

RIVALRY INTERVENTION: WHY INTERNATIONAL RIVALS INTERVENE IN  
CIVIL CONFLICTS

by

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For Heather, Susan, Ron, Julia, Charlotte and Harold.  
And Abby.

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## Abstract

This dissertation examines balancing intervention into civil conflict by international rivals. That is, the phenomenon of two states, locked in a long-term and ongoing conflictual relationship, intervening on opposing sides of a civil conflict occurring in a third-party. Extant research has demonstrated that civil conflicts which experience balancing intervention are longer, bloodier, and more difficult to resolve than those which do not; outside supporters fuel continued violence by providing support for domestic factions. The consequences are significant with respect to global security, meaning the study of civil war intervention is a pressing issue in the fields of Political Science and International Relations. Scholars have typically focused on the characteristics of civil conflicts which precipitate intervention; by contrast, this dissertation emphasizes the relationship between interveners, locating the motivation for intervention at the international level. Specifically, the dynamics that exist between long-standing enemies – or ‘rivals’ – are posited to trigger balancing intervention. States in rivalry have experienced a history of crisis and confrontation. This context shapes the perceptions of each side, such that rivals anticipate future conflict. Rivalry is an ongoing, continuous state of security competition; present behaviour is conditioned by the ‘push’ of the past (reputation and experience) and the ‘pull’ of the future (uncertainty and a preference for survival). In this respect, rivalry is a broadly rational process, not a psychological or emotional pathology driven by ‘hatred’ or ‘hostility’. With respect to civil conflict intervention, rivals anticipate the loss of security that would result from non-intervention and act accordingly. The causal mechanism triggering intervention is the underlying dynamic of the rivalry relationship itself. In order to assess and develop this argument, the dissertation examines three cases of civil conflict intervention by rivals. First, Indian and Pakistani interventions into Afghanistan (2001-present); second, Israeli and Syrian interventions into Lebanon (1975-85); and third, US and Soviet interventions into Angola (1975). The cases suggest that a common process – or mechanism – operates across time and space, linking rivalry to intervention. These findings have significant policy implications moving forward, particularly as the international community formulates conflict stabilization practices vis-à-vis complex civil conflict environments.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*For War consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known. And therefore, the notion of time is to be considered in the nature of war, as it is in the nature of weather. For as the nature of foul weather lieth not in a shower or two of rain, but in an inclination thereto of many days together, so the nature of war consisteth not in actual fighting, **but in the known disposition thereto during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary.***

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, paragraph 8, Chapter XIII

Many of the most prominent conflicts of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century (Afghanistan, Libya, Syria etc.) have been, at one time or another, characterized as civil conflicts subject to outside, third-party intervention. In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the ideological and geopolitical struggle between the United States and Soviet Union was defined, in part, by interventions and “proxy wars” in various corners of the globe. In the ancient world, Rome and Carthage were drawn into the first Punic War as a result of intervention in Sicily, in which each empire supported opposing sides (Mamertine and Syracuse) in a local dispute. The Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta, similarly, included local conflicts in which allies were supported by the two great powers (even the First Peloponnesian War in 460BC was triggered, in part, by balancing support to Megara and Corinth in a local border dispute). “Intervention is as ancient and well-established an instrument of foreign policy as are diplomatic pressure, negotiations and war,” wrote Hans J. Morgenthau (1967: 425), “from the time of the ancient Greeks to this day, some states have found it advantageous to intervene in the affairs of other states on behalf of their own interests [while] other states, in view of their interests, have opposed such interventions and have intervened on behalf of theirs.” While the modern study of international security and war has typically been divorced from the study of civil conflict, this distinction belies important interrelations (both theoretical and empirical) that reveal themselves in the study of history; and in particular, the study of relations between antagonistic states – or rivals – in the international system.

Understanding the international dimensions of civil wars represents one of the most important and pressing puzzles in the study of world conflict, one that spans diverse literatures in comparative politics and international relations, and which requires a

theoretical engagement that goes beyond merely identifying the correlated conditions of probabilistic intervention. More must be done to understand *why* states intervene in civil conflicts (that is, to identify and explore the causal mechanisms which trigger intervention in specific circumstances); particularly if the deleterious effects of prolonged violence that result from such interventions are to be mitigated or prevented. Civil conflicts which experience so-called ‘balancing’ or ‘dual-sided’ interventions (in which each domestic faction is supported by an outside patron) are longer, bloodier, and more difficult to resolve than those that do not (Hironaka 2005; Cunningham 2010). To take the Afghanistan case alone, the death toll after over fifteen years of war approaches 200,000 (Crawford 2016); this in a conflict many recognize as spirited along by Pakistani involvement which Western policymakers have been unable to dissuade despite prolonged and concerted effort. A better appreciation of the rationale and logic undergirding Pakistani behaviour is essential for improving policy in this instance; even more, an understanding of why certain countries are so committed to seemingly counter-productive interventions can be useful moving forward as new conflicts emerge.

This dissertation focuses on the theory and practice of international intervention into civil conflict by external rivals; that is, the phenomenon of two states, locked in a long-term and ongoing acrimonious relationship, intervening on opposing sides of a civil conflict occurring in another state. As mentioned, the empirical record – particularly after the second World War – suggests that not only is this behaviour fairly common (at least 35 such conflicts occurred between 1945 and 2002, see Table 1 on page 107), it generates and exacerbates a significant amount of conflict, violence and bloodshed in world politics. The primary research objective is to explain this behaviour, why conflict in rivalry is strategically exported, and what the international community can do more effectively to manage and prevent these types of interventions from recurring.

The dissertation will argue that international rivalry is an ongoing (continuous) strategic relationship in which the push of the past (reputation) – defined by war, conflict, and crisis – and the pull of the future (uncertainty) – in which security and survival is the ultimate goal – engenders balancing behaviour vis-à-vis external civil conflicts. This dynamic affects how rivals intervene. Contrary to many standard interpretations of interventions, rivals are inclined to focus on the overarching international relationship;

the immediate stakes of the civil conflict – the gains intrinsic to the country in question – are less relevant. More specifically, rivals will be less concerned with helping a particular side *win* and instead be driven by a desire to frustrate or block their rival's capacity to further its own interests. The animating motivation is the prospect of future confrontation and conflict at the international level. The stakes of the civil conflict are considered through this prism, and other interests (including material gains, immediate security, and/or identification with domestic groups) are either irrelevant or sacrificed in favour of protecting long-term security vis-à-vis an anticipated opponent. For outside observers, this priority is puzzling; for those states engaged in rivalry, it is largely inescapable.

The designation of 'rivalry' is not merely descriptive; rather, it connotes an established – if contested – concept in the study of International Relations (IR), one with observed implications for how states behave. The *fons et origo* of rivalry is a history of conflict and confrontation. States that fight tend to do so repeatedly, and the periods between direct conflict remain tense. In the absence of perfect information with respect to a rivals' intentions, states rely, in part, on past behaviour within the relationship, leading them to anticipate future conflict. Given this expectation, rivals will be particularly sensitive to developments which might enhance a rivals' strategic position. Any such change could adversely alter the balance of power (whether globally or locally) in the *next* confrontation. Rivalry is fundamentally a relationship in which all conflicts are believed to be linked in an overarching competition which has the potential for violence; a state's security is therefore (perceived to be) threatened at all stages and in all facets of the relationship (which is to say, security concerns remain acute even in the interregnum between overt conflict). It is for this reason that balancing interventions into civil conflicts should be considered in the context of the broader international relationship between two rival states. The proposed causal mechanism for intervention derives from the dynamics of rivalry: *decision-makers anticipate the negative long-term security consequences – at the international level – of non-intervention and act accordingly*. Long-term security vis-à-vis a rival is, in this sense, 'over-weighted' in a state's calculations.

The argument has two key components. A theory of rivalry intervention presupposes a theory of rivalry itself; an argument that rivals intervene because they are

rivals would be meaningless. It is therefore crucial to unpack the dynamics which make ‘rivalry’ a distinct type of international relationship. I can then explore whether evidence in specific interventions supports the hypothesis that it is these dynamics which explain the decision to intervene. The purpose is to link the dynamics of rivalry to the causal mechanism leading to intervention; this will a) offer a better explanation of specific interventions, b) suggest a causal process linking rivalry to intervention across time and space (albeit with the necessary caveats associated with generalization from a small number of cases), and c) enhance the broader understanding of rivalry itself, with potential implications for other types of behaviour that occur in such relationships.

This introductory chapter proceeds as follows. First, I articulate and clarify the animating research puzzle(s) of the dissertation. Second, I specify the original contributions to knowledge that the project makes. Third, I summarize the findings of the case evidence that is presented. Fourth, I provide a roadmap for the chapters that follow. Finally, I conclude by clarifying several limitations of the research.

### **The Puzzle(s)**

The extant literature on civil conflict intervention – discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2 – has established that ‘rivalry’ is strongly correlated with the decision to intervene. For example, Findley and Teo (2006) found that a state was eleven times more likely to intervene if a rival state was supporting the government in a civil conflict, four times more likely if a rival was supporting the opposition.<sup>1</sup> Yet recognizing that such a correlation exists does not illuminate the underlying cause(s) of the behaviour. What is it about rivalry that motivates states to intervene in this way, particularly given the enormous costs and risks associated with involvement in an outside civil conflict? Why would violence and war occurring in another country, often one with seemingly minimal immediate economic or strategic significance, trigger potentially risky entanglement?

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<sup>1</sup> There are different sets of criteria for establishing that a relationship constitutes ‘rivalry’ (X number of conflicts over X number of years, etc.), with obvious implications for the coding of rivalry as a variable and the resulting statistical analysis. These different ‘definitions’ of rivalry are discussed in Chapter 2. Often, scholars performing quantitative analysis will check their findings against alternative formulations (see for example Colaresi et al. 2008).

Such questions are familiar to diplomatic historians. The legacy of Vietnam and other costly interventions (or “over-extensions”) into ‘peripheral’ conflicts befuddle many assessments of American foreign policy, particular those which assume that the national interest (defined in terms of power and/or security) is pursued in a broadly rational manner. Soviet involvement (1979-1989) in Afghanistan, likewise, is recognized with hindsight as a harbinger of decline; the loss of resources and prestige resulting from the embroilment helping precipitate the final collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War. Each superpower, similarly, was guilty of pursuing involvement in an Angolan civil war for which neither could ultimately provide ‘sound’ justification (which is to say, justification in terms of the strategic, economic or humanitarian interests manifest in the conflict itself). Moving further back in history, the ill-fated Sicilian Expedition (in which Athens sailed a great distance to involve itself in a dispute between the Italian city-states of Segesta and Selinus) is generally considered a turning point in the Peloponnesian War, leading eventually to Athenian defeat at the hands of its Spartan rival. Most recently, as mentioned above, Western analysts and policymakers have expended great energy trying to convince leaders in Pakistan that its involvement in the war in Afghanistan – specifically, Islamabad’s continued support for the Taliban insurgency – is at odds with its own self-interest; an argument that continues to fall, it seems, on deaf ears.

The forces of history are too variegated to allow for sweeping generalizations with respect to the motivations, causes, and determinants of such an array of international behaviour. The cases to be investigated in this dissertation are, as a consequence, necessarily selected with more limited scope conditions in mind (on case selection see Chapter 4). Nonetheless, the questions with which this dissertation is (more narrowly) concerned contributes to the broader body of knowledge about interventions throughout history. More specifically, the dissertation seeks to *explain* what has been so commonly *observed* (both anecdotally and in the statistical literature). It moves beyond the correlation and goes into specific cases to determine the underlying cause of the decision to intervene. Given the strength of the correlation, an examination of the mechanisms and processes underlying rivalry intervention is justified (even demanded) in methodological terms (Beach and Pedersen 2013).

A secondary puzzle, deriving from the above, is the nature of rivalry itself; as mentioned earlier, to focus in on a potential causal mechanism linking rivalry to intervention requires thinking about what rivalry means. More precisely, it requires thinking about the sources of the behaviour that result in the situation scholars have identified as ‘rivalry’ in IR. As discussed in Chapter 2, scholars have examined the onset, duration (including the relative stability over time), and termination of international rivalries. There are similarly different approaches with respect to rivalry’s internal dynamics. While no consensus exists, a common theme in much rivalry analysis is that it is essentially a pathological condition; hostility and antagonism in rivalry is *outsized*, the product of amplifying hatred and paranoiac mistrust which results in unnecessary levels of conflict. Rivalry is believed, in other words, to force departure from broadly rational decision-making processes in which security and/or material interest is maximized. This would imply that rivalry *intervention* may be the product of distorted decision-making – beholden to exaggerated antagonism, rivals pursue costly and counter-productive interventions. This possibility accords, in fact, with many casual observations regarding specific historical cases, including American and Soviet behaviour during the Cold War and Pakistan’s involvement in Afghanistan post-2001: the US intervened in Angola or Pakistan in Afghanistan because they were/are ‘obsessed’ with their rival (the USSR and India, respectively). I am skeptical of this pathological explanation. The implication is that leaders and decision-makers embark on major, costly expeditions due to some emotional or psychological condition (or are driven to do so by rabid publics beholden to such impulses). Instead, I argue that rivalry is driven primarily by strategic interaction under conditions of uncertainty and the goal of state survival, not the emotional and/or psychological pathologies which may or may not result as a by-product of repeated conflict. Rivalry intervention, therefore, is explicable by reference to structural conditions and the implications of international anarchy.<sup>2</sup> These points are elaborated in Chapter 3. For present purposes, the key consideration is the clear distinction between two basic, and competing, conceptualizations of rivalry: what I call Pathological Rivalry and Rational

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<sup>2</sup> These basic assumptions do *not* reflect a dogmatic commitment to ‘structural realism’ or any other paradigm in the tired inter-paradigmatic ‘great debate’ that captured much of IR discourse over preceding decades. Fortunately, the field appears to be moving past such generally unproductive conversations and towards a more eclectic, problem-based approach to theoretical inquiry (Lake 2013).

Rivalry, respectively. Each implies a different causal mechanism linking rivalry to civil conflict intervention. In attempting to solve the first puzzle described above, the dissertation will inevitably speak to this secondary puzzle (or debate) contained in the rivalry literature.

### **Contributions to Knowledge**

This dissertation makes several important and original contributions to knowledge. First, it expands the growing literature on the connections between inter- and intra-state conflicts. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, the traditional divide between the study of international security and the study of civil conflict is longstanding. As recently as 2010, Jack Levy and William Thompson (2010: 3), in their extensive survey of the field, noted that: “most of the contemporary literature on war focuses either on interstate war or on civil war, but not on both.” Yet increasingly scholars have attempted to bridge this “curious dichotomy”, as Gleditsch and Salehyan (2007: 58) have called it, by considering the international dimensions of civil conflicts or the implications of civil conflicts for international politics. While this dissertation remains firmly grounded in the field of IR, it nonetheless contributes to this move by foregrounding civil conflict as an alternative venue for, and extension of, international rivalry. Relatedly, in addressing the puzzle noted above – the missing causal link underlying the observed correlation between rivalry and civil conflict intervention – the dissertation fills a crucial gap in existing knowledge about potential motivations for state intervention.

Second, the dissertation develops a novel theory of international rivalry in which the engine or logic of state behaviour within rivalry is explicitly articulated, something which has hitherto been largely absent in the rivalry literature. More specifically, it obviates the need to invoke emotional, cognitive or psychological biases and distortions to explain rivalry behaviour (see for example Vasquez 2001, 2009; Hopf 2010; Valeriano 2013). The extant literature on rivalry is explored in Chapter 2, with a particular emphasis on the lacuna that persists with respect to a theoretical explanation for why states behave as they do in the context of ongoing and acrimonious relationships. It may be intuitive that such relations are marked by competitive behaviour, yet traditional treatments of

conflict and war ignored the historical and temporal linkages between conflicts, while the rivalry approach itself (intended specifically to address this obvious problem) is unclear, in theoretical terms, as to how such conflicts are linked or how past experiences and behaviour influence outcomes within the ongoing relationship. This dissertation foregrounds the importance of strategic interaction: the implications of the international system and the perceptions that accompany repeated conflict induce further competitive behaviour in the form of off-setting or balancing interventions.

Third, the dissertation provides detailed, theoretically-informed analysis of several important historical cases of civil conflict intervention. The theoretical lens that is applied to the analysis is useful for parsing out alternative explanations and interpretations of each case. From a theoretical perspective, the differences across cases are not flattened for the purpose of “bend[ing] reality...to conform [it] to pre-existing theoretical scripts” (Lawson 2012: 221), as social scientists have so often been accused of doing by their colleagues in the humanities. Rather, the rich detail of particular cases adds layers to the complexity of the theory of rivalry intervention that is developed; the patterns of conflict, past behaviour, and reputations that differ between the cases correspond to variations in intervention processes and practices in ways which inform and refine the theory while simultaneously illuminating the cases themselves. The dissertation makes a particular contribution to current understandings of the Afghanistan war. The documentary evidence collected and presented in Chapters 6 and 7 constitutes a comprehensive and original treatment of Indian and Pakistani policy in Afghanistan since 2001.

Fourth, the sum total of the theoretical and empirical analysis suggests important policy implications for decision-makers regarding ongoing civil conflicts and the perils of rivalry interventions under certain circumstances. Given its historical ubiquity, knowledge of the logic and process by which rivals intervene is an important foundation for the effective prevention, management, and resolution of civil war. In many instances, states (particularly the United States and its allies in NATO, including Canada) become involved in civil conflicts, or conduct international interventions, without realizing the implications – or more precisely, complications – stemming from the international or regional environment. Attempts to end or stabilize such conflicts are at risk of being

undermined by the obstinacy of actors whose motivations may be misunderstood or underestimated.

### **Summary of Findings**

The dissertation examines the Indian and Pakistani interventions into Afghanistan (2001-present); the Syrian and Israeli interventions into Lebanon (1975-1985); and the Soviet and US interventions into Angola (1975). A detailed discussion of case selection occurs in Chapter 4. Here I briefly summarize the findings of each case and comment on the implications for the proposed explanation of rivalry intervention.

The India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case is complex given that Indian and Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan stretches back many decades prior to the outbreak of the current war in 2001. Nonetheless, the American invasion shortly after 9/11 drastically altered the political structure of Afghanistan such that it is possible to bifurcate between the pre- and post-2001 eras and to speak meaningfully about new and distinct interventions during the latter period. Following the overthrow of the Taliban, India began supporting the nascent Afghan government, largely through massive economic aid, including the development of major infrastructure projects. Pakistan, having initially supported the American effort against the Taliban, reversed course in late 2002, and subsequently began a prolonged campaign to support an emerging Taliban-led insurgency against the new Afghan government.

India's intervention on behalf of the government was the product of several factors, including economic opportunities and a broader geopolitical interest tied to regional hegemony and the projection of Indian power. Also important, however, were rivalry concerns associated with the security threat tied to Pakistan's use of Islamic terrorism and militancy against India. The Pakistani decision to support the Taliban insurgency is more directly attributable to rivalry dynamics. Unlike the Indian decision, Pakistan's intervention runs *against* (rather than with) other interests. The decision-sequence leading to the 2002 reversal – along with subsequent evidence and the persistence of the policy – corroborates the presence of the proposed causal mechanism.

Concerns about long-term security given the anticipation of renewed conflict with India drove Pakistan's policy in Afghanistan.

The Israel-Syria (Lebanon) case is similarly complex albeit for different reasons. Respective Syrian and Israeli interventions into Lebanon occurred over a period of roughly ten years – from the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 through what is known as the Lebanon War from 1982-1985. The case therefore offers multiple decision points, in the context of changing circumstances, whereby the presence of the rivalry-driven causal mechanism can be assessed. Syrian attempts to quell instability in 1975-76 were linked to apprehension about a potential Israeli invasion of Lebanon (and the security consequences that would ensue). As it turned out, the intervention threatened to bring about this very scenario, given Israeli concerns about Syrian control of territory in southern Lebanon along the Israeli-Lebanese border. Later, the roles were reversed, as Israeli forces moved into Lebanon in 1982 and Syria reacted by supporting proxy forces to counter their presence. The various iterations of these competing interventions are covered in Chapter 8, but in broad terms the evidence suggests that both Israel and Syria were driven primarily by long-term security concerns vis-à-vis one another; the specific dispensation of political control in Lebanon itself was ancillary to such considerations.

The US-Soviet (Angola) case is more straightforward but nonetheless illuminating. Historians generally agree that Soviet and US involvement in Angola was tied to the broader Cold War relationship. The civil war in Angola that broke out in 1975 was geographically distant from both states, and the country had no major and immediate material or strategic implications for either side. There was a potential ideological dimension, insofar as the Soviets supported a stridently Marxist domestic faction (and publicly championed its support for Third World revolutionary movements more generally); but the evidence suggests that the underlying motivation for Soviet intervention had more to do with concern about Chinese and American influence in Southern Africa. The US intervention was even more clearly motivated by rivalry concerns; US decision-makers explicitly tied the imperative to balance the Soviet presence in Angola to potential long-term consequences for the ongoing security competition with the USSR. Failure to check Soviet influence in Southern Africa, the logic went, might result in future, more direct challenges (owing largely to reduced

American credibility) which could undermine US security by altering the global balance of power.

The cumulative evidence across the three cases therefore supports the argument that the causal mechanism triggering civil conflict intervention was long-term security concerns generated by international rivalry. Of course, the strength of the explanation with respect to each specific intervention varies. In particular, the initial – or ‘first-mover’ – interventions appear to have potential additional motivations which make it more difficult to definitively state that rivalry considerations were dominant (e.g. in the Indian and Soviet cases). This makes logical sense; if a state’s rival is not yet involved in a civil conflict, rivalry pressure is not as severe – indeed, may not be an immediate consideration at all – and the decision to intervene may be the result of other precipitating causes. The theoretical import of the ‘first-mover’ and ‘balancer’ distinction (which state intervenes first and which state second) is elaborated in Chapter 4 as well as Chapter 10. In terms of the cases, however, it is interesting to note that the distinction is not as decisive as one might assume – not only is it somewhat difficult in practice to distinguish which state occupies which role (in the Afghanistan case for example India could be said to be responding to the history of Pakistani support for the Taliban pre-2001) but additionally the first-mover interventions that can be identified also appear to be influenced in significant ways by rivalry concerns (Syrian intervention in Lebanon *anticipated* potential Israeli involvement; Soviet intervention in Angola was tied to competition with China which was itself linked to the potential dangers of Sino-US cooperation in Southern Africa). Thus, while rivalry considerations were perhaps more immediate for balancing interveners (roughly Pakistan, Israel and the US) the evidence suggests that all six states across all three cases were influenced by rivalry. I further unpack these possibilities and examine their relevance for the development of the proposed explanation for intervention in Chapter 10.

In addition to the *initial* decisions to intervene (for both first-movers and balancers), the cases highlight the relevance of rivalry for the *development* of the interventions over time. In each instance, there was a sequence of action/reaction as rivals responded to the other side. While future work might specify precise explanations/expectations for these retaliatory and/or escalatory sequences (by treating

them as iterated coercive encounters in the context of deterrence theory, for example), the observation that there was some level of synergy between interventions – that rivals calibrated their interventions over time in relation to the other side’s activities – is further evidence (suggestive, not dispositive) that rivalry was the key motivator in each state’s decision-making calculus. More specifically, the evidence indicates that adjustments were generally consistent with the rivalry goal of intervention rather than, e.g., the *victory* of a particular domestic faction – this is important insofar as the basic (and logically most simple) assumption of many observers regarding such interventions was that support for a domestic faction was designed to help that faction win vis-à-vis its domestic opponents. Yet the evidence suggests that: in Afghanistan, Pakistan is not primarily concerned with the Taliban achieving control of the country; in Lebanon, neither Israel nor Syria were primarily concerned with its preferred-proxy achieving control; and in Angola, the US was not primarily concerned with its preferred-proxy achieving control. Rather than outright victory, interveners appeared content to muddle through, doing just enough to forestall victory by the other side (this dynamic was the source of domestic US opposition to the American intervention in Angola, for example, as members of congress and even members of the administration focused on African affairs reasoned that any support short of that necessary to achieve ‘victory’ was pointless; it also points to the exacerbating role rivalry interventions can play insofar as resolution of a civil conflict is delayed owing to interventions *intended* to balance – stalemate – rather than decisively resolve violence).

Finally, in general terms, the case studies indicate that a common causal pathway does appear to operate across time and space. There are fundamental similarities in the development of each respective rivalry over time, in the decades preceding the interventions of interest. Perceptions within the rivalries were remarkably consistent; leaders and decision-makers were wary, cautious, and concerned about the future – always believing that renewed conflict was possible, even likely – without displaying overt hostility, hatred or other obvious signs of personal antipathy toward their opponent. The interventions themselves were justified primarily in defensive terms, as leaders repeatedly stressed the potential security consequences of inaction. These findings are of course tentative (see the section on limitations below and the discussion of generalization

from small-n case study research in Chapter 4) but nonetheless constitute an important step forward in research linking rivalry to intervention via an explicit causal mechanism. Across three different instances of international rivalry, and the interventions of six international rivals into three separate civil conflicts, there is consistency with respect to the perceptions and priorities that drove the decision to intervene.

## Roadmap

In this section I offer a brief overview of the development of the dissertation, highlighting the key information and takeaways from each successive chapter. In broad strokes: Chapters 2-4 establish the framework of the study; Chapters 5-9 constitute the empirical content in the form of three<sup>3</sup> historical case studies; and Chapter 10 concludes and evaluates the research findings of the dissertation as a whole.

With respect to the framework, Chapter 2 reviews the relevant scholarly literature. Because the argument advanced in the dissertation draws on and connects several distinct bodies of academic inquiry, the goal of this chapter is to weave together various strands of theoretical and empirical work so as to situate the present project in existing scholarship. This discussion will similarly explain how the dissertation informs and contributes to these literatures. First, extant work on civil conflict intervention is surveyed; as mentioned above with respect to the primary research puzzle, this will highlight the value of a mechanism-based analysis exploring an important sub-set of interventions – rivalry intervention – and how it advances, in particular, work being done on the international dimensions of civil wars. Next, the literature on international rivalry is surveyed. Again, an explanation of rivalry intervention presupposes a theory of rivalry, meaning it is important to engage with existing approaches to rivalry research. The discussion of rivalry flows into a brief exposition of the importance of *reputations* in IR; while largely unexplored, the study of reputations has natural (that is, theoretically-informed) linkages with the concept of rivalry – this possibility is pursued in the theory

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<sup>3</sup> Or six, depending on how one conceptualizes and demarcates the cases; that is, there are *three* civil conflicts that are examined but each conflict is subject to *two* interventions – one from each rival. There are therefore *six* distinct decisions to intervene (two per conflict) that are examined. This point is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

of rivalry advanced in the subsequent chapter. Finally, the discussion of rivalry and reputations links to general work about how states perceive intentions in IR, and the persistence of the security dilemma.

Chapter 3 articulates the theory and the related explanation for rivalry intervention that is derived from it. In particular, the argument is made that the dynamics of rivalry are explicable through reference to strategic interaction under conditions of international anarchy and incomplete information, and need not rely on emotional, psychological, and/or idiosyncratic explanations derived from lower levels of analysis. An important clarification in this regard is the distinction between *interpersonal* rivalry and *international* rivalry; I argue that the metaphorical invocation of the former has clouded analysis of the latter by introducing dynamics – specifically emotional and/or psychological biases – unsuitable and unnecessary for understanding state-to-state (as opposed to individual-to-individual) relationships. This contention brings me into tension with a proliferating trend in IR which focuses on political psychology – I therefore use a brief discussion of this research programme (what has recently been called the ‘behavioural revolution’ in IR) as a foil to better articulate my own position.

Having presented a theory of rivalry, Chapter 4 translates that theory into a specific causal mechanism which I posit explains why rivals engage in off-setting or balancing civil conflict interventions. I then outline the methodology I employ to examine the existence of the proposed causal mechanism. I use process-tracing to make within-case causal inferences regarding the operation of the mechanism, as well as cross-case comparisons to extend the applicability of the purported causal pathway. These methods offer several advantages vis-à-vis the research objectives of the dissertation; at the same time, they introduce necessary limitations as to the scope of the causal claims that are capable of being made. Both these advantages and limitations are discussed in turn. These methodological choices similarly inform case selection; the criteria and rationale for case selection is explained, again noting the various trade-offs that inevitably flow from such considerations. The evidentiary requirements are discussed, as well as the structure and execution of the subsequent case studies.

Chapters 5-7 present the India-Pakistan case; specifically, the Indian and Pakistani interventions into Afghanistan post-2001. This case forms the empirical core of the

dissertation. Because it is a contemporary case, extensive research was required to not only investigate *why* each rival intervened into the Afghanistan war but, as a necessary antecedent, *whether* and *how* they intervened at all. Unlike later case studies which examine more distant historical events, the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) lacks a comprehensive secondary literature documenting the interventions in question. I therefore had to compile much of this evidence myself, using government documents and contemporary reporting. This additional detail mandated extended coverage of the case, spreading it across three chapters. Chapter 5 discusses the overall history and development of the India-Pakistan rivalry, including the various wars and crises that occurred between 1948 and 2001. As explained in Chapter 3, this history and development is relevant to the argument about intervention because it establishes the *context* in which each rival assessed the civil conflict into which intervention was contemplated. History – past experiences, prior interactions, and the reputations that formed as a result – is the basis for perceptions about the future that constitute the causal mechanism triggering intervention. After examining that history, Chapter 5 briefly concludes by outlining the parameters of the Afghanistan war and the opportunities for intervention that the conflict presented to each rival. Chapter 6 then examines the Indian intervention in detail, describing both its form and, even more importantly, the rationale by which it was motivated. Chapter 7 does the same for the Pakistani intervention, and summarizes the findings of the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case overall.

Chapter 8 covers the Israeli and Syrian interventions into Lebanon between 1975-1985. It begins with an overview of the development of the rivalry from 1948 to 1975; again, setting the context in which the Lebanese conflict was considered. The ten-year period of conflict in Lebanon that is examined saw iterated interventions by both rivals in what was an ongoing and evolving crisis; the case therefore offers multiple decision-points – on both sides – relevant to unpacking the decision-making processes of each rival. A discussion of these interventions in comparison to the interventions of the India-Pakistan case concludes the chapter.

Chapter 9 covers the Soviet and American interventions into Angola in 1975. As in Chapter 8, it begins with an overview of the US-Soviet rivalry from the immediate post-World War II period up until 1975. It subsequently examines first the Soviet

intervention and then the American intervention. The concluding section evaluates the findings of the case in the context of both the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria cases that preceded it.

Chapter 10 summarizes and unpacks the research findings as a whole. I revisit the expectations and arguments articulated in Chapter 3 and re-consider them in the light of the evidence contained in Chapters 5-9. I evaluate the overall strength of the argument in light of this evidence, and extrapolate implications for the development of knowledge on rivalry, intervention, reputations and the field of IR. I re-visit the limitations of the study, noting in particular the deficiencies and trade-offs that obtain given the methodological choices that were made. I note potential avenues of future research that might ameliorate and correct for some of these limitations. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of policy implications, connecting the dissertation's findings with the practice of international politics.

### **Limitations & Clarifications**

Before proceeding, it is important to clarify the scope and limitations of the present study. The issue of outside intervention into civil conflicts constitutes a variegated phenomenon – the argument in this dissertation pertains to a specific sub-set of such interventions, and does not make claims beyond this purview. Likewise, the study of rivalry involves an array of theoretical and empirical issues – including rivalry onset (how are they created?), rivalry dynamics (how are they perpetuated over time?) and rivalry termination (how do they end?) – which are not *explicitly* addressed in theoretical terms by the present work. The issue of rivalry onset is discussed in the context of the case studies, but no precise claims are made regarding necessary or sufficient conditions for rivalry initiation. The historical overview sections which begin each of the case studies similarly do not attempt causal explanation regarding recurring disputes. The analysis is agnostic as to whether the dynamics of rivalry are themselves responsible for the specific ebbs and flows one observes in a rivalry relationship – rather, the narratives help to establish the decision-making and perceptual *context* in which rivals operate, as experiences and past interactions pile up over the course of a rivalry's history. I would

strongly suspect, of course, that rivalry dynamics do in fact help perpetuate additional direct conflict; this is, after all, one of the fundamental claims of the rivalry literature. Yet it must be conceded that the historical narratives do not constitute sufficient evidence to make such a claim. Rather, causal claims are reserved for the decisions made by rivals to intervene into civil conflicts.

In this regard, the case studies constitute preliminary evidence, subject to the inherent limitations of small-n qualitative analysis. That a common causal process is observed in three different contexts across time and space suggests that such a process may operate in still additional cases, but further research is required before the findings can be generalized with substantial confidence. The point is not to minimize the contribution to knowledge that the dissertation makes – all analysis in the social sciences, particularly with respect to causation, is tentative and subject to refinement – but rather to underscore the incremental nature of building knowledge about complex historical processes. The present work is an important and necessary step in a wider research effort, building on extant research regarding the correlated conditions of international rivalry (itself a developing social science concept) and intervention into civil conflict, and moving toward a more complete understanding of the precise mechanisms and processes by which these major and consequential decisions – influencing war and peace, life and death, “from the time of the ancient Greeks to this day” – are made.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review is particularly important as it helps ground and situate the theory of rivalry intervention that is presented in the subsequent chapter. The dissertation brings together disparate literatures (on intervention, rivalries, and international reputations) for the purpose of examining rivalry intervention into civil conflicts. The resulting argument makes contributions to each of these literatures by: identifying a causal mechanism leading to state intervention; filling a lacuna with respect to the underlying logic of rivalry behaviour; and advancing our theoretical understanding of the importance of reputations for state behaviour. Each literature is evaluated in turn below.

First, the development of the study of international intervention is surveyed, with an emphasis on those trends which suggest the need for the explanation of intervention offered in this dissertation. The broader literature on intervention is massive, and includes treatments of humanitarian concerns, ethnic (and other ‘affective’) linkages, economic motivations (including colonial ambitions), domestic politics and various other unilateral considerations purported to drive the intervention by one state into the affairs of another. Because this dissertation proposes an explanation of a specific *type* of intervention, as opposed to a theory of intervention in general (if such a theory is even possible) it is prudent to narrow the focus of the review to that slice of the intervention literature to which this dissertation purports to contribute. To this end, the burgeoning research on the linkages between international relations and civil wars is discussed; particularly the intervention of outside powers into ongoing civil wars, with a further emphasis on so-called balancing interventions by multiple actors. As will be shown, the current state of knowledge with respect to these types of interventions begs for explanations as to the strategic logic of outside interveners.

Next, the extant literature on international rivalry is engaged. As discussed in Chapter 1, because this dissertation offers a novel explanation of rivalry intervention it presupposes a theory of rivalry more generally. While much has been learned in the study of rivalry over the last several decades, the development of a coherent logic of rivalry behaviour is lacking. Specifically, the driving force underlying rivalry is typically over-

specified, with interpersonal and psychological dimensions mixing with strategic and structural imperatives. This discussion of the rivalry literature therefore lays the groundwork for the subsequent development (in the following chapter) of a more parsimonious theory of rivalry in which the strategic interaction between states in the international system can, under certain circumstances, lead to rivalry behaviour without mistakenly privileging (over-emphasizing) cognitive, psychological or emotional factors.

Key to understanding rivalry behaviour in this formulation are the *perceptions* that are generated through repeated conflict; as such, the theory similarly speaks to the ongoing discussion in IR about how states perceive the intentions of other states. Scholars have approached this issue from a variety of perspectives, including rationalist theories on bargaining and costly signalling as well as psychological explanations predicated on cognitive schemas, trust, and individual-level biases. I briefly discuss this literature so as to situate the argument of the dissertation in the broader debate regarding the perception of intentions at the international level.

While past behaviour and past actions have often been included in general rationalist frameworks (as part of a state's calculations regarding the intentions of an adversary during a crisis), the specific relevance of *reputations* more broadly has been underappreciated. This is particularly the case with respect to linking reputations to work on international rivalry. I therefore end the literature review by discussing the ways in which incorporating the role of reputations can enhance our understanding of how rivals perceive one another over time. This discussion gives way, in the next chapter, to an explicit formulation of how perceptions in rivalry shape expectations about the future and lead to outcomes such as civil conflict intervention.

### **Intervention and the International Dimensions of Civil Conflicts**

In this section I examine existing research on international interventions into civil conflicts. In particular, I describe emerging work on the characteristics of outside interveners – including strategic interaction between multiple interveners – in determining intervention. This literature helps to frame the empirical puzzle that the

dissertation attempts to solve; namely, the need for a causal account linking international dynamics to civil war intervention.

Civil wars are international events. Of the 150 civil conflicts that occurred between 1949 and 1999, 101 (or 67%) experienced outside intervention of some kind (Regan 2000, 2002). As Balch-Lindsay and Enterline (2000: 618) have suggested, “external intervention in civil wars is nearly ubiquitous.” Even those conflicts which do not experience intervention have consequences for other states by, *inter alia*, altering the international structure, destabilizing the region, and threatening to spill across borders (making them particularly pertinent to the decision-makers of proximate nations, see Kathman 2011).

The study of the nexus between international relations and civil war is not new and has progressed through several more or less definable stages, while nonetheless remaining generally marginal in the discipline. Not surprisingly, the early literature was significantly influenced by the dynamics of the Cold War, particularly American and Soviet involvement in the Third World. Given the implications of this involvement – and the apparent centrality of Third World ‘proxy wars’<sup>4</sup> to broader superpower relations – a subset of scholars became interested in the linkage between internal and external conflict, even as the majority of the academy continued to treat inter- and intrastate war independently.

In his introduction to a collection of essays on the *International Aspects of Civil Strife* (one of the earliest contributions to the systematic study of the subject), for example, James Rosenau (1964: 1) wrote:

A focus upon the international aspects of internal war requires us to concern ourselves with the convergence of two sets of phenomena that are ordinarily treated separately. Most students of foreign affairs hold domestic variables constant. They have enough to study without probing deeply the national sources

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<sup>4</sup> This dissertation opts to focus on “intervention” rather than simply “proxy war” as the former encapsulates a wider range of behavior (up to and including direct military involvement) that is of interest to the theory being presented. Put simply, all proxy wars are interventions but not all interventions are proxy wars.

of international behavior. Likewise, most students of domestic matters attempt to achieve a modicum of simplicity by ignoring international variables or controlling for their effects. No such delineation was possible [in this volume], however. The international aspects of internal wars cannot be analyzed apart from the conflicts that foster them.

If the tendency to treat the two sets of phenomena separately has persisted, the import of the final observation (that is, the largely irreducible connection between the two) continues to hold as well. As Levy and Thompson (2010: 3) observed in their extensive survey of the field at the start of this decade (and as quoted earlier): “most of the contemporary literature on war focuses either on interstate war or on civil war, but not on both.” In the same year Patrick Regan (2010: 467), reviewing the intervention literature more narrowly, noted that

At the core, there is a relative paucity of broadly cross-national research on interventions into civil wars, relative in the sense that this [phenomenon] does not get the intellectual attention that, say, the onset of civil war does...As a form of international behavior it is rather frequent, and by most accounts civil wars are, today, the most frequent form of armed conflict within and between states. So this relatively sparse body of research leaves room for much more scrutiny as to the conditions for and outcome from external interventions.

This is not to suggest that nothing has been accomplished in the decades since the Rosenau volume, but rather that many of the core and fundamental puzzles related to the external-internal relationship remain unsolved, while the urgency of the task has if anything increased given the proliferation of civil conflicts since the end of the Cold War.

While several of the contributors to Rosenau (1964) were more or less committed to the systematic study of external-internal linkages in the abstract (Scott [1964] for example distinguishes between the general phenomenon of interventions as a tool of cold *warfare* and the particular instantiations of that phenomenon in the form of US and Soviet interventions during the Cold War itself; see also Rosenau 1969) the subsequent literature

was increasingly characterized by historical case studies of specific interventions, particularly those of the two superpowers (see for example James and Sheil-Small 1971; Paul 1971; the contributions to Luard 1972; Lowenthal 1972; Gurtov 1974; Blaufarb 1977; Girling 1981; Baloyra 1982; Karnow 1983; Vickery 1984; Cable 1986; Schmid 1985; Dietz 1986; Lagon 1992; Scott 1996; Yoon 1997; Westad 2006; Bennett 1999 offers a more systematic treatment of Soviet interventionism but again limits his focus to explanations of Soviet behaviour alone). These studies highlighted the foreign policy dynamics and geostrategic implications of the decision to intervene, but generally did not attempt generalization beyond the case at hand (or to interventions outside of the US-Soviet rivalry).

An early exception, and a precursor to subsequent phases in the literature, was Mitchell's (1970: 166-7) attempt to move beyond a narrow focus on the Cold War to the study of intervention more generally, recognizing its importance as a distinct phenomenon in global politics:

This paper argues that the pervasiveness of the Cold War and its accompanying spasms of violence in the Third World may have produced neglect of another equally important aspect of international conflict in the postwar era, namely the process by which external parties become involved in civil strife between contending groups within another state...[C]onflict[s]...become 'internationalised' through a process by which one external party (normally the political authorities of another state and their official forces or agents) acts in support of one of the parties to the internal conflict. This often brings about a counter-intervention or counter-involvement by another party acting in support of the other side.

Mitchell (1970: 170) articulated four sets of variables related to civil conflicts that he suggested should be studied in the context of external intervention: factors within the "disrupted" state (i.e. the state experiencing civil conflict); factors in the intervening state itself; linkages between the disrupted state and the intervening state; and finally facilitating conditions in the international system or environment. Particularly important, according to Mitchell, were those linkages between disrupted states and outside

interveners (whether political, economic, ethnic, ideological, religious etc.) that encouraged or facilitated intervention. Though he did not assess his hypotheses empirically, the factors Mitchell highlighted helped set the stage for future quantitative analyses designed to test for correlations linking civil conflicts with foreign interventions.<sup>5</sup>

Although several quantitative analyses did appear during the last two decades of the Cold War (see for example Gurr and Duvall 1973; Pearson 1974a; Pearson 1974b; Rasler 1983; Dunér 1983; Tilemma 1989), a relative dearth of appropriate data sets and the persistent historical centrality of US-Soviet rivalry meant that historical and comparative case studies emphasizing the foreign policy dynamics, geostrategic incentives and political preferences of particular superpower interveners continued to dominate the literature. With the end of the Cold War and the development and distribution of more comprehensive data on intervention, however, quantitative analysis (as elsewhere in political science) gradually rose in prominence, eventually becoming the standard approach in the analysis of external-internal linkages.

This shift in the literature was about more than just methodology, however. Also important was the proliferation of civil conflicts, and the concomitant decline of interest in traditional state-to-state conflict (the focus of much of IR during the Cold War). The result was a greater emphasis on civil conflict itself, as a subject to be studied for its own sake (see the discussion in Florea 2012). Scholars became particularly interested in, for example, the onset and/or causes of civil war (as alluded to in the quotation from Regan above), a focus embodied by the well-known “greed vs grievance” debate (whether civil conflict initiation was best explained by incentives for material gain or by identity concerns related to ideological/religious/ethnic characteristics, see Collier and Hoeffler 2002).

The study of intervention, in this context, became largely about understanding the *consequences*, or outcomes, of foreign involvement (for an excellent review of this

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<sup>5</sup> As Wolak (2014) points out, Mitchell’s emphasis on ‘affective’ linkages, particularly ethnicity, was taken up by many subsequent scholars (see for example Suhrke and Noble 1977; Rothschild 1981; Heraclides 1990; Gurr 1992; Carment and James 1995; Carment and James 1996; Kaufmann 1996; Carment, James and Rowlands 1997; Roy 1997; Saideman 1997; Khosla 1999; Saideman 2002; Cetinyan 2002; Carment, James and Taydas 2006).

literature see Regan 2010). In this vein, scholars examined the effects of international intervention on the duration, severity, intractability and/or outcome of civil war (see for example Regan 1996; Mason and Fett 1996; Elbadawi and Sambanis 2000; Regan 2002; Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom 2004; Heger and Salehyan 2007; Cunningham 2010) as well as the conflict-resolution approaches interveners might employ to end them (Lemke and Regan 2004; Cunningham 2006; Balch-Lindsay, Enterline and Joyce 2008). This literature established, in broad terms, that third-party interventions can prolong and exacerbate civil wars (for an exception see Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom 2004), particularly if interveners do not have as their primary goal immediate conflict resolution (see for example Walter 2002; Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski 2005; Cunningham 2010).

More recently, scholars have begun to (re)incorporate the attributes, interests, or strategies of the interveners themselves, an approach that places its emphasis on the *causes* of intervention (see for example Carment and James 1996; Balch-Lindsay and Enterline 2000; Carment et al. 2006; Findley and Teo 2006; Gent 2007; Mullenbach and Matthews 2008; Fordham 2008; Gent 2010; Salehyan et al. 2011; Aydin 2010; Aydin and Regan 2012). In part inspired by the case study literature that characterized the study of intervention in an earlier phase, Findley and Teo (2006) sought to move beyond what they saw as the “phenomenon-centric” bias in the scientific study of civil war intervention embodied by the ‘consequences’ literature cited above. A focus on the structure and characteristics of the conflict itself overlooked important strategic dynamics associated with potential interveners. The foreign-policy dynamics which were so central to the case study literature on US and Soviet interventions, for example, were largely missing in such analyses. As such, Findley and Teo (2006: 829, emphasis added) argued that an “actor-centric” approach was required, recognizing that “potential interveners (the actors) undertake evaluations of the changing civil war context (the phenomenon) which is constituted not only by ground conditions, but more importantly, *the sequences of decisions by other third parties as well.*” The result of their quantitative analysis supported the contention that states partake in “balancing” (supporting opposing sides of the civil conflict) or “band-wagoning” (supporting the same side) interventions as the result of the strategic sequence of intervention by other outside powers. This suggested that familiar IR concepts like balancing and band-wagoning “may pertain not only to

interstate alliance politics, but also to the geopolitics of civil war intervention” (Findley and Teo 2006: 837; see also Saideman 2002; Aydin and Regan 2012). The present dissertation builds on these insights by presenting an ‘actor-centric’ explanation of intervention predicated on the dynamics of international rivalry; it specifies the ‘trigger’ of balancing in civil conflicts, locating the motivation of interveners at the international level.

Hironaka’s (2005: 131-132) study of “never-ending” civil wars suggests that balancing, or as she calls it “dual-sided”, interventions are a major factor “extend[ing] the length and intensity of a civil war by pouring resources into opposing sides, adding more and more fuel to the fire.” The frequency of these competing interventions approaches that of interventions more generally; if, as suggested above, over two-thirds of civil wars since 1949 have experienced intervention of some kind, Hironaka notes that “almost half of all civil wars fought since 1945 saw external support given to *both sides of the conflict*.” Which is to say, balancing interventions, and the deleterious effects they bring, are endemic features of civil conflict. Hironaka (2005: 137) goes on to suggest that third-party intervention can be, to appropriate Clausewitz, interstate conflict by other means: “The proliferation of weak states and corresponding changes in the international community have led to the use of intervention as a means of pursuing interstate rivalry or aggression.” It is precisely this phenomenon that is explored in subsequent chapters.

The claim that intervention can serve as a proxy for inter-state conflict is made elsewhere. Balch-Lindsay and Enterline (2000: 620), for instance, note that interventions may be undertaken for reasons “wholly unrelated to the civil war itself”, often having more to do with the choices of other third-party actors and geopolitical considerations related to the international environment. Such considerations figure prominently, of course, in studies of superpower intervention during the Cold War. Fordham (2008), for instance, found that American intervention was more likely in the event of Soviet intervention into the same conflict (see also Lagon 1992; Yoon 1997; Scott 1996; Mullenbach and Matthews 2008; Gent 2010). In her review of the literature on American interventions, Amber Aubone (2013) identifies systemic and dyadic variables as one set of explanations (along with internal determinants, domestic politics, and individual and organizational beliefs) that have received support through empirical analysis. As she

explains: “The common assumption is that US intervention in civil conflicts during the Cold War was driven largely by the security concerns of containment and the motivation to be more powerful than its rival, the USSR” (Aubone 2013: 287). The influence of the “geographic and strategic environment”, as Balch-Lindsay and Enterline identify it, is of course not unique to the superpowers during the Cold War; the salience of particular conflicts to particular dyadic relationships in the international system will likewise generate opportunities and challenges – and strategic sequences – that make balancing interventions possible and even likely. As mentioned above, for example, Findley and Teo (2006: 834-35) found that a rivals’ intervention in support of one side of a civil war significantly increased the likelihood of a state intervening in support of the other side (i.e. a balancing intervention).

Several recent studies have taken up even more directly the actor-centric challenge of Findley and Teo (2006), emphasizing the external and strategic dynamics of civil war intervention (see for example Salehyan et al. 2011; Aydin 2010; Kathman 2011; Aydin and Regan 2012). Salehyan et al. (2011: 710) suggest that while “existing research has made significant progress in understanding external involvement in civil conflict” it has nonetheless been “hindered by an overly narrow focus on features of the civil war as a whole that make intervention more likely, rather than the attributes of the actors involved.” In an attempt to correct for this limitation, the authors’ present a dynamic theory of third party (state) intervention that highlights the decisions of, and interactions between, the relevant actors – that is, the interveners and the specific rebel groups they support. In a similar fashion, Aydin (2010) examines the strategic choices facing interveners given certain civil war contexts. She contends that “certain conflict processes and dynamics energize external support from third-party states whereas others retard such support” (Aydin 2010: 49). While Aydin’s general focus is on intervention as a means of controlling, quelling, and ultimately resolving civil conflict, the presentation of third party intervention as a dynamic process predicated on, and responsive to, the behaviour of other states (or groups of states, whether through informal alliances or international organizations) is important. Indeed, despite the ostensibly “altruistic” desire to intervene as a means to quell violence, states often pursue “conflict resolution” strategies for their own selfish national interests (as alluded to above). This presages treatment of

interventions that are undertaken for explicitly strategic purposes. The key, in both cases, is the interplay between relevant actors. As the author concludes: “Intervention decisions are mostly affected by dynamic processes rather than fixed country characteristics. Accounting for strategy has important implications to understand where states go [sic]” (Aydin 2010: 63). While her analysis remains (explicitly) wedded to state interpretations of civil war situations – and thus retains a civil conflict focus or bias in its external-internal linkage – Aydin’s work opens up crucial theoretical space for understanding and examining the interactive and dynamic elements of intervener decision-making processes. The present dissertation enters this space; the fixed characteristics of the civil conflict into which balancing intervention occurs are considered less important than the mutual perceptions and strategic interaction between the balancing interveners themselves.

In her collaborative work with Patrick Regan, Aydin maintains an emphasis on the interaction of relevant actors (interveners and domestic groups) while both expanding (to include interventions not intended as conflict resolution) and refining her framework (Aydin and Regan 2012). Civil wars are conceptualized as “multiparty environment[s] where interveners and combatants are involved in a complex web of relations” (Aydin and Regan 2012: 574). The result of these complex relations is the formation of “networks” between multiple interveners. Importantly, the authors note that

...possible interactions between intervening states can be conflictual or cooperative. States can form rival networks in a civil war and compete for diverse outcomes by engaging in offsetting interventions...States with similar preferences can also act with the objective to establish peace (ibid: 574).

The empirical results of these studies point to potentially important features of external interventions into civil conflicts: when such interventions may occur, which rebel groups are likely to be supported, and how much longer fighting may continue as a result. Yet each work privileges, in its operationalization of particular hypotheses, the internal context as prior to, and largely determinant of, outside state support for civil war combatants. That is, the motivations of outside actors are derived from the civil conflict environment, even as it pertains to the behaviour of other third-party interveners. In this

sense, the analysis cannot account for or adequately explain behaviour that may be “wholly unrelated to the civil war itself”. The pre-existing motivation for intervention may be the result of international factors independent of the particular civil war environment into which intervention occurs. As Salehyan et al. (2011: 710) note: “One cannot fully understand civil conflicts without noting the pervasiveness of external support for rebels, and one cannot fully understand international conflict without an appreciation of the incentives to undermine rivals through indirect means.” More must be done to address the latter part of this observation; to understand indirect confrontation – such as that which occurs via balancing civil war interventions – as fundamental features of international conflict. This imperative is explicitly addressed in the present study.

In their recent overview of the literature on third-party intervention into civil conflicts, Linebarger and Enterline (2016: 99) note that “while it is widely accepted that third parties are strategic actors within the context of a conflict, their strategic interactions with the broader international environment is a neglected area of study.” They go on to identify “The World Politics of Intervention” as an important area of future research. Specifically, they suggest greater efforts must be made to “connect civil wars to insights in the broader world politics literature” (ibid.: 106). This includes tying the decision to intervene to assessments of the international environment, ending the hitherto exclusive focus in the civil war literature on “the traits of the conflict or conflict-state” (ibid.: 108). By focusing on international rivalry, this dissertation is among the first full-length, detailed examinations of the “World Politics of Intervention” – it thus constitutes a necessary step in the development of the literature on civil conflict intervention.

The dissertation’s qualitative, causal mechanism-based explanation for intervention (see Chapter 4) is also an important contribution to the extant literature. Common to many quantitative analyses on civil war intervention is the selection of ‘rivalry’ as an independent variable (see for example Regan 2002; Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski 2005; Fordham 2008; Mullenbach and Matthews 2009; Owen and John 2010; Gent 2010; Wolak 2014). Several studies have shown that intervention is more likely if a rival state is experiencing civil war (that is, if the rival government is experiencing a challenge from a rebel group); intervention in these circumstances is a relatively direct and easy way to undermine one’s rival. More complicated is the question

of third-party rivalry; that is, rivalries which do not include the state experiencing civil war but which nonetheless influence decisions to intervene. As mentioned above, several analyses of superpower intervention during the Cold War found that the probability of a balancing intervention increased if one's rival had already intervened to support one or the other side of a civil conflict, irrespective of any affective, political, ideological or economic linkages between the balancing intervener and the group they ultimately support; which is to say, again, for reasons "wholly [or perhaps more accurately mostly] unrelated to the civil war itself." As early as 1972, for example, Evan Luard observed that while many superpower interventions into the Third World occurred in civil conflicts whereby the cleavage between warring factions hewed roughly to the ideological divide between the US and USSR (and in which support and intervention might therefore be expected on ideological grounds),

there was also a considerable number of other post-war civil wars, in which the ideological beliefs of either side could not be so conveniently categorized; but in which two sides [sic] received, none the less, political sympathy and support, moral if not physical, from the East and West respectively (p. 12).

Again, this points to a strategic rationale which goes beyond the particular structure or characteristics of any specific civil war; the *international* becomes the primary factor in the decision to intervene.

In lay parlance, the meaning of the term rivalry is relatively well-understood, and indeed the designation has long been used in diplomatic history and foreign-policy analysis. One understands that the US and Soviets were 'rivals' during the Cold War (indeed much of the literature summarized by Aubone, as elsewhere, references 'rivalry' as a factor influencing American intervention); no further explanation or elaboration is required to justify this claim. Over the last several decades, however, a small but growing literature has focused on the study of rivalry as more than mere historical description or intuitive designation (important early contributions include Wayman 1983; Leng 1983; Gochman and Maoz 1984; Thompson 1995; Vasquez 1996; Bennett 1996; Vasquez and Leskiw 2001; Goertz and Diehl 2001). One of the key findings of this research has been

that rivalry relationships produce outcomes which differentiate them from other dyadic relationships in the international system. As such, it is not sufficient merely to use rivalry as a case selection mechanism or independent variable, as the dynamics of rivalry may well be part of the causal process (or causal mechanism) by which certain phenomena occur (in this instance, civil war intervention). Given the statistical *correlation* between rivalry and intervention; and in the context of the shift toward international *explanations* for outside intervention described above, the present study focuses on how rivalry itself might trigger such behaviour.

### **International Rivalry**

The fundamental insight of the rivalry framework is the intuitive notion that “conflicts and wars are related to each other” (Diehl 1998: 2).<sup>6</sup> That is, particular events (wars, conflicts, disputes) are not ahistorical but part and parcel of a larger and ongoing narrative. William Thompson and David Dreyer (2011: 2) summarize the perceptual shift that occurs as a result:

The states that collide in international space tend to do so repeatedly, especially if they are unable to resolve the conflicts. To the extent that the conflicts persist, the two states in question look at, and treat, each other in ways that are different from the way in which most states interact. They regard each other’s diplomatic and military maneuvers with considerable suspicion. Past defeats and victories are lamented or celebrated. Future attacks or threats are anticipated. As a consequence, the two states surround themselves in a cognitive web of intensifying antagonism, mistrust, and threat expectation that makes future conflict all the more likely.

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<sup>6</sup> While intuitive, this assumption was not always incorporated into studies of international conflict, which traditionally treated war atomistically, separating particular conflicts from their historical context. See for example Midlarsky (1989).

Despite some disagreement between scholars about how exactly to conceptualize and measure rivalry, several key principals have emerged which inform the argument of this dissertation.<sup>7</sup>

First, quantitative research has established that conflict and war occur disproportionately between rivals. Gary Goertz and Paul Diehl (1995: 32), for example, found that “of militarized disputes, 45% occur in...rivalries, and over half of the wars [in the international system] take place between...rivals.” The work of Goertz and Diehl (2001) on the war-proneness of rivalries – and the development of their “punctuated equilibrium” model more generally – offers powerful “prima facie” evidence that the study of rivalry is pertinent for scholars of conflict and war.

Second, as William Thompson (1995: 215) has observed, “[c]onfrontations between rivals...work differently than confrontations between nonrivals.” John Vasquez (1996), for instance, suggests that repeated confrontations can reinforce hostility and cause a negative spiral in which states become increasingly antagonistic vis-à-vis one another. Essentially, Vasquez (1996: 532) highlights the fact that prior hostility alters how states perceive each other; in situations where there has been a significant level of prior conflict “there is...a tendency for all issues (and the specific stakes that compose them) to become linked into one grand issue – us versus them.” Once this “actor dimension”, or “negative-affect calculus”, has become operative, Vasquez suggests that states will abandon a conventional cost-benefit analysis of conflict (a “stake dimension”) and engage in confrontation primarily out of hostility toward their rival. As a result, states engaged in rivalry may allocate strategic value to a particular issue or stake to a degree far greater than would be the case in an isolated or non-rivalry confrontation (see also Vasquez and Leskiw 2001). While Vasquez’s psychologically-based *explanation* for this behaviour is challenged in this dissertation (see Chapter 3), the *observation* that rivalry confrontations play out differently than isolated or non-rivalry confrontations is crucial.

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<sup>7</sup> Early work employed a host of modifiers (“enduring”, “strategic”, “interstate” etc.) in discussing rivalry, each denoting slightly different approaches to the conceptualization and measurement of rivalry; much recent scholarship has dropped these terms in favour of simply “rivalry”; see for example Findley et al. (2012). For a recent appraisal of knowledge cumulation in the rivalry subfield, particularly with regards to internal rivalry dynamics, see Valeriano (2013), especially chapter 7. Though debates continue within the subfield, my intent here is to outline several general principles that capture the key concepts of rivalry and are common to most (if not all) of the different rivalry approaches.

Third (and as a consequence of the above), all disputes in rivalry are related. Issues of high salience (such as disputed territory) may be important for the birth of rivalry, but hostility from such confrontations is carried over to influence subsequent conflicts, even ostensibly minor or insignificant ones. This dynamic may be particularly difficult for observers to appreciate, as it defies the assumption of discrete cost-benefit calculations on the part of a state. The true source of hostility may not be readily apparent, and may in fact lie in the distant past and/or a different geospatial location entirely. To take an obvious example, no account of the Siachen glacier dispute between India and Pakistan would be complete without an appreciation of the historical relationship between the two countries; an analysis predicated solely on the immediate strategic value, tactical advantage, and/or economic opportunity of the glacier (of which there are/is virtually none) would be almost farcical. The impasse only makes sense if one considers the Siachen dispute as part of the broader rivalry relationship, and thus connected to other disputes within it. The result is the appearance of greater hostility, and greater volatility with respect to any particular confrontation – a border incursion more likely to escalate, brinkmanship more likely to break down.

Fourth, states use a variety of means to “manage” rivalry. Because rivalry constitutes a perpetual (or continuous) state of competition, the parameters of the rivalry relationship are constantly subject to challenge from one or both sides. In addition to conventional military confrontation, states actively seek alternative ways to challenge the status quo. Zeev Maoz and Belgin San-Akca (2012: 720) have noted that while various means (including alliances, arms races, direct military confrontation, and covert operations) have been assessed, “[o]ne of the least explored rivalry management strategies consists of indirect confrontation.” That is, the use and support of non-state armed groups (NAGs) as a means by which states may target their rivals indirectly, by proxy. The authors argue that states dissatisfied in a rivalry relationship (with regards to a variety of potential issues i.e. territory, regional position etc.) but wary of the costs associated with direct military confrontation may employ NAGs to impose costs on their rival and possibly revise the status quo. The costs of supporting NAGs that target a rival are perceived to be significantly lower (though not entirely without risk) than other, more conventional options. Hironaka (2005: 132), for her part, argues that international norms

in the global polity since 1945 have discouraged traditional military invasion as way of solving conflict and that, as a result, "...indirect intervention (military aid or advisors) [has become] an attractive low-cost option." Either way, rivals are likely to see non-conventional means of prosecuting rivalry as particularly attractive.

These arguments are echoed by Findley et al. (2012: 236-7) in their examination of rivalry-related state support for terrorism:

States now use terrorist movements to "manage" their interstate rivalries by using them to exact real costs on rivals—the targeted state must spend resources on counterterrorism and often sustains casualties—while preventing higher stakes and more costly military conflict.

They further note that the attractiveness of such tactics is enhanced by the ambiguity and "plausible deniability" they afford purveyors vis-à-vis putative targets; and as means by which to overcome asymmetries in conventional capabilities.

Typically, scholars have focused on one or several of the following aspects of international rivalry: how they begin (initiation), how they endure (dynamics), and how they end (termination). Perhaps the most developed literature in this regard is on rivalry initiation. A general consensus exists that rivalries are most likely to begin over territorial disputes (see Vasquez 1996; Valeriano 2013) or, more broadly, some kind of "political shock" in the international system (including major power war or the creation of a new state, the archetypal example being the partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan; see Goertz and Diehl 2001). Such initial conditions set the stage for more longstanding and enduring rivalry to emerge (Goertz and Diehl [2001] call these situations "proto-rivalries"). With respect to rivalry dynamics, some scholars (most notably Gary Goertz and Paul Diehl) have focused on describing the 'external' characteristics of rivalries in terms of dispute density and patterns of conflict, making for generalizable observations regarding rivalry across the international system. Others (including William Thompson, Russell Leng, Zeev Maoz and Ben Mor) have focused on the 'internal' characteristics of rivalry development and the dynamics between the actors involved – how states react to one another, and the consequences of iterated encounters

for learning and strategy. Two main models have emerged in this regard: the so-called ‘volcano’ model, in which each confrontation ramps up tension and hostility, leading to more frequent and volatile crises; and the stability model, in which confrontation locks-in to a relatively consistent rather than escalatory pattern. Finally, with respect to termination, scholars have generally agreed that, much like rivalry initiation, major political shocks greatly increase the chances of ending rivalry (Goertz and Diehl 2001). Rasler et al. (2013: 16) have offered a comprehensive theory of rivalry termination, which involves the confluence of shocks (“radical changes in the environment”), policy entrepreneurs (leaders less wedded to past confrontations) as well as encouragement from third parties. Valeriano (2013) suggests that if decision-makers can simply avoid power-political behaviour, peace is possible (this conceptualization is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3). Whatever path it might take, empirical research has shown that rivalries can and do end, sometimes absent cataclysmic war (though this remains, as Rasler et al. discouragingly point out, the most common precursor of termination).

The study of rivalry is similarly characterized by theoretical and methodological pluralism. With respect to the latter, rivalry has already shown the potential to serve as a tentative ‘cross-cultural’ communication between quantitative and qualitative research.<sup>8</sup> Comparative case study analysis and within-case process-tracing can engage the rich historical detail and specific causal mechanisms that underlie the statistical relationships and correlations observed by quantitative research. The internal dynamics of rivalries (how they begin, endure, end) can be unpacked in greater detail using methods designed to examine such processes. Meanwhile, quantitative approaches can be used to test, confirm and/or generalize the processes so identified as well as to generate new puzzles and problems that can be similarly examined qualitatively. Both approaches can do what they do best (e.g. effect estimation vs. outcome explanation) while remaining united by a shared theoretical conceptualization of, and substantive focus on, rivalry (i.e. persistent interstate conflict and/or hostility) in the international system.

Some scholars have employed a multi-method research design in an effort to leverage both approaches. For example, Valeriano (2013) uses a structured and focused case study of the US-Iraq rivalry as a means to illustrate the mechanisms at work in his

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<sup>8</sup> The term, and the analogy, is from Goertz and Mahoney (2006).

broader steps-to-rivalry theory of rivalry onset. Similarly, Findley et al. (2012) supplement their statistical analysis with a brief plausibility-probing case discussion of the India-Pakistan rivalry to illuminate potential causal mechanisms underlying the observed relationship between rivalry and terrorism. In a primarily qualitative study, Christopher Darnton (2014) uses controlled comparison and primary historical sources in Latin American rivalries to process-trace the oft-proffered proposition that a ‘common foe’ can induce rivalry rapprochement (or termination). DiCicco (2011), for his part, uses historical evidence to highlight a turning point in American perceptions of the Soviet threat during the final stages of the Cold War. His analysis underscores the ability of qualitative research to serve as “fruitful means of understanding the microfoundations of rivalry” (DiCicco 2011: 272). Michael Colaresi (2005), in a similar engagement with domestic-level rivalry dynamics, employs a “dual quantitative-qualitative approach to probe the explanatory power of dynamic two-level [domestic and international] pressures.” Colaresi’s (2005: 40) justification for this approach nicely summarizes the productive synergy between qualitative and quantitative methods in the study of rivalry:

By analyzing the historical record of specific pairs of states, I can track distinct policies, events, and motivations. Complementarily, I also create approximate measures...of dynamic two-level pressures in a much wider array of cases to cross-validate whether the case study findings are peculiar to just a few rivalries. Therefore, the following case studies and statistical analysis serve to reinforce each other. The case studies...allow the reader to directly compare the dynamic two-level pressure prognostications with historical events.

As these studies indicate, the range of methodological tools available to rivalry researchers is wide. Additional examples include the use of content-analysis by Akcinaroglu et al. (2011) or Thies’ (2008) innovative use of simultaneous equation estimation for modelling the social construction in Latin America of rivalry roles and a regional ‘Lockean culture of anarchy’ (following Wendt 1999). While the present study employs qualitative case studies, it nonetheless connects to quantitative research on the factors associated with civil conflict intervention.

Like Thies, Valeriano (2013) couches his work in an explicitly constructivist framework highlighting the theoretical eclecticism of the study of rivalry. Given its focus on conflict, hostility, and war, and even more specifically on territorial and/or economic conflict/competition, or ‘spatial’ and ‘positional’ motivations, much early rivalry research placed an emphasis on material factors. Yet while tangible considerations (particularly territory) are undoubtedly essential to all facets (onset, duration, termination) of rivalry, the manner in which such factors relate to the rivalry behaviour of particular actors (states or state leaders, domestic actors, publics etc.) is inevitably perceptual.<sup>9</sup> As Valeriano (2012: 30-31) notes:

Rivalry is a situation that begins through stimuli and events that are specific to the process. Rivalries do not develop in a vacuum; the situation requires that attention be paid to the nuances particular to the history and culture of the states engaged in the situation. Past studies of rivalry routinely fail to engage history and culture in explaining why states commit to long-term animosity...History, culture, and tradition do matter for rivalry onset.

This commitment to non-material considerations is present if implicit in earlier rivalry work – recall Vasquez’s ‘actor dimension’ or Maoz and Mor’s (2002) ‘psychological manifestations of enmity’ as constitutive components of rivalry. Consider also Thompson’s third criterion, which specifies that states must regard each other as ‘enemies’ (a classification that is clearly *not* reducible to material factors, as evidenced by the inclusion of a separate criterion that mandates they be ‘competitors’ – roughly comparable in power, resources, position – as well). Indeed, one of the more persuasive elements of the rivalry approach as a whole is its ability to take account of clear *deviations* from conventional rational behaviour. If a conventional rational actor

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<sup>9</sup> Of course, the recognition that both material and ideational factors are important does not answer the question as to which, in the last instance, is relatively more so or indeed is decisive – this continues to be a theoretical consideration that will separate scholars in to more or less opposing camps. Nonetheless, to the extent that the very existence of rivalry occurs at the interstice of the material and the ideational (i.e. it is an identifiable attitude which exists in relation to a set of tangible circumstances) the research area is well-suited as terrain both for continuing such debates but also, perhaps more productively, exploring potential complimentaries for the purpose of explaining empirical phenomenon. This possibility is reflected in the research design of the present study.

maximizes gain, “states engaged in rivalry are much more willing to go out of their way to deny a benefit to an enemy even if that means they harm their own security or personal well-being” (Valeriano 2013: 13). The ‘gain’, in this scenario, may be an intangible, psychological one, not measurable by conventional metrics and therefore inaccessible to typical (cross-sectional, discrete) rationalist accounts.

This does not, of course, suggest that rivals are “irrational”; instead, it indicates the extent to which rivalry may alter preference structures such that inflicting harm on an enemy is desired above material gain or security. If a long-standing criticism of so-called “thin” rationalism is its inability to account for the preferences of actors (see Fearon and Wendt 2003), rivalry offers a potential means by which to do so. Repeated and compounded hostility, along with the prospect of future conflict, may mean that preferences in rivalry are appreciably different than what they are outside of it. Below, I suggest that such preferences can be subsumed within a rationalist framework. Others have argued that rivalry dynamics are best understood from non-rationalist, alternative perspectives. Perhaps the most extreme constructivist position in this regard was suggested by Ted Hopf (2010) in his discussion of the “logic of habit” (that is, reflexive and unthinking behaviour):

Evidence that the logic of habit underpins an enduring rivalry begins with an enduring pattern of hostile interactions not accompanied by a reflective calculation of the costs and benefits of the relationship or reference to some norm specifying what actions are appropriate in such a relationship. Instead, we should see automatic responses to the action of a rival.

While an intriguing hypothesis, I remain skeptical that behaviour with respect to matters as vital and important as war, defence, and security unfold as the result of an un-thinking, un-reflective process. Quite the opposite – I elaborate a rationalist theory of rivalry in the subsequent chapter.

This summary of the rivalry literature can either inspire or disappoint. On one hand, much has been learned regarding the characteristics of rivalry (increased and persistent hostility, conflict, war) as well many important descriptive statistics and

conditions regarding what constitutes rivalry as a concept (for a summary see Dreyer 2014). Similarly, the methodological and theoretical pluralism in the study of rivalry suggests a healthy and vibrant sub-field in which multiple perspectives and approaches are united by an emphasis on rivalry as a distinct phenomenon in world politics. Given its centrality to international conflict, the proliferation of rivalry approaches (from quantitative to qualitative; constructivist to materialist) could be considered a net positive in its own right.

At the same time, however, this broadening of approaches also points to a lack of cumulative knowledge about rivalry as a generic phenomenon. There appears to be much heat, but little light, as to the core theory or logic driving rivalry or, more precisely, *the state behaviour that constitutes what we call rivalry* in the international system. In the end, this must be the central task or purpose of the rivalry approach; not merely to describe rivalry characteristics or observe, test, and even theorize about the knock-on effects of the existence of rivalry itself (as is done when rivalry is used for case selection or as an exogenously defined independent variable with respect to, for example, civil war intervention) but to understand the ‘engine’ of rivalry in terms of the logic or process of state behaviour within it. Put succinctly, why do rivals behave as they do and, relatedly, how can rivalry be explicitly linked to observed behaviour?

As it stands, there is little clarity as to what this logic might be. From a rationalist point of view, some have suggested that the process of ‘learning’ from repeated conflicts engenders increasingly hostile *realpolitik* behaviour (Leng 1983, 2000; Maoz and Mor 2002). Conversely, from a constructivist perspective, Valeriano (2013) argues that a *realpolitik* worldview precedes such learning and in fact causes (or at the very least is reinforced by) it. Many treatments of rivalry dynamics are imprecise, listing several characteristics without identifying which are most fundamental, crucial or determinative for rivalry behaviour. Recall for example the broad characteristics outlined by Thompson and Dreyer above, in which “antagonism, mistrust, and threat expectation” combine to constitute rivalry; from a theoretical perspective, each characteristic suggests a different underlying process, whether emotional (antagonism), psychological (mistrust), or strategic (threat expectation).

Nor is this problem averted when scholars attempt to be more precise in their theoretical exposition of the concept. Colaresi et al. (2008: 25) suggest (building off the earlier conceptualization offered by Thompson [1995, 2001]) that for states to be considered strategic rivals they must regard each other as 1) competitors, 2) the source of actual or latent threats that pose some possibility of becoming militarized and 3) enemies. The second of these criteria is essentially the baseline of what is physically possible and hence of little theoretical import. The first relates generally to material capabilities and the power position of the state. The last refers to perceptions of hostile intentions. In principle, Thompson argues that the ‘competitors’ criterion mandates that states be roughly symmetrical in power in order to be rivals (this position is shared by Vasquez 1996). In practice, however, he and his co-authors concede that there are many exceptions to this rule (that is, many asymmetrical rivalries exist – indeed, Klein et al. [2006] have noted that nearly 80 percent of rivalries in the international system are in fact asymmetrical), leading to the following caveat:

Asymmetrical dyads can become rivalries if the weaker side acts as if it is more powerful than its capabilities would otherwise suggest and the more powerful side reacts as if the weaker side is a *threatening* competitor (Rasler et al. 2013: 5, emphasis added).

Thus, the first criterion (competitors) is reduced to and conflated with the last (threatening enemies). A more parsimonious definition of rivalry would thus drop power symmetry (and the associated ‘competitors’ criterion) in favour of mutual threat; it would remain true that many asymmetrical dyads would not constitute rivalry as the more powerful state dismisses the ability of the smaller state to challenge it (such as for example US-Haiti or India-Nepal), but this can be explained by threat perception without recourse to the competitor criterion. That confrontation must at base be physically possible is conceded, though in the context of superpower rivalry power projection capabilities render this distinction exceedingly broad.

I argue instead that the presence of rivalry as a continuous conflictual relationship alters the cost-benefit calculations of a particular actor to include dynamic and iterated

strategic considerations (as in the ‘shadow of the future’, see Axelrod 1984). If the crises and confrontations in rivalry are connected to past and future behaviour within the dyad, it makes sense for states to consider history and past behaviour as well as the possibility (or rather high *probability*, from their own point of view) of future hostility as they decide how to behave vis-à-vis their rival in any particular situation. In this sense, the psychological antagonism and hostility (while perhaps real and present for particular individuals or broader publics) that many note with respect to rivalry is illusory, incidental and/or epiphenomenal as it pertains to state-to-state interaction. The ‘overreaction’ to peripheral disputes and concerns is less about ingrained hatred or irrational motives resulting from ‘negative-affect’ than reasonable responses given the information at hand (past confrontations) and the expectation of conflict in the future. If the security dilemma in international relations is characterized by uncertainty, reasonably certain expectations as to conflict and/or malign intentions (as is the case between rivals) can lead to hostile interactions between broadly rational actors. This is not to say that rivalry constitutes a determinative process in which conflict and war are inevitable; as extant research has shown, rivalries do experience variation in hostility levels and, perhaps even more importantly, can end. But it does suggest, in a manner consistent with the empirical observations of existing rivalry research, that rivalries are persistent and difficult to resolve.

In the existing rivalry literature, the work of Maoz and Mor (2002) comes closest to the approach outlined here. The authors present a game theoretic analysis of rivalry development, injecting not only multiple, iterated rounds (i.e. repeated game-play), but also preference change and learning (which allows for ‘new’ games in successive rounds); the result is a “supergame” model of rivalry dynamics which maps how rivalries emerge and change over time. As they explain:

We chose to focus on the *strategic and evolutionary* aspects of enduring rivalries. By strategic aspects, we refer to several facets of enduring rivalries that we view as crucial for dealing with our research questions. First, we feel that it is important to study rivalries in terms of the preferences and decisions of the actors involved, not only in terms of structural issues that are beyond decision makers’ immediate

control. Second, we assume that the evolution of interstate relations, in general, and of enduring rivalries, in particular, is characterized by fundamental interdependence. Actors are interlocked in a process wherein each state's best decisions are based on its expectations regarding the kind of actor it is interacting with and its intended actions. Therefore, each state must choose how to act not only on the basis of its own goals and interests, but also on the basis of whatever goals and interests it attributes to its rival (Maoz and Mor 2002: 257).

The engine of rivalry development in the supergame model are state *preferences* vis-à-vis the status quo and state *capabilities* to alter it; also important, given the emphasis on strategic interdependence, are state perceptions with respect to their *opponent's* preferences and capabilities regarding the status quo. The authors develop formal predictions of rivalry development based on the specifications of their model, and track – via both qualitative and quantitative analysis – the fit of their model with empirical evidence. They note general support for their predictions, while nonetheless recognizing that factors which were exogenous to the model (including domestic politics, war outcomes, system shocks etc.) exerted significant influence on rivalry dynamics.

One of the most important conclusions to come from this analysis is the recognition that rivals take the long view with respect to their decision-making. Maoz and Mor (2002) conclude that a so-called nonmyopic rationality is a better predictor of rivalry behaviour than the more conventional myopic rationality (or Nash equilibrium) which maximizes utility in the immediate term. In nonmyopic logic, “actors decide on the basis of a more complex and long-term layout of the consequences of their choice...The comparison of a final outcome to the initial state serves as the basis for strategy selection” (p. 35). The finding that nonmyopic rationality characterizes supergame strategy in their model supports the theory of rivalry outlined in this dissertation insofar as it similarly underscores the import and influence of concern regarding the *future* in rivalry decision-making.

Unlike the Maoz and Mor (2002) study, however, the focus in this dissertation is not on direct military crises or confrontations but rather on the interstices *between* (or

prior to) such confrontations. Indeed, Maoz and Mor (2002: 287) recognize this as a lacuna in their theory, suggesting with respect to ‘future research’ that:

[t]here appears to be a missing link between dissatisfaction with the status quo and actions – *other than direct dispute initiation* – that actors can pursue to change the status quo, or to prepare the ground for such a change through military means. This missing link is particularly pertinent in the case of dissatisfied actors who lack the capability to change the status quo through militarized disputes. This is a potentially productive research avenue (emphasis added).

Goertz and Diehl (2001: 69) make a similar point when they admit that “...there [has been] little concern with the relationship between the crisis or dispute participants after the war until the next crisis or dispute occurs.” While rivalry may in large measure be defined by (and in some instances reduced to) military crises, the essence of rivalry remains the relationship that persists over time, subsuming both particular crises as well as the interludes that exist between them. In this sense, too much existing rivalry research has focused on only the most obvious and visible manifestations of rivalry behaviour, ignoring the balance of time in which rivalry exists but remains below boil. Despite their disputatiousness, after all, rivals spend more time in non-crisis as opposed to crisis situations. What are the dynamics of rivalry in these time periods, and what overt behaviour might be linked to rivalry pressures in this interregnum? The practice of civil conflict intervention examined in this dissertation addresses precisely these questions.

Understood in this way, rivalry becomes a situation, or setting, within which actors (states) operate and the parameters of which help shape the strategic decisions and choices they make. Goertz and Diehl (2001: 67) anticipated this conceptualization when they wrote that rivalry constitutes

a general framework for examining many issues and hypotheses in the international conflict literature. It is not just another hypothesis to be added to an already long list, but rather is more like Most and Starr’s (1989) ‘opportunity and willingness’ framework for the study of international conflict.

In this sense, understanding a particular phenomenon (in this case civil war intervention) requires an appreciation of the dynamics of the rivalry situation. As Goertz and Diehl go on to explain: “At the heart of...the rivalry approach lies the claim that one cannot understand disputes, crises, and war without considering the rivalry context” (Goertz and Diehl 2001: 69). Yet this context is about more than mere case selection (as has occurred in the past with respect to rivalry and deterrence [Lieberman 1995], or rivalry and arms races [Rider et. al 2011]):

Many models of international conflict...assume a context of hostility between two or more states. That assumption is traditionally translated into case selection rules...The rivalry approach suggests that characteristics of the conflictual relationship – the background context – should be directly incorporated into the theory. The rivalry approach moves rivalries out of the research design background and places them in the theoretical explanation (Goertz and Diehl 2001: 70).

This is precisely the type of explanation attempted here. The parameters of rivalry, as a continuous negotiation between rational actors, influences decision-making with respect to civil war intervention. More specifically, past behaviour in the negotiation reinforces perceptions of hostility. While such reputations need not be deterministic in the sense that a rival will automatically assume the worst about its rival in any particular situation (specific reputation), it does mean that rivals will be more cautious and more likely to perceive a long-term threat (general reputation). The literature on reputations is engaged in greater detail below.

This review of the extant work on rivalry informs the dissertation in several important ways. First, it establishes rivalry as a concept warranting study, and demonstrates the progress that has been made regarding how and why rivalry is relevant for international relations. At the same time, it outlines the gaps in present knowledge with respect to, in particular, the dynamics that exist between rivals that both perpetuate rivalry itself and, relatedly, motivate state behaviour within it. Finally, the review points

to the need for examinations of state behaviour *other* than direct conflict and war; the rivalry literature has been too preoccupied with only these visible manifestations of hostility, while the application of rivalry to other aspects of international relations has been limited to use as a case selection criterion or exogenously defined independent variable. My approach, by contrast, “moves rivalries out of the...background” and into the “theoretical explanation” itself.

### **The Assessment of Intentions in IR**

An emphasis on the consequences of perceptions within rivalry brings the argument made in this dissertation into contact with long standing debates in the field of IR about how states assess the intentions of other states (typically with an emphasis on the intentions of potential ‘adversaries’ or opponents in the context of international crises). This issue has been approached from a variety of theoretical perspectives which are briefly summarized here.

At one extreme, ardent structural realists believe that states will simply assume that other states are aggressive and act accordingly; the implications of anarchy and the concomitant necessity of self-help combine with the ‘other minds problem’ (the fundamental impossibility of knowing with complete certainty what another actor believes or intends, see Jackson 2011) to produce worst-case assumptions (Waltz 1979; Mearsheimer 1995, 2001; Rosato 2015). So-called defensive realists moderate this position somewhat, arguing that states which are not aggressive can effectively communicate or ‘signal’ their benign intentions and that, crucially, the targets of such signals can recognize and appreciate them (Schweller 1996; Taliaferro 2001; Glaser 2010). In other words, two states which are fundamentally ‘security-seeking’ (i.e. not aggressive or expansionist) can overcome the propensity for mistrust inherent in the structural conditions of international anarchy. This argument is reflected in formal rationalist approaches which emphasize the role of ‘costly signalling’ – actions which credibly reveal a state’s intentions because no rational state with different intentions would undertake them (examples include investing heavily in defensive weapons to signal benign intent or issuing public threats and/or mobilizing military forces to signal

resolve in a crisis; on costly signalling see Fearon 1997; Jervis 2002; Kydd 2005; Slantchev 2005; Fuhrmann and Sechser 2014). The focus of this work is on the strategic ‘bargaining’ that occurs between states, typically in the context of direct security crises – particularly given rational incentives to misrepresent resolve and/or strength (so as to improve one’s position in the bargaining situation) the assessment of intentions remains very difficult, albeit not impossible.

Because states seek *security* and not power per se, the primary cause of conflict is the ‘security dilemma’ (defined by Robert Jervis as a situation whereby “the means by which a states seeks to increase its security” – for example by building or developing arms, or by entering into security alliances with other states – “decreases the security of others”; the original formulation of the concept is typically attributed to either John Herz [1950] or Herbert Butterfield [1951]; for a critical treatment see Booth and Wheeler 2007). By virtue of the security dilemma, even defensive or status-quo states can find themselves engaged in conflict. The lack of perfect information (precluded because of the other minds problem as well as the incentives for aggressive states to hide or lie about their intentions) means the security dilemma can never be entirely resolved, even if it can be mitigated through a variety of means (including by signalling as noted above and in situations where defensive technology predominates in the offense-defence military balance). Central to the security dilemma are perceptions as to the future intentions of adversaries. If this question could be solved with absolute certainty, defensive (status-quo) states would be able to avoid conflict.

Despite the difficulty, therefore, states spend considerable resources attempting to ascertain other states’ intentions. Edelstein (2002), for example, has argued that states employ a “portfolio” of indicators to assess intentions, which include both domestic signals (regime type, personality of leaders, social identity etc.) as well as behavioural signals (including past behaviour, as well as alliance commitments, arms procurements etc.). Yarhi-Milo (2014), for her part, suggests that leaders are subject to multiple cognitive and psychological biases which lead them to privilege certain types of information (particularly ‘vivid’ experiences in which they were directly involved) when assessing an adversary. Her work builds on the tradition of applying psychological principles to IR made famous by Robert Jervis (1976), which emphasizes the role of

“misperceptions” in the assessment of intentions. This approach examines the various cognitive and psychological biases which prevent the straightforward and uniform assimilation of information. Strong prior beliefs, motivated reasoning, wishful thinking, defensive avoidance, loss-aversion, and other biases undermine the ability of state leaders to accurately assess their opponents (see Jervis 1976; Lebow and Stein 1989; Levy 1997; McDermott 2004; Stein 2013; Shore 2014).

While the various approaches propose different explanations and highlight different underlying dynamics, the above summary points to the common recognition that assessing intentions in IR is *difficult*. Structural and offensive realists go so far as to argue that it is impossible or in any case irrelevant; given international anarchy, worst-case assumptions prevail. Defensive realists suggest that the worst-case baseline can be overcome, with the bargaining literature forwarding costly signalling as a mechanism by which intentions can be credibly communicated. Psychological approaches question the empirical veracity of such mechanisms by noting the various individual-level biases which preclude accurate perception. The argument I put forward in this dissertation overcomes these difficulties by focusing on the perception of intentions in a *specific* type of international relationship: rivalry. The structural realist position is too broad, and cannot explain the empirical observation that many states do cooperate and trust one another (i.e. do not make worst-case assumptions). Defensive realists and formal rationalist approaches overemphasize direct interactions and immediate behaviour; the assessment of intentions also occurs outside of specific crises or bargaining situations (i.e. beyond ‘signalling’) and when states aren’t explicitly or expressly attempting to communicate their intentions to an opponent. Psychological approaches are too pessimistic; the emphasis on individual-level biases and the associated difficulties of accurate perception risks obfuscating the patterned, systematic assessments that can and do occur at the international level.

The purpose of this dissertation is not to adjudicate between these various theoretical approaches, nor to resolve the debate on the assessment of intentions in IR; rather, it remains focused on proposing an explanation to a specific empirical puzzle (civil conflict intervention). Nonetheless, this explanation (put forward in the next chapter) contributes to this broader debate by foregrounding the role that perceptions of

intentions play in the context of international rivalry. Within this bounded domain, I argue, systematic and rational assessments of available information lead to the assessment that one's rival is likely to harbour hostile intentions in the future (I do not argue, it should be made clear, that such perceptions are *correct* or *accurate*; indeed, they are often mistaken). In a sense, rivalry 'solves' the security dilemma, removing uncertainty as to the nature of the opposing state. It is here that the relevance of past behaviour and reputations comes into play; given that rivalry is – by definition – a relationship in which states have experienced past confrontations and crises (and typically, though not always, direct war), this history is particularly influential in terms of how a state overcomes the condition of incomplete information that obtains under international anarchy. I now turn to a discussion of the literature on reputations in IR, highlighting in particular the unrealized potential of its contribution to an understanding of rivalry dynamics.

### **Reputations in IR**

The relevance of reputation (past behaviour) in international relations remains controversial. Beginning with Thomas Schelling (1960; 1966), there was a strong consensus, particularly within the emerging field of deterrence theory, that past actions help establish (along with power, interests, and communication) the credibility of coercive threats (see for example Schelling 1960, 1966; Snyder 1961; George and Smoke 1974; Snyder and Diesing 1978; Huth 1988, 1997; Harvey 1998; Harvey and Mitton 2017). States which display a history of backing down or breaking commitments are said to be signalling a lack of resolve which subsequently undermines their ability to effectively deter or compel an opponent through threats and/or promises. By contrast, standing firm and following through signals resolve, meaning future threats are more credible and deterrence/compellence more likely to succeed.

More recently, several scholars have challenged this position (Hopf 1994; Mercer 1997; Press 2005), arguing instead that reputations are irrelevant and that states consider only the balance of power (capabilities) and interest when assessing credibility. This latter position generally overstates its claim – while reputations are certainly not

*definitive* of coercive credibility, there is strong evidence (see Tomz 2007; Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo 2015; Harvey and Mitton 2017) that past behaviour is relevant in certain circumstances and under specified conditions. Reality is far more complex than the either/or (either reputations always matter or they never do) proposition that has defined much of this debate. For instance, reputation should not be treated as an undifferentiated concept; it can be usefully bifurcated into *general* and *specific* forms; the latter is crisis-based and situational, while the former is dispositional and behavioural, and therefore more broadly applicable between crises and over time.

General reputations relate to habitual features or characteristics of a state's foreign policy that are perceived by other states as patterned and consistent, and repeatedly inform expectations about behavior. General reputations rarely change and are typically based on widely accepted (though occasionally mistaken) impressions of the opportunities and constraints that adversaries believe influence another state's foreign policy preferences and priorities. Perhaps the clearest illustration of a general reputation is the Western (liberal democratic) aversion to military and civilian casualties, which has regularly influenced the way adversaries perceive American and other Western nations' (including through NATO) resolve. These commonly shared perceptions are typically not decisive vis-à-vis an adversary's overall impression of intentions, but there is evidence to suggest that these perceptions do play a role when adversaries evaluate important pieces of an opponent's credibility (Harvey and Mitton 2017). Evidence supporting the relationship between rising casualty numbers and an inevitable decline in domestic political and popular support for interventions has received detailed treatment in the literature (see for example Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2009).

Specific reputations evolve over a much shorter period of time and typically emerge as a direct consequence of interactions and exchanges during different stages of a protracted military-security crisis. Unlike general reputations, specific reputations for resolve can change relatively quickly. In the context of a deterrence encounter, for example, resolve is best demonstrated through the use of military force in retaliation for the failure of an adversary to comply with the demands stipulated in a deterrent threat. However, if retaliation is not forthcoming, and in the absence of perfect information about intentions, adversaries often probe for concrete evidence regarding interests and

credibility, usually by mounting challenges at various points in the crisis. If officials fail to respond to these probes, for whatever reason, adversaries are likely to interpret this as a partial clarification of (un)willingness (resolve, or lack thereof) to deploy military capabilities to enforce the deterrent threat.

Surprisingly, there has been little explicit cross-fertilization between the rivalry and reputations literatures, despite an obvious affinity in terms of an emphasis on temporal considerations. Occasionally rivalry has been invoked as a case-selection device in deterrence studies (e.g. Lieberman 1995; Stein 1996), but the actual theoretical implications of rivalry as a distinct concept have not typically been considered. One recent exception is the work of Van Jackson (2016), which explores the influence of reputation in the context of the US-North Korea rivalry. Tracking the development of the rivalry across several crises and confrontations, Van Jackson concludes that reputational considerations were important for understanding both the initiation of crises, the response to such challenges, and the development of expectations within the rivalry over time. As he concludes:

viewed through the reputational lens, serial crises initiated by the weaker power can be seen as a function of persistent rivalry conditions combined with one party to the rivalry (in this case the stronger party) cultivating a reputation for backing down when challenged (Van Jackson 2016: 362).

Exploring reputations in the context of rivalry is helpful, Van Jackson (2016) argues, because it specifies the conditions whereby reputations are most relevant. This helps overcome the aforementioned debate on reputations by articulating more precisely when and how they matter (as opposed to the unhelpful and overly broad question of whether they matter at all, see also Mitton 2015). In the iterated and ongoing rivalry between the US and North Korea, expectations about behaviour mattered both within and between crises.

Of course, Van Jackson (2016) only explores a single rivalry, so it is important to qualify the applicability or generalizability of his findings. Yet this exploration of ‘rivalry reputation’ suggests an important advance in the reputations debate (and one this dissertation similarly attempts to make). The concept of a ‘rivalry reputation’ falls

somewhere between a general and specific reputation; it is less broad than the former, applying to the interaction between particular actors and not necessarily transferring to interactions with states outside of the rivalry dyad; yet it also applies across time and between crises, meaning it has a broader scope than within-crisis, specific reputation.

Reputation within rivalry therefore exerts a powerful hold on the perceptions that exist between states. As Paul Diehl (1998: 4-5) observed, “there is enough past competition” in rivalry “that such interactions affect contemporary and future behaviour.” And elsewhere: “past actions are crucial in explaining the current and future course of a rivalry” (ibid: 16). Logically, the link between past actions and current (as well as future) behaviour are the perceptions such actions and experiences generate, which are then translated into the policies and actions states pursue. As mentioned, experiences in rivalry are *conflictual*; this means that the reputations which are generated are *negative* (which is to say, suggest hostility). As rivals look to the future, and assess the intentions of the other side moving forward, they are likely to assume, and plan for, renewed aggression – not on the basis of innate hostility, or hatred, or psychological, cognitive, or emotional bias, but rather given the *weight* of their historical experiences and the associated reputation for behaviour they assign to their potential opponent.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has surveyed a range of literatures in order to situate and frame the argument that is developed moving forward. The literature on civil conflict intervention has, in recent years, increasingly focused on the international dimensions of civil wars. Further, it has called for more work on the strategic dynamics between interveners (the ‘actor-centric’ approach) as compared to a traditional focus on characteristics of the civil war itself (‘phenomenon-centric’) with respect to potential triggers of intervention. Similarly, the extant statistical literature identifies ‘rivalry’ as strongly correlated with intervention. This dissertation directly contributes to these considerations by foregrounding a causal explanation (i.e. beyond a simple correlation) that foregrounds international dynamics and the international relationship between interveners.

Unpacking how the bracketed, independent variable ‘rivalry’ (the way it is treated in the correlative studies) might cause intervention requires an in-depth understanding of the concept of rivalry itself. I therefore addressed the developing literature on rivalries, demonstrating the progress that has been made over the decades in terms of establishing its relevance in the study of IR. I also note, however, some potential theoretical confusion as to the internal dynamics of rivalry behaviour: why do rivals act as they do? By answering this question – as I attempt to do in subsequent chapters – this dissertation takes rivalry out of the “research background” (as has hitherto been in the case in many applications of the concept to empirical phenomena) and instead embeds it explicitly and clearly at the core of a theoretical explanation of intervention.

The nature of this explanation involves the perceptions that exist between states in a rivalry relationship. The dissertation therefore abuts the larger debate in IR about how states assess and perceive the intentions of other states. I note the main theoretical approaches to analyzing this question, and suggest that none are particularly suited to dealing with the precise dynamics that exist within rivalry. In order to do so, I suggest that past behaviour and experience are particularly formative and relevant in the context of relationships which, by definition, have experienced prior conflict and crisis. I therefore introduce the concept of reputations, summarizing the state of the research about how and why reputations are relevant in international relations, and how this work might be usefully integrated with the concept of rivalry. In the next chapter, these insights are used to develop a specific explanation of rivalry intervention into civil conflicts.

## CHAPTER 3: THE THEORY

*For mankind do not await the attack of a superior power, they anticipate it.*

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book XI, Paragraph 18

In this chapter, I present my theory of rivalry intervention: the common pressures that dominate international relations and politics, particularly the absence of an unbiased governing authority to effectively manage relations between states, combine with the informational inferences derived from international reputations in ways that encourage defensive balancing behavior vis-à-vis civil wars. States are expected to display and communicate a primarily defensive, future-oriented logic with respect to the decision to intervene, emphasizing the history of confrontation with their rival, and the potential strategic danger of allowing their rival's intervention to go unchecked.

I begin the chapter, however, with a brief discussion of behaviouralism in IR. This foray is pertinent insofar as the concept of rivalry is contested between the competing logics or images of individual- and international-level explanations. As discussed in the previous chapter, the rivalry literature has failed to articulate a compelling theoretical account of what drives rivalry behaviour, mixing emotion and psychology with strategic considerations. This tension is mirrored in the broader IR literature where an emphasis on individual psychology (and the attendant experimental method) has become more prominent in recent years. Not intended as a full-scale critique, I believe a familiarity with this development and some of its limitations will help clarify the broader theoretical contribution of this dissertation. Following this general discussion of behaviouralism, I sketch a behavioural (or psychological) theory of rivalry, not as a comprehensive alternative to be tested but rather as a point of comparison and foil for the theory of rivalry subsequently developed.

### **The Limits of Behaviouralism**

A recent (2017) special issue of the prominent international relations (IR) journal *International Organization* (IO) serves as overview, statement, and cutting-edge

exposition of what guest editors Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake and Victor have termed the “Behavioral Revolution in IR” (which is to say, more accurately, the *application* of the already-existing behavioural revolution [a focus on individual-level preferences, interests and behaviour developed in economics and psychology, primarily] to a new domain, in this case the study of international politics).<sup>10</sup> In their introduction to the issue, by way of an example as to the insights available through the application of a behavioural lens to IR, the editors cite former Vice President Dick Cheney’s well-known statement outlining a key part of the logic behind the Bush administration’s infamous Global War on Terror (GWOT): “if there’s a 1 percent chance that Pakistani scientists are helping al-Qaeda build or develop a nuclear weapon,” Cheney explained, “we have to treat it as a certainty.” The editors subsequently argue:

Such a response is equivalent to overweighting the probability of a nuclear terrorist attack and thus overinvesting in responses to this threat while, in a world of scarce resources, necessarily underinvesting in other more probable challenges (p. 11).

Cheney’s position is in this way cast as a deviation from rationality, the product of motivational and cognitive biases related to the overestimation of unlikely threats and probability neglect with respect to more likely outcomes. Subsequent events, or more precisely *non-events* (insofar as no al-Qaeda directed attack, nuclear or otherwise, has occurred on American soil in the seventeen years since 9/11), suggest that Cheney (and the Bush administration more broadly) were wrong to think this way, and wrong to invest so many resources (including American lives) in pursuing many if not most GWOT policies and priorities (for a discussion of related issues with respect to investing in homeland security see Harvey 2008). Not incidentally, the intelligence and competence of Cheney and others (never held in particularly high-esteem) are dealt yet another blow; this time, predictably pessimistic appraisals are confirmed by the application of psychological and cognitive principles to the administration’s decision-making.

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<sup>10</sup> For a similar discussion see the review by Kertzer and Tingley (2018).

An alternative interpretation is simply this: as the leaders and decision-makers of a nation recently attacked, the Bush administration was compelled to adopt worst-case scenario planning; the uncertainty of the international environment, and the depth of the fear related to a potential nuclear attack<sup>11</sup> mandated that significant resources be expended to ensure the security of the United States. After all, al-Qaeda had *just* attacked New York and Washington; it was reasonable to believe<sup>12</sup> they would attack again, perhaps with much deadlier means. Importantly, Cheney states that a 1 percent chance should be “treated” as a certainty; he is *aware*, in other words, that such an outcome is unlikely, but that the imperatives and pressures facing he and other administration officials mean that they “have to” respond in this way. Given this recognition, is it really accurate to suggest that Cheney et al. were suffering from severe cognitive biases and misperceptions? Does the tendency for overestimation and probability neglect on the part of the average individual cut us closer to understanding the foreign policy of a superpower threatened, even remotely, by nuclear attack?

To be fair, the editors of the IO special issue use the Cheney example in passing; it hardly constitutes a core piece of their overview or argument related to the strengths and benefits of the behavioural approach. It’s use here is in a similar vein, however. The alternative interpretations of the Cheney remark demarcate, in my view, the essential logic of the competing interpretations of rivalry outlined in this dissertation. More broadly, they speak to alternative approaches to the study of IR. On one hand, an emphasis on emotional, psychological, and cognitive deviations from rationality (or reality); rivalry as a product of these deviations in particular circumstances; international politics as the aggregation of individual-level behaviour; psychology, cognition, and the study of individual behaviour (particularly via experiments) as the building blocks of IR. To simplify for the purposes of exposition: Cheney overestimates threats as the result of

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<sup>11</sup> Such an attack was essentially a threat to state survival. Even if only one major city were to be wiped out and the rest of the country left intact, the ramifications would be so profound as to fundamentally reshape American political reality; almost without question such an event would generate an epochal distinction between before/after (9/11 itself, incomparably less damaging than a nuclear strike, created such a distinction, such that it has now become commonplace to refer to the pre- and post-9/11 eras) meaning the threat to the American state *as it was presently constituted* was existential.

<sup>12</sup> Even beyond whether this assessment was ‘reasonable’ for any particular individual, the key is that it was *necessary* for those individuals bearing the responsibility of protecting all other individuals from such an attack.

cognitive biases → American foreign policy (GWOT) explained. On the other hand, an emphasis on structure, anarchy, power and uncertainty and their effects on states as broadly rational group-actors; rivalry as a product of these conditions in the context of past behaviour and expectations about the future; international politics as more than the aggregated behaviour of individuals; theory, history and the careful testing of causal logic as the building blocks of IR. Again, to simplify: Cheney (and other Bush administration officials) forced to adopt worst-case planning following attack on homeland because of the impossibility of knowing when or where next attack might occur and because of the severity of the potential threat → American foreign policy (GWOT) explained.

Importantly, these alternative visions should not be considered mutually exclusive. Most obviously, an emphasis on structure, anarchy and states as group-actors does not deny that individuals are, ultimately, the ‘stuff’ of social science. Any explanation regarding the causes of behaviour in, or outcomes related to, international politics must at base recognize that it is human beings themselves who create and inhabit the institutions and structures that help define and shape the social world. Further, the pressures exerted by structural conditions are inevitably filtered through the perceptions and cognitive processes of individual actors. Yet the structural approach suggests that reducing explanations of international politics to individual behaviour (and perceptions, biases, emotions etc.) misses important (indeed crucial and determinative) facets of that phenomenon. The various biases and distortions emphasized by behaviouralists may and indeed likely do occur in various situations or circumstances; but the extrapolation of experimentally identified individual behaviour (even if the experiments in question target elites as opposed to, say, university students) to overarching outcomes in international politics is an epistemological leap of faith. “To attempt to explain social forms on the basis of psychological data,” Kenneth Waltz (1959: 28) once wrote, “is to commit the error of psychologism: the analysis of individual behaviour used uncritically to explain group phenomena.” Or as Jack Levy (2013: 3) has written elsewhere:

...because war and other forms of strategic interaction are the product of the joint actions of two or more states at the dyadic or systemic levels, individual level psychological variables...cannot by themselves provide a logically complete

explanation for war or for other international patterns. Such explanations must be subsumed within a theory of bargaining or strategic interaction that include dyadic or system-level causal variables.

If an explanation can be formulated deductively from a set of basic assumptions regarding the structural conditions of international relations, the distance between cause and effect is greatly reduced; generalizability is similarly enhanced, insofar as the explanation does not rely on the particular interests, personalities or pathologies of specific individuals (which render the explanation contingent by definition) but on conditions common to any decision-maker regardless of these characteristics. The structural approach does not erase the individual, but rather finds the most useful and compelling explanation for the behaviour of that individual outside of, rather than within, him/her. Which is to say, in the situation which confronts the actor in question.

Of course, there are innumerable circumstances in which structural explanations will be inadequate. An emphasis on structure misses a lot of what makes international politics interesting, a lot of what makes it move. Yet appropriately ceding some room on the stage should not extend to ceding the space that remains properly within its purview. To the extent that structural explanations are possible and compelling they should be privileged; deviations from (or the inadequacies of) structural expectations might then serve as the catalyst for further examinations at alternative levels of analysis or from different theoretical points of view. This statement is certain to be controversial. Yet likely objections stem from divergent expectations with respect to how much space structural approaches can cover (how much of the empirical world they can explain), and not with the logic of attempting (even implicitly, even subconsciously!) such explanations before moving on.

For those who see minimal value in structural explanations, they cover little (even nothing) and so can be quickly cast aside. Others will see their value as extremely truncated, capable of explaining outcomes in only the most narrowly specified circumstances. Still others will examine and exhaust structural explanations before shifting to alternatives to explore and explain what remains. Ardent structuralists will reject agency altogether, claiming to cover all 'important/relevant' behaviour and social

phenomenon by reference to the structure of the situation in which actors find themselves. The recognition that one cannot *begin* with an individual-level explanation (even if one arrives there eventually) is ultimately ontological; at base individuals exist in, and react to, their environment.<sup>13</sup> Even if our intention is precisely to explain the behaviour of a single individual, we must know where that individual is situated vis-à-vis various social structures to begin the analysis (indeed, to recognize that the individual is ‘behaving’ or ‘acting’ at all).

Crucially, rejecting structural explanations too quickly risks distorting the conclusions one draws with respect to particular cases or phenomena. It is not simply a matter of arriving at the same place after travelling on a more arduous and complicated route (i.e. formulating an explanation for American foreign policy by plumbing the childhood experiences and developing a psychobiography of George W. Bush [McAdams 2011] that is congruent with more straightforward structural analysis). Interpretations of events – and associated policy recommendations – will typically hinge on the factors one emphasizes as causal or determinative. As Rose McDermott (2004: 3) explained in her seminal book *Political Psychology in International Relations*:

What unifies political psychology and makes it distinct from other forms of political analysis is the search for explanation, description, and prediction at the individual level of analysis. The individual level of analysis informs and affects the kinds of questions that are asked, the forms of evidence that are sought, and the nature of inferences about causality that are made.

With respect to individual explanations, this most often manifests in the notion that if one could have changed the person or persons in a position of power or decision-making (“throw the idiots out”), the outcomes would have fundamentally changed. Taking the Cheney example above, a more rational and probability-sensitive intellect may have recognized the ‘absurdity’ of treating a remote possibility as a certainty and opted to

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<sup>13</sup> The ontological objections of certain critical theorists rests on a rejection (in some cases denial) of this reality.

invest in more immediately welfare-increasing programs ahead of security and defense. The allocation of resources would have reflected the ‘objective’ level of threat/priority.

The traditional emphasis, in this mode of analysis, is on ‘hawks’ and ‘doves’ and the influence of particular worldviews or ‘operational codes’ on the decisions that get made with respect to foreign policy (for their part, Hafner-Burton et al. note that the behavioural approach has moved past such distinctions to include even more nuanced and sophisticated treatments of individual cognition/psychology, see p. 19). The point, from the structuralist perspective, is not to suggest that such distinctions are totally devoid of utility, or do not refer to actually-existing preferences on the part of particular individuals. Preferences with respect to the use of military force certainly vary between leaders and other elite decision-makers; a distinction which is identifiable and even measurable. This makes it (along with other preference or personality categories related to individual psychology such as ‘pro-self’ or ‘pro-social’) highly amenable to experimental testing via lab and survey experiments. The key consideration is not whether leaders are actually hawks or doves or more broadly fall victim to any range of potential cognitive biases or misperceptions (they are, and they do), but rather the extent to which this *helps us to understand the outcomes of international politics*. In some cases they will; in others they will not. The problem is that by privileging behavioural analysis, we immediately foreclose first-order, structural explanations even with respect to those domains (and vis-à-vis those phenomena) which are amenable to structural analysis. By beginning one’s analysis with the distinction between hawks and doves, for example, one *assumes* such distinctions are relevant, inevitably biasing one’s interpretation. More broadly, if one’s entire research design is predicated on identifying, measuring, and interpreting individual-level psychology or cognition, one is unlikely to downplay such factors in the final analysis.

Take for example the recent work by Jonathon Renshon and Daniel Kahneman (2017), two high profile scholars within the behavioural tradition (the former within IR; the latter as one of the fathers of the contemporary behavioural field more broadly). Discussing the existing and established cognitive biases derived from the psychology literature, Renshon and Kahneman (2017: 51) make a startling observation: “we find, almost without exception, that the biases recently uncovered by psychological research

favor hawkish decisions in conflict situations.” Loss aversion, overconfidence, attribution error, pseudo-certainty: all these well-known cognitive biases, and others, apparently push decision-makers to make hawkish decisions during conflict and crisis. The authors conclude that this finding is “intriguing” but caution that it is merely an observed pattern, and explicitly do not propose a broader theoretical explanation as to why cognitive biases might all lean the same way in the context of international conflict.

While they do not foreclose the possibility of doing so in the future, one potential source of difficulty in formulating such a theory is that from a (purely) behaviouralist perspective there *is* no plausible reason for an array of (often unrelated) cognitive and psychological biases to tend in one direction. Such a theory would require stepping back (or zooming out) to consider the broader conditions of conflict which might themselves push (or pull) actors toward ‘hawkish’ (for lack of a better term) behaviour.<sup>14</sup> To be fair to Renshon and Kahneman (2017: 73), they seem to recognize as much, as when they write:

In our view, neither psychology nor decision science can provide a theory of interstate conflict...It is simply unreasonable to expect a theory of choices between gambles with specified probabilities and monetary outcomes to predict or explain the decisions of national leaders as they wage war and negotiate peace.

Yet the discussion the authors provide seems to mitigate against developing this broader theory.

The paper is framed by a hypothetical scenario: a national leader receiving conflicting advice from two advisors – one a hawk, the other a dove – during a conflict situation. “Our contention”, Renshon and Kahneman (2017: 52) write, “is that cognitive biases will tend to make the hawk’s arguments more persuasive than they deserve to be [from an objective perspective].” Note that the determinative factor in this scenario

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<sup>14</sup> While each *individual* bias may be rooted in conditions that seem to privilege hawkish decision-making (e.g a ‘domain of losses’ encourages risky behaviour according to prospect theory), the point here is that a theory connecting these various observations cannot be derived from behaviouralism precisely because each such bias is putatively a function of the unique parameters of individual decision-making in each instance.

remains the cognitive biases of the individual leader; the sources of the ‘preferences’ are these two archetypal advisors (one imagines them in miniature on either shoulder) pushing their points of view on an otherwise neutral head of state.

This hypothetical is employed entirely for expository purposes; the authors are not claiming that such a scenario accurately describes how foreign policy is made or how leaders make important conflict decisions. It is nonetheless revealing with respect to the behaviouralist modeling of decision-making more broadly. *The objective situation is insufficient for determining preferences.* The leader, incapable of correctly perceiving the situation at hand, receives conflicting options from advisors, *who themselves are incapable*, insofar as each pushes an alternative policy. The presumption is that there will always be hawks and doves (these preferences being arrived at for whatever reason, presumably as a function of particular personalities and life experiences) around to make such recommendations. But what if the ‘advisors’ in question are merely two sides of the internal debate within the leader’s mind itself? Faced with a conflict decision, the leader evaluates sets of options (one more conciliatory and dovish, the other more competitive and hawkish) and selects the competitive option based on his/her reading of the situation. Is this not still a behaviouralist explanation? After all, one could argue that the hawkish set is selected due to the array of cognitive biases outlined by Renshon and Kahneman. Yet if the finding is consistent (as the authors note, “almost without exception”) that the hawkish position is preferred (or is more persuasive), this suggests that regardless of who the leader might be, they are more likely to move in this competitive direction. This is important, and reveals why the set-up of the scenario involved external (two hypothetical advisors) as opposed to internal (inside the leaders’ own mind) debates between divergent options; the ‘leader’ him/herself must be *neutral* for the scenario to maintain crucial behaviouralist assumptions. Which is to say, he/she cannot already be either a hawk or a dove, because the observed tendency to lean in a hawkish direction would obliterate the utility of the distinction. If, for example, the leader is *already* a dove, and yet is overridden as a result of the cognitive biases *provided by the situation*, then the importance of *a priori* preferences for/against the use of military force is significantly diminished. This being the case, is it not reasonable to return to that situation which, hitherto considered too opaque to be objectively grasped, so consistently shapes the

behaviour of those responding to it? Which is to say, the situation (and structure) of conflict itself?

Note that this analysis does not, crucially, deny the existence of the biases identified by the behaviouralist literature. Nor is it meant to gloss over the debates and discussions that go on within a state (typically amongst its executive) as to how to respond to, or behave within, a crisis or conflict situation. The point is not to suggest that the structure of a situation offers a clear answer, perfectly perceived by the decision-maker evaluating it, about how to respond to threats, opportunities etc. Yet there does appear a general pressure, or logic, that tends toward consistency with respect to decision-making in conflict. Like all social scientific propositions, the outcomes related to such pressures are probabilistic; as when Renshon and Kahneman (2017: 52) caveat that their analysis does not contend that “all decisions in the international political context will be hostile or aggressive as a result of biases of cognition and preference, only that more decisions will be so more often than they would be in the absence of bias.” Far from directly contradicting behavioural analysis, therefore, a structural approach might subsume the various biases outlined in the literature as the microfoundations of a theory predicated on the pressures and imperatives related to the situation of conflict itself. A tendency for hawkishness, emergent in the situation an actor finds itself confronting, might be realized through various cognitive and psychological processes.

Of course, the danger remains that an emphasis on behavioural variables will inhibit the recognition of broader structural patterns. Moving to the rivalry literature specifically, Russell Leng (2000) offers a mixed-method quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Soviet-American, Egyptian-Israeli, and Indo-Pakistani rivalries. Examining the ‘learning’ that occurs with respect to repeated and recurring crises between the same actors, Leng concludes that the remarkable consistency he observes across all three rivalries is due to “shared beliefs” regarding the appropriateness of ‘realpolitik’ behaviour. In each case, “realpolitik beliefs predisposed [leaders] to view even efforts at conflict resolution in terms of competitive advantage” (Leng 2000: 301). Again, because Leng’s analysis *begins* with the proposition that belief systems are crucial, his finding that conflict patterns were broadly consistent (notwithstanding minor

variations between cases owing to, *inter alia*, “respective military capabilities” [Leng 2000: 278]) is attributed to individual-level factors:

A comparison of the crisis behaviour across the three rivalries indicates the realpolitik beliefs held in common by policymakers in the rival states frequently result in similar influence strategies and tactics by states facing similar circumstances (Leng 2000: 271).

The alternative possibility, that the observed consistency was due to states “facing similar circumstances” is dismissed outright. This approach is mirrored in the rivalry literature by Vasquez (2009) and Valeriano (2013), who similarly posit that common beliefs in realpolitik (which is to say, the preferences of particular leaders at an individual level) drive rivalry, rather than the structural conditions related to rivalry driving and generating behaviour consistent with realpolitik practices.

### **Pathological Rivalry**

Before building my own rationalist and structural theory of rivalry, I briefly outline its main theoretical alternative. Continuing from the discussion above, I sketch a behavioural theory of rivalry which emphasizes individual-level psychology and emotion as the causes of perceptual distortion and pathological antagonism between states. While many in the rivalry literature allude to such factors (in particular emotional hatred) the clearest and most consistent articulation of this approach comes from John Vasquez (2001; 2009) and Brandon Valeriano (2013). I will refer to their contributions and approach as the *Pathological Rivalry* explanation.

Given the rigorous methodological requirements tied to the testing and evaluation of a theory (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, see pp. 123-4) the point here is not to present a comprehensive alternative that will be tested side-by-side with the structural theory articulated below; rather, the reader should have a basic familiarity with the logic that underlies it so as to facilitate juxtaposition and plausibility-evaluation with respect to the theory that is ultimately examined.

The basic premise of Pathological Rivalry is that rivalry is a distortion of, and deviation from, rational decision making. As Valeriano (2013: 13) writes:

Some states are actually “addicted” to conflict with other states. The image of another state as an enemy endures in the relations between the states and in the minds of the elites and the mass public. Despite any information that may cause a reevaluation of the relationship, rivals typically are stuck in the situation because of the traits exhibited by addicts. Rivals tend to be impulsive, to be socially disconnected from each other, and to exhibit compulsive conflictual behavior. These are all traits one would expect to find in drug addicts, not responsible international actors. Rivalry as a situation is the height of irresponsible international behavior.

Importantly, this attitude (or addiction) adheres to “elites” (as well as members of the mass public); which is to say, it infects individual decision-makers and distorts their ability to craft “responsible” foreign policy.

Vasquez (2009: 79), likewise, suggests that in rivalry “a major motivation behind actions is psychological hostility, i.e. more emphasis is placed on hurting or denying something to the other side than on gaining something positive for oneself.” This focus – harm to the other side above any potential gain for oneself – is the crux of the psychological/behavioural distortion foregrounded by the Pathological Rivalry explanation. The impulse defies a fundamental precept of rational behaviour and is thereby used by Vasquez to distinguish rivalry from typical competition.

The key difference is that between a conventional *cost-benefit* calculus (in which an issue or point of contention is evaluated with respect to the costs and benefits related to particular outcomes) and an *affect* calculus (in which the *identity* of the opposing actor establishes preferences with respect to potential outcomes). As Vasquez (2009: 80) contends:

Leaders in a rivalry will adopt a negative affect calculus rather than a cost-benefit or interdependence calculus. Leaders who employ a negative affect calculus favor

any position that will hurt their opponents and oppose any position that will help their opponents.

The result is conflict, competition, and even war in circumstances under which a cost-benefit calculation would be expected to produce none. “Rivalry is essentially an irrational project,” Valeriano (2013: 138) writes, “that defies normal power or balance considerations.”

The key to rivalry, therefore, is to understand the psychological basis of negative-affect between states. Again, the source is psychological, rooted in the hatred and hostility that stems from repeated conflict. The result is a relationship “characterized by selfishness, relative positions, mistrust, hostility, and animosity” (Valeriano 2013: 14). Behaviour in rivalry is primarily a function of these factors; leaders are overcome by their hatred for their rival state, and act as though blinded by this impulse. Each successive conflict only increases this animosity over time, amplifying the distortions associated with rivalry. Concrete stakes (including territory or political influence in another country) are infused with symbolic significance, making them indivisible, thereby rendering resolution all but impossible.

This cycle forms part of the underlying structure of Pathological Rivalry, as it moves beyond the purely psychological in order to explain the genesis of rivalry (perpetually conflictual relationships) by reference to inherited systems of beliefs, worldviews, and/or norms. Pathological Rivalry contends that a belief in ‘realpolitik’ is the underlying condition which promotes conflict and generates competitive spirals, as bellicosity is met with more aggression, and hawkish predilections dictate responses in kind. Which is to say, the pressures of the relationship itself do not determine that states behave in this way, they do so because of the inherited wisdom (norm) of power-political behaviour (displaying resolve, using force etc.). The recourse to this type of response exacerbates and reinforces psychological hostility (rather than resolving it):

One of the great ironies of human interaction...is that conflictive (i.e. negative) acts are intended to change issue positions, but instead change affect. Typically, if an actor tries to resolve a disagreement on a salient issue by punishing another

actor, this will generate hostility rather than any shift in issue position (Vasquez 2009: 83-4).

Note again that the basis for this contention is the psychological effect of interpersonal interaction (we know that punishment results in hostility between individual *human beings*), which is then applied to the interaction between states (or state leaders acting on behalf of states). A conflict arises and is handled according to the precepts of *realpolitik*, this response provokes *realpolitik* from the other side, and these conflictual interactions generate hostility which result in a focus on the identity of the opponent (negative-affect) leading the stakes to be infused with symbolic significance and eventually uniting all issues of contention into one single overarching issue: us-versus-them.

The proposition that this cycle is perpetuated by a dogged (and by implication unnecessary) adherence to *realpolitik* strategies is also found in Leng's (2000) analysis of behaviour in the Soviet-American, Egyptian-Israeli, and Indo-Pakistani rivalries (as discussed briefly above). Again, Leng concludes that the consistency of behaviour across rivalries is explained by the ubiquity of a belief in power-political strategies, not the similar circumstances and pressures rivals face with respect to repeated conflict.

Pathological Rivalry can thus be categorized according to its emphasis on first-image, individual-level variables. As Janice Stein (2013) observes elsewhere: "Basic psychological impulses incline national leaders to exaggerate the evil intentions of adversaries." The belief in *realpolitik* as the appropriate strategy for dealing with conflict triggers psychological and emotional hostility in the context of repeated confrontation, which generates pathological distortions of rational-decision making. All of these factors adhere to the elites, leaders, and decision-makers of a particular country. Solutions, therefore, similarly reside at this level of analysis. Valeriano (2013: 148), for example, admonishes state leaders for prescribing to *realpolitik*, insisting that a change of attitude will engender more cooperative, reciprocal relationships which do not descend into rivalry. This suggests that Pathological Rivalry is a form of what Kenneth Waltz (1959: 39) called 'reductionist' theory in IR: "The evilness of men, or their improper behaviour, leads to war; individual goodness, if it could be universalized, would mean peace: this is a summary statement of the first image."

With respect to civil conflict intervention – the phenomenon of interest in this dissertation – Pathological Rivalry offers two possibilities.<sup>15</sup> First, one might expect rivals to conduct balancing or off-setting interventions for essentially offensive purposes. Psychological hostility and hatred would cause leaders to seize an opportunity to attack their rival's interests in whatever capacity, and in whatever location, possible; the perception of an exposed position with respect to a rival's involvement in an external civil conflict would present an opportunity to damage, bleed, or disrupt that rival (recall that *harm* is the overriding interest with respect to a negative-affect calculus). This explanation accords with the aggressive hostility that characterizes many of the descriptions of rivalry in the literature, including the 'addict' characterization offered by Valeriano.

The second possibility relates to a defensive motivation, and stems from the 'paranoia' that is often described as a psychological effect of rivalry. Leaders may be concerned that their rival's involvement is a conspiracy against their own interests, or a prelude to more direct confrontation (this might particularly be the case in regional rivalries, where the relevant civil conflict is proximate to both nations). This possibility hews more closely to the rational theory of rivalry outlined below, and will therefore be more difficult to distinguish as compared to the offensive, aggressive variant of Pathological Rivalry described above. Paranoia and exaggeration are, in a sense, in the eye of the beholder. An actor may find it prudent to err on the side of caution, while an outside observer might ascribe paranoia for what they perceive to be an exaggeration or over-estimation of threat (consider the Cheney example discussed above). Yet if such behaviour is consistent across rivalries, which is to say across space and time, how useful is it to describe defensive motivations in rivalry as distortions of the individual psyche, as opposed to functions of the structural situation which confronts it? Indeed, it may be that expressions of 'paranoia' in the form of exaggerated threat estimations are the micro-foundations of a structural situation which *generates* them.

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<sup>15</sup> Neither of which, it should be pointed out, were directly articulated by Vasquez, Valeriano, Leng, or any other scholar operating in this tradition. Their work on rivalry did not and has not – to my knowledge – directly engaged the question of civil conflict intervention. I therefore extrapolate logically consistent expectations given their conceptualization of, and explanation for, rivalry itself.

This suggests a potential synergy or synthesis between micro- and macro-approaches (in this case, between Pathological Rivalry and my rational theory of rivalry). After all, any macro-theory *requires* (or at least implies) some kind of micro-foundation, which in the social sciences involves the behaviour of individuals who act (and can only act) according to their perceptions of reality. It would be nonsensical to suggest that states conduct balancing interventions in the absence of human activity to bring them about. From a micro-perspective, the paranoia and threat-exaggeration observed in rivalry is a pathology; from the macro-perspective, they may be the predictable consequences of pressures at the international level.

Nonetheless, the level at which the analysis begins is important. The same phenomenon, approached from different perspectives, yields alternative interpretations and, with them, divergent policy recommendations. Recall Valeriano's contention above that a change in attitude is necessary to forestall the onset and perpetuation of rivalry; abandon realpolitik, and the negative consequences that ensue will be avoided. Of course, Valeriano (and Vasquez, Leng, and others who adopt this point of view) recognize that this is much easier said than done, and are cautious as to how realistic such an attitude change might be; yet their analysis of rivalry suggests to them that it is at this individual level that policy change should be pursued. This focus is a natural outgrowth of Pathological Rivalry – the theory ends where the theory begins: with the preferences, beliefs, and attitudes of individuals.

That the foundation of the theory is the inherited norm of realpolitik behaviour is similarly indicative of its emphasis on the first-image. That individual belief systems are the starting point for, or the trigger of, the subsequent conflict spiral which creates rivalry (which is to say they begin the process by which psychological hostility is subsequently fostered and compounded), places the causes of rivalry beyond the structure of conflict, which would make international relations tragic, and instead in the minds of men and women, making it ironic (*if only decision-makers could see the light*). Again, the only remedy is to make this apparent, and hope that in so doing entrenched belief systems with respect to power politics are transcended or abandoned. In keeping with the critique of behavioural approaches outlined above, Pathological Rivalry limits itself to, or cannot see

beyond, explanations and/or possibilities tied to its preferred level of analysis. Waltz (1959: 75), again, anticipated this problem when he observed:

considering a quality shared by pacifists and many behavioural scientists suggests the more general point that in the absence of an elaborated theory of international politics the causes one finds and the remedies one proposes are often more closely related to temper and training than to the objects and events of the world about us.

It is for this reason that a simple marriage of micro- and macro- approaches to rivalry is not presently possible; the assumptions built in to either approach keep them separate, particularly with respect to the origins of rivalry behaviour, and the modes of addressing, or alleviating, the consequences of rivalry for international politics.

Consider the following example offered by Stein (2013) which, although not *à propos* civil conflict intervention or rivalry *per se*, again illustrates the basic logic of the behavioural approach while implying an overlooked alternative explanation:

In 2009, Israeli and American leaders had access to almost all the same data and evidence on Iran's nuclear program... Yet American officials estimated a much longer time horizon – five years – for the development of a nuclear weapon by Iran than did Israel's officials who estimated a year or two. The difference in threat perception is not explainable by the evidence but by the higher emotional loading of the likelihood of an Iranian bomb for Israel's leaders that shaped threat perception.

In this reading, Israeli leaders were 'emotionally loaded' vis-à-vis the Iranian nuclear program, and therefore distorted evidence to arrive at a more pessimistic appraisal of the situation. Why the discrepancy with the American assessment, however? One or two years as opposed to five? Is this explainable merely by reference to different levels of 'emotion'? How could this possibly be measured? By contrast, reference to the relative danger (given geographical proximity) and the associated existential implications, along with the history of Israeli-Iranian competition in the region, suggests Israel had

compelling strategic reasons for being more alarmed/concerned/worried than their American counterparts – the implications (costs) of being *wrong* were simply much higher (recall again the Cheney example offered above). While this insight fails, also, to explain the precise discrepancy in time horizon (how many years is ‘existential threat’ worth?) it is a superior explanation because it *precedes* and *specifies* the causes behind the ‘emotional loading’ foregrounded by behavioural analysis. It is more satisfactory because it does not reduce serious, sober individuals (to say nothing of the intelligence apparatuses which inform them) into emotionally charged imbeciles.

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to developing an alternative theory of rivalry. Rather than searching for the consistency of rivalry behaviour in the *a priori* belief systems of particular leaders (or in the cognitive, psychological and emotional processes that result from repeated conflict), the theory outlined here emphasizes the structural conditions of the international environment which lead, however tragically, to rivalry behaviour between broadly rational actors, even those who might be defensive or status-quo with respect to their ambitions and intentions vis-à-vis one another.

## **A Rational Theory of Rivalry**

### *What it Does, and What it Does Not Do*

The intent of the theory presented here is to examine the *causal mechanism* or *process* linking international rivalry to civil conflict intervention. The methodological requirements of this goal are discussed in the subsequent chapter, but this purpose is important to keep in mind before the theory itself is outlined. Most immediately, it underscores what the theory is *not* attempting to do.

The theory is not a general theory of intervention. Intervention is quite obviously subject to equifinality; there are multiple causal pathways by which a state can be caused to intervene in a civil war. In this dissertation, I take as my expressed focus one potential pathway. The justification for this decision is outlined in the introduction and in the literature review. As a result of this focus, the theory is not meant to predict when intervention will occur. Perhaps surprisingly, it is not even meant to comprehensively predict when *rivals* will intervene. This equivocation may appear to undermine the

relevance of the project as a whole. What good is a theory of rivalry intervention if it cannot be used to predict when rivals will intervene? The caveat is a necessary one, however, for methodological reasons. The use of qualitative historical case studies, even if carefully selected, cannot be used to establish a generalized theory across a much larger population of cases. That being said, the theory and evidence in this dissertation should provide useful insight into other cases of rivalry intervention across history, and deliver reasonable parameters by which such interventions might be predicted to occur in the future. In the social sciences, this is not an insignificant contribution. More importantly, however, the theory can help establish and elucidate the putative mechanism linking rivalry to intervention; this is the purpose and power of historical case studies, particularly when linked to quantitative research which has hitherto established a correlation between two phenomena (as is the case with respect to rivalry and intervention, see Chapter 2). Because the dissertation examines more than one case, the potential that this mechanism applies to the larger population is amplified (but again, importantly, not confirmed).

Even with these limitations, however, the import of the theory extends beyond the parameters of simply the cases that are examined. Because, as will be made clear below, the mechanism purported to connect rivalry to intervention (put succinctly for the purposes of exposition: strategic concern for the future) is inherent to the relationship of rivalry itself<sup>16</sup>, broader behaviour within rivalry (that is, beyond interventions) is potentially illuminated. This has significant implications for future research; the causal mechanism identified here may be found elsewhere; the theory which purports to explain this mechanism can be applied to other forms of behaviour in international politics. *A theory of rivalry itself is revealed through the development of a theory of rivalry intervention.* So while it is important to be cautious and circumspect as to what a theory might be said to achieve, there is good reason to contend that the theory presented here accomplishes quite a bit.

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<sup>16</sup> Which is to say, *rivalry* is the mechanism linking rivalry to intervention, a formulation that is not tautological if one recognizes that ‘rivalry’ is an artificial concept imposed on reality for the purpose of analysis. It is the underlying conditions, or dynamics, of rivalry that are of interest (that both make the concept and generate the behaviour within it).

### *Interpersonal vs. International Rivalry*

I begin by drawing the distinction between *interpersonal* and *international* rivalry. This dissertation consciously develops a theory of the latter, while extant treatments of rivalry between states have often been muddled by familiarity with, and reference to, the former.

In the study of IR, states are typically categorized with respect to their material capabilities (great power, major power, minor power etc.) but it is also useful to categorize *relationships between states* according to their *perceptual* dynamics (friends, enemies, allies, rivals, etc.). After all, material capabilities are relevant only relative to other states in the international system. War and peace, moreover, can most fundamentally be understood in dyadic terms even if, as is clear empirically, complex relationships among multiple states interact, including in wars and conflict. (Consider for example the multiple overlapping alliances and relationships involved in World War I; in rivalry terms a good example is the Sino-Soviet rivalry and its influence for both US-Soviet and US-China relations.) Nonetheless, a conflict involving multiple states is composed, logically, of sets of interacting dyads.<sup>17</sup> The moment a state ‘acts’ internationally, it minimally involves at least one other state. The most basic building blocks of international *relations* are therefore dyadic relations. Conceptualizing and theorizing about these dyadic relations is (or at least should be), therefore, fundamental to the study of IR.

I posit the designation of rivalry, or “extreme enmity”, to be a basic feature of the relations between certain states. This is because the existence of rivalry, and more specifically the threat that is implied by the prospect of future conflict with a rival, amplifies precisely the implications of international anarchy which result in confrontation between states. The concern for survival as the ultimate goal (in the sense that without it the pursuit of any other goal is not possible) is particularly acute when a state is assessing the intentions of an established rival (it is objectively possible that other relationships [which is to say the threat from non-rival states] could be of greater existential danger,

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<sup>17</sup> Even if two states are simply attacking a common enemy and have no direct interaction, the relationship between the two can be described in terms of their shared and/or conflicting interests.

yet it is in the context of an established rivalry that *perceptions* of this danger are most readily accessible, because of past experience); the fundamental reality of self-help means states must act to protect themselves in the face of this threat; and the function of power as the means by which to secure one's survival means not only direct war but the overarching balance between the two rivals will be of constant concern. Hence rivals move to balance, block, frustrate and off-set one another's interests and/or gains in a variety of domains. Understanding international rivalry *on its own terms* – which is to say, absent recourse to analogy or metaphor, which often muddy as oppose to clarify its unique characteristics – is necessary for appreciating its relevance to broader considerations of international relations.

All states at all times stand in various relations one to the other. In a useful abstraction, Arnold Wolfers (1962) conceptualized these relations as existing along a continuum between extreme enmity and extreme amity. With respect to the former, he wrote: “Enmity reflects the existence of a conflict of interests. *Peace is threatened at that stage of the conflict when physical coercion, by one side or both, becomes a practical possibility*” (Wolfers 1962: 30, emphasis added). It is this latter consideration – the possibility of physical confrontation – that is, I suggest, most important. Conflicts of interest are essentially ubiquitous, and exist even between nations whose relationship approaches ‘extreme amity’ such as the United States and Canada. Yet, as Wolfers implies, such a disjuncture threatens peace only so far as physical violence is considered possible. It is precisely this possibility which is most severe – not necessarily objectively, but *subjectively*, in the perceptions of state leaders – in the context of rivalry. Rivalry is, in this sense, the *acute possibility* of war and violence, as perceived by the parties involved.

It is similar, in this way, to the “friend-enemy” distinction made famous by German political theorist Carl Schmitt. As Schmitt's ([1928] 2007: 32) definition maintains, “the political”, at its most fundamental, takes the forms of an antithesis between ‘friend’ and ‘enemy’ where “the ever present possibility of combat” between “fighting collectivities” exists. This friend-enemy distinction is, moreover, not reducible to, but nonetheless substantively informed by, antitheses in other spheres (good and evil in the moral sphere, beautiful and ugly in the aesthetic sphere, profitable and unprofitable

in the economic sphere etc.). These other antitheses *become* political the moment they contain the possibility of physical violence between groups. The political is penetrated by economics, ethics etc., while nonetheless retaining a logic of its own; one can isolate and examine its characteristics without reducing it ‘in the final analysis’<sup>18</sup> to some other dimension of social activity.

It is the group itself, moreover, that defines the enemy; the designation is public and political, not private or personal:

The enemy is not merely any competitor or just any partner of a conflict in general. He is also not the private adversary whom one hates. An enemy exists only when, at least potentially, one fighting collectively of people confronts a similar collectivity (Schmitt 2007: 28).

This distinction is key. Again, the use of the individual pronoun “he” is somewhat misleading; in reading Schmitt, it is clear that the actors to which this decision apply are political collectivities, not individuals. Political enemies, in other words, stand in relation to one another as group-entities. For Schmitt, the decisive political entity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the nation-state, an assumption we may reasonably carry forward to the 21<sup>st</sup>. Political enemies are therefore states; this enmity exists between the units themselves (as states *qua* states) and not between the individuals that comprise either collectivity.

Importantly, the basis of this confrontation between states is explicitly existential: “Each participant is in a position to judge whether the adversary intends to negate his opponent’s way of life and therefore must be repulsed or fought in order to reserve one’s own form of existence” (p. 27). Schmitt (pp. 67-8) goes on to cite Oliver Cromwell’s speech to the Second Protectorate Parliament during the Anglo-Spanish War (1654-60), which typifies the recognition of the enemy in the public sense:

The first thing, therefore, that I shall speak to is *that* that is the first lesson of Nature: Being and Preservation...The conservation of that, ‘namely of our

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<sup>18</sup> The phrase is appropriated from Marxist analysis, where it is used *inter alia* to indicate that politics are ultimately reducible to economic considerations.

National Being', is first to be viewed with respect to those who seek to undo it, and so make it *not to be* (emphasis in original).

While competition or rivalry in, for example, the economic sphere can be about material gain or profit, political rivalry (or enmity) between states is about *survival*. Again, this is not to say that the basis for disagreement need initially be existential (that is, borne out of a desire to destroy one's opponent); as Schmitt maintains, conflict can have its origin in any sphere of activity (or with respect to any goal or interest of the political units involved), it is only once this conflict approaches real violence (and therefore the possibility of 'negating' an opponent in the ultimate sense) does the disagreement (or conflict of interest) become political.

This violence need not even approach 'total war' (as it became known in the 20<sup>th</sup> century) in which the negation of the enemy becomes the focus of an entire society (and in which the question of survival becomes most acute in an immediate and practical sense). Indeed, the advent of nuclear weapons has largely forestalled the development of such conflicts, meaning any question as to the implications of total war – while not irrelevant – would be less fundamental to global politics today than it would have been in a previous era. The concern here is with the *threat* or *possibility* of violence; the perception that one's own existence as a political unit *could be* endangered by the aggression of another. Ironically, therefore, the existence of nuclear weapons actually enhances and amplifies this condition; despite the logical impossibility of their use, the prospect of nuclear annihilation (the speed and rapidity with which it might be unleashed by the stroke of a button) generates intense anxiety and concern. As the Soviet-American rivalry demonstrated, direct violence of any kind need not even occur for states to be enemies in this ultimate sense (see Chapter 9).

Perceptions, possibilities, and the prospect of confrontation. Schmitt's definition of the political enemy is useful as a foundation for understanding the conceptualization of rivalry offered in this dissertation. The key distinction is that between personal/private hatreds on one hand and public/political rivals on the other. Wolfers (1962: 25) recognizes the common difficulty in making this differentiation:

Terms like ‘amity’ and ‘enmity’ – even more, terms like ‘friendship’ and ‘hostility’ – must be used with caution in discussing interstate relationships. These terms are taken from the universe of interpersonal relations and they convey a sense of emotional involvement. In contrast, diplomatic postures of amity and enmity do not depend on emotional conditions and may in fact contradict them.

Which is to say, the private enemy and public enemy are not the same and the characteristics of the relationship that define one or the other – though often described with a similar vocabulary – are different as well.

Schmitt (p. 27-8) attempts to pre-empt any confusion or conflation in this regard:

The friend and enemy concepts are to be understood in their concrete and existential sense, not as metaphors or symbols, not mixed and weakened by economic, moral, and other conceptions, least of all in a private-individualistic sense as a psychological expression of private emotions and tendencies.

The propensity to discuss international rivalries in the language of interpersonal rivalries pervades both diplomatic history and more recent scientific treatments of the rivalry concept in IR. This leads to a form of the pathetic fallacy, in which group entities such as states are said to “hate” or “despise” one another despite the fact that such emotional conditions apply only, it should be obvious, to individuals. (To be sure, the work of Vasquez, Valeriano and others described above and in Chapter 2 does not simply rely on the use of inappropriate descriptive language; their conceptualizations of rivalry are tied to systematic deployments of legitimate psychological/cognitive/normative principles. Nonetheless, I suggest that the *move to apply* these principles was facilitated, in some measure, by the tendency to think of interstate rivalry in interpersonal terms.)

Of course, one can speak of the “mood” of a nation with respect to general public sentiment; it is certainly a reasonable course of inquiry to examine general attitudes of citizens – or even elites and political leaders – with respect to other nations (both in the abstract and vis-à-vis counterpart individuals). Even more, these attitudes may well influence certain dimensions of public policy, or shape the way foreign policy toward a

particular country is formulated. Personal animosity between decision-makers, likewise, can be of considerable influence, particularly in the context of crisis negotiation. Yet such analysis should not stand in for, or obfuscate, an analysis of international rivalry in which the political and not personal is emphasized. This basic distinction, between rivalry as an international phenomenon between group-entities (political units/states) versus rivalry as an interpersonal (emotional, psychological, individual) condition, underlies the dissertation as a whole.

### *Rivalry as 'Continuous Negotiation'*

States in rivalry have interacted in the past, and expect to do so again in the future. Whatever they do in the present is affected by (the perception of) this reality. The concept is simple and pure, but nonetheless powerful. It is similar to the designation of "continuous negotiation" as defined by Thomas Schelling (1960) in his famous "Essay on Bargaining". As such, a brief exposition of this concept will help set the parameters for the conceptualization of rivalry which is developed.

"To study the strategy of conflict," Schelling (1960: 5) writes, "is to take the view that most conflict situations are essentially bargaining situations." The emphasis is on explicating the way two or more actors interact such that the behaviour of one is contingent on the behaviour of the other. The purpose is to outline, in broad terms, "a tactical approach to the analysis of bargaining" in which the strategic (or interdependent) is emphasized.

The terms 'bargaining' and 'negotiation' may be confusing here; one should remember that Schelling included within these terms precisely the type of geopolitical conflict that was occurring, at the time of his writing, between the Soviet Union and the United States. His point was in effect that the type of strategy related to such conflicts was fundamentally similar to other forms of competition (say between labor unions or even individuals on the street). 'Negotiations', in this sense, is a broad term (far beyond the narrow and conventional usage denoting people crafting a 'deal' around a table) which can include military crises, threats and other forms of international conflict; the crucial factor is the interdependence of actions, the action-reaction sequence denoting 'negotiations' and the totality constituting the 'bargaining' situation. "Continuous

negotiations”, Schelling (1960: 30) writes, are “a special case of interrelated negotiations [occurring] when the same two parties are to negotiate other topics, simultaneously or in the future.” This recognition implies an ongoing relationship, one in which future conflict is assumed and, even more importantly, in which *present behaviour is conditioned by this knowledge*.

In the context of such negotiations, Schelling underscores the importance of reputation in the bargaining process. What a state has done in the past sets the parameters of the present relationship. Even more, the *staking* of a reputation is a tactic available in the present negotiation:

to persuade the other that one cannot afford to recede, one says in effect, “If I conceded to you here, you would revise your estimate of me in our negotiations; to protect my reputation with you I must stand firm.” The second party is simultaneously the ‘third party’ to whom one’s bargaining reputation can be pledged. (ibid.: 30).

This logic, moreover, can cut both ways; the *protection* of one’s reputation (particularly if it has been staked in the past or might be perceived to be at stake in the present) is a powerfully motivating factor. In the context of a continuous negotiations, in which parties interact (and just as importantly, expect to interact) over time, concerns about how one’s actions will be perceived (backing down, failing to follow through, showing weakness, showing toughness etc.) are about more than just the present confrontation (negotiation) and the stakes involved in it. Schelling’s concept is therefore particularly useful for explicating the strategic logic related to these types of ongoing relationships.

One potential criticism of this approach would be to point out that *all* relationships, in some way, conform to this conceptualization of dyadic interactions over time. This is simply what is meant by “strategic interaction” and is therefore consistent with (which is also to say, adds nothing to) existing treatments in the literature regarding the interdependence of decision-making (the formal rational choice and game theory literatures come most prominently to mind).

This criticism is fair but overstated. It is certainly true that one of the most fundamental contentions of this dissertation is that international relations are best understood in a historical (ongoing, with the present and future partially contingent on the past) context. There is, as a consequence, clearly, an affinity with more formal rationalist approaches which model ongoing relationships and with game theory which tracks the interdependence of decisions between actors over time (the work of Maoz and Mor [2002] discussed in Chapter 2 on pp. 40-41, for example, represents a game theoretical approach to rivalry). Yet the decision to foreground Schelling's 'continuous negotiations' is for conceptual, not formal, exposition. Because this dissertation examines a small number of historical cases little is gained by abstracting from the actual decisions of actors to model a game interaction; the violence that such models do to reality is not justified when the theory developed here can be formulated in a way that subsumes rather than excludes historical detail (as Charles Tilly [1984] noted in another methodological context, better that theory and method fit "like a sweater rather than a straightjacket"). Ultimately, however, this is a choice reflecting the methodological preferences of the author. In the execution of any research project certain trade-offs will arise; a game theoretical model of rivalry (and rivalry intervention more specifically) may well be useful, but the research bet made here is that non-formal argumentation is just as effective in outlining the basic logic at work, at least at this initial stage of theory development.

A final point worth noting, and one that further distinguishes the concept of rivalry developed here from the trivial observation that all dyadic relationships between states are ongoing and interdependent, is the emphasis on *hostility*. It is assumed, for the purposes of the concept, that the 'continuous negotiation' of rivalry is conflictual in nature (this is also, it should be obvious, in keeping with how Schelling himself viewed them).

In sum, understanding rivalry as a continuous (hostile) negotiation is helpful for establishing its strategic parameters: past interactions and the anticipation of future interactions define the present bargaining situation, amplifying the relevance of reputation, and altering how actors would otherwise be expected to behave in the context of a one-off or isolated encounter.

### *Reputations & Rivalry*

Reputations are the rational basis for rivalry. In the theory outlined here, reputations are treated as broadly influencing the general perceptions of actors with respect to potential future behaviour. Which is to say, past behaviour influences not only perceptions regarding likely behaviour in the context of a specific, ongoing crisis or conflict, but also in hypothetical and as-yet-uninitiated conflict. In other words, reputations are the basis for hostile perceptions such as those observed in the rivalry literature; the atmosphere of enmity that characterizes rivalry is the product of the accumulation of experience between rivals which leads them to expect continued hostility, and the concomitant recognition that one's own reputation will be important moving forward as confrontations and crises renew. I argue that such perceptions of hostility are not 'emotionally loaded' in the interpersonal-individualistic sense of the term (though it is possible that the specific individuals involved may or may not 'hate' their rivals in this way) but rather are the reasonable and predictable result of the search for relevant information and the imperative to be cautious and prudent in international politics.

Goertz and Diehl (2001: 78) are among the few (another recent exception is Van Jackson 2016) to explicitly make the connection between rivalry and reputation:

The most obvious way that the historical experience of the rivals comes into deterrence models is through the concept of reputation and credibility. The credibility of current deterrence threats depends (at least in part) on past behavior in the rivalry.

The affinity between the two concepts is clear. Reputation highlights the history of interaction between states, which speaks to the core of the rivalry approach. While the influence of this history undoubtedly has something to do with the underlying and potentially unresolved stakes involved in particular conflicts (as one or both sides remains dissatisfied with the status quo *ex post*), it is simultaneously connected to the perceptions of decision makers. As Levy and Thompson (2010: 58) conclude: "Certainly political leaders of adversarial states do not ignore their past interactions." This is

particularly true given that, as Bennett (1996) has maintained, the actual stakes or issues in dispute in a rivalry are likely to change over time; in such an event, the link across time is not a particular (unresolved) issue but the perceptions of the actors involved.

Colaresi et. al. (2008: 108, emphasis added) give an excellent description of what this means in a rivalry setting, and are worth quoting at length:

The meaning imputed to the opposing side's actions will depend on the context within which the information is processed... Was the Egyptian threat meant to signal imminent war or was it just a bluff? Would the same threat be interpreted identically by Israel if it had come from the United States? *This decision will be based on an interpretation of the present information in the context of past interactions.* Since states' actual intentions are unobservable, decision-makers must make their best guess as to what each action means. *Past experience forms the guiding hand of expectation to infer intentionality to action.* If one expects cooperative behavior from a state, threats are likely to be interpreted more as warnings or slaps on the wrists as opposed to threats of an oncoming military conflict. Conversely, in a relationship plagued by mistrust and expectations of conflict the same threat may take on a much graver interpretation.

Downs and Jones (2002: 109), in their study of compliance with international treaties, similarly point out that "reputational inferences" are conditional, localized and segmented. It matters, in other words, in what context reputation is being considered.

For international rivals, the context is clear – repeated conflict and hostility lead, in part, to an inference of malign intentions that might not be made in other circumstances, all else being equal; the reputation of Egypt in the eyes of Israel is markedly different than that of the United States, given the respective histories of the states involved (or to put it more categorically, because Egypt is a rival of Israel and the United States is not). In this sense, a 'rivalry reputation' is somewhere between a specific and a general reputation (these concepts are discussed on pp. 48-49 in Chapter 2); it applies across time and between crises, much like the latter, but is nonetheless localized (or 'specific') to interactions within the rivalry itself.

As we have seen, the rivalry literature is replete with references to ‘hatred’, ‘enmity’, and ‘hostility’ – terms which intimate an unthinking, reflexive, malicious animosity in which whole populations revile and detest one another. David Dreyer (2013) has even explored the connections between interstate rivalry and well-known sporting rivalries (Yankees-Red Sox, Duke-North Carolina etc.), likening the “hate” between opposing fans to that between, say, the Chinese and Japanese during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 or between Indians and Pakistanis today. Rivalry is, in this view, emotional, the product of pathologies which distort an individual’s decision-making and cognitive processes (recall the discussion of Pathological Rivalry above). No doubt such sentiments exist in the real world (for more on emotion in IR see Mercer 2005, 2010, 2014; Crawford 2000). Yet there is good reason to believe that they are not the cause but rather the result, or even the instrumentally induced by-product,<sup>19</sup> of rivalry between nations. There is little evidence that such hatred precedes the initiation of rivalry, and much more to suggest that it is incubated as the rivalry unfolds. Even this latter point should not be taken to suggest that the persistence of rivalry is caused by emotional hatred; unless we believe decision-makers are entirely beholden to the collective hysteria of their populations when it comes to formulating foreign policy, it seems more reasonable to focus on the decision-making process and strategic environment leaders face than on the emotional pathologies of their publics.<sup>20</sup>

Even beyond the allusions to popular hatreds and jealousies, however, the balance of the extant rivalry literature points to the ‘irrationality’ of the phenomenon. Much is made, for example, of the “distortions” and “exaggerations” that are exhibited with respect to the perceptions rivals have of one another, in particular the tendency to misperceive evidence as indicating hostile intent in the absence of any rational basis to do so. As is commonly noted, all diplomatic overtures are interpreted as duplicitous, while

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<sup>19</sup> Consider, for example, the feelings of many Canadians and Americans toward the German and Japanese people during and after the Second World War; an attitude of hostility was actively cultivated by government propaganda during the war (for obvious reasons) and lingered in the years after, yet such attitudes did not prevent the American or Canadian governments from entering into comprehensive alliances with the governments of the defeated powers. Hatred toward the Germans and Japanese was inculcated for instrumental purposes, and exerted no subsequent influence once strategic realities had fundamentally changed.

<sup>20</sup> For the contending point of view that decision-makers *are* beholden to their domestic publics see Colaresi 2006. See also McGinnis and Williams 2001. Darnton 2014, for his part, offers an institutional theory of rivalry based on bureaucratic incentives to perpetuate rivalry for parochial interests.

all aggressive actions are believed to reveal true colours. Inevitably, this “cognitive web of intensifying antagonism, mistrust, and threat expectation” (Thompson and Dreyer 2011: 2) is cast as an unfortunate distortion of cool, level-headed decision making. This position is at the core of what Vasquez (1996: 532) has in mind when he writes: “Normal conflict is guided ultimately by a selfish concern, whereas rivalry...can get out of hand and make for disagreement and negative acts that from a strict cost-benefit analysis are not necessary.” Or consider more broadly Thompson’s contention that states in rivalry behave “differently” than non-rivals, the latter not being subject to the distortionary effects of compounded hostility. As a result, states in rivalry are said to disproportionately value “marginal” or “minor” interests vis-à-vis their rival, leading to otherwise-avoidable conflict. This interpretation is ultimately the basis of Pathological Rivalry, described above.

What is particularly striking about this contention is that it ignores the avowed *essence* of the rivalry approach; that is, it evaluates state behaviour by a standard of rationality that is itself devoid of history or context. The rivalry approach was quite explicitly a repudiation of the discrete, cross-sectional analysis of crisis and war that had long characterized the discipline. Yet in highlighting the ‘distorting’ effects of rivalry, scholars nonetheless invoke a cross-sectional, one-off, “strict” rationalism as their baseline of reference. Noting that rivalry behaviour deviates from this discrete rationality, scholars have typically resorted to inexact assertions of cognitive distortion, psychological enmity, hatred, mistrust etc. They have, in other words, stopped short of fusing their emphasis on history and context with rational principles of decision-making. To return to the discussion of Schelling above, the parameters of a continuous negotiation *necessitate* strategic behaviour that is both backward and forward looking. This is not a distortion, but rather a product of the strategic relationship in which rivals find themselves.

There is a tendency to dismiss historical reasoning (reputation, historical analogies, etc.) as short-cuts or convenient but inaccurate ‘heuristics’ in the decision-making process (see for example Stein 1985; Press 2005; Yarhi-Milo 2014). In many instances this assessment is valid, particularly insofar as leaders draw disproportionately on ‘vivid’ historical cases in which they were directly involved or for some other reason

not primarily tied to the objective similarities between situations. It is not disputed that individuals reacting to new information search for ‘cognitive consistency’ by conforming evidence to pre-existing beliefs and worldviews. What is often overlooked, however, is that in certain circumstances is it *perfectly rational to do so*. Robert Jervis’s (1976: 117) admonition that “scholars too often apply the labels of closed-mindedness and cognitive distortion without understanding the necessary role of pre-existing beliefs in the perception and interpretation of new information” continues to hold.

While distortion is certainly possible, the process can be justified because “balanced attitude structures do not reveal irrationality if the cognitive consistency can be explained by the actor’s well-grounded beliefs about the consistency existing in the environment he is perceiving” (ibid.: p. 119). In the context of international relations, ongoing and enduring relationships with particular states (whether conflictual *or* amicable) offer “well-grounded” parameters for such consistency. Sensing deception from someone who has deceived in the past, or inferring aggression from someone who has aggressed before, is rational in a context of incomplete and imperfect information. Reference to past experience

would decrease accuracy *if data were completely unambiguous* or if all states of the world were equally probable. But since the evidence always permits multiple interpretations and because theories developed from previous cases must provide a guide to the explanation of new information, the influence of expectations on perception is not only consistent with rationality, but is ‘essential to the logic of inquiry’ [quoting Kaplan 1964: 86]. One can be too open-minded as well as too closed to new information (ibid.: 154, emphasis added).

Absent this process, actors would confront each new situation, each new piece of information or evidence, *de novo*; which is to say, they would be discounting relevant information, thereby significantly *decreasing* the probability of accurate perception: “Intelligent decision-making in any sphere is impossible unless significant amounts of information are assimilated to pre-existing beliefs” (ibid.: 145). Indeed, this process of

reasoning is fundamental to the very “scientific process” that is often heralded as the apotheosis of rationalism (see Jervis pp. 156-162, *passim*).

The key consideration is that relying on past behaviour and/or reputation is not in and of itself a decision-making distortion and does not, therefore, necessitate explanation from a psychological or cognitive perspective. All that need be relaxed is the assumption of complete or perfect information (or “unambiguous data”) – a situation which fits extremely well with the reality of international relations under the condition of anarchy (more on this below). Particularly in the context of rivalry – which by definition includes a history of interaction between states – inferences informed by past experience can be subsumed within a rationalist framework.

Jervis (1976: 120) himself seems to recognize as much when he says, by way of example:

If you think the Russians are aggressive, there is nothing irrational about viewing their suggestions with suspicion – not only will you know of previous attempts at deception, but the belief that the Russians are adversaries implies, by definition, that you should be skeptical of their proposals.

To rely on past experience, to infer intentions based on rivalry reputation (which is to say, a reputation limited to experiences within the rivalry relationship) is a process which need not be explained by emotion, enmity, hostility or hatred. It is rather a largely unavoidable (and broadly predictable) basis for interpretation amongst states locked in a pattern of repeated and iterated disputes, confrontations, and/or crises.

### *Rivalry Under Anarchy and the Search for Security*

While it may be rational to infer intentions in this way, reputation and past experience are insufficient for explaining how and why states *act* as a result of these inferences. Perceptions of the past help determine the parameters of the milieu (put another way, they help the state *recognize* that it is, in fact, engaged in a ‘continuous

negotiation'), but do not in themselves motivate states in one direction (or toward one response or course of action) over another.

In Maoz and Mor's (2002) supergame model, the geneses of action are state preferences regarding the status quo, and their attendant belief in their ability (or capabilities) to change it (along with their beliefs about their opponents satisfaction/dissatisfaction and attendant capabilities). The basis for action is therefore the present 'game' (or crisis) and the pay-offs related to it (while the selection of a particular strategy is based on the past, or previous games, from which states can learn about their opponents). As the authors themselves point out, however, states in rivalry do not typically pursue an immediate, 'myopic' rationality, maximizing gain in the short-term (within the present 'game'). Instead, they overwhelmingly prefer a long-term, or 'nonmyopic' strategy which takes into consideration *future* interactions.

Obviously, this outcome cannot be explained exclusively by preferences vis-à-vis the *present* status quo. Put more broadly (leaving Moaz and Mor's supergame model), state behaviour will not conform to a "strict cost-benefit" analysis in an immediate, utility-maximizing sense. Instead, recognizing that it will likely have future confrontations with the same opponent (the essence of a continuous negotiation), present behaviour will be determined, in part, by an anticipation of these subsequent interactions. In this sense, the past (through rivalry reputation) suggests a probable future, which is itself the basis for action.

While the focus of their empirical work was on the identification of aggregate rivalry patterns across the international system, Goertz and Diehl (2001: 79, emphasis added) hinted at this perspective when they wrote:

One consequence of the rivalry approach is to inquire about the stability of preferences and the origin of expectations. We suggest that answering these questions will put international conflict in the context of a past and a future. *Part of the key to understanding rivalry will be making the links between the two.*

Having established that the push of the past on rivalries occurs through accumulated interactions and experiences which produce reputations of malign intentions between

rivals, it now remains to be explained why the pull of the future generally results in continued confrontation and conflict, as opposed to, say, more cooperative or peaceful pathways.

Charles Glaser (2010: 84), while not concerned with rivalry *per se*, suggests in his *Rational Theory of International Politics* that "...a world history that has experienced high levels of conflict and results in states often starting their interactions with information that opposing states are likely to have malign motives creates a tendency for a continuation of conflict relations." The reason, according to Glaser (2010: 83), is that "...variation in the state's information about the opposing state's motives can produce variation in the severity of the security dilemma and in the state's choice of strategy." It is precisely this injection of uncertainty, or more specifically the security dilemma, which is missing from Maoz and Mor's model and from other treatments of rivalry which similarly emphasize strategic interaction. The link between perceptions of intentions and state behaviour *requires* assumptions about the goals states have as well as the conditions of the international environment in which they operate. Both of these elements are the domain of conventional IR theory, but are surprisingly neglected in much of the rivalry literature.

The condition of uncertainty, and the relevance of reputation for overcoming it, has already been discussed above. But following from this, the paramountcy of survival, and the reality of self-help to secure it, offer the animating assumptions behind the theory of rivalry intervention. Ultimately, most authors in the rivalry tradition *begin* with materialist assumptions, particularly insofar as territorial disputes are identified as key components and drivers of rivalry behaviour. Yet, as mentioned above, these ostensibly rationalist frameworks seem unable to account for the supposed 'distortions' associated with rivalry behaviour.

Whatever other interests a state might have, they must above all continue to exist in the international system. While obvious, this basic fact conditions states to privilege survival above all other values (Mearsheimer 2001).<sup>21</sup> Given the nature of rivalry,

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<sup>21</sup> To the common critique that an emphasis on survival is overstated because state death is so rare, I reply that our *own* deaths are similarly so (n=1), and yet no one would argue that mortality is an insignificant or trivial consideration in our day-to-day lives (which is to say, we order our activity so as not to cavalierly invite death; driving carefully, checking for traffic when crossing the road, not standing too

moreover, there are likely no other settings or relationships in which the very existence of a state is more challenged or endangered. Intuitively, it is difficult to imagine that a concern for survival has any bearing on Canada's relationship with, or perception of, the United States, even in the face of massive power asymmetry which makes it possible, at least hypothetically, for the latter to completely annex the former. Given the long and established history of amicable relations between Canada and the US, it is reasonable to assume that Ottawa is not strategizing ways to ensure it is not invaded or can defend itself in the event that such an invasion occurs (though such war plans did exist, it should be noted, as recently as 1921 [Lippert 2015]). Yet for international rivals, the precise opposite is true. Given a long and established history of inimical relations, it *is* reasonable to assume that rivals will be overwhelmingly concerned with strategizing ways to ensure their own survival in the event of crisis, conflict or war.

The security dilemma, which ultimately reduces to uncertainty regarding other states' motivations and intentions, is in this sense largely 'solved' by rivalry, albeit it in an alarming and conflict-inducing way. While it is true that intentions are, in the end, "ultimately unknowable" (Mearsheimer 2001: 45), given what has been termed in the philosophy of science "the other minds problem" (Jackson 2011), this does not mean that states do not use whatever information is at their disposal to discern them to the best of their ability. The result of such assessments subsequently influences behaviour. Edelstein (2002: 12) writes, for example:

In the infrequent case where states are confident that another state has either benign or malign intentions, formulating appropriate strategies is straightforward...if State A confidently believes that State B has malign intentions and State B has the capability to harm State A's interests, then State A employs predominately competitive strategies meant both to balance and deter State B.

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closely to steep drop-offs etc.). If anything, this concern is amplified for the state because, as a group-entity, the state is responsible for the lives of everyone within it, thereby rendering self-sacrifice or altruism immoral, an observation which is made by classical realists such as Reinhold Niebuhr and E.H. Carr, among others.

Importantly, these “competitive strategies” are necessitated by State A’s overwhelming desire to survive; the nature of anarchy means international politics is a self-help system – a combination of malign intentions and sufficient capabilities to inflict harm demands that even an inherently peaceful and satisfied state respond by, as Edelstein suggests, balancing or deterring their potential opponent.

Edelstein’s (2002: 25, emphasis added) example of French perceptions during the inter-war period precisely illustrates the dynamics articulated here:

The French government during this period was unimpressed that Weimar Germany was a democracy and pointed instead to historical and geographical realities. In fact, the most pessimistic French leaders believed there to be no uncertainty about German intentions. *They were quite certain about the ultimately malign nature of German intentions.* As French foreign minister Edouard Herriot predicted in 1924 ‘On the day that Germany finds herself strong enough to refuse to pay us she would inevitably bring about a new war.’ Historian Anthony Adamthwaite agrees, noting that ‘Geography imposed a simple, harsh logic on French thinking. The greatest single external threat was Germany *and after two wars in living memory the French could not be other than firm in their insistence on security.*’

The French pointed to a German reputation for aggression (earned over two major wars in recent decades) as the basis by which their own security was imperiled; it goes without saying that this perception, and fear, was validated not long thereafter.

In the context of a rational framework modelled on continuous negotiation, in which the push of the past and the pull of the future combine to generate certain strategic imperatives, rivals behave in predictable ways owing to basic pressures that exert themselves on decision-makers in the international environment. The simple assumption here is that survival and security are a states’ fundamental goal. In the context of civil war intervention, this means moving to ‘balance’ against a rival who has become involved in a particular civil war.

Recall the example cited from Stein (2013), earlier, in which American and Israeli officials differed in their assessments as to the imminence of the danger from the Iranian nuclear program. Rather than some kind of collective emotional response, as Stein posits, one can explain these different assessments by appreciating the influence of the concerns for security and state survival, which, given the threat in question, were more acute for the Israelis than for the Americans. The key consideration is how states evaluate potential threats, and the information they use to make these evaluations. The nature of rivalry, as a continuous hostile negotiation, serves to amplify the concerns of the security dilemma (or, put another way, allows “State A to confidently believe that State B has malign intentions”). Given the imperative of survival, this is predictable, as is the behaviour which results from it: a concern for preventing an unfavourable change in the relative position or status quo between the two rivals.

This means that outwardly aggressive behaviour can in fact be defensive in origin. Intervention into civil conflict, for example, can be spurred by defensive and not expansionist goals. Balancing can occur not just through alliances or arms buildups (as typically conceptualized) but through low-grade conflict itself, short of all-out war, such as proxy conflicts or off-setting interventions, designed to forestall advantage accruing to one’s rival. This might well result in escalation or conflict spirals, as states respond to perceived aggression in kind, but the initial motivation is nonetheless defensive.

Consider for example Pakistan’s activities in Afghanistan. Continued support for the Taliban, and the targeting of Indian interests, are typically explained by reference to revanchist motivations regarding the re-establishment of pre-2001 Taliban-era influence. Yet the persistence of this behaviour, and the extent to which it harms ostensible Pakistani interests with respect to regional trade and Islamabad’s own security against Islamists, defies such an interpretation. Instead, Pakistan’s behaviour is consistent with a defensive logic with respect to its ongoing rivalry with India – the disjuncture of the American and subsequent NATO intervention afforded New Delhi significant opportunities to enhance Indian influence in Afghanistan; Pakistan has consistently opposed and attempted to undermine this influence, not out of aggression but rather apprehension as to the implications of an Indian-influenced Afghanistan for Pakistani security (see Chapters 5-7).

The Soviet intervention into Afghanistan, over two decades earlier, was similarly explained, at the time, by reference to aggressive Soviet intentions (Yarhi-Milo 2014). Yet the subsequent historical record has revealed that it was primarily Soviet concerns about American encroachment, and the prospect of an American-influenced regime in Kabul, that precipitated the intervention. As Dennis Ross (1984: 247, emphasis in original) observed, “Soviet leaders...permit the use of decisive and perhaps risky action far more readily for *defending* as opposed to *extending* Soviet gains.” Israeli leaders, for their part, were largely willing to curtail their intervention into Lebanon in 1975 once it became clear that Syria would abide by implicit ‘red-lines’ with respect to the advance of Syrian forces past certain geographical boundaries, keeping them sufficiently distant from Israeli territory (see Chapter 8).

Consistent across all of these cases, and others, is the invocation of language which mirrors that often contained in the rivalry literature (and in particular the Pathological Rivalry explanation). Paranoia, obsession, irrational worst-case thinking; the purported motivations underlying intervention into peripheral or marginal areas, or the intensity with which such interventions are pursued, are cast as psychological or emotional pathologies. “Rather than taking proactive action based on an independent assessment of important national security goals and values,” Stein (2013) writes,

leaders often grant the initiative for action to the opposition. In other words, leaders often simply react to actions of the opponent, seeing threat wherever the adversary makes a move, rather than stepping back to ask whether a given action really constitutes a clear threat, whether the issue of contention really creates a genuine challenge to national security, or whether the opponent might be acting for domestic reasons with no intention of threatening the other side.

But would such an assessment yield definitive answers to any of these questions? Would such questions be completely resolved even after an exhaustive evaluation (itself not possible given the immediacy and time constraints of most international crises)?<sup>22</sup> The

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<sup>22</sup> Elsewhere (Harvey and Mitton 2017, see especially pp. 82-88), I point out similar difficulties with respect to Daryl Press’ (2005) ‘power’ and ‘interests’ thesis regarding credibility in coercive diplomatic

point is not to suggest that objective assessments of particular situations should not be attempted, or are not useful in assessing alternative policy options, but the reality of international politics, attendant as it is with anarchy, uncertainty, the imperative of survival, and self-help, make it strikingly more difficult to conduct such straight-forward evaluations as those Stein, and others, recommend. Particularly in the context of significant strategic danger, as is signalled by past behaviour within rivalry, and potential military threat, one cannot simply dismiss defensive behaviour as the by-product of distorted perceptions. This behaviour is consistent across time and space, which is to say it is exhibited by a range of individuals (each presumably different or unique with respect to life experience, belief system, operational code, psychological makeup, hawkishness, dovishness, emotionality, mental acuity etc.). Similarly, if the contention is that *all* individuals display these misperceptions when confronted with similar situations than the explanation for their behaviour is best found within the structure of the situation itself; psychology is at best a micro-foundation of a broader theory.

### *Bayesianism & Bargaining*

The theory outlined in this dissertation is described as broadly ‘rational’ insofar as states behave according to an underlying ‘preference’ for survival and their assessment of a rival’s intentions is based on available information in the context of uncertainty and anarchy; which is to say, such perceptions are the product of rational processes and are not distortions related to emotional biases brought on by hatred or animosity. As quoted earlier, Stein (and others in the psychological camp; see also the quotation from Valeriano cited on p. 64) considers threat perception such as that observed in rivalry as non-rational because a proper weighting of available evidence does not occur – pre-existing emotional biases inhibit and distort the assessment of new information regarding the actual threat that exists in a particular situation (for example a diplomatic overture is

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crises – how can states so easily and accurately assess either of these dimensions? The point is that past behaviour and reputations are fundamental for calculating credibility precisely because they provide crucial information with respect to an opponent’s interest (what it values) and capabilities (power) to achieve them. In the present context, the opacity of international politics similarly precludes the immediate and accurate assessments Stein posits, but again states do the best they can to overcome these conditions by reference to available information, including past actions and reputations.

regarded as a ruse, a minor manoeuvre as an indication of imminent attack etc.). The basic thrust of this argument is that threat perception in rivalry violates the rule of Bayesian updating, and is, as a consequence, *ipso facto* non-rational.

While often expressed in formal mathematical terms, the logic of Bayesian inference or updating is actually quite simple: assessments as to probability should be adjusted (either up or down) as new information is received. In the context of international relations, this means that new information regarding the intentions of another state should result in the revision of previous assessments; if a state makes a move (either conciliatory or aggressive) in the form of a ‘costly signal’ (meaning the action carries real costs thereby enhancing its credibility<sup>23</sup>) an attendant revision should occur (if the move was conciliatory the state should be perceived as less hostile, if aggressive more hostile etc.). Other behaviour should similarly result in updated inferences, including how a state behaves with respect to other international actors, whether it honours other international agreements, etc. The basic logic is quite powerful: if states do not consider new information, and do not change their perceptions (‘priors’) as a result of this new information, the basis of their new perceptions violates fundamental principles of rationality.

At first blush, the theory of rivalry outlined in this chapter seems to imply just such a violation. Perceptions as to hostility are resistant to the updating of beliefs, such that even conciliatory moves are dismissed as at best insignificant and at worst outright duplicitous. If true, this observation would be potentially fatal to the ‘rationalist’ foundation of the theory. Yet the principle of Bayesianism implies an ongoing process; the standard for evaluation is not (and can never be) a neutral starting point in which an actor has no prior-existing information (even in those circumstances in which such information is so minimal as to be near non-existent). Updating always occurs relative to an already-established ‘baseline’ which sets the probabilities by which new information is assessed. If this baseline is sufficiently entrenched (which is to say, the actor has *already* assessed sufficient information to render an assessment with high probability) then new

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<sup>23</sup> Fearon (1997) for example outlines two basic types of costly signal: tied-hands (such as public statements which increase audience costs if act is not followed through) and sunk costs (such as the mobilization for military assets).

information, even that which contradicts the present assessment, will not necessarily result in an observable alteration of attitude.

Indeed, the psychological literature has observed this phenomenon in the form of the ‘anchoring’ heuristic, in which “Initial judgements or prior beliefs serve as a conceptual anchor on the processing of new information and the revision of estimates” (Stein 2013). As with the general discussion on behaviouralism and related psychological approaches, this suggests that ‘anchoring’ is a distortion. Yet if the basis for pre-existing beliefs is experience, and the consequences of being wrong are sufficiently severe so as to privilege caution, maintaining prior perceptions is not necessarily a deviation from rationality (recall Jervis’ observation cited on p. 83 that relying on pre-existing beliefs is in fact central to rationalism).

In this regard, the theory of rivalry does not contradict Bayesian rationality, it merely suggests that perceptions of hostility – based on prior experience and the salience of the issues in dispute – form an entrenched baseline which is resistant to change in the face of incremental new information. This possibility accords with the observation in the rivalry literature that major “political shocks” (such as systemic war, revolution, or the partition and therefore creation of new countries) are virtual necessary conditions for rivalry termination (Goertz and Diehl 2001; Rasler et al. 2013). Such shocks would be sufficient to shatter prior perceptions (or disrupt the continuity of experience which constitutes the relationship of rivalry) and ‘reset’ relations such that new assessments of intentions could proceed with greater weight given to new information.

The point, ultimately, is not to cast the present theory in strict or formal Bayesian terms. The theory proceeds according to a logic of inference that is predicated on historical observation and process-tracing, not mathematical modeling. Yet in invoking the term ‘rational’ it is nonetheless important to pre-empt potential criticisms by pointing out how the theory does not violate axiomatic rational principles.

In a similar vein, readers may note – particularly given the reference to ‘bargaining’ vis-à-vis Schelling’s conceptualization of continuous negotiations above – a lack of engagement with the well-established bargaining literature on the causes of war. Fearon’s (1995) well-known “rationalist explanation for war” posited that war between states was essentially the product of bargaining failure linked to three factors: information

problems (and incentives for bluffing), commitment problems (whereby no state can credibly commit to honour current agreements or not behave aggressively in the future) and issue indivisibility (which makes it difficult to establish a settlement). Fearon in particular emphasized the first two, information and commitment problems, as leading to bargaining failure and therefore war.

Again, the intent in this dissertation is not to outline a formal bargaining model (even further, the theory here is not interested in the causes of war *per se* but rather alternative forms of international conflict i.e. balancing civil conflict intervention), but it is worth noting that both of the problems highlighted by Fearon are related to elements of the theory: uncertainty and anarchy. The absence of perfect information (and the incentive to misrepresent or bluff regarding's one actual resolve or intentions) is consistent with my theory's emphasis on past experience for the assessment of intentions. This type of information outweighs what an opponent says or claims in a particular moment for precisely the reasons Fearon articulates. Second, the commitment problem is acute precisely because the nature of international anarchy precludes the outside enforcement of agreements. As Powell (2006: 170) explains: "The crucial issue in commitment problems is that in the anarchy of international politics, states may be unable to commit themselves to following through on an agreement and may also have incentives to renege on it." This situation mandates a cautious, pessimistic approach to international interactions, an attitude naturally amplified by the informational inferences available in rivalry.

The purpose of this brief section is not to tie the present theory into either Bayesianism or formal bargaining models. Instead, I mean to address potential affinities between these approaches and the theory I present, simultaneously forestalling criticisms that my theory violates or is inconsistent with core principles from these other relevant perspectives.

## **Conclusion**

The theory outlined thus far represents a novel explanation of state behaviour within rivalry. It conceptualizes rivalry as a 'continuous negotiation' in which present

behaviour is informed by the past and conditioned by the future. It contributes to ongoing debates regarding the relevance of reputations in international politics by highlighting how past interactions between rivals establish the parameters of their strategic interaction. Using past behaviour to infer intentions is a rational response to a condition of incomplete information. The rivalry solution to the security dilemma is to act competitively. A rivals' intervention into a civil conflict has the potential to negatively affect the balance of power within the rivalry; such behaviour is part and parcel of the continuous negotiation in which rivals find themselves. As a result, rivals will conduct balancing or off-setting interventions which are fundamentally *defensive* in nature, even as they might appear aggressive or belligerent.

## CHAPTER 4: THE CAUSAL MECHANISM & CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapter, I outlined a theory of rivalry in which the push of the past and the pull of the future conditions the perceptions that rivals form about one another; past experience (and associated reputations for behaviour) amplify security concerns in the context of anticipated future confrontation. As a result, rivals are extremely concerned about potential alterations to the balance and/or status quo within the rivalry. Such alterations are likely to be considered as presenting unacceptable losses in security in the ongoing, continuous competition that constitutes a rivalry relationship. In this chapter, I specifically address the way in which these dynamics influence the decision to intervene in an ongoing civil conflict. The argument is predicated on a proposed *causal mechanism* linking rivalry to intervention; the perceptual dynamics described in Chapter 3 shape the decision-making process of rivals confronting the decision of intervention/non-intervention. Causal mechanism-based explanations are specifically designed to link observed correlations; they specify the ‘trigger’ between X and Y. The next portion of the chapter details how case studies are a useful means of theory development, and in particular for establishing the existence of the proposed causal mechanism. I also offer the criteria by which specific cases are selected for these purposes. I then outline the process-tracing method for within-case causal inference, noting that the type of causal mechanism being investigated – which involves the decision-making process of state leaders and policymakers – is best approached through ‘anticipated’ process-tracing, which focuses on the anticipated consequences of potential decisions. I then note that cross-case comparison can incrementally increase confidence in the applicability of the proposed explanation across time and space. Finally, I outline the basic logic associated with testing and evaluating theory, particularly with respect to the search for, and assessment of, relevant case evidence.

### **A Causal Mechanism Explanation for Rivalry Intervention**

Definitions of causal mechanisms abound. For Mahoney (2000: 531), “Causal mechanisms are the intervening processes through which one variable exerts a causal

effect on another variable.” King, Keohane and Verba (1994), often considered the great skeptics of qualitative research, note that:

Some scholars argue the central idea of causality is that of a set of ‘causal mechanisms’ posited to exist between cause and effect. This view makes intuitive sense: any coherent account of causality needs to specify how the effects are exerted.

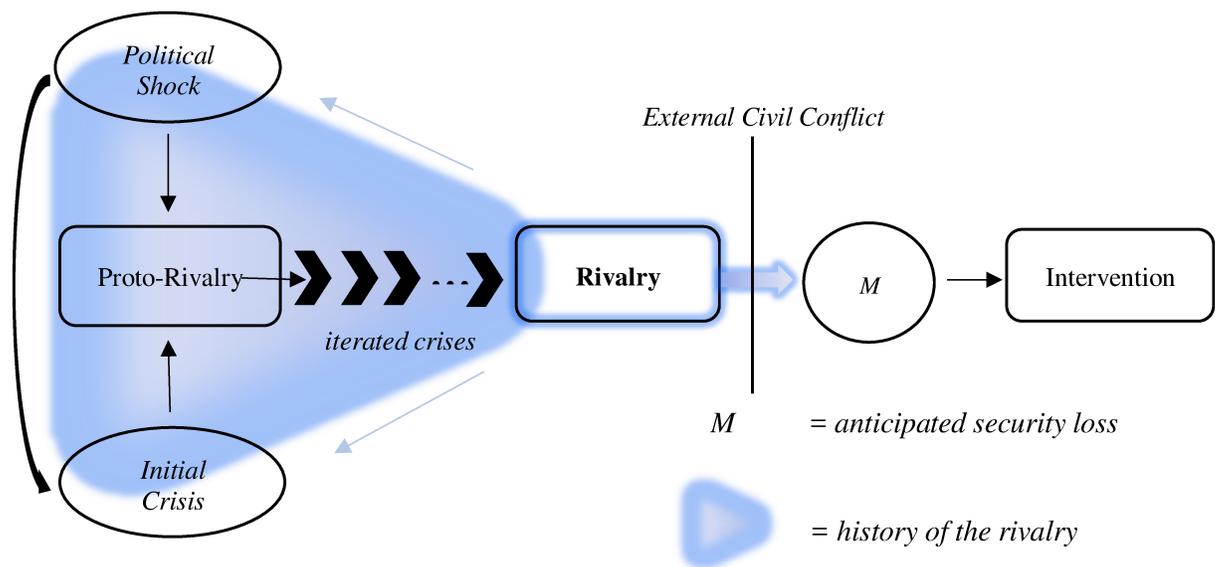
Bennett and George (1997: 1), for their part, posit causal mechanisms as “the processes and intervening variables through which causal or explanatory variables produce causal effects.” Little (1991:15), likewise: “A causal mechanism...is a series of events governed by lawlike regularities that lead from the explanans to the explanandum.” For Hedström and Swedberg (1998: 13), “Mechanisms...are analytical constructs that provide hypothetical links between observable events.” Gambetta’s (1998: 102) definition is more complex, and particularly relevant for the analysis in this dissertation:

I take ‘mechanisms’ to be hypothetical causal models that make sense of individual behavior. They have the form, ‘Given certain conditions K, an agent will do [Y] because of M with probability p.’ M refers either to forms of reasoning governing decision making (of which rational choice models are a subset) or to subintentional processes that affect action both directly (as impulsiveness) or by shaping preferences or beliefs.

The mechanism of rivalry posited here is closest to the ‘M’ specified by Gambetta: a form of reasoning or decision-making whereby strategic concern for the future shapes behaviour. Like essentially all social scientific theories, this theory is probabilistic; yet the conditions ‘K’ (past interaction, expectation of future conflict, and international anarchy) should produce ‘Y’ (a balancing intervention) because of ‘M’ (again, concern for the future and the need to ensure security/survival).

**Figure 1** provides a visualization of the explanation for rivalry intervention. To the left of the figure we see the onset of rivalry. Because rivalry initiation is not the focus

of the argument I include only two basic components here: ‘political shocks’, identified by the rivalry literature as a virtual necessary condition for onset (Goertz and Diehl 2001); and an ‘initial crisis’, given that by definition rivalry must begin with a hostile interaction.<sup>24</sup> Note that the beginning of a rivalry can only be ascertained in hindsight – obviously not all crises result in a situation of rivalry, but rather offer the *potential* for rivalry to subsequently emerge (hence the label ‘proto-rivalry’, a term used by Goertz and Diehl 2001). Also necessary is a succession of crises and conflicts through which the condition of rivalry (and the associated perceptions of the states within it) is



**Figure 1: Visualization of Rivalry Intervention Explanation**

created. While the argument makes no specific causal claims regarding necessary or sufficient conditions for the genesis of rivalry (and therefore potentially omits other relevant variables<sup>25</sup>), the *existence* of these crises (as well as their circumstances and

<sup>24</sup> Which is to say, a hostile interaction must be observed at some point, and the first such interaction may, with the benefit of hindsight, come to be seen as the ‘beginning’ of rivalry. More fundamentally, of course, it remains possible that the rivalry in fact began earlier – the dynamics of rivalry became operative before the first visible manifestation of conflict/confrontation. Because I am not explicitly concerned with rivalry onset, however, such considerations, while interesting, are not directly relevant here.

<sup>25</sup> The arrow connecting the political shock to the initial crisis is the recognition that the former typically triggers the latter.

outcomes) are the *context* in which rivals consider an external civil conflict (represented by the vertical line in the figure). The weight of this context is indicated by the blue cone which filters into rivalry (the light blue arrows similarly indicate the rivals' search for information about their rivals' intentions in looking back over this history and these experiences). The rivalry itself is, in a sense, the culmination of this history. Confronted by an external civil conflict, intervention is triggered by the mechanism – 'M' – of 'anticipated security loss'. Though the wording is slightly awkward, this definition captures the core logic at work; rivals *anticipate* (or expect) that failure to intervene will result in a loss of security in the future. Given that renewed conflict with a rival is assumed (the security dilemma 'solved' with an assumption of malign intentions), unchecked intervention will result in an unacceptable shift in the balance of the rivalry (this proposition should apply regardless of whether the rival is the stronger or weaker side; for the former it would mean the potential loss or diminution of an existing advantage; for the latter the exacerbation of an existing disadvantage).

### *First-mover Interventions*

As mentioned, the primary focus of this dissertation is on balancing civil war interventions. Yet a balancing intervention requires, by definition, an initial intervention by what I have chosen to call a 'first-mover'. All balancing interventions are preceded by a first-mover intervention, but not all first-mover interventions are followed by a balancing one (the latter are a subset of the former, in set-relational terms). As a result, there may be *different* explanations as to why a state chooses to intervene depending on whether they are the first-mover or the balancer. Indeed, given the discussion in Chapter 3, it would make sense to expect the influence of rivalry to be more acute for balancers – a *response* to a rivals' action is more obviously in line with the defensive concerns I argue are operative in rivalry. It may be that the theory is only useful for explaining the balancer's motivations. Whatever the motivation behind first-mover intervention (here the broader literature on intervention suggests multiple possibilities, including ethnic ties, ideological or ideational affinities, domestic political pressures, fears of conflict contagion, etc.), the dynamics of rivalry will engender a balancing intervention by the first-movers' rival.

At the same time, it remains possible that the first-mover is also primarily influenced by rivalry dynamics. As I have argued, a state engaged in rivalry has amplified security concerns; this ‘lens’ may shape initial assessments of a civil conflict – even before a rival is involved – and trigger intervention. Indeed, the opportunity to *be* the first-mover may attract them in this regard, which is to say moving first might be preferred precisely because it forestalls the loss of security that would accompany unchecked rival intervention were it to eventually occur (a preventative move, as in the apocryphal aphorism that ‘Rome conquered the world in self-defence’). The point is that at this initial stage, in which case studies of specific balancing interventions are conducted to explore, develop and refine the possible causal mechanism linking rivalry to intervention (see below), it is not necessary to exclude first-mover motivations from consideration. The power of historical case studies is precisely their ability to unpack and examine complex processes; conclusions regarding the relative fit of theoretical expectations with actual state behaviour (and the possible differences between first-mover and balancer motivations in specific cases) can therefore be incorporated *ex post* (see Chapter 10) and need not be rigorously specified *a priori*. It is more useful to cast the net wide – to include both first-mover and balancing interventions in the search for evidence – and refine/narrow based on the findings, rather than restrict the range of inquiry before the evidence is evaluated.

### *Case Studies & Case Selection*

As discussed in Chapter 2, the quantitative literature has established that the presence of rivalry is strongly correlated with the occurrence of balancing civil war interventions (see for example Findley and Teo 2006; Hironaka 2005; Mullenbach 2001; Wolak 2014; Gent 2010; Mullenbach and Matthews 2008). In methodological terms, the “cross-case” and generalized effects of rivalry (condition X) on intervention (outcome Y) have been examined. The proposed dissertation cuts in where this approach leaves off, focusing instead on the within-case and causal relationship between X and Y. Rohlfing (2012: 12) uses the example of democratic peace theory to summarize the logic of this shift:

The central cross-case hypothesis of democratic peace theory simply states that two democracies are at peace with each other. The hypothesis is about the causal effect of a democratic dyad on the nature of foreign relations between the two countries in terms of war and peace. A within-case hypothesis of the democratic peace phenomenon could specify the mechanism that explains why two democratic countries refrain from fighting each other, a question left implicit by the cross-case proposition.

*Mutatis mutandis*, this is precisely what is attempted here; instead of a democratic dyad I focus on a rivalry dyad, and instead of the decision to refrain from fighting I investigate the decision to conduct balancing civil war interventions.

Given this research objective, I conduct a series of case studies using within-case, process-tracing methods. The purpose of these case studies will be to evaluate the posited causal mechanism or pathway linking the presence of international rivalry to the decision to intervene in an extra-dyadic civil conflict. The importance of this phenomena (i.e. the exacerbation of violence that results) makes understanding the causal mechanism and process by which such interventions occur important for its own sake; beyond the correlation identified in the quantitative literature, what do these interventions actually look like, how are they performed, and what other relevant variables or dynamics are revealed through historical analysis of particular cases?

The case study method is suitable for this purpose because of its inherent sensitivity to mechanisms and processes, as opposed to effects or correlations. As John Gerring (2007: 5) has noted:

Within political science and sociology, the identification of a specific mechanism – a causal pathway – has come to be seen as integral to causal analysis, regardless of whether the model in question is formal or informal or whether the evidence is qualitative or quantitative. Given this newfound (or at least newly self-conscious) interest in mechanisms, it is hardly surprising that social scientists turn to case studies as a mode of causal investigation.

Crucially, the case study method is never simply focused on the case at hand, a mere one-off explanation (this is true even if only a single case is examined, let alone several). While certainly more narrow than large-N statistical analysis, small-N case studies nonetheless attempt generalization (even if consciously and carefully circumscribed by appropriate ‘scope conditions’). Indeed, the recognition that the results of a case study extend beyond its borders is inherent in the definition of the concept itself. “A case study,” Gerring (2007: 20) writes, “may be understood as the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is – as least in part – to shed light on a larger class of cases (a population).” Jack Levy (2008: 2), likewise, highlights the importance of *theory* with respect to case studies:

With the shift of political science toward a more theoretical orientation in the last three decades, qualitative methodologists began to think of a case as an *instance* of something else, of a theoretically defined class of events.

The key consideration is that particular cases can help build our understanding of certain concepts, phenomenon and classes of events. A well-constructed and executed case study contributes to the development of theoretical perspectives relevant to the phenomenon of which that case is an instance.

Case studies can be used to build, test, or modify theories (Rohlfing 2012; George and Bennett 2005). Often, some combination of these tasks occurs in any particular research project. Nonetheless, it is important to identify which is the main purpose of the case studies being conducted. Modification is most suited for a well-established theory seeking extension to ‘deviant’ or ‘outlier’ cases (George and Bennett 2005). Likewise, theory testing is most effective when several clear theoretical alternatives have been identified and articulated in the literature. Finally, theory building is suitable when there is a dearth of relevant hypotheses and potential explanations for a particular phenomenon (ibid.). This last scenario most closely approximates the context of the present dissertation, in which I present a novel explanation linking rivalry dynamics to the decision to intervene in civil conflict. The purpose of the case studies is therefore

primarily to facilitate the further development of this theory. At the same time, of course, the posited explanation – outlined above – is evaluated by reference to the evidence available in each case, meaning theory ‘testing’ is also relevant (i.e. the case studies are not purely inductive). The distinction between building and testing is important, however, for guiding the selection of cases. For the latter, cases should be selected so as to maximize coverage and confidence, for example by choosing ‘least-likely’ or ‘most-difficult’ cases (the logic of these case types is that if a theory is operative in a case whose parameters are not conducive to theoretical expectations, then it is likely to apply in other, unexamined cases which are more straightforward). In selecting two or more cases for the purposes of testing, similarly, one could select ‘most different’ cases so as to demonstrate that the theory operates in situations with significant variance on variables others than those of interest (for a discussion of the various case study ‘types’ vis-à-vis case selection see Gerring 2007; Seawright and Gerring 2008).

In the context of theory development, however, the priorities are slightly different. Particularly as it relates to causal mechanism research, case selection at this stage should focus on cases which clearly demonstrate the presence and functioning of the proposed causal mechanism. When building on an observed correlation between X and Y, qualitative case studies are well suited for this purpose – establishing the existence of causal mechanisms – as in the case of rivalry intervention into civil conflicts:

the case study is about looking at causal mechanisms in individual cases and confirming that the proposed causal linkage between X and Y can be found in them. Hence, it is about causal inference within cases. The researcher needs to convince her audience that X was a cause of Y in the individual case; this is within-case causal inference (Goertz 2016: 8-9).

This is similar to Gerring’s (2007: 122) discussion of a “pathway case”: “the pathway case exists...in circumstances where cross-case covariational patterns are well studied but where the mechanism linking X and Y remains dim.” Gerring (2007: 131) goes on to note that “this sort of case illustrates the causal relationship of interest in a particularly vivid manner.” Goertz (2016: 14) concurs: “If the main goal of a case study is to investigate

causal mechanisms,” he writes, “then one should look for a good example of that causal mechanism in action.” Ideally, a pathway case is one “where the causal effect of the factor of interest can be isolated from other potentially confounding factors, the logic being that a case in which one knows a particular causal factor to be dominant should be ideally situated to shed light on the mechanisms involved” (Nome 2007: 7). In other words, the ‘archetypical’ pathway case is one in which X is exclusively responsible for Y. In practice, of course, it is exceedingly difficult if not impossible to identify one or more cases in which all potentially confounding factors (i.e. potential alternative causes of Y) can be confidently dismissed; nonetheless, the emphasis should be on selecting cases in which the proposed link between X and Y is clear and pronounced, as such a case will maximize the researcher’s ability to illustrate a clear argument as to the way in which X causes Y (i.e. the causal mechanism at work). (Of course, this characteristic simultaneously presents obstacles to generalizability; see the discussion on pp. 122-23 below and pp. 470-71 in Chapter 10.) In terms of theory development toward the articulation of a causal-mechanism based explanation of rivalry intervention, therefore, the appropriate logic for case selection suggests that a pathway case – one in which both rivalry (X) and dual-sided intervention (Y) are clearly present – is preferable.

As mentioned above, the purpose of a case study – even one focused on within-case causal analysis tied to the explication of a causal mechanism – is to offer insight into a broader population of like-cases, even if the researcher must be cautious with respect to the generalizations that are inferred. With this in mind, it is important to identify the relevant ‘population’ of cases vis-à-vis the phenomenon under investigation. A necessary preliminary step before deciding which specific case(s) to select for investigation is the identification of this population (George and Bennett 2005). The population of this dissertation is balancing rivalry interventions into extra-dyadic civil conflicts.

Unfortunately, available data does not allow for a comprehensive identification of all cases in the population, for several reasons. First, many instances of covert and/or indirect intervention have not been, and likely cannot be, fully documented. While this dissertation is concerned with intervention more broadly, so-called ‘proxy-wars’ fall beneath this umbrella, and are notoriously difficult to document. As Geraint Hughes (2012: 8) explains:

It is often impossible to gain firm information on the extent of such assistance (how many millions of US dollars' worth of aid provided, how many proxy personnel trained, the types of weaponry and other equipment supplied, even the number of its own troops the sponsor provides to augment their client's war effort).

As such, there are likely more cases in the population than can be identified via available historical data.

Second, data prior to 1945, even for more overt interventions, are difficult to ascertain in any precise detail. The Correlates of War Intra-State War Data Set, 1816-1997 (v. 3.0) does identify external civil war 'participants' and the side on which they intervened, but the threshold to be considered a participant is relatively high (direct involvement *and* at least 1,000 committed troops or 100 battle-related deaths) meaning many of the interventions that would be of interest to this dissertation are omitted. Fortunately, data for the period after 1945 are more available (though, again, many of the more covert interventions are likely missing from this data as well). In **Table 1**, I present a list of balancing rivalry interventions between 1945 and 2002. I also include two additional dimensions for descriptive purposes: the balance of power (BoP) within the rivalry, and whether the intervention is global (i.e. outside of the region of the interveners), local (within the rivalry region) or mixed (global for one intervener and local for the other). There were 35 balancing interventions during this time period, including between Major/Major (9), Major/Minor (13) and Minor/Minor (18)<sup>26</sup> rivals; as well as global (5), local (19) and mixed (11) interventions. The data for this table were derived from Mullenbach (2001) and Wolak (2014). The criteria for identifying whether interveners were rivals were taken from Colaresi et. al (2008), who offer lists of rivalries generated from six different operational definitions found in the rivalry literature. Interventions listed in **bold** denote a 'consensus rivalry', meaning the rivalry was found

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<sup>26</sup> The bracketed numbers exceed 35 because several interventions included multiple parties on a particular side, meaning the same intervention could include a Major/Minor and Major/Major or Minor/Minor rivalry etc.

on all six rivalry lists. Interventions listed in *italics* denote rivalries found on three or more of the six rivalry lists.

While not a representation of the complete population, the list in **Table 1** represents a reasonable sample of balancing rivalry interventions.<sup>27</sup> The selection of a sample post-1945 is justified for reasons beyond merely the availability of descriptive data; there is a general recognition in the literature that interventions prior to World War II likely proceeded according to a different logic than those that occurred after it (because of the differing conditions with respect to colonialism and the emergence of the Cold War); by extension, there is reason to believe that the mechanism under investigation in this dissertation may only apply to the latter era.

The important consideration in defining my population (and attendant sample) in this way is that I am *not* attempting to explain all civil war intervention or even all balancing civil war intervention. As stated above, my purpose is specifically to investigate the causal mechanism or process linking rivalry to balancing intervention. This focus vitiates the standard directive against ‘selecting on the dependent variable’, a criticism often levied at qualitative case study research, and made famous by King, Keohane and Verba (1994). By definition, my population of cases displays no variance in outcome: a balancing rivalry intervention. As such, selecting on the dependent variable cannot be avoided and is in fact necessary (for a justification see Rohlfing 2012).<sup>28</sup>

A further consideration worth addressing is whether this population is drawn too narrowly. This relates in particular to the first-mover/balancer consideration; what about cases in which one rival intervenes (a first-mover) but no subsequent balancing intervention occurs? After all, not all civil conflict interventions are dual-sided; to the extent that a state sees its rival intervene but chooses not to respond, this would suggest the absence of the proposed causal mechanism in a situation in which it might be expected to operate, given the theory outlined in Chapter 3. Such cases would be

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<sup>27</sup> It is not, however, a full population of post-1945 interventions, because of the data difficulties described on page 104.

<sup>28</sup> As Rohlfing (2012: 89) explains: “For a within-case analysis, King, Keohane, and Verba’s prescription is invalid because the selected cases should lay a solid foundation for process tracing. This is only achieved by choosing cases that meet the requirements in terms of the cross-case scores on the cause (or causes) and the outcome.” This comment similarly underscores the importance of selection so-called ‘pathway’ cases, as discussed on pp. 108-112 below.

<b>Civil Conflict</b>	<b>Rival Intervener A</b>	<b>Rival Intervener B</b>	<b>BoP</b>	<b>Global or Local</b>
<b>Afghanistan (2001-)</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>Minor/Minor</b>	<b>Local</b>
<b>Angola (1975-1988)</b>	<b>USSR</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>Major/Major</b>	<b>Global</b>
<i>Bolivia (1967)</i>	<i>US</i>	<i>Cuba</i>	<i>Major/Minor</i>	<i>Local</i>
Cambodia (1970-1975)	US/South Vietnam	North Vietnam	Major/Minor/Minor	Mixed
Cambodia (1979-1991)	USSR/China/Laos	North Vietnam	Major/Minor/Minor	Mixed
<b>China (1946-1949)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>USSR</b>	<b>Major/Major</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
<b>Cyprus (1963-1964)</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>Minor/Minor</b>	<b>Local</b>
Djibouti (1999)	Ethiopia	Eritrea	Minor/Minor	Local
Egypt (1993-1998)	US	Iran	Major/Minor	Mixed
<b>El Salvador (1980-1991)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>USSR</b>	<b>Major/Major</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
El Salvador (1980-1991)	Honduras	Nicaragua	Minor/Minor	Local
<b>Ethiopia (1962-1991)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>USSR/Cuba</b>	<b>Major/Major/Minor</b>	<b>Global</b>
<b>Indonesia (1956-1960)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>China</b>	<b>Major/Major</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
<b>Iraq (1963)</b>	<b>Syria</b>	<b>Israel</b>	<b>Minor/Minor</b>	<b>Local</b>
<i>Iraq (1973-1975)</i>	<i>USSR</i>	<i>Iran</i>	<i>Major/Minor</i>	<i>Local</i>
Iraq (1983-1987)	Turkey	Iran	Minor/Minor	Local
<b>Laos (1960-1962)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>USSR</b>	<b>Major/Major</b>	<b>Global</b>
<b>Lebanon (1975-1988)</b>	<b>Israel</b>	<b>Syria</b>	<b>Minor/Minor</b>	<b>Local</b>
<b>Lebanon (1988-1990)</b>	<b>Syria</b>	<b>Israel</b>	<b>Minor/Minor</b>	<b>Local</b>
Malaysia (1963-1966)	UK	Indonesia	Major/Minor	Mixed
<i>Mauritania (1975-1978)</i>	<i>Morocco</i>	<i>Algeria</i>	<i>Minor/Minor</i>	<i>Local</i>
Mozambique (1979-1993)	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Minor/Minor	Local
<b>Nicaragua (1982-1990)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>USSR</b>	<b>Major/Major</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
North Yemen (1962-1967)	Egypt	Saudi Arabia	Minor/Minor	Local
Philippines (1970-1989)	Libya	US	Minor/Major	Global
Rwanda (1990-1994)	DRC	Uganda	Minor/Minor	Local
Senegal (1990-1991)	US	Libya/Iraq	Major/Minor	Global
Somalia (2002)	Eritrea	Ethiopia	Minor/Minor	Local
<b>South Vietnam (1960-1964)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>USSR/China/NV</b>	<b>Major/Major/Minor</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
<b>Sri Lanka (1984-1987)</b>	<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>Minor/Minor</b>	<b>Local</b>
Tajikistan (1992-1994)	Russia	Afghanistan	Major/Minor	Local
<b>Thailand (1965-1985)</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>China</b>	<b>Major/Major</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
Turkey (1984-1999)	US	Iran/Syria	Major/Minor	Mixed
Yemen (1994)	Iraq	Saudi Arabia	Minor/Minor	Local
<i>Zimbabwe (1967-1979)</i>	<i>South Africa</i>	<i>Zambia</i>	<i>Minor/Minor</i>	<i>Local</i>

**TABLE 1: BALANCING RIVALRY INTERVENTIONS (1945-2002)**

*Sources:* Mullenbach (2001), Wolak (2014), Colaresi et. al (2008). **bold** = consensus rivalries; *italics* = rivalry identified on three or more of six rivalry lists; all others = rivalry identified on at least one of six rivalry lists

important to consider, because they might suggest appropriate scope conditions as to the applicability of the theory and the circumstances in which the causal mechanism does/does not generate balancing intervention. I return to these considerations below. Insofar as the present study is focused on theoretical development, however, it is appropriate to concentrate initially on cases in which the dependent variable (Y) – balancing intervention – is present as opposed to absent. This means selecting cases from the more circumscribed population described above. Remember, the purpose of the proposed theory is not primarily to *predict* occurrences of rivalry intervention (which would render non-occurrences of Y particularly important) but rather to *explain* and elucidate the link between rivalry and intervention. This is a necessary first step – the confirmation that a specific causal mechanism does indeed link X to Y in concrete cases – after which further development and clarification can refine the predictive capacity by specifying possible scope conditions (for example by looking at cases where X is present but Y does not occur; see Goertz 2017).

In addition to methodological considerations, I also employ policy relevance and historical significance as case selection criteria (see Van Evra 1997). In earlier work (Mitton 2014), I examined the India-Pakistan rivalry in the context of the war in Afghanistan. As a current and ongoing case of international and civil conflict in which Canada was directly involved through its membership in NATO, understanding the dynamics driving the Afghanistan war was and is pertinent to policy makers; the application of systematic scholarly analysis to such a case might help illuminate policy options which would allow for the more effective management and resolution of a persistent security crisis. How can the effects of the India-Pakistan rivalry be overcome such that stability in Afghanistan can be achieved? Answering this question requires an understanding of the motivations underlying Indian and Pakistani behaviour vis-à-vis the war. To the extent that the Afghanistan war has been a ‘failure’ for US/NATO, similarly, future international interventions may benefit from the insights afforded by an appreciation of regional dynamics – namely the behaviour of India and Pakistan as regional rivals – and the ways in which such dynamics drive state behaviour, often to the detriment of conflict stabilization and/or resolution. Put differently, it is useful to know what can occur if a state triggers a security crisis in a region in which a rivalry is present.

The India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case is, at the same time, a good fit as a potential pathway case; as noted in **Table 1**, the India-Pakistan relationship is a consensus rivalry (meaning it appears on all six of the rivalry lists provided by Colaresi et. al 2008) between two regional powers. The civil conflict into which intervention occurs is local to the region, making it proximate to both states. While the two states are not evenly balanced in terms of material and military power (India enjoys an advantage), this asymmetry is largely offset by mutual nuclear capabilities (Paul 2005). Finally, preliminary, policy-oriented work (Mitton 2014) demonstrated that the rivalry appeared relevant to the decision-making processes of both states, though this work did not articulate or theorize as to the precise causal mechanism linking the two. It did suggest, however, that some causal link might underlie the observed correlation between rivalry and intervention (this possibility is further evidenced by the abundant contemporary policy analysis that posits the relationship is important without offering precise arguments as to how or why it is important in causal terms, see Chapters 5-7). The combination of its historical and policy relevance, along with its suitability as a potential pathway case, led me to select Indian and Pakistani intervention in Afghanistan (2001-present) as my initial case study (Chapters 5-7).

The initial case study is the most important in a small-N research design intended to illuminate a causal mechanism. The within-case analysis (see the section on process-tracing below) is crucial for establishing the causal path linking X to Y. In addition to the evidentiary considerations alluded to in Chapter 1, this accounts for the relative length of the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case (spread as it is across three chapters). The next step is to examine additional cases in order to incrementally build our confidence that the identified mechanism operates beyond the initial circumstances; “how general is it?” as Goertz (2017: 83) asks. The basis for generalization on the strength of a single case is extremely tenuous; confidence in the causal mechanism, even if well-established through within-case evidence and inference, awaits additional support in the form of supplementary case study analysis.

The second case I select builds on the initial case by examining the causal mechanism at work under broadly similar circumstances. Which is to say, to increase confidence in the findings of the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case, I look for a case

which is matched along several key dimensions. Again, the leverage obtained by selecting such a case is incremental, but nonetheless important in terms of theoretical development. The basic logic is that if the proposed causal mechanism is at work in the initial case, it should also be operative in the second case (if it is not, this would be powerfully damaging to the theory). While the similarities between the cases certainly mandates caution with respect to putative generalizability, the move from  $n=1$  to  $n=2$  is a necessary precursor to more ambitious claims regarding the operation of the mechanism (and therefore the validity of the proposed explanation) across time and space.

In order to fulfill this function, I select Israeli and Syrian intervention into Lebanon (1975-1985) as my second case. Like India-Pakistan, the Israel-Syria relationship is a consensus rivalry, appearing on all six rivalry lists. Further, it is a rivalry between two regional powers, with intervention occurring into a local, proximate conflict. Israel enjoyed a relative power advantage over Syria (as India does over Pakistan), but the two were nonetheless recognized to be military competitors. As in the South Asian context, religion was an important dimension of the Israel-Syria relationship (Jewish/Muslim for the latter and Hindu/Muslim in the former). To the extent that the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case reveals solid evidence that the proposed causal mechanism plausibly links rivalry to intervention, additional evidence as to the operation of this mechanism in the Israel-Syria (Lebanon) case establishes, at a minimum, that the mechanism travels, albeit potentially only under specific circumstances.

Of course, all the of the dimensions along which the two cases are similar constitute potential confounders with respect to the trigger for intervention. Perhaps the decision has nothing to do with rivalry or long-term security concerns – irrespective of what the within-case evidence appears to suggest – and instead the true underlying cause derives from one of these other factors (geography, power asymmetry, religion, etc.). For the third case, therefore, it is important to stretch the parameters somewhat by looking for a case which is *dis*similar along multiple dimensions. Having established narrow applicability and plausibility, the next step is to look further afield to assess whether the proposed mechanism has wider purchase. After all, international rivalries come in a variety of shapes and sizes; as a concept, rivalry is believed to obtain between states irrespective of religious, ethnic or ideological character or whether the states are

proximate (regional) or distant (global), etc. Certainly, the proposed explanation does not contain qualifications as to the type or character (nature) of the rivalry necessary for it to be operative. As such, the third case that I select is Soviet and American intervention into Angola (1975). The US-Soviet rivalry was global, as opposed to regional, with the intervention of interest occurring in a geographically distant as opposed to proximate civil conflict. Similarly it was a basically symmetric rivalry between two major international powers for which ideology, not religion, was the primary underlying cleavage. These differences obviate some of the key potential confounders that are common to the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) and Israel-Syria (Lebanon) cases. If the proposed causal mechanism similarly operates in the US-Soviet (Angola) case, our confidence increases that a common causal link between rivalry and intervention exists across time and space.

The US-Soviet (Angola) case is selected for two additional reasons. First, like the two preceding cases, it fits the criteria for a pathway case. The US-Soviet relationship is a consensus rivalry. Further, the historical record is generally clear that the Angolan civil war had little direct import for either the US or the USSR, and that the superpower interventions seemed to be tied in some way to their overarching international relationship. In other words, if there *is* a causal link between rivalry and intervention it should be operative in this case, making it well-suited for analysis intended to illuminate that underlying causal process. Second, the inclusion of the US-Soviet rivalry is important for historical relevance; the Cold War defined international politics in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the various proxy-wars that occurred were a central feature of that period. Indeed, the impetus to study rivalry (prolonged and enduring conflict between two states) in many ways derived from scholars' attempts to grapple with the Cold War (the modern scientific study of the concept emerged during the 1980s). As such, any research project dealing with a) rivalry and b) dual-sided civil conflict intervention (of which 'proxy-wars' can be considered a sub-set) would be remiss to exclude the US-Soviet rivalry (doing so would likely raise the eyebrow of any discerning, historically-minded reader).

In sum, case selection in this dissertation proceeds according to criteria designed to maximize theoretical development regarding the causal mechanism (link) between

rivalry and civil conflict intervention. I therefore select cases in which both X (rivalry) and Y (dual-sided intervention) are present. While future research will require the examination of other configurations (in particular cases where X is present but Y is absent, suggesting that the causal mechanism does not operate in certain cases of X), the focus on (X=1, Y=1) cases is appropriate at this stage; before refinements to appropriate scope conditions can be made, it is first necessary to establish that the causal mechanism exists at all. Even further, I concentrate on pathway cases, in which the strength of the variables suggest that the correlation is most likely indicative of an underlying causal process; this enhances the clarity of the proposed explanation regarding the connection between X and Y (put differently, these cases are the best places to look in order to understand the way in which X might cause Y). While the variables in question are not continuous, I am able to discern such cases by looking at a) whether the rivalry in a particular case is a 'consensus' rivalry, meaning it is present on six different lists which identify rivalries according to different criteria and b) the extant analysis/commentary on a particular case, which offers a sense of the extent to which interventions are generally perceived to be associated with international considerations (but where precise, theoretically-informed explanations as to how they are connected are absent). Finally, I also consider the historical and policy relevance of potential cases. The Afghanistan war is a significant, ongoing international crisis with implications for Canada and the broader international community; theoretically-informed understandings of the case are therefore particularly important in terms of informing contemporary policy and practice with respect to conflict stabilization and potential future international activity. Similarly, the US-Soviet (Angola) case incorporates perhaps the most historically-important modern international rivalry (certainly of the last fifty-plus years) into the analysis.

The three cases selected are therefore:

1. Indian and Pakistani intervention into Afghanistan (2001-present).
2. Israeli and Syrian intervention into Lebanon (1975-1985).
3. US and Soviet intervention into Angola (1975).

The progression from one case to the next similarly expands confidence as to the generalizability of the proposed explanation. The first case establishes the existence of the proposed causal mechanism; the second confirms its existence in a similar setting; the third broadens the parameters of potential applicability by investigating the mechanism in a much different context. The increase in confidence that occurs with each case is incremental, but important. It cannot be overstated how cautious one must be in proclaiming generalizability on the strength of such a limited number of cases. More work must be done in the future to more precisely define the relevant scope conditions associated with the proposed causal mechanism. Yet the cases nonetheless provide a solid basis for the proposition that a common causal process exists across time and space linking the dynamics of international rivalry to decisions about civil conflict intervention.

### *Key Terms*

Before moving on to a description of the methods that will be used to conduct the case studies and evaluate the evidence pertaining to the proposed causal mechanism, it is important to briefly characterize and define some of the key terms and concepts that pertain to the argument being made. The dissertation makes claims with respect to complex historical and social phenomenon; it is therefore necessary to be clear as to the nature of these phenomenon.

### Civil Conflict

The argument asserts that rivals intervene into ongoing ‘civil conflicts’; what is meant by this term? James Fearon (2007: 3) defines civil war as “a violent conflict within a country fought by organized groups that aim to take power at the center or in a region, or to change government policies.” Whether violence constitutes “war” or “conflict” typically turns on a threshold number of battle-related deaths. In a more comprehensive definition, for example, Doyle and Sambanis (2000; 2006) consider a civil *war* to be an armed conflict that meets the following criteria: a) the war has caused more than 1,000 battle deaths; b) the war represented a challenge to the sovereignty of an internationally recognized state; c) the war occurred within the recognized boundary of that state; d) the

war involved the state as one of the principal combatants; and e) the rebels were able to mount an organized military opposition to the state and to inflict significant casualties on the state. Gleditsch et al. (2016), meanwhile, specify 25 battle deaths (in one calendar year) as the marker of civil *conflict*, with the further condition that at least one of the combatants be the government of a state.

These types of precise specifications are necessary for the construction of data-sets to be used in quantitative analysis. (Gleditsch et al., for example, derive their definition of civil conflict from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program data set they employ.) This is because the analysis of dozens and even hundreds of cases requires consistent coding criteria; all such cases cannot be examined in-depth in order to determine if they constitute an example of the concept under investigation. Needless to say, such definitions are somewhat arbitrary (whether potential-fatality number 1000 hangs on in hospital or succumbs to injury obviously does not change the underlying reality of a particular conflict). For present purposes, therefore, the parsimonious definition offered by Fearon is sufficient. In a qualitative study of a small number of historical cases, it is preferable to rely on expansive definitions (provided one's cases satisfies them, of course) as this amplifies the applicability and generalizability of the theory that is developed and tested.

The three civil conflicts (Afghanistan; Lebanon; Angola) that serve as case studies in this dissertation are typically and generally identified as such. In each instance, two or more organized groups (including the nominal government) fight/fought for power and/or control of territory. The theory that is presented should apply to all such cases, provided the other boundary conditions related to the theory are present. Which is to say, the size or scope of the civil conflict should not affect whether balancing intervention occurs, so long as the case in question satisfies the condition of organized groups using violence to vie for power, authority and/or territory.

### Intervention

Similarly, the argument is that rivals 'intervene' in these civil conflicts. What type of behaviour satisfies this condition? The definition of intervention used in this

dissertation follows that developed by Regan (2000; 2009), and summarized by Lineberger and Enterline (2016: 96) as follows:

...third party intervention is the use of an actor's resources to affect the course of a civil conflict (Regan 2000: 9). These resources may be spent in a variety of ways that include, but are not limited to the following: (1) diplomatic methods, which can include mediation, arbitration, or the use of international forums (Regan 2000; Regan and Aydin 2006; Regan et al. 2009: 6-7); (2) economic intervention, including sanctions, inducements, and foreign aid (McNab and Mason 2007); (3) the deployment of peacekeepers (Fortna 2004); (4) covert or overt support for one of the warring factions in the form of funds, sanctuary, and weapons (Salehyan 2009; Salehyan et al. 2011); and, (5) direct military intervention (Balch-Lindsay and Enterline 2000; Balch-Lindsay et al. 2008; Mason and Fett 1996; Mason et al. 1999).

As with the discussion of civil conflict offered earlier, the scope of this definition means that an expansive range of activity is consciously included within the parameters of the theory. Indeed, each of the case studies exhibits different types of behaviour/policy which nonetheless satisfy at least one element of the definition offered above. In Afghanistan, Indian intervention is characterized by diplomatic involvement and economic activity (both in support of the Afghan government), while Pakistani intervention takes the form of covert support for one of the warring factions (the Taliban) through the provision of funds, sanctuary, and weapons. In Lebanon, both Israel and Syria engaged in an array of interventionary activity, including direct military intervention. In Angola, Soviet and American intervention primarily took the form of covert and overt support for specific warring factions.

#### Dual-sided (Balancing) Intervention

With respect to third party intervention, three basic possibilities exist: government biased (outside support for the government), rebel biased (outside support for the rebels), or balanced (outside support for both sides from two different third-party actors). The

outcome of interest ('Y', or the dependent variable) in this dissertation is this last situation: dual-sided (or balancing) intervention. Dual-sided interventions are a sub-set of interventions more broadly in which both sides of a civil conflict are supported in some way by an outside, third-party intervener. As Linebarger and Enterline (2016: 101) note in their review of the civil conflict literature, "balanced interventions in which third parties intervene on behalf of the government and rebels simultaneously...decrease the odds of negotiated settlement and lengthen the duration of hostilities" as compared to biased interventions of either variety. In the context of a balancing intervention, the state who intervenes first is considered the "first-mover", while the state who intervenes second is considered the "balancer". Parsing which state fulfills which role is more difficult in practice than it might initially appear to be, particularly if both states become involved at approximately the same time or if gradual escalation occurs that suggest a 'balancing' response from the state who may have been, technically, the first-mover. Again, the qualitative approach is helpful in this regard; a more realistic assessment of the behaviour of the intervening states can clarify both the strategic sequence and escalation of intervention (see the discussion of the first-mover distinction above).

### *Process-Tracing*

I now turn to a discussion of the actual methods used to conduct the case studies. In keeping with the focus on elucidating the causal mechanism linking rivalry to intervention, I employ within-case process-tracing. This approach is particularly well-suited for the type of causal inference that is required. In their influential volume dedicated to the practice, Bennett and Checkel (2015: 7-8) define process tracing as:

the analysis of evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case for the purposes of either developing or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might causally explain the case.

The use of process tracing, Levy (2008: 6) writes, allows "case study researchers to get inside the 'black box' of decision making and explore the perceptions and expectations of actors, both to explain individual historical episodes and to suggest more generalizable

causal hypotheses.” Which is to say, process tracing allows for the intensive study of the specific circumstances and events related to a particular case while simultaneously systematizing the inquiry in a manner which allows for the cumulation of knowledge.

Given my research objectives, it is important to be clear about what precisely my process-tracing analysis is intended to illuminate. Following Rohlfing (2012), I intend to illustrate the *anticipated process* connecting rivalry to civil conflict intervention. Conventional process tracing is typically associated with mapping *realized processes*; that is, processes which have actually come to pass empirically and can be tracked as a sequence of events ( $X1 \rightarrow X2 \rightarrow X3 \rightarrow X4$ , etc.). Anticipated processes, by contrast, have to do with “the considerations that actors make before coming to a decision and/or committing a specific action. The consequences that actors expect will unfold if they take a specific action that account for their performing the action that results in the outcome” (ibid.: 154). In other words, how did decision-makers assess the situation facing their state, and what was their thought-process with respect to the actions they believed necessary to confront that situation? In the choice between action/non-action (or intervention/non-intervention), what was the ‘anticipated process’ associated with each alternative? Determining these perceptions is key to understanding why particular decisions (including the decision to intervene in a particular civil conflict) were made.

The analogy with democratic peace theory noted above is useful again here. The causal process associated with a democratic dyad is an *anticipated* one: the expectations one democratic government has when confronting another determines how it precedes. As Rohlfing (2012: 156, emphasis added) explains:

The democratic peace example [shows] that actors evaluate different potential processes before a decision is made because the expected consequences inform an actor’s decision. It follows that the empirically relevant process is the *decision-making process* that brings about the outcome...The goal of process tracing is to collect multiple pieces of evidence demonstrating that the government weighed the consequences of the two available courses of action and decided for peace because of the concerns that war would have for the country’s trustworthiness and foreign relations.

Again, the goal of process-tracing in such a scenario is to unpack evidence relating to how decision-makers arrived at a particular decision.

Unlike realized processes, in which the sequence *begins* with the purported independent causal variable, anticipated processes are triggered by an “exogenous event” which prompts the decision-making procedure of the relevant actors. Returning, again, to the democratic peace example:

The trade war, which triggers the crisis that could lead to a military conflict, first prompts the government to meet and to discuss the proper course of action. Empirically, this means that the government’s decision-making process is triggered by an *exogenous event* – a trade war – and not by the hypothesized cause (that is, concerns about the implications of war and peace) (Rohlfing 2012: 156).

The analogue in the present instance is the occurrence of a civil conflict (and, for the balancing intervener, the initiation of an intervention by a states’ rival). Here, again, the purported *cause* is not this event but the resulting decision-making *process* that this event triggers. In “explaining an outcome with anticipated processes,” Rohlfing (2012: 154) writes, one “focuses on the considerations that actors make before coming to a decision and/or committing a specific action.” The key are the “consequences that actors expect will unfold if they take a specific action [which] account for their performing the action that results in the outcome” (ibid.). With respect to intervention, the *mechanism* triggering action is not automatically or mechanistically the occurrence of a civil conflict and/or a rival’s intervention into it, but rather the perceptions and anticipated consequences of decision-makers confronted with this reality (the “concerns about the implications” for future confrontations with a rival). It is the weighing of these consequences, and the perceived outcome of alternative courses of action, that is of interest. The goal of process-tracing in such a case is to examine decision-makers’ motivations and rationale as they pertain to the course of action ultimately pursued.

Rohlfing (2012: 154) further points out that analysis of anticipated process is particularly well-suited for rational choice explanations. Importantly, however, an

anticipated process approach does not *require* a rational choice explanation; in fact, it is also well-suited for assessing the validity of alternative explanations *as compared to* rational choice explanations. Bennett and Checkel (2015: 32) highlight, for example, that “rational choice explanations [are] often tested through process tracing against the alternative explanation that actors’ decisions are influenced by cognitive errors and biases.” This means that tracing the anticipated (decision-making) process related to rivalry dynamics should offer a good basis for assessing the validity of the theory I foreground while also implicitly comparing this explanation to alternative possibilities vis-à-vis the same evidence. Which is to say, even if alternative explanations are not explicitly tested, the type of evidence to be assessed is similar to that which would have been collected in such an effort, meaning an inherent comparison is made in accumulating and evaluating said evidence.

Ultimately, process-tracing is well disposed not simply to the theoretical perspective outlined in this dissertation, but even more importantly (from a methodological point of view) to the scope and content of the inquiry itself. Which is to say, the subject matter that is to be studied. Levy (2008: 11) makes this point well: “Process tracing has a comparative advantage in the empirical analysis of decision making at the individual, small group, and organizational levels, including the analysis of leaders’ perceptions, judgments, preferences, internal decision-making environment, and choices.” This is precisely the type of analysis attempted here, and called for by the theory outlined above.

It bears repeating, however, that anticipated process-tracing differs in important respects from more conventional approaches to process-tracing, such as that outlined by Bennett and Checkel (2015) in their well-known ‘how-to’ volume on the method. Unlike this approach, which is more determinative in its orientation insofar as the identification and linking of discrete points in a causal chain is emphasized (such that the result essentially resembles an explicitly defined causal pathway in the form  $A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C \rightarrow D$ ), the approach outlined by Rohlfing (2012) and adopted here is more conceptual. This is necessary given that the basis of the theory to be tested has to do with the the *perceptions* and *decisions* of actors. It is not determinative in the sense that physical variables or events lead to outcomes, but rather concerns the process by which actors

interpret their environment and arrive at decisions about their preferred behaviour. Yet as Rohlving (2012) makes clear, an analysis of this type of causal mechanism is still fruitfully approached by the process-tracing method, insofar as the collection and evaluation of evidence related to the anticipated process (which is to say, the evidence related to an actor's thought and decision processes vis-à-vis an anticipated outcome) clarifies the causal logic underlying an event which is the product of state action.

### *Evidence*

Because we are dealing with the decision of leaders and policy makers to intervene, the appropriate place to look for evidence is in the diplomatic and historical record. The logic here is similar to that offered by Copeland (2014: 75) for his investigation of trade expectations theory:

qualitative documentary analysis is the best method for studying rare events in international relations, at least when one has access to the documents that reveal the inner decision-making process of the actors in question. In-depth documentary work provides us with a window into the thinking of key decision makers as they make estimates of future realities, grapple with trade-offs associated with feedback loops and escalatory spirals, and adjust their behavior to alter the factors that will serve their ends.

In addition to contemporaneous primary documents (such as transcripts of meetings, internal memos etc.) and public statements (in newspapers, official releases, interviews), one can also examine the memoirs and writings of the relevant leaders and decision-makers. Ultimately, the extent to which decision-makers acted according to the logic of my theory can be adjudicated by reference to what they said, wrote and otherwise indicated regarding their thought process vis-à-vis intervention. Such documents can be supplemented by secondary historical analysis in which scholars have commented on, and provided their own interpretations of, leaders' decision-making rationale (keeping in

mind potential biases of particular scholars and the possible distortions that can result from preferred interpretations).<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, however, we can make inferences about the reasons behind interventions by tracking the practice of intervention, indirectly inferring motivation from the nature, scope, and conduct of the intervention itself. An intervention taken for the purpose of protecting security in rivalry is likely to be conducted differently than one designed to, *inter alia*, resolve conflict, secure a particular outcome for one or both sides of the conflict, or for reasons related to domestic politics. Rivalry interventions will be more concerned with blocking, frustrating or damaging a rival's (or its proxy's) aims than with helping a particular side 'win' or achieve more narrowly defined goals.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, the development of the intervention over time, and the extent to which there is synergy between the competing interventions, or the justifications associated with escalating/de-escalating involvement, can offer indirect evidence of state motivations. If the underlying theory is correct, in other words, there should be observable implications with respect to how the interventions are conducted. Ultimately, it is the *combination* of both decision-making evidence (how decision makers arrived at and justified the decision to intervene) *and* non-decision making evidence (what the intervention actually looked like) that help support the theory. The latter increases our confidence in the probative value of the former because it decreases the likelihood that statements from decision-makers about their motivations for intervention were disingenuous, instrumental (for public consumption) or inconsequential; while the former increases our confidence in the latter because it guards against the danger of inferring 'revealed preferences' simply on the basis of behaviour (George and Bennett 2005).

Accumulating and assessing evidence in the context of within-case process tracing inevitable requires the piecing together of disparate, non-comparable

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<sup>29</sup> As George and Bennett (2005: 25) caution, "Historians are always at risk of selectively choosing the primary and secondary sources that confirm their arguments. For this reason, it is important to consider a wide range of secondary accounts representing contending historiographical schools and explanations." Both the Israel-Syria (Lebanon) case and the US-Soviet (Angola) case – each of which carries a voluminous historical literature – address historiographical considerations. See also Trachtenberg (2006).

<sup>30</sup> It must be noted that these types of observations would also be generally consistent with Pathological Rivalry; as the purpose of the dissertation is not the explicit comparison of my theory with Pathological Rivalry, however, that each piece of evidence does not offer a definitive test between the two is not fatal. My hope is that the preponderance of the evidence and the underlying logic of the theory will be persuasive to readers, rather than a point-by-point adjudication between competing theoretical claims.

observations. As Rohlfsing (2012: 30) explains: “gathering and evaluating evidence on the within-case level is similar to assembling a jigsaw puzzle; every piece is more or less different from every other piece, but when put together, they deliver a full picture of the phenomenon of interest.” The case studies in this dissertation follow this pattern by looking at multiple, disparate types of evidence for the purpose of establishing a compelling causal account of particular interventions.

### *Cross-Case Comparison*

While anticipated process-tracing constitutes the method for within-case inference, the purpose of conducting multiple case studies is to facilitate comparison across cases (thereby enhancing the applicability of the findings to the broader population of cases). While, as noted above, even a single case study is implicitly concerned with the broader population of cases implied by the demarcation of a single instance of an event, inferential leverage is enhanced by the inclusion of several cases which track and examine the same process in different contexts. Even if each individual case study is primarily concerned with elucidating the within-case process linking a particular rivalry to a particular intervention, cross-case evaluation (and therefore generalization) is possible so long as each case is conducted with the same goals in mind. This can be achieved through the process of “structured focused comparison” (see Eckstein 1975).

George and Bennett (2005: 67) explain the key dimensions of this approach:

The method is ‘structured’ in that the researcher writes general questions that reflect the research objective and that these questions are asked of each case under study to guide and standardize data collection, thereby making systematic comparison and cumulation of the findings of the cases possible. The method is ‘focused’ in that it deals only with certain aspects of the historical cases examined.

This last point is crucial; because the historical data available for any particular international event is extensive, research must confine itself to a specified empirical

domain. The scope, or focus, of the present research is the decision-making process of relevant actors. For each case, the general questions which are asked relate to this process – e.g., how did decision-makers evaluate the relevant civil conflict? What concerns did they reference, in public and in private, regarding the possible consequences of action/inaction (intervention/non-intervention)? What arguments did they provide in support of intervention? How did they justify their decision to intervene after the fact? What does the practice of the intervention – how it was conducted and how it played out over time – logically say about possible motivations? This list of questions is not exhaustive; part of the strength of the process-tracing approach is its ability to incorporate multiple and disparate types and sources of evidence for the building of a particular case (a common analogy is that of a police detective piecing together available clues to reach a conclusion). While each case study must grapple with the specific evidence that is available, the general focus is on unpacking the decision-making process; in so doing, the intent is to determine whether Rational Rivalry accounts for decisions that were made, or whether some other explanation (including Pathological Rivalry) might be responsible.

As a result, each case study will look slightly different; the inquiry will follow the contours of the particular case and the evidence that is available to support the investigation. Yet the general focus on the decision-making process related to intervention allows for cross-comparison. As Rohlfing (2012: 97) avers, “a within-case comparison is appropriate for discerning whether the causal mechanism and causal processes are similar in the two (or more) cases at hand.” We can track how each state evaluated potential intervention and the comparative motivations for becoming involved in the relevant ongoing civil conflict. To the extent that such evaluations and motivations are consistent in terms of the thought processes leading to intervention, such cross-case comparisons can incrementally increase our confidence as to the common operation of a particular causal mechanism across space and time.

### *Testing Theory*

While, as mentioned, the primary purpose of the three case studies executed in this dissertation is the *development* and refinement of a novel theory linking rivalry to

intervention, the basic logic of theory *testing* is also relevant to the search for, and assessment of, case evidence (it is in this way that George and Bennett [2005] observed that many research projects involve some combination of theoretical development, testing, and/or modification). As such, it is helpful to briefly consider the requirements associated with this task. The mode or logic of inquiry required to properly test my, or any other, theory involves three moves: a) looking for evidence that matches expected behaviour (direct confirmation), b) looking for evidence that is inconsistent with expected behaviour (direct disconfirmation), and c) looking for evidence for and against competing theories and alternative explanations (indirect disconfirmation). With respect to a), the search is relatively straightforward: an analysis of the historical and diplomatic record, including public and private statements (both contemporaneous – preferably – and reflective, as in memoirs) can provide direct evidence of the proposed explanation; while tracking the form, scope and scale of the interventions can increase our confidence in this evidence and provide indirect confirmatory evidence of the proposed explanation. For c), any evidence pointing to, for example, Pathological Rivalry would be indirectly disconfirming of the preferred Rational Rivalry theory. (Such evidence would *not* be confirmation of Pathological Rivalry – the purpose of the dissertation is to articulate, examine and develop a particular theory, not to adjudicate all possible alternatives, which would require conducting tasks a, b, and c for multiple alternative theories.) Finally, the search for disconfirming evidence (task b), involves searching for explicit justifications of intervention based on reasons other than rivalry (disconfirming decision-making evidence) *and* interventions that do not follow expectations regarding how such interventions will be conducted (disconfirming non-decision-making evidence). As discussed above, the logic of inference in case studies is essentially predicated on a preponderance of evidence; this does not obviate the need to be as clear as possible with respect to evidentiary expectations, but it does mean that assessing the theory in any particular case requires a common-sense weighting of all available evidence pertaining to a, b, and c.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has provided the framework for the dissertation. It outlined the specific argument regarding the link – the causal mechanism – between international rivalry and civil conflict intervention. It justified the use of qualitative historical case studies as the most appropriate means by which this argument could be developed and demonstrated. The rationale driving the selection of three cases – India-Pakistan (Afghanistan); Israel-Syria (Lebanon); and US-Soviet (Angola) – was established; these cases constitute so-called ‘pathways’, in which the causal connection between rivalry and intervention is most ripe for excavation (this is not an invitation to select ‘easy’ cases, but rather a methodologically sound principle for the elucidation of a causal mechanism in the context of an established correlation, such as that between rivalry and intervention). They also constitute historically and practically relevant cases; the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case, in particular, is an important and ongoing international crisis of profound interest to Canadian and NATO policymakers. The method of process-tracing is described, in which disparate pieces of evidence are used to make within-case inferences regarding the operation of a causal mechanism. The common focus across all three cases (specifically, on the decision-making process related to intervention) can then provide the basis for cross-case comparison. While any conclusions with respect to the case evidence and generalizability of the proposed explanation must be tempered by the realities of small-N qualitative research at the theory development stage, to the extent that a consistent causal process appears to operate across the three selected cases, this dissertation contributes to our understanding of a complex international phenomenon.

## CHAPTER 5: THE INDIA-PAKISTAN RIVALRY

The purpose of the next three chapters is to examine the proposed explanation for rivalry intervention outlined in the preceding chapters in the context of Indian and Pakistani intervention into Afghanistan. As will be shown, conventional assessments of the rationale motivating both India and Pakistan to become involved in Afghanistan could strongly benefit from an appreciation of rivalry dynamics. Pakistan's calculus, in particular, is better understood through the future-oriented defensive prism outlined in earlier chapters; this explanation better accounts for the persistence and obstinacy displayed by Pakistani's decision-makers, while refuting idiosyncratic explanations which emphasize paranoia, emotional hatred, bureaucratic interests and other factors that imply incompetence or malevolence on the part Islamabad. Such explanations have become commonplace in discussions of Pakistan's role in Afghanistan, which posit that it's behaviour can *only* be understood as the product of a breakdown in rational decision-making. Yet, as will be shown, one need only consider the implications of long standing rivalry with India – including a history of repeated war and armed crises – to recognize the strategic logic of continuous negotiation (or unbroken confrontation) when interpreting Pakistan's obstructionist behaviour in Afghanistan. This is an analytical and not a normative statement; Pakistan's behaviour is no less unfortunate or damaging with respect to stabilizing violence in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, only proper diagnosis can precede effective policy responses – if the international community is committed to smart policies in Afghanistan, it must properly appreciate the logic driving the intensity of Pakistani behaviour. The same can be said for Indian behaviour. While analysts are typically more sanguine about Indian involvement – insofar as New Delhi supports the Afghan government against the Taliban insurgency – it must be recognized that India has its own interests and motivations in Afghanistan which are tied to rivalry in South Asia. This has implications for what India is likely to do moving forward and is therefore also germane to policy considerations.

Before examining intervention in Afghanistan directly, however, I begin, in this chapter, by providing the relevant background of the overarching rivalry itself. First, I describe the nature of the rivalry. The *basis* of a specific rivalry can take a variety of

forms, while the underlying *dynamic* of rivalry – the defensive motivations for behaviour in the rivalry context – is consistent across time and space. Second, I offer a brief history of the crises, conflicts and wars which have occurred between India and Pakistan. Given the centrality of past interactions to the conceptualization of rivalry offered in this dissertation, a familiarity with the pattern and development of the rivalry is necessary for an appreciation of the influence such interactions have on perceptions regarding present circumstances and, even more importantly, expectations with respect to future conflict. It is necessary, in other words, to establish the bases for the reputations that subsequently form within the rivalry. I then discuss these perceptions in greater detail, paying particular attention to assessments in the early years of the 21st century i.e. when decisions regarding intervention and policy vis-à-vis the war in Afghanistan were being contemplated. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the situation in Afghanistan in light of the preceding decades of rivalry. This analysis is important as it sets the context for the subsequent two chapters, in which the competing interventions (India in Chapter 6 and Pakistan in Chapter 7) are themselves directly engaged.

### **The Nature of the Rivalry**

The rivalry between India and Pakistan is first and foremost territorial – as discussed below, the partition of British India in 1947 immediately triggered competition over particular tracts of land as well as a generally contested border. It is also religious – the specifically-Muslim character of newly created Pakistan was the basis of Pakistani nationalism and the fundamental feature of the country itself. Juxtaposition with Hindu-India quickly became a core component of national identity. While India was and continues to be avowedly secular, Hindu nationalism is nonetheless a feature of its domestic politics and the relationship with Pakistan is often viewed through a religious lens. Finally, the rivalry is ‘positional’ (Colaresi et. al 2008) in power-political terms, as each country is a significant economic and military power in the South Asian region (even if India is generally dominant in this regard, and has extra-regional power-political ambitions that Pakistan cannot also pursue). Given the scope of this positional competition, the rivalry can be characterized as regional (as opposed to global, as in the

case of the US-Soviet rivalry discussed in Chapter 9). The content of the rivalry is therefore a *mélange* of territorial, religious, and strategic (at the regional level) dimensions. Each plays a role in defining the parameters of the relationship; the stakes, as it were, of what is being contested.

Outwardly, this can lead to assumptions regarding the purported motivation of specific behaviour. Religious divisions resonate, to varying degrees, with both citizens and decision-makers alike. Passion, hatred, and other nakedly human emotions (jealousy, revenge, even forgiveness, compassion) are natural corollaries of this worldview. Moreover, territorial disputes are tinged with religious connotations. As discussed below, the question of control over Kashmir is typically couched in terms of Muslim irredentism, and Pakistan's desire to claim territory inhabited by its co-religionists. More generally, conflict and competition between India and Pakistan are often considered to contain a religious component, either overt or implicit.

The prospect of regional influence, and the strategic and economic opportunities that correspond with advancing national interests, similarly suggest motivations for expansion and even offensive, aggressive behaviour. Gaining access to energy markets in Central Asia is a motivation for both countries, as is military power projection with respect to both land and (particularly in the Indian case) sea. New Delhi and Islamabad act to expand, enhance, and enlarge the economic and strategic interests of their respective countries. Like all states, the pursuit of such interests forms the basis for much of their foreign policy. These motivations inevitably influence the rivalry but are not in themselves conditions of it. The important consideration is that neither India nor Pakistan is exclusively defensive in terms of their outward orientation. Yet even if the basis of such behaviour is not rivalry-related, it relates to the rivalry insofar as each state's behaviour is interpreted by the other through a rivalry lens (more on this below). Thus the momentum of rivalry, or the perpetuation of it, is potentially fueled by behaviour that is largely inevitable, and anyway incidental to it – to argue that rivalry is defensive, as this dissertation does, is not to suggest that rivals behave only defensively; rather, the component of the relationship that is attributable to rivalry (which is to say, the component that makes such relationships *distinct* from other dyadic relationships in the international system) is that which is motivated by defensive concern. Rivalry is present

when such defensive concerns become dominant, and produce behaviour that is inexplicable from a more straight-forward cost-benefit analysis (that is, behaviour is different from what it would otherwise be in the absence of this dynamic).

Territorial considerations, also, feature prominently and suggest powerful incentives for conflictual behaviour. Territorial integrity is the *sine qua non* of modern statehood. Territorial disputes, as discussed in Chapter 2, are a powerful predictor of both war and rivalry. A contested piece of land is an immediate and tangible point of contention, doubly so when laden with religious significance as is the case on the subcontinent. But not all rivalries are territorial, and not all territorial disputes result in rivalry. They are therefore not reducible one to the other.

All of the above suggest varying dimensions of the India-Pakistan rivalry. All such dimensions undoubtedly contribute to how the rivalry plays out, and any accurate discussion of the relations – and conflicts – between the two countries would generally require some consideration of each. Moreover, for comparative purposes it is helpful to juxtapose the nature of the India-Pakistan rivalry with that of Israel-Syria (Chapter 8) and the US-USSR (Chapter 9). Each rivalry is different in terms of the dimensions which provide its content. Yet each is united in the underlying dynamic of rivalry within which this content operates. The point, as explained in previous chapters, is to avoid stripping away the historical complexity of a particular case while nonetheless extracting what is consistent between cases separated by time and space. Religion, territory, regional power – each characterizes to varying degrees the exchanges between India and Pakistan; the product of these exchanges has been rivalry, with an emergent logic of its own. If rivalry is about the expectation of future conflict, it is assumed that future conflict will break out because of one of these three dimensions.

I now turn to a discussion of the birth and pattern of exchanges that led to this emergence. Which is to say, the interactions which created the rivalry context. Again, this narrative is important in terms of the dynamics it reveals with respect to the development of perceptions and reputations between the rivals. Before engaging with intervention in Afghanistan, it is important for the reader to have familiarity with the interactions which preceded it; assessing how and why Indian and Pakistani decision-makers approached Afghanistan the way that they did is impossible absent an appreciation of this history. As

mentioned in Chapter 4, the narrative does not make any causal claims regarding one crisis/conflict to the next – instead, the purpose of including this material is to illustrate and establish that crises/conflicts were and are connected in terms of their cumulative effect on how rivals perceive one another and consequently what they anticipate a rival doing in the future. It is these perceptions, I argue, which determined behaviour vis-à-vis Afghanistan.

### **The Birth and Progression of the Rivalry**

In 1947, centuries of British colonial rule on the subcontinent came to an end, and with it the creation (in a process that was by all accounts rushed and on occasion haphazard and arbitrary) of the two sovereign nations of India and Pakistan. The two countries were born in bloodshed, as internecine violence and massacres between Hindu and Muslim communities – particularly in the province of Punjab, through which a large segment of the new border bisected – raged tit-for-tat within the dislocated population. The two countries quickly found themselves in confrontation, as the question of territorial control over the region of Jammu and Kashmir could not be definitively settled. The Hindu ruler of the Muslim-majority province initially balked in his decision regarding which new country to join; the invasion of Pakistan-backed guerillas forced him to turn to India for his defence, which demanded the province's accession in return. The Maharaja agreed, but under the stipulation that a referendum would eventually be held allowing the population of the province itself to decide its permanent home – this plebiscite has never occurred, and India maintains nominal control of the majority (approximately two-thirds) of the region to this day.

The creation of the two countries was thus the genesis of war over disputed territory; two key elements identified by the rivalry literature – a political shock (partition and the birth of the two countries) and territorial dispute (the First Kashmir War) – were therefore present for the birth of the India-Pakistan rivalry (on political shocks see Goertz and Diehl 2001, and on the importance of territorial disputes see, in particular, Vasquez 2009). It is not surprising then that the India-Pakistan dyad is often foregrounded as an 'archetypal' rivalry and invoked as a clear example of the underlying concept. The

relationship is included on virtually every list of international rivalries (Goertz, Diehl and Saeedi 2005; Geller 2005) no matter the coding or selection criteria (see also Colaresi et al. 2008).

Four wars have been fought, in addition to numerous crises and lower-level confrontations. These major episodes are summarized in turn below. Again, this history is relevant to the argument of the dissertation insofar as these experiences are the *source* of the perceptions (their weight and depth) which constitute the causal mechanism triggering civil conflict intervention.

#### *The First Kashmir War (1947-9)*

As mentioned above, the First Kashmir War was precipitated by British partition, and the subsequent question of which newly created country would lay claim to the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. As per the conditions of independence, the individual rulers of the subcontinent's many principalities and territories were offered a choice of acceding either to Pakistan or India. Typically, this meant choosing along confessional lines – Muslim majority territories opting for Pakistan and Hindu areas acceding to India. Because, as noted, Muslim majority Kashmir was pulled in opposite directions given the religion of its ruler (the Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh), the territory endeavoured to maintain nominal independence, and did so for approximately two months following partition.

Internal unrest proliferated, as armed factions within the territory jockeyed for political position and control, challenging the rule of the Maharaja. In this context, informal arrangements were made by elements of the fledgling Pakistani army to indirectly supply and support guerilla fighters from Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, who would infiltrate across the border into Kashmir in an effort to tip the balance toward Muslim forces sympathetic to Pakistan (Schofield 2003). The militia seized territory in the north (including the city of Muzaffarabad, which would subsequently become the capital of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir) and pressed on to the city of Srinagar, the seat of administrative power. As a response, and at the request of Hari Singh (who in desperation signed a letter of accession committing his state to India),

newly seated Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru dispatched Indian troops to repel the invasion. Though Jinnah subsequently attempted to involve regular Pakistani soldiers, he was rebuffed by the British, whose officers still staffed many positions within Pakistan's armed forces and thereby exerted considerable influence. As a consequence, Pakistan continued to send 'volunteer' irregular fighters across the border to combat the Indian army. Nonetheless, Nehru assured his cabinet in December 1947 that "what is happening in Kashmir State is not merely a frontier raid but a regular war" (quoted in Wolpert 2010: 23).

In January 1948, India brought the matter before the newly-formed United Nations, demanding that Pakistan's aggression be condemned and Pakistani forces compelled to withdraw. Pakistan countered by demanding the withdrawal of Indian forces from Srinagar and the surrounding areas. A UN Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was appointed, and a series of proposals for cease-fires and other resolutions put forward. Pakistani regular forces did eventually become involved in the spring of 1948, in response to an Indian offensive. Once it was perceived as a possibility that Indian forces could thrust west, Pakistani decision-makers could not tolerate the strategic implications of allowing such a move to go unchallenged. As one report on the situation noted at the time, the capture of Muzaffarabad and beyond would mean the Indian army "[would] be knocking on the back door of Pakistan" thereby presenting a "serious and direct threat to Abbottabad, Rawalpindi, and ultimately Peshawar from the rear" (Document No: 2014/58/DMO, Pakistan Army GHQ, Rawalpindi archives; quoted in Nawaz 2008: 141).

Attacks and counter-attacks continued over the summer, with the Pakistani army formally engaged but primarily supporting local forces and militia fighters (who nonetheless can be considered relatively pliant proxies). A formal cease-fire was finally instituted on 1 January 1949, under the condition that a plebiscite be held to allow the residents of Jammu and Kashmir to decide for themselves which country to join. Repeatedly, however, the conditions for such a plebiscite were rejected. Eventually, India held parliamentary elections in the territory and essentially gave up on the idea of a plebiscite overseen by UNCIP, arguing that the elections themselves constituted the "will of the people". A Line of Control (LoC) was established between Pakistani-controlled

(known as 'Azad' – meaning 'free' – Jammu and Kashmir) territory and the bulk of the region which remained under Indian control. The LoC is not recognized as a legitimate international border, but rather a de-facto demarcation of the territories controlled by the two nations.

This first conflict set the parameters for the subsequent relationship, “locking-in” – to use Goertz and Diehl’s (2001) terminology – rivalry between the two young nations. Even following the cease-fire of 1 January 1949 (generally recognized as the formal end to the war) skirmishes and violence along the LoC persisted over the following years, as the UNCIP attempted doggedly to establish a more permanent and workable solution, to no avail. Neither Pakistan nor India were particularly satisfied with the status quo that had been established. Pakistan, in particular, considered the possession of a Muslim-majority territory part and parcel of their national project; acquiescing to Indian possession of Kashmir was thus intolerable. The desire to revise this status quo precipitated another war over Kashmir, this time at an even larger scale and involving heavily equipped and traditionally trained armed forces in direct and sustained combat.

#### *Rann of Kutch (1965)*

Kashmir was not the only unresolved territorial issue between the two countries, however. A small princely state known as the Rann of Kutch, located in a salt marsh along the southern border, had similarly been an object of dispute at partition; although it had formally opted to accede to India, Pakistan continued to claim the northern portion (the border itself was difficult to demarcate as the area was essentially uninhabited and submerged under water for large portions of the year). A minor crisis in 1956 (which had resulted in a tentative agreement to settle claims by negotiation) was followed in April 1965 by a more significant clash, as Pakistani regular forces crossed the border to attack an Indian outpost (Lyon 2008). Fighting occurred sporadically until the end of April, prompting the British to intervene diplomatically in an effort to bring the crisis to a close (Manchanda 2002). A cease-fire was established in June (Khan 2009).

Several dynamics contributed to the Pakistani decision to escalate the conflict. First, there was a decline in the respect afforded Indian forces following their defeat in

the Sino-Indian War in 1962. Second, Pakistani President Ayub Khan had recently cultivated support and friendship from both China and the Soviet Union (the latter agreeing to sell arms and supplies; this in addition to continued military aid from the United States) (Leng 2000), boosting Pakistan's perceived military prospects. Finally, the topography of the area favoured the Pakistani position, affording easier supply routes and allowing them to manoeuvre on higher, drier ground (ibid.). All of these factors contributed to a general confidence that Pakistan could be successful in a limited military confrontation. The broader rationale for pushing (if not outright precipitating) the crisis was linked, according to Leng (2000), to perceptions of long-term Indian goals with respect to reclaiming the entire area: "The Pakistani leadership remembered how India had forcibly achieved the accession of Hyderabad and Junagadh as well as Kashmir's continued occupation" (Leng 2000: 214). There was a fear, in other words, that India might attempt to seize the territory along the border, a concern amplified by the Indian military buildup then underway as a consequence of Indian defeat against the Chinese. While it is somewhat unclear who in fact initiated the first fighting along the border at the Rann of Kutch (see the discussion in Colman 2009), the Pakistanis certainly took the opportunity, in the context of the aforementioned favourable dynamics and fears as to future Indian aggression, to escalate by crossing the border with newly-acquired Patton tanks to attack the Indian position (Joshi 2015). The outcome of the skirmishes, prior to the internationally-negotiated ceasefire, was indeed favourable to Pakistan, reinforcing a perception that India had yet to fully recover from the Sino-Indian war and emboldening Pakistan's leaders with respect to their own military prospects in future confrontations (Wolpert 2010).

### *The Second Kashmir War (1965)*

The Second Kashmir War began somewhat similarly to the first, with Pakistan supporting a cross-border infiltration of guerilla fighters – supported by a limited number of regular troops – in an effort to set off an internal uprising against Indian rule. The plan was known as Operation Gibraltar, and was precipitated in part because of the aforementioned Pakistani military successes at the Rann of Kutch earlier in the year

(Khan 1993: 167-8). The infiltration began in August 1965 and succeeded in creating small-scale chaos and violence but little else – no major uprising was triggered, and by 20 August Indian forces had blunted the attempt.

The deployment of additional Indian forces to the region made possible subsequent retaliatory attacks, in which the Indian army pressed forward into Azad Kashmir in an attempt to degrade the logistical capabilities of the Operation Gibraltar attackers (Khan 1993: 39). The success of these efforts, and the presence of Indian forces near Muzaffarabad, worried Pakistani leaders; the military therefore launched a large counter-offensive (Operation Grand Slam) intended to rebuff Indian advances and push the fight forward, severing lines of communication for the Indian army, encircling them, and forcing New Delhi to accept negotiations regarding Kashmir on more favourable terms, while avoiding a larger-scale war (Schofield 2003). While intended to repel and reverse Indian advances, the operation cannot be construed as merely a defensive response – plans for Grand Slam were in place even before the initiation of Gibraltar, and could well have been the second phase of a coordinated offensive attack (Wolpert 2010). Nonetheless, the impetus for the retaliation was amplified following the failure of Gibraltar and the resulting Indian response.

Yet the Pakistanis miscalculated with Grand Slam, in both design and execution; the crossing of an established international boundary between Sialkot and Jammu provided India with justification for escalating the war, while the operation itself was unable to effectively penetrate Indian lines (Schofield 2003; see also Ahmed 2002). Instead, the Indians scored a major tactical victory by unleashing the waters from a series of dams and effectively trapping Pakistan's entire tank contingent (recently acquired from the United States) (Wolpert 2010). The Indian army then pressed on, gaining significant swaths of territory (even pushing towards Lahore) and routing the remaining Pakistani forces in a series of battles (*ibid.*).

Once again, the UN intervened, forcefully demanding a cease-fire that was eventually accepted on 23 September. The British and Americans had thrown their weight behind these diplomatic efforts, concerned about potential Chinese intervention against India and the consequent possibility of escalation to a broader regional war (Schofield 2003). Once the cease-fire was in place, American President Lyndon Johnson

coordinated with Russian Premier Alexei Kosygin to organize a peace conference at Tashkent, which convened in January 1966. Within a week, Pakistani leader Ayub Khan and his Indian counterpart, Lal Bahadur Shastri, had agreed to a settlement, with India retreating to its pre-war borders (and not, much to Ayub's relief, demanding significant concessions in order to do so) (Wolpert 2010). As evidenced by Minister of Foreign Affairs Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's address to the UN General Assembly the previous September (a day before the imposition of the cease-fire) however, Pakistan had not sacrificed its desire to claim all of Kashmir. Bhutto warned that Pakistan would wage war for 'a thousand years' in order to make this claim a reality (quoted in Wolpert 1993: 94).

### *The Bangladesh War (1971)*

Unlike the two wars over Kashmir which preceded it, the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971 was initiated by India, seizing on the vulnerability generated by a domestic political crisis to score a significant blow against Pakistan. Geographically, the creation of an East and West Pakistan (separated by a thousand miles by the territory of India itself) at partition was always awkward and difficult in practice, even more so as the Bengali population of Eastern Pakistan was linguistically and ethnically distinct from the Urdu-speaking population of Western Pakistan. A common Muslim religion was essentially all that linked the two territories of the nominally unified country.

East Pakistan, moreover, despite having a larger population, was dominated politically by West Pakistan. When the result of federal elections in 1970 threatened to hand control of parliament to the East Pakistani political party the Awami League, the country's military leadership (encouraged by Zulfikar Bhutto's West Pakistani-based Pakistan's Peoples Party [PPP]) demurred, delaying the seating of the new parliament and calling for negotiations on power sharing between the two 'wings' of the country (Ganguly 2001). These negotiations failed to satisfy Awami League political leader Sheik Mujibur Rehman (known as 'Mujib') who instead organized a campaign of civil resistance, including a general strike which essentially suspended the functioning of East Pakistan and its economy.

In March 1971, the Pakistani military began to crackdown on East Pakistani dissidents, focusing on the city of Dhaka and in particular the student population of the university there (considered the likely focal point of opposition). This included indiscriminate firing on unarmed Bengalis, and the slaughter of tens of thousands of civilians, in what was later recognized as genocide (Sisson and Rose 1992). Mujib was arrested, and full on civil war broke out. Millions of refugees fled into Eastern India in order to escape the violence.

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (daughter of iconic Indian leader Jawaharlal Nehru) recognized the strategic opportunity afforded by these developments. Justified in part by the destabilizing influx of refugees, India explored opportunities for intervention. Initially, this was limited to support for secessionist forces. Prominent members of the Awami League relocated to Calcutta, and India armed, trained and provided sanctuary to the Mukti Bahini ('liberation force') along the border (Ganguly 2001). A full-scale intervention against the Pakistanis was considered risky given the possibility of a Chinese attack in the north as retaliation. So as to forestall this possibility, Gandhi actively courted support from the Soviet Union, eventually signing a twenty-year (it was to last for only eighteen) 'Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation' (Cohen 2001). This quasi-alliance with the Soviets satisfactorily mitigated the threat of Chinese intervention on behalf of Pakistan, opening the door for more robust involvement by India in the Bangladesh crisis.

Support for the Mukti Bahini increased. In November 1971, Indian forces began using artillery fire to provide cover for guerrilla fighters across the border. Pressured by this escalation, Pakistan conducted an air attack on India's northern air bases, formally beginning the international war on 3 December (Dixit 2002). The attack failed to significantly damage Indian capabilities, and the following day the Indian Air Force conducted retaliation attacks on a series of West Pakistani air bases in Islamabad, Sargodha and Karachi (Chopra 1973). The Indian navy also played a significant role in hostilities, attacking oil facilities as far afield as the Pakistan-Iran border, and erecting what was in effect a naval blockade between West and East Pakistan (Ganguly 2001). The strategic logic pushing India to intervene and essentially initiate war with Pakistan was relatively clear. Indian leaders had long been wary of being flanked by two Pakistani

‘wings’ which portended a potential two-front war in the future (even a three-front war should China decide to attack in the north), perhaps at a time when the balance of military capabilities was less favourable. Former Indian foreign secretary J.N. Dixit summarizes the Indian position as follows:

The two wings of Pakistan with an intervening stretch of a thousand miles of the Indian Republic was a geographical and political incongruity. India was also getting a little tired of having to confront and possibly fight Pakistan on two fronts whenever a conflict arose...A non-hostile Bangladesh instead of a hostile East Pakistan was considered desirable (quoted in Ganguly 2001: 62).

The crisis in East Pakistan was thus an opportunity; intervention in support of an independent Bangladesh – and the inevitable direct confrontation with Pakistan that this intervention precipitated – had the potential to increase India’s security by eliminating a hostile border to the east.

The Indian victory in the war was decisive. On 16 December, Indian forces entered Dhaka, and the following day fighting was suspended (Wolpert 2010). Mujib was freed from prison and returned to Dhaka via Delhi, where he was greeted as a hero and the first leader of the newly created nation of Bangladesh (ibid.). Gandhi and Bhutto – each trailing a large delegation – convened at Simla to discuss a post-war settlement. Despite their resounding defeat, Pakistan was able to secure most of its objectives in these discussions, including the release of thousands of Pakistani prisoners of war, the recovering of some lost territory, and no fundamental adjustments to its basic position on Kashmir.

For India, the outcome of the war solidified its status as the dominant power in the subcontinent. Though the outcome of the 1965 war had also been an Indian military victory, the rapidity with which Indian forces routed their Pakistani counterparts in the 1971 war made clear the significant capabilities gap between the two countries. Overall, despite the above mentioned diplomatic mollifications, the effects on Pakistan were devastating – Bangladeshi independence had resulted in the loss of roughly fifteen percent of the country’s territorial size and, even more alarmingly, nearly sixty percent of

its population (Sathasivam 2005). Nonetheless, Pakistan's leadership continued to harbour revisionist designs, particularly in Kashmir. The dismemberment of their state, however, and the 'blitzkrieg' tactics of the Indian armed forces, were to have lasting effect on the calculations of Pakistan's military planners.

### *Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan (1979-1989)*

Though not a direct conflict or crisis between India and Pakistan *per se*, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the winter of 1979 constituted an important event in the evolving South Asian security situation (this is doubly true in the context of the next two chapters, which focus on Indian and Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan a few decades later). The primary outcome of the invasion was to solidify the superpower alignment of both India (pro-Soviet) and Pakistan (pro-American) respectively. Pakistan, given its geographical location and its perceived ability to influence events in its neighbour to the northwest, was courted by the United States (first by the Carter administration and then even more aggressively by the Reagan administration), which delivered significant military aid in return for support for its anti-Soviet agenda and activities. This infusion of American military support for its rival pushed India further toward an eager and receptive Soviet Union; the two countries agreed to what Sumit Ganguly called an "exceptionally generous arms package" in May of 1980, a deal worth over US\$1 billion and which included advanced military hardware (Ganguly 2001: 82).

The result of these concomitant infusions of military aid into the subcontinent had the inevitable effect of ratcheting up tensions between the two South Asian nations. Superpower support essentially created an arms competition which, whatever the rationale behind American and Soviet aid (the former was certainly designed to increase Pakistan's capabilities in Afghanistan; while the latter was delivered in part with an eye to China), both India and, especially, Pakistan, considered through the prism of South Asian conflict.

Robert Wirsing (2007) details a personal anecdote in this regard. While chairing a public seminar at Islamabad's Institute of Strategic Studies in the early 1980s, Wirsing listened to a speech by the head of Pakistan's Air Force, Air Chief Marshall M. Anwar

Shamim. The topic was the Reagan administration's sale of forty F-16 combat aircraft to Pakistan, a deal designed to augment Pakistan's capabilities with an eye to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan:

In the course of Shamim's remarks, he showed a slide of the F-16's combat range. The concentric circles depicting its range were drawn over India, to Pakistan's east, not over Afghanistan, where the proxy war to free Pakistan's western neighbour of its Soviet invaders was then at its height. Shamim's tacit acknowledgement that the F-16 purchase was done with India fixed indelibly in Pakistani minds struck me at the time as curiously symptomatic of an infirmity in that era's U.S.-Pakistan strategic alliance (Wirsing 2007: 152).

This 'infirmity' presages the American experience in post-2001 Afghanistan, as its ostensible partners in Islamabad would remain fixated on the Indian enemy to the detriment of the American anti-insurgent effort (as will be discussed in Chapter 7). Planning for future conventional combat with India overrode other considerations – then, as now, the US appeared unable to grasp the logic of this calculation or the strength of the imperative.

### *The Siachen Dispute*

In 1984, a brief military confrontation occurred over control of the Siachen Glacier, a remote and forbidding strip of territory that forms part of the Himalayan mountain range. More than anything, the controversy regarding which country could lay legitimate claim to the region stemmed from confusion and incompetence on the part of British cartographers. In the chaos of partition in 1947, British lawyer Sir Cyril Radcliffe developed the so-called "Radcliffe Line", which was to serve as the demarcation line between India and Pakistan (Chadha 2005). Yet Radcliffe and his aides failed to complete the line in the area of the Siachen Glacier. Likely not recognizing potential future problems in the area, the Karachi Agreement (signed in 1949) delineated territorial control beyond NJ 9842 with the qualifying statement "thence north to the glaciers" (ibid:

102). In other words, the lack of a definitive line gave way to an ambiguous statement regarding territorial control over the area.

Varying and competing interpretations as to the precise meaning of the phrase “thence north to the glaciers” have served as sticking points in numerous negotiations over the years. For the first several decades following partition, the subject of Siachen was not discussed: “At the time, there seemed to be no reason to demarcate the Siachen region. No one was ever expected to live there; it was literally a no man's land” (Macdonald 2012). Real controversy didn't begin until the “cartographic aggression” (as the Indians called it) of Pakistan in the 1970s. Tourists and travelers were coming to India carrying maps which showed the Siachen Glacier as Pakistani territory. India promptly issued maps claiming the area for themselves (ibid).

Exactly who is to blame for precipitating military confrontation in the region in 1984 is unclear. Khosa (1999), for instance, asserts that India decided to move into the Salto Ridge merely out of “frustration” with Pakistani non-military mountain climbing expeditions. Misra (2010), on the other hand, contends that India moved in pre-emptively in the face of an impending move by the Pakistani military to establish control over “Indian” territory. VR Raghavan (2002: 36) concurs, stating that the “Indian military had intelligence of Pakistan having attempted an armed occupation of the passes west of the Siachen Glacier in September-October 1983” and was thus merely reacting to Pakistani aggression. Whatever the case may be, in 1984 India began to deploy troops into the Salto Ridge, prompting a reaction by Pakistani forces and the beginning of overt hostilities over the Siachen Glacier (Chari 2005). Both India and Pakistan became locked into the confrontation. Over the next twenty-one months each side dug in, beginning the long and arduous task of maintaining supply routes to the world's highest battlefield. Finally, in January of 1986, the first round of meaningful negotiations to end the conflict began in Islamabad, with a follow-up round occurring a few months later in New Delhi. A definitive solution to the impasse remains elusive even to this day, however; with little more than a tenuous ceasefire in place, the negotiations over ice and snow continue.

The Siachen dispute highlights the continuous and ongoing nature of the India-Pakistan relationship. A minor military skirmish over a relatively unimportant and remote piece of territory makes little sense in the context of an isolated, one-off confrontation.

The salience of Siachen can only be appreciated by recognizing that it constitutes not a distinct crisis or episode of conflict, but rather a visible outburst of a conflict situation that was and is ongoing – one that, following the initial outburst at partition, had never in fact terminated. As Indian diplomat RCA Raghavan told US officials in 2007: “Over Siachen...the issues facing the two countries were not technical, but revolved around trust.”<sup>31</sup> Whatever the post-war agreements reached after any of the preceding three wars may have indicated, hostilities between the two countries had never been resolved (which is to say the *de facto* contradicted the *de jure*; much as the Line of Control remained the former rather than the latter as a boundary).

#### *The Brasstacks Crisis (1986-87)*

The Brasstacks crisis takes its name from the series of military manoeuvres and exercises initiated by India in the fall of 1986 (Wirsing 2003). The ostensible goal of the manoeuvres was to carry out an assessment of Indian military capabilities and to implement new organizational tactics recently developed by leaders in the Indian armed forces. Many Pakistani observers, however (both then and even now), maintained that ulterior – even aggressive – motives underlay the exercises (Bajpai 1995). Little direct evidence exists to suggest India planned to parlay the exercises into overt military aggression, yet many analysts nonetheless agree that India was keen to send a warning message to Pakistan given Islamabad’s increasing support for Sikh separatists in the Punjab (Indira Gandhi had recently been assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards). Thus, as Ganguly (2001: 85) notes, “embedded in the Brasstacks military exercise was an element of coercive diplomacy.”

The most problematic of the exercises – from the Pakistani point of view – was known as Brasstacks IV, scheduled to be conducted in March of 1987. The mobilization was to be massive, and would occur near the border in the Punjab, along an east-west axis (which is to say, pointing directly toward Pakistan, as opposed to the north-south direction of previous exercises). Once news of Brasstacks IV reached Islamabad,

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<sup>31</sup> WikiLeaks. Tour d’horizon with incoming MEA Joint Secretary for Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran. (2007, May 2). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI2101\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI2101_a.html)

Pakistani leaders expressed concern over the scale and scope of the mobilization and communicated with their Indian counterparts in an attempt to convince them to alter and/or scale down the simulation. India demurred, emphasizing that the exercise was not part of an aggressive military campaign, and that Pakistani concerns were misplaced given that no Indian military personnel had yet been deployed to the region in question (Hagerty 1998).

In the end, India could not adequately assuage Pakistan's concerns (despite assurances from the highest level of the Indian military as to its benign intentions) and so Islamabad opted to extend ongoing Pakistani military exercises past their previously scheduled end date so as to maintain military preparedness in the border region (ibid.). This decision generated concern in New Delhi for a variety of reasons, as outlined by Ganguly (2001: 86):

first, the Pakistani forces were so arrayed that they could, in a pincer movement, cut-off their Indian counterparts in strategic areas; second, a demonstration of forces by Pakistan along sensitive border areas in Punjab could embolden the Khalistani [Sikh] terrorists, who might think they were to receive overt military support; and third, access to Kashmir could be interdicted by the Pakistani forces.

Thus, each country, conducting ostensibly benign military exercises, aggravated fears in their counterpart to the point that a stand-off ensued along the border. This tense moment was exacerbated by a nascent nuclear dimension, in which India, a bona fide nuclear state, reckoned that Pakistan had not yet, but might soon, reach the nuclear threshold. According to Hagerty (1998), this likely tempted the Indians towards a pre-emptive attack (a decision they ultimately opted against), while simultaneously rendering Islamabad more sensitive to the possibility.

Throughout January 1987, the two militaries conducted moves and counter-moves along the border, leading to real fear on both sides that war could break out at any moment. Nonetheless, the crisis was ultimately resolved without incident following high-level talks in New Delhi from 31 January to 4 February. By mid-February, tensions had eased and direct military confrontation had been averted (Hagerty 1998).

The nature of the Brasstacks crisis underscores the salience of the security dilemma within the rivalry. Neither side could adequately reassure the other that planned military manoeuvres and exercises were benign; each considered such plans to be potentially aggressive, and acted accordingly, by responding with counter-moves and mobilizations of their own. The potential spiral into overt conflict was real, by all accounts, and the avoidance of such an outcome never guaranteed. Tensions were eased, finally, only after extensive high-level discussions and, crucially, the negotiated withdrawal of troops from the border region.

#### *Recurring Kashmir Crises (1990-99)*

Throughout the 1990s, tensions over Kashmir continued to plague relations in South Asia. The flaring of an internal political crisis in the region in late 1989 touched off an international crisis that threatened to spill into war, with accusations of fomenting unrest levied at Pakistan and concomitant military manoeuvres generating yet another stand-off between the two militaries (Wirsing 2003). In April 1990, as India increased its troop presence in Kashmir to quell a rising insurgency (again, believing Pakistan was to blame for much of its intensity), Islamabad mobilized forces to the region and began calling up military reserves, declaring it was ready to ‘meet the challenge’ posed by Indian forces (Ganguly 2001: 94; see also Fair 2014).

Tensions eased – partly as a result of American diplomatic intervention – but only just; recriminations and periodic crises became standard in the region over the next several years. As Ganguly (2001: 95) summarizes:

Even though war did not ensue in 1990, Indo-Pakistani relations remained strained throughout the decade. The situation in Kashmir continued to deteriorate throughout the early 1990s. India routinely accused Pakistan of blatant interference in India’s internal affairs and repeatedly called on Pakistan to stop its support to the various insurgent groups operating in Kashmir. Pakistan, in turn, persistently accused India of denying the Kashmiris their right of ‘self-determination’ and of systematic human rights violations. Simultaneously,

Pakistani officials denied that they were providing any form of material assistance to the insurgents.

This pattern persisted, undermining efforts on both sides – and within the international community – to craft a more stable and cooperative relationship between the two countries. The implication of these periodic Kashmir crises for the overarching relationship is clear; even the interregnum between overt confrontations was conditioned by mistrust and tension; relations, while short of war, were nonetheless characterized by constant – which is to say unbroken and continuing – conflict.

### *The Kargil War (1999)*

In 1999, under the guidance of newly promoted chief of army staff (COAS) General Pervez Musharraf (though with the acquiescence of Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif), Pakistani troops crossed over the LoC in the remote and icy Kargil region of Kashmir, seizing a series of Indian military outposts, perched along the mountain range and left unoccupied during the forbidding winter months. The move obviously angered the Indians, who cited it as a clear breach of the Simla Agreement reached after the 1971 war (Wolpert 2010). As soon as the weather began to warm, India sought to regain the outposts through the use of force, including extensive aerial bombardments (Operation Vijay) and ground assaults on surrounding Pakistani positions. Indian forces then sought to regain the outposts directly, by mounting difficult and treacherous charges up the mountains, incurring heavy casualties but eventually pushing the Pakistani forces from many of the outposts by mid-July (Ganguly 2001). In the end, India officially lost 417 soldiers (with an additional 570 reported wounded) and Pakistan 690 (with an additional 150 guerillas reported dead), though these numbers are considered by most observers to be significantly lower than the actual figures (Schofield 2003).

Islamabad had attempted throughout June to receive diplomatic support for its position from the United States, but had been rebuffed; the Clinton administration was unwilling to assert that the Indians had been aggressors in the crisis, thereby significantly undermining the Pakistani position. Faced with the slow but steady gains of the Indian

forces, Prime Minister Sharif and the military leaders began to withdraw Pakistani troops from the remaining occupied outposts, and hostilities eventually petered out by the end of July.

Most contemporary commentators (even within Pakistan) recognized that the Kargil incursion had been a fiasco for Islamabad, once again resulting in decisive Indian victory in a military confrontation. Explanations for Pakistan's motivations in initiating the crisis include a desire to probe Indian resolve in the defence of outlying areas, as well as an attempt to trigger and "jumpstart" further unrest in Kashmir (Ganguly 2001). On the latter score the incursion was not altogether unsuccessful, as insurgent attacks within Kashmir spiked somewhat in the aftermath of the incident (Wirsing 2003). On the Indian side, recriminations followed the war despite Indian victory, as critics chastised the military for not anticipating the attack. As Ganguly (2001: 120-1) summarizes, the experience of Kargil resulted in a shift in India's military preparations:

Indian defence planners started to draw up plans to prevent a future incursion. Among other measures, the Indian army planned to set up permanent posts every 200 yards along the LoC. It also decided to build all-weather bunkers at high-altitudes, to enhance long-range patrols, and to purchase a variety of sophisticated equipment needed for mountain warfare, including direction-finding equipment, snow clothing and goggles, snowmobiles, and heating equipment.

Significantly, the Kargil War occurred after both countries had successfully tested nuclear weapons (in 1998); though some took this as insurance hostility would not escalate beyond the immediate theatre, others (including many members of the international community) worried about the possibility of a nuclear conflagration.

The Kargil incursion was the first Pakistani bid to actually seize territory within Kashmir since 1965; it was also unique insofar as the diplomatic fall-out rested almost entirely on Islamabad, a break from previous episodes in which India bore at least some of the blame from the international community. As Schofield (2003: 220) notes, the episode marked a considerable thaw in US-Indian relations, with President Clinton

reaching out directly to Prime Minister Vajpayee to applaud India's 'restraint' in the conflict.

Despite these discontinuities, however, regional expert Robert Wirsing (2003: 39) stressed that the Kargil War was consistent with the trajectory of the broader relationship:

In its fundamentals...Kargil did not represent a sharp break with the pattern of regional rivalry, whether conceived in military or political terms, that India and Pakistan have maintained for decades. On the contrary, it is the continuity of this pattern, one of nearly unremitting hostility and failed diplomacy, which Kargil largely reconfirmed, that is its most striking and important feature. Kargil marked neither the end of an era, nor the start of a new one. Instead, it was emblematic of a malaise in India-Pakistan relations.

Which is to say, the conflict was in keeping with the cycle and pattern of the rivalry; while Pakistan was bold to use regular troops to seize territory, the move was consistent with their revisionist aims in Kashmir. India, meanwhile, learned from the experience and adjusted its defence posture accordingly. Relations in Kashmir remained frayed, and the presence of nuclear weapons, while perhaps limiting the scale of conventional conflict, did not forestall confrontation completely.

#### *2001-02 Standoff*

Just a few years later, relations reached another low ebb, as massive military mobilization led to what many analysts consider a near-miss nuclear exchange. In the wake of Kargil, insurgent and terrorist activity in Kashmir – fomented if not controlled by Pakistan and its Inter-Services Intelligence [ISI] agency – increased. In December 2001, a terrorist attack on the Indian parliament prompted New Delhi to mobilize military assets to the border (Operation Parakram) and threaten retaliatory consequences against Pakistan itself if Islamabad failed to deal with the terror groups operating from its soil (Raghavan 2009). Islamabad responded in kind, positioning its own troops and military

assets along the border, precipitating a stand-off involving approximately one million soldiers belonging, ominously, to two nuclear weapons states (Ganguly and Kapur 2010). This situation obviously alarmed the international community, and the United States in particular made considerable diplomatic efforts to de-escalate the crisis (for an overview of the Bush administration's activities during this period see Nayak and Krepon 2011). Partially due to coaxing from US Secretary of State Colin Powell, Musharraf committed to cracking down on terrorist groups – including Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed – known to be active in Kashmir, as well as to the possibility of extraditing non-Pakistanis wanted by New Delhi in connection with terrorist-related crimes. As a result of these concessions, the Indians agreed to forestall any military attacks, though its troops remained on high alert and the military stand-off itself continued (Ganguly and Kapur 2010).

In May 2002, another attack – this time on an Indian army camp – prompted more anger from New Delhi, who now threatened an even broader military retaliation than the one initially planned; not just targets and territory in Kashmir but targets and territory further South (including in the Thar Desert) were now reportedly in play. This generated increased anxiety in Islamabad, with several officials intimating that the nuclear option was being considered as possible retaliation for any such attacks (Davis 2011). Again, the United States intervened, this time securing a promise from Musharraf not simply to reduce terrorist activity and infiltration along the LoC but to eliminate it altogether (Nayak and Krepon 2011). Following the pledge, Indian troops began to withdraw from the border region in October 2002 (Raghavan 2009).

That the stand-off did not escalate into overt military confrontation likely has something to do with the stabilizing effects of nuclear deterrence; yet the initiation of the crisis – in particular Pakistan's complicity in the terrorist attacks of December 2001 and May 2002 – similarly suggest the effect of the stability-instability paradox noted earlier. As Paul Kapur (2010: 59) explains:

The Parliament and Kaluchak [army base] attacks were part of a broad pattern of low-intensity conflict that was promoted by Pakistan's nuclear weapons capacity.

Regardless of any stabilizing effects they have had later in the 2001-2002 dispute, nuclear weapons played a central role in instigating the crisis in the first place.

Also important were the lessons of previous conflicts, in particular the Kargil war of 1999, which had reinforced India's conventional military superiority and therefore the necessity of alternative tactics in the minds of Pakistani leaders (Swami 2011).

Nonetheless, the possibility of direct conflict (including the use of nuclear weapons) continued to trouble leaders on both sides.

### **Decades of Conflict and the Effect on Rivalry**

What was (and is) the cumulative effect of these decades of rivalry, in which four wars and numerous crises have occurred at regular if sporadic intervals? Typically, assessments of the compounded effect of repeated hostile interactions focus on the psychological and emotional responses that are generated (consider for example Leng 2000 who discusses in-depth the India-Pakistan case and the negative 'affect' which he argues emerges from iterated crises). Indeed, historical assessments of the India-Pakistan relationship often highlight the "hatred" that is said to pervade relations; Stephen Cohen's 2013 book *Shooting for a Century: The India-Pakistan Conundrum* explores the psychological dimensions undergirding persistent animosity in South Asia, including religious hatreds and societal divisions (the latter of which, Cohen argues, stem partially from British colonial policies) that perpetuate intense feelings between the two populations.

Public opinion and polling data support the perception that Indians and Pakistanis actively dislike one another. In 2011, 75% of Pakistani respondents reported unfavourable attitudes towards India, while 65% of Indians reported similar negative attitudes towards Pakistan; a majority of respondents in Pakistan (57%) considered India to be the greatest threat to their country; in India, a plurality (45%) identified Pakistan as the biggest threat (Pew Research Center 2011). Inevitably, the implication – whether implicit or explicit – emerges that such feelings generate (or at the very least perpetuate) the continued military and strategic rivalry between India and Pakistan. Leaders and

decision-makers either internalize and project such feelings themselves or are swayed and constrained by the force of popular sentiment to act as if they did.

Yet there is good reason to believe that hatred between the populations has been the product of, rather than the force driving, repeated conflict. Most immediately, political elites have instrumentalized negative attitudes as a means of undergirding support for their policies. As Indian General P. N. Kapthalia noted: “There is no doubt that the troubles of India and Pakistan are basically of the making of the leadership. In the last forty-one years the leadership of one country has consistently fanned popular hatred and suspicion and pursued it as an instrument of policy” (quoted in Cohen 2013: 143). Elites recognize that cultivating public attitudes is helpful for executing their preferred policies; running against the grain of public sentiment is obviously not impossible (particularly for autocratic military regimes as, for example, Pakistan has often had throughout the decades) but a supportive population certainly makes the process much easier.

In addition to being cultivated and inculcated by elites, negative attitudes can also arise more organically, simply by virtue of the actual death and destruction that accompany conflict and war. The loss of sons, brothers, cousins, friends or countrymen in military confrontations colours perceptions of the ‘other’ side; with each new round of fighting the reach of this resentment is undoubtedly expanded. (This dynamic has effects on elites as well, of course, with former Pakistani President – and former army General – Pervez Musharraf [2006] describing at length in his memoir the death of his best friend at the hands of the Indian army during the 1971 war.)

Whichever way it is produced, the reality is that Indians and Pakistanis harbour deep-seated fear and resentment toward one another. Without question, these basic orientations have profound psychological and sociological implications for both societies and, as a consequence, the politics of South Asia. But explanations based on popular resentment, which imply some kind of mass emotional hysteria or primordial – and perhaps inevitable – hatred obfuscate other crucial, perhaps decisive, dynamics of the relationship between the nation states. Popular animosity is a consistent feature of international rivalry (consider the other rivalries explored in this dissertation – between Americans and Soviets; Israelis and Syrians), but international rivalry cannot be *reduced*

to popular animosity; real strategic and structural incompatibilities exist between rivals, not the least between India and Pakistan.

The point is not to deny the existence of emotional and/or psychological dynamics, nor their relevance to certain aspects of the relationship. Nor is it to suggest that popular sentiment exerts no influence on decision-makers. Michael Colaresi (2005) has developed a compelling ‘two-level’ model of rivalry in which public opinion and domestic politics influence elites, making it more difficult for them to adopt conciliatory policies vis-à-vis an established rival; leaders may be punished domestically, Colaresi argues, by not sticking to antagonistic policies favoured by hard-line populations. This type of dynamic is certainly at play in the India-Pakistan case, as when Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh worried about the Indian public’s adverse reaction to his government’s handling of the Mumbai terrorist attack in 2008. Singh feared that a failure to secure Pakistani cooperation in the investigation of the attack might mean that “the people’s anger will increase and politicians will be held accountable.”<sup>32</sup> This ‘control’ is not absolute, however, as decision-makers can and do make decisions which deviate from those which might be preferred given public attitudes (however such preferences might be inferred from public opinion polling). In any event, that such domestic considerations have some role in shaping policy is self-evident; the key question is how much of a role, are they relatively more important than international factors, as filtered through decision-maker perceptions of the international environment.

What are the basic effects, at a rational strategic level, of repeated confrontation? And how does the history of the rivalry shape attitudes, perceptions, and policy orientations? Research on the role of reputations in international politics is relevant in this regard; as an extensive corpus of work has demonstrated, assessments of past behaviour do play a role in the strategic decisions that are made between adversaries, whether in a deterrent situation or more broadly with respect to the course of military crises (see in particular the discussion in Chapter 2 of Harvey and Mitton 2017). Such assessments do not, of course, completely determine a state’s responses or the perceptions about the adversary a state forms. Insisting on this kind of strict one-to-one causation as the

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<sup>32</sup> WikiLeaks. PM Singh urges McCain codet to deliver tough message to Pakistan. (2008, December 3). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3054\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3054_a.html)

standard for assessing the relevance of past behaviour is unnecessarily simplistic, obscuring the extent to which perceptions of intentions and associated reactions to behaviour are the product of an array of variables tied to a particular situation. Prior interactions are not the entire picture but are nonetheless an important component of the broader whole. If we posit states as more-or-less procedurally rational actors<sup>33</sup>, the information provided by a history of interactions should help establish the basic orientation of the relationship – the parameters of possible or even probable present and future behaviour. In the context of rational deterrence theory (RDT), reputation (past behaviour) is relevant as part of the calculation of credibility; it helps to define the horizon of possible interpretations as to specific threats or even general dispositions in the context of specific and/or general deterrence. In rivalry, this information helps mold (but, it bears emphasis again, does not completely determine) the basic attitudes of rivals vis-à-vis one another. Which is to say, states with long conflictual histories will have more narrowly conscribed possibility horizons with respect to the behaviour they anticipate in the context of that relationship as a result of the information offered by that history. This

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<sup>33</sup> Again, the standard here should be what is analytically *useful*, not what most completely or precisely mirrors reality; pointing out that simplifying assumptions do violence to reality is a *critique* (and a legitimate one) but not an analytical alternative. To the extent that an alternative is offered, it too will be judged on its utility, at least insofar as the intention is to explain and/or predict outcomes in the empirical world. Obviously, the closer the assumption is to the reality it is meant to represent the better, but if we recognize that it is in the end impossible to fully know (for epistemological reasons) that an explanation is *complete* (i.e. a perfect representation of reality) than more accurate assumptions – to the extent they are possible – at best asymptotically approach that which they are meant to explain. Which is to say, again, the only available standard is how useful these assumptions are in formulating potential explanations. The assumption of procedural rationality does not always and everywhere hold. *In fact, it almost certainly does not completely hold at any point in a particular situation.* That is, this ‘thing’ or process we call ‘procedural rationality’ is merely a construct we use to represent some type of thing or process that is happening in a much more complex reality. As such, it is always and everywhere an incomplete representation. But if, in the chaos and contingency of social behaviour, it is possible to apperceive the presence of *something like* procedural rationality and its more-or-less regular recurrence, it shows itself to be potentially analytically useful in the difficult task of making some kind of sense out of that inchoate reality. The success or failure of a theory or explanation based on such an assumption is based on one’s assessment as to whether or not it is useful in this regard; failure cannot come by reference to its inadequacy or in-completeness as a representation of reality itself. Given that all assumptions *necessarily* do violence to reality, explanations which rely on fewer and more basic assumptions (parsimony) are preferable, if possible, both because this violence is minimized, and also because the potential generalizability of the explanation is enhanced vis-à-vis other social phenomena; exporting it to other situations, cases, or phenomena is rendered simpler by the simplicity of the assumption (or set of assumptions). This export fails if it offers no useful insight into the new domain. Explanations which rely on greater complexity vis-à-vis the phenomenon they explain are more difficult to extricate from the particulars of the situation to which they are originally applied. As a result, export may fail even before it can be attempted; which is to say, the explanation is less generalizable than its simpler alternative (assuming such an alternative was itself useful in the original instance).

information will similarly serve as a lens through which they consider the behavioural signals they observe in the present. Such assessments, conditioned by anarchy and a concern for survival (a finger on the scale towards caution and prudence), makes states worry about the future, and react accordingly.

Consider the progression, outlined above, of the India-Pakistan relationship since partition. Immediately, the countries were thrown into a dispute over territory, one that was not definitively resolved, and remained unresolved for subsequent decades (indeed, remains so today). Pakistan's tactics in Kashmir have been relatively consistent, moreover, employing guerrilla insurgents as proxies for their military objectives, and occasionally supplementing them by the introduction of regular forces. They initiated conflicts and crises on several occasions (including in 1999 in Kargil, leading to direct military confrontation) and have been vocal in their continued desire to revise the status quo, while also pursuing international relationships and diplomatic opportunities (including with the United States and subsequently with China) specifically designed to counterbalance and perhaps even threaten India (Thornton 1999). The sponsorship of terrorism – in both Kashmir and beyond, including in Afghanistan during the 1980s, indirectly damaging the Indian position who at the time offered nominal, if reluctant, support to the Soviet Union – makes Pakistan a continued threat to an extent beyond what would be suggested by its immediate military capabilities. As Ashley Tellis and his co-authors (2001: 7) observe:

Pakistan perceives its diplomatic and military options to be quite limited as far as resolving the issue of Kashmir is concerned. Given these constraints, Pakistan believes that one of its few remaining successful strategies is to 'calibrate' the heat of the insurgency in Kashmir and possibly pressure India through the expansion of violence in other portions of India's territory. Security managers and analysts widely concur that Pakistan will continue to support insurgency in Kashmir, and some have suggested it could extend such operations to other parts of India.

The development of nuclear weapons, similarly, presents India with an existential threat, while simultaneously freeing Pakistan to pursue confrontational policies and tactics beneath the protection of their nuclear deterrent (in an example of what Krepon [2003] calls the ‘stability-instability’ paradox)<sup>34</sup>.

Indian perceptions of Pakistan have been coloured by these experiences. As Rajesh Basrur (2009: 311) observes: “The truism that we learn from experience is nowhere better illustrated than in the wide-ranging changes introduced in Indian security policy following the Kargil conflict.” Writing in the aftermath of the Kargil episode, Lieutenant General (ret.) V.R. Raghavan, India’s Director General of Military Operations from 1992 to 1994, observed that “Indian analysts concluded” that “the neutralization of military asymmetry had made Pakistan seek higher levels of conflict in Jammu and Kashmir” (Raghavan 2001: 83). “The conclusion in New Delhi,” he continued, was that “Pakistan was deliberately raising the level of conflict...assuming that nuclear weapons would effectively deny India the option of a military response” (ibid.). More broadly, this reinforced the perception that Pakistan was committed to pursuing its aims in Kashmir and elsewhere and, crucially, might now believe itself freer to do so going forward. An official Indian report on the Kargil episode, entitled *From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report* (2000) also concluded that Pakistan deliberately attempted to ‘internationalize’ the episode; that is, hope that the United States and the international community would, fearing an escalation of the conflict, intervene favourably to diffuse and adjudicate the dispute. This assessment was based not only on the events of Kargil in a vacuum, but also on the reputation Pakistan had developed through previous attempts to employ such a tactic, including in both Kashmir wars, the Rann of Kutch conflict, the Brasstacks crisis, and the various Kashmir crises of the 1990s (Kargil Review Committee 2000). Kargil reinforced India’s perception that “dealing with Pakistan...is going to be deeply problematic” moving forward (Tellis et. al 2001: 16). Moreover, “almost all Indian analysts argued that...India ought not to have been surprised” by Pakistani aggression, “because this event comported perfectly with the history of Pakistani adventurism witnessed specifically in 1947, and thereafter in 1964

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<sup>34</sup> On the stability-instability paradox in the context of South Asia see Bracken (1999); the original formulation of the concept goes back to Snyder (1965).

and 1965” (ibid.: 16). Ultimately, “Kargil strengthened the belief that Pakistani surprises can and will occur with potentially dangerous results and that they consequently merit anticipatory preparation in India” (ibid.: 28). Such preparation for “Pakistani recklessness”, Indian leaders concluded, must include awareness of the different forms attacks might take: “terrorism throughout India, conventional operations and incursions, increased [low intensity conflict] in Kashmir, and a variety of non-traditional threats” (ibid.: 31).

At other points in the rivalry, there is evidence of specific reputations forming about behaviour in the short-term, particularly crisis to crisis (given that the opponents remain the same, even ostensibly ‘separate’ confrontations can be considered part of a protracted sequence). In the Rann of Kutch crisis, for example, Pakistan’s decision to initiate (or at the very least escalate, given disagreement amongst historians as to who was the actual initiator) conflict was partly based on its reading of past Indian behaviour – the forcible seizure of Hyderabad and Junagadh, for example, the latter of which is reasonably proximate to the salt marshes of the Rann of Kutch. A more general reputation for military capability was also a factor, as Pakistani military leaders were perhaps emboldened by India’s recent, and decisive, defeat at the hands of the Chinese in 1962. On the Indian side, short-term lessons were clearly learned following the Kargil episode, as mentioned above, with major policy revisions occurring as to security preparedness at the border. More broadly, the pattern of specific, general, and rivalry reputation that emerges from the series of interactions described above is one of caution, pessimism, and preparations for future conflicts and crises. Again and again, both Indian and Pakistani leaders made assessments that reflected prior experiences and, just as importantly, used such assessments to infer the likely future behaviour of the other side. Because experience was confrontational, assessments were pessimistic, and in the context of, and given the imperatives relating to, the international system, responses erred on the side of prudence, caution, and preparation for renewed conflict.

Hasan-Askari Rizvi (2009: 334) highlights the “broader pattern of Pakistani strategic conduct.” “Pakistani military officials,” he writes

believed that their military success in the Rann of Kutch in 1965 indicated that India had insufficient resolve to compete militarily, and thus the Ayub Khan government mounted a major military operation in Kashmir...Conversely, India's victory in the 1971 Bangladesh war was seen in Pakistan as proof of a harsh *Realpolitik* lesson that India will exploit any opportunity it has to take Pakistan down a notch...Pakistani behaviour after each setback in crises has been to analyze the causes of failure and resolve to live to fight another day (ibid.: 336).

These observations are consistent with those offered by Russell Leng (2000) in his study on learning in the India-Pakistan rivalry. Leng concluded that repeated confrontation led to 'hard-line' policies on both sides. Yet his explanation for this behaviour is drastically different than the one offered here. Leng observes that hard-line, hawkish (or as he terms it, 'realpolitik') policies were preferred over time, as one conflict and/or crisis followed another. He attributes this pattern to a 'culture' of realpolitik, arguing that the internalized norm of competitive, hawkish behaviour caused leaders to act 'tough' in iterated encounters (in other words, very little 'learning' occurred at all). This explanation is derived, partly, from the observation that tough policies or pessimistic appraisals of intentions were not always optimal or accurate; not, in other words, substantively rational. This deviation from rationality, therefore, is explained by the existence of the internalized norm of realpolitik behaviour as the 'appropriate' response in international politics. I argue, by contrast, that hard-line policies were the product of reputations within the rivalry which, given the inescapable reality of incomplete information, serve as an important part of a state's calculus when assessing an adversary's intentions. This means that irrespective of a 'norm' of realpolitik, states will be cautious, pessimistic, and hard-line vis-à-vis an established rival.

By 2001 (where the narrative picks up below and in subsequent chapters with a discussion of the war in Afghanistan), New Delhi had over a half-century of behaviour informing their assessment of Pakistan's intentions and objectives and, just as importantly, their understanding of the tactics Islamabad was likely to employ to achieve them. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, these perceptions were not that of unremitting hostility. A more accurate description would be a generally *pessimistic* interpretation of

likely Pakistani motives and behaviour moving forward. Which is to say, Indian officials were not deliriously warning of imminent Pakistani aggression, but rather resigned to the possibility of ongoing hostility in the form of the continued pursuit of long-standing Pakistani goals related to Kashmir, Islamism, and regional economic and security interests. In particular, India was wary of the *tactic* that Pakistan had consistently employed in the pursuit of its objectives – low-grade and clandestine support for Islamist groups in an effort to undermine Indian security. As Chris Ogden (2013: 45) observes: “the association between Pakistan and their use of terrorism against India has entrenched itself within Indian security perspectives.” In several conflicts (including both Kashmir wars), Pakistan used irregulars as the ‘tip of the spear’ before escalating to conventional confrontation. As the balance of power shifted more decisively in India’s favour, the support for terrorists became a stand-alone tactic designed to induce “death by a thousand cuts”, a phrase used by Indian officials<sup>35</sup> and widely promulgated by analysts.

From a balance of power perspective, Stephen Cohen, writing in 2003, found India’s continued preoccupation with Pakistan “puzzling.” “It would seem that India,” he writes, “seven times more populous than Pakistan and five times its size, and which defeated Pakistan in 1971, would feel more secure,” before noting that “this has not been the case and Pakistan remains deeply embedded in Indian thinking” (Cohen 2003: 32). Cohen speculates that this preoccupation is predicated on the belief that Pakistan has never accepted the parameters of partition, and therefore retains its designs on Kashmir, in particular, as well as the rest of India’s Muslim population, more broadly, as the culmination of the country’s Islamic mission. There may be truth to this, but where does the evidence for this preoccupation (that is, Pakistan’s continued desire to revise the status quo) lie? Cohen provides a partial answer: “More recently,” he writes (in 2003), “Pakistan has served as the base for Islamic ‘jihadists’ who not only seek the liberation of Kashmir, but the liberation of all of India’s Muslims” (Cohen 2003: 35). This, more than anything, reinforces perceptions regarding Pakistani intentions. India is concerned about Pakistan because they believe Pakistan to be aggressive; their evidence for this

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<sup>35</sup> WikiLeaks. Prime Minister discusses Iran, Afghanistan with codel Berman. (2009, April 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI782\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI782_a.html)

aggression is largely the behaviour that Pakistan has exhibited over the course of several decades, and during the 1990s in particular.

Several episodes at the end of the 1990s further entrenched these perceptions. The development and detonation of a Pakistani nuclear bomb in 1998 changed the dynamics of the rivalry; as many have subsequently noted (and as Indian officials themselves recognized), a nuclear deterrent afforded Islamabad more room to manoeuvre in terms of its provocations, both conventional and otherwise. The Kargil incident shortly thereafter demonstrated Pakistani boldness in this new context. Combined with recurring Kashmir crises throughout the 1990s (as well as, of course, the more distant but still relevant memory of multiple direct wars and conflicts), the turn of the millennium offered a threat environment to Indian decision-makers that set the parameters for how they would consider developments in Afghanistan. These assessments are picked up in the next chapter. Presently it is sufficient to emphasize the relevance of past interactions and reputations for behaviour over the course of the entire rivalry; whatever the broader public attitudes between the populations, or the private resentments of individual elites, there remains systematic reasons for apprehension; described as ‘paranoia’ by others, Indian concerns regarding Pakistan are prudent, by their own estimation.

From Islamabad’s point of view, the progression of the rivalry has arguably been even more formative. Several of the wars and confrontations have resulted in decisive defeat for the Pakistani military. In both 1948 and 1965, Indian military forces pushed toward Pakistani territory, putting in artillery range major Pakistani cities including Rawalpindi. In addition to the simple humiliation of military defeat, this underscored the vulnerability of Pakistani territory to Indian forces surging at various points from the east. As Sathasivam (2005: 153) points out – and as Pakistani decision-makers are well aware – “most of Pakistan’s population, industry, and arable land are located within 300 to 400 kilometers from the India-Pakistan border. This places all of Pakistan’s major population centers, as well as all of its conventional military assets well within the strike range of India’s combat aircraft and ballistic missile forces.” Similarly, General Raghavan (2001: 94) notes that a decisive Indian thrust at the “waist” of the country could allow it to be “strategically split”. These realities are well-understood by Pakistan’s military planners. “From its very inception,” writes Thomas Perry Thornton (1999: 171) “Pakistan was an

‘insecurity state’ that perceived itself not only as small and disadvantaged but as on the defensive against a real and present threat, with its survival at stake.” Such immediate apprehension was the product of the situation the new nation found itself in – adjacent to a larger, more powerful neighbour with whom there were territorial disagreements – *and* the experience of almost immediate war over said disagreements: the first Kashmir war. This confluence reinforced Pakistani perceptions as to its ‘insecurity’; subsequent confrontations (the history outlined above) further entrenched them.

The most formative and decisive experience may well have been the war in 1971, in which Pakistan was not only resoundingly defeated but fractured territorially, an entire wing of the country effectively partitioned by virtue of Indian military interference. The scope of the Indian victory was alarming, from complete superiority in air and ground forces to naval domination at far removes from the ostensible heart of the battlefield. The reach of Indian forces during that conflict left a lasting impact on Pakistani perceptions. As Kapur (2011: 71) notes:

Pakistan’s defeat in the Bangladesh war was devastating. The Indians had vivisected the country, creating Bangladesh out of the former East Pakistan. In addition, they had captured approximately five thousand square kilometers of territory and ninety thousand prisoners...Bangladesh...proved that India could in fact decisively defeat Pakistan on the battlefield. This was a shattering realization for Pakistani leaders.

Also relevant are the tactics by which India effectuated their military victory. As noted above, New Delhi initially supported the Mukti Bahini rebel group, offering sanctuary, assistance, and eventually covering artillery fire for cross-border rebel attacks against the Pakistani military. Tactically, this necessitated a Pakistani response, which then brought India directly into the conflict. For Islamabad, this experience suggests an Indian willingness to employ and support local militants as a prelude to direct confrontation. Islamabad’s contemporary focus on perceived Indian meddling in Balochistan – the strength of which has long confounded India, Afghanistan, and NATO – is perhaps more understandable in this context. An internal independence movement potentially receiving

support from New Delhi presents an analogue to the Bangladesh experience. Again, the trauma of the 1971 war cannot be overstated – psychologically for individuals, whether public or elite, to be sure, but also in terms of its existential challenge to *state* security. The loss of over half a state's population and 1/6<sup>th</sup> of its territory is essentially a brush with death, a bullet by the ear; Pakistan is understandably more suspicious than others as to the 'benign' behaviour/intentions of the rifleman who fired the shot.

More generally, the repeated crises and confrontations shaped Pakistani expectations with respect to Indian military responses. That is, it established a clear baseline of hostility on the part of New Delhi and a willingness to settle crises decisively, if necessary. Sathasivam (2005: 11) summarizes Pakistani perceptions in this regard:

India['s] central role in separating East Pakistan (Bangladesh) from the rest of Pakistan has cemented within the minds of many Pakistanis the following belief: not only does India not have any intention whatsoever of relinquishing any part of Kashmir as the result of some political negotiations process, India is actually looking to taking away [sic] from Pakistan additional pieces of territory in the future until there is nothing left of Pakistan. The belief that India's long-term strategic goal is the destruction of Pakistan is a core element of Pakistan's post-1971 national psychology.

Now, it may very well be (in fact it is likely) that India does *not* harbour the long-term strategic goal of destroying Pakistan. Yet Islamabad's belief to this effect is rooted not in 'emotion' or 'paranoia' but rather in the tangible *experience* Pakistan has acquired over the course of the rivalry (with the 1971 war, in particular, looming large). Discerning intentions in international relations is one of the most insoluble problems states face (a fact reflected by the lengthy and ongoing scholarly attention paid to the issue, both before the work of Robert Jervis and even more systematically afterward). Incomplete information, the other-minds problem, and the reality of self-help under international anarchy mean states use whatever means are at their disposal to assess intentions and interpret that information pessimistically. Given the stakes involved (state survival), the

lessons of 1971 could not but engender extreme caution and apprehension moving forward.

This experience prompted, it is worth noting, the initiation of Pakistan's nuclear program in 1972. Pakistan's then president (and future prime minister) Zulfikar Ali Bhutto convened a meeting of the nation's nuclear scientists and engineers just two weeks after the war and exhorted them to develop the bomb as quickly as possible, having said the nation would "eat grass" if necessary to make it happen (Amin 2000: 78). That the decision was linked to the 1971 defeat is clear (see for example the discussions in Ahmed 1999 and Cheema 1996), and further underscores the effect of the rivalry (specifically, experience within the relationship) on determining threat perceptions. A nuclear deterrent was considered a necessary capability in terms of forestalling Indian aggression and addressing the imbalance in conventional military power that had been laid bare by the events of 1971 (Spector 1984). The proximity of this decision to the outcome of the war supports the inference – articulated in the extended quotations from Kapur and Sathasivam above – that Pakistani perceptions were powerfully shaped by the war's outcome. This is not to suggest that Islamabad is fundamentally status quo with respect to the relationship – the consensus amongst analysts and scholars that Pakistan is the revisionist power in the rivalry is basically correct, as it maintains an interest in seizing and controlling Kashmir and pursues antagonistic policies to that effect. But this does not obviate the basic lesson that Pakistani leaders have drawn from decades of conflict: that military confrontation with India is possible, perhaps likely, and potentially devastating.

In the context of the balance of power Cohen references, Pakistani concerns regarding India are perhaps more immediately appreciable. A large, militarily dominant, nuclear-capable neighbor is likely to unsettle the security of any nation. For Pakistan, rivalry dynamics amplify these concerns. "Pakistan fears Indian aggression," writes Zafar Jaspal (2011: 54-55),

India's military victories over Pakistan including the partition of East Pakistan in 1972 reinforce fears that India seeks to keep Pakistan weak and subservient.

India's preponderant size, resources, technological advancement, and military

superiority give credence to its threats to make Pakistan a vassal state, if not eliminate it altogether. Pakistanis perceive that their identity, territorial integrity, and independence are under constant threat from India.

These fears remained influential up through the 1990s. The prospect of Indian aggression was particularly acute as a threat *given* the structural realities of the balance of power between the two states. It is understandable, therefore, that Pakistan is typically considered particularly ‘paranoid’ vis-à-vis India, specifically in places like Afghanistan (to be discussed further in Chapter 7). Again, this reinforces the extent to which rivalry dynamics are not separate from, or independent to, more straightforward balance of power considerations. Rather, they intermingle with these realities, and together shape perceptions of intentions. Pakistan’s concerns regarding India are predicated on the objective threat a large, powerful neighbour represents. Yet they are amplified by the history of interactions between the two states adumbrated in this chapter. In terms of assessing probabilities regarding Indian behaviour, the possibility of future conflict is weighted with the existential consequences of a repeat of the 1971 war. This necessitates, as far as Islamabad is concerned, constant vigilance in terms of protecting against Indian encirclement. (Recall again that, as mentioned above, the development of a nuclear weapon was and is justified almost exclusively in defensive terms).

Not all interactions between the rivals, of course, have been conflictual. The Indus Water Treaty of 1960 is but one example of cooperation that has sporadically occurred.<sup>36</sup> Repeated rounds of peace talks, initiatives, and summits have brought various leaders together at different times.<sup>37</sup> Economic cooperation, similarly, has been steadily, if not always successfully, pursued. To say nothing of the civil society and public linkages which have occasionally succeeded in bringing together members of each population. The Lahore Declaration of 1998 saw the leaders of both sides (Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammed Nawaz Sharif) “sharing

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<sup>36</sup> The treaty outlines the procedures and mechanisms for cooperation regarding each country’s use of the Indus River. See Indus Water Treaty (1960).

<sup>37</sup> In addition to formal war settlements following 1965 and 1972 (Tashken and Simla, respectively), mutual peace initiatives have been launched at regular intervals over the entire span of the relationship, roughly two per decade. See the discussion in Rajagopalan (1999).

[their] vision of peace and stability between” the countries, as well as announcing their “commit[ment] to the objective of...nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation” all while agreeing to “intensify their efforts” to resolve issues such as Jammu and Kashmir and “refrain from intervention and interference in each other’s internal affairs” (Lahore Declaration 1999). And yet the Kargil conflict, described above, promptly followed; just as, similarly, the Simla Agreement of 1972 was followed by Indian nuclear tests and associated tensions in 1974, and the Tashkent Declaration settling the war in 1965 failed to prevent war in 1971.

We see in this pattern of interactions the influence of both specific reputation (as the lessons from individual crises informed tactics in the short term; Pakistan’s decision to launch Operation Gibraltar – and thereby initiate the 1965 war – was partially a product of Indian “pusillanimity” in the Rann of Kutch episode earlier that year [Ganguly 1999: 160]) but also even more importantly of rivalry reputation over the years (as general proclivities and behaviour reinforced the perception on both sides that its rival was hostile; for India that Pakistan retained its revisionist designs vis-à-vis Kashmir and for Pakistan that India could threaten it strategically through the use of superior conventional military force). Again, the suggestion is not that the tangible conflicts of interest that remained were irrelevant. Quite the opposite: that outstanding issues remained is a necessary condition for the continued hostility that is observed. Yet it is the *combination* of these extant issues with the reputations that developed as a result of the conflicts they produced which served to maintain the fundamental incompatibility between the two nations. Which is to say, suspicions between New Delhi and Islamabad were outsized beyond what should have been the case given the scope and salience of the outstanding issues.

This point is made forcefully by Thornton (1999: 184) in his assessment of Pakistani foreign policy just prior to the millennium:

Pakistan’s mixture of ambitions, goals, and threat assessment has been out of balance. In fact, Pakistan has faced very little threat in its history... The focus on the India threat was no doubt warranted at first, and the events of 1971 were painful reminders of its potential, but for a quarter-century now India has been a

status quo power and its threats have mostly been in response to Pakistani activities. Preoccupation with India has led Pakistan into costly debacles such as the misbegotten 1965 war, waste of budgetary resources, and policy choices that were probably counter to its values and broader interests.

The associated policy recommendation is, of course, for Islamabad to adjust its priorities and re-evaluate its threat perceptions vis-à-vis India. Yet such an adjustment is unlikely – at least in the short term – given Pakistan’s experience over the last half century. Confident peace with India might well be desirable, but because Pakistan *also* retains ambitions regarding Kashmir (along with the general desire to promote its interests by expanding its economic power and political influence, as all nations do) it knows that India may react – presumably aggressively, given the history. Most fundamentally, as a function of geography, anything Pakistan does will be of interest to India, a reality that Pakistani decision-makers obviously recognize (just as any person in a domestic relationship occasionally anticipates their partner’s reaction – irritation, or worse – to what one considers minor or innocuous behaviour).<sup>38</sup> Even if Islamabad were to renounce any and all priorities which might possibly antagonize New Delhi (that is, adopt a foreign policy the explicit purpose of which is to project benign intentions, to the point of near inactivity internationally so as to preclude misperception) the basic strategic vulnerability outlined above combined with past experience in the rivalry would demand caution and skepticism. Thornton (1999) himself recognizes as much when he writes: “no Pakistani military planner could assume that India presents no security problem to Pakistan” (p. 185), and elsewhere that “India will inevitably remain the principal determinant of Pakistani policy just as the United States is for Canada or Mexico” (p. 186). This last comparison is illuminative; it is largely because the United States is not a rival (in the sense employed in this dissertation) of either Canada or Mexico that such inevitable preoccupation can proceed along more amicable lines; the history of – which is to say, the reputations developed within – each respective dyad suggests cooperation or, if

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<sup>38</sup> Kenneth Waltz (1959: 183) invokes Jean-Jacques Rousseau to make the same point in a different context: “The states of Europe [Rousseau] writes, ‘touch each other at so many points that no one of them can move without giving a jar to all the rest; their variances are all the more deadly, as their ties are more closely woven.’”

conflict, confrontation short of military means.<sup>39</sup> Reputation in the India-Pakistan dyad suggests precisely the opposite, meaning the inevitable preoccupation of proximity is coloured by the possibility of violence.

This applies equally to New Delhi, of course, even if the ‘existential’ dimension is less acute (though not absent, given Pakistan’s nuclear capability), due to its conventional military superiority. Yet the insurgency in Kashmir has been and remains a major issue for Indian security, as does the threat of Islamist terrorism more broadly – a point reinforced by high-profile attacks in the heart of major Indian cities such as New Delhi in 2001 and Mumbai in 2008 (but recognized well before these dates over the course of decades of Pakistani-sponsored guerilla and terrorist activity in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s). Nor have conventional attacks from Pakistan completely dissipated. As evidenced by the Kargil episode, and discussed above, Islamabad’s acquisition of a nuclear weapon capability even seemed to augment, rather than diminish, this possibility (Ahmed 2000). Moreover, it is in the context of Islamabad’s demonstrated revisionist ambitions that rivalry reputation informs Indian decision-makers. Given their past behaviour, New Delhi can assume that Islamabad has not abandoned these aims; given this assumption, past actions provide a clue as to how they are likely to pursue them in the future. (Consider the adjustments to security policy and preparedness following the Kargil incursion noted above.) Thus, while India is less concerned with being overrun militarily as compared to Pakistan, it is wary of opportunities by which Pakistan might continue or augment its long-standing policies of supporting unrest in Kashmir, targeting India more broadly using state-sponsored terrorism, and potentially employing conventional forces to hurt or bleed India in supplement to, or in consolidation of the gains achieved by, the first two tactics.

It is in this vein that Afghanistan has strategic relevance. As Christine Fair (2010: 7-8, emphasis added) explains:

In addition, Pakistan has raised and supported several militant groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen/Harkat-ul-Ansar, and Harakat-ul-Jihad-

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<sup>39</sup> Power asymmetry is also relevant, obviously; of course such asymmetry also exists between India and Pakistan (see Paul 2005), though clearly not to the same extent as between North American neighbours.

al-Islami, among others, which operate in India. *All have trained in Afghanistan, with varying proximity to the Taliban and by extension al Qaeda. Consequently, India is pre-eminently interested in ensuring that Afghanistan does not again return to being a terrorist safe-haven as it was under the Taliban.*

This theme of regional terrorism finding incubation in Afghanistan would feature heavily in Indian assessments of its security interests from 2001 onwards. Pakistan, by contrast, is focused on retaining ‘strategic depth’ in Afghanistan. William Dalrymple (2013) outlines the basic logic:

The idea had its origins in the debacle of 1971, when, in less than two weeks, India crushingly defeated Pakistan in their third war...According to the Pakistanis’ narrative, the dismemberment of their country – which they blame on India – made it all the more important to develop and maintain friendly relations with Afghanistan, in large measure in order to have a secure refuge in the case of a future war with India. The porous border offers a route by which Pakistani leaders, troops and other assets, including its nuclear weapons, could retreat to the northwest in the case of an Indian invasion.

In both instances, these perceptions and associated priorities are predicated on experiences within the rivalry, and the reputations for behaviour that have been established between the two states. In both instances, concerns are future-oriented; past conflict portends continued conflict, present policy contemplated in the shadow of an ominous future. Given these origins (and the concomitant pressure to err on the side of caution given the nature of the international system), such perceptions will be ‘sticky’, i.e. unlikely to change. As a baseline, I argue, they serve as powerful motivators of behaviour. In the year 2001, both Indian and Pakistani decision-makers had long-term concerns regarding vulnerabilities in the rivalry. They were not paranoid or emotional in this regard, but rather conditioned by decades of history and experience. This is the nature and effect of international rivalry.

## Summary

The case of interest for this dissertation, presented in the next two chapters, is Indian and Pakistani involvement in the war in Afghanistan. The argument is that both countries were and are motivated by defensive concern to balance one another in that theatre, lest they be disadvantaged moving forward, particularly in the context of potential future confrontation. As such, it is important to know specifically how the rivals viewed the relationship at or around the time intervention into the current war in Afghanistan occurred. Was there a concern that ceding influence in Afghanistan might have adverse long-term consequences in the rivalry? Generally, did the two rivals continue to consider one another to be a significant strategic threat at the time intervention was contemplated? Establishing these perceptions at this crucial moment can lend support to the interpretation that rivalry concerns were and are important for explaining intervention.

Answering this question requires an appreciation of India-Pakistan relations during the relevant time period (roughly, the years preceding the initiation of the present Afghanistan conflict in 2001). As discussed above, the 1990s saw continued and intensified instability in Kashmir, as Islamabad ramped-up its destabilization campaign through the support of Islamist militants and insurgents. Relations similarly frayed as a result of competing interests vis-à-vis the civil war that was then occurring in Afghanistan in the aftermath of Soviet withdrawal. At the turn of the millennium, relations between the two countries remained generally hostile. Both the immediate (nuclear tests; Kargil; instability in Kashmir; the 2001-2 nuclear standoff) and long-term history (the various wars and crises in the decades following partition) played a role in defining perceptions at this particular moment in time. Afghanistan was an important component of the relationship as well, both in the 1980s and in particular in the 1990s, as various factions fought for control of that proximate nation (these issues are touched on briefly above on pages 139-40 and picked up in more detail in the following two chapters). As this chapter has made clear, both Indian and Pakistani leaders had real reason to be wary of the intentions of the other side – reputations had formed such that Pakistan feared potential encirclement (a concern compounded by the material realities relating to the balance of power that meant any Indian aggression could be devastating)

and India feared continued Pakistani antagonism through Islamabad's support for Islamist terrorism and militancy.

The attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent reaction from the United States, would change the South and Central Asian regions forever. Within weeks of the collapse of the twin towers in New York city, CIA special operatives were coordinating the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Kabul. Shortly thereafter, major conventional military operations would begin, led by the US and its NATO allies, to reconstitute a moderate Afghan government and protect that government against a domestic insurgency led by remaining elements of the Taliban and affiliated groups. For New Delhi and Islamabad, the resulting civil war in Afghanistan would present them with significant opportunities and threats. In the context of the rivalry described in this chapter, I argue that the latter were decisive in terms of formulating strategies and policies vis-à-vis Afghanistan. Concerns regarding the long-term consequences of the conflict, and what certain outcomes might mean for the ability of their rival to imperil their own security moving forward, dictated their respective responses. The chronology of the rivalry outlined in the preceding pages runs unbroken into the post-2001 involvement of both India and Pakistan in Afghanistan. Understanding the latter requires an appreciation of the former. Because of that history, security concerns are not 'emotional' or 'irrational' or 'paranoid', but rather predictable and procedurally rational.<sup>40</sup>

The preceding discussion established the parameters of the India-Pakistan rivalry, highlighting the history of confrontations between the two states, and interpreting the consequences of those confrontations for the perceptions that exist (the reputations that have been formed) between New Delhi and Islamabad. I now turn to a brief discussion of the Afghanistan context, setting the stage for the following two chapters which engage the competing interventions directly.

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<sup>40</sup> Though not necessarily *accurate*; states and state leaders can and certainly do make mistakes in terms of their assessments (indeed, it seems quite likely that Islamabad does have less to fear from India than they believe). But whether or not such assessments are 'correct' has nothing to do with whether they are procedurally rational, as is argued here.

## **The Afghanistan War (2001-Present)**

At the time of writing, the war in Afghanistan has entered its seventeenth year. In early 2018, major terrorist attacks in the heart of Kabul offered vivid confirmation that the Taliban is resurgent (Sharifi and Adamou 2018). A few months earlier, in late summer 2017, American President Donald Trump had articulated a ‘new’ Afghanistan strategy that resembled, in many ways, the old – a continued US military presence (including a slight increase over the 8,400 troops then-serving, albeit still significantly reduced from the war-time high of roughly 100,000 in 2010-11) and a commitment to training Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) so that they might eventually take ownership of the security situation in the country (see Nakamura and Phillip 2017). Yet most accounts and assessments of the war, whether journalistic or academic, suggest that ‘victory’, however it might reasonably be defined, remains remote. Over the last several years, the Taliban has reclaimed large swaths of territory in the South and Southeast; it threatens and challenges Afghan government control (supported by the US) in still other areas. A recently completed analysis by BBC News suggests that a full 70% of Afghan territory is in play – i.e. controlled or contested by the Taliban – representing a significant deterioration of the security situation since 2014, when NATO officially ended its combat operations and large numbers of foreign troops exited the country. While paying nominal heed to a similar commitment to withdrawal, the United States nonetheless holds on in the face of rising security challenges, unwilling to admit a defeat which now, according to most observers, approaches a foregone conclusion.

The post-mortems have preceded death. Even as the war sputters on, attempts to understand its ultimate failure occupy policymakers and analysts alike. Consistent across many of these assessments is the perfidious behaviour of America’s nominal ally, Pakistan; Islamabad’s continued support for elements of the Taliban insurgency have undermined first NATO and now US-led efforts to stabilize the country. “The inability to stop [Pakistan’s] covert interference in Afghanistan”, writes noted author and regional expert Steve Coll (2018: 667), is the “greatest strategic failure of the American war.” Seth G. Jones, similarly, highlights Taliban sanctuaries on the Pakistani-side of the border, suggesting that “[t]he US failure to stop Pakistan is particularly egregious because the United States was involved in an almost identical program 30 years ago – with

[Pakistan's] help – against the Soviets in Afghanistan” (quoted in Wittmeyer 2013). Amrullah Saleh, former head of Afghanistan's intelligence services (2004-2010), highlights what he considers the naïve belief that Pakistan might “change” – that is, give up its own regional ambitions and security agenda – as the fundamental error of US and NATO strategy (Wittmeyer 2013). While other factors are also mentioned – Roland Paris (2013), for example, notes the “surfeit” of possible explanations for failure, from the illegal drug trade to institutional incompetence (see also Waldman 2013) – the Pakistani problem, as it might be called, looms large.

An extended policy discussion is reserved for the end of Chapter 7 (pages 326-9). For now, it is important to recognize the broader context of which the following analysis forms a part. A standard explanation of Pakistan's obstinacy is Islamabad's ‘obsession’ with India and Indian activity/influence in Afghanistan (see for example Meher 2012; Haqqani and Curtis 2017). Yet simply recognizing the centrality of the Indian question to Pakistani decision-making does not explain it. Further, reference to ‘paranoia’ or ‘delusion’ (Christine Fair [2010: 17] calls the focus “neuralgic”) on the part of decision-makers is hardly satisfactory; for scholars of international relations, such covers amount to inexact hand-waving at the expense of more explicit, careful analysis. Explanations should not rest on observations which are themselves puzzling. To highlight Islamabad's preoccupation with India is to beg the question: why are they so preoccupied? Here we see an echo of the fallacy noted in Chapter 3 regarding the ascription of human emotion to interstate rivalry. Just as states cannot ‘hate’ one another, so too it is nonsensical to suggest that they are ‘obsessed’ with or ‘paranoid’ about one another. The individual decision-makers that comprise the leadership of either country can be said to display such psychological pathologies, to be sure, but insofar as there is a consistency with respect to the general orientation of different decision-makers across time, it is more helpful to think of the conditions by which a state's foreign policy is shaped in a particular direction. If this foreign policy is consistently moved – which is to say, cumulative decisions display a tendency towards either hostility or benevolence vis-à-vis their intended target, or regularly indicate an assessment of intentions that is either distrustful

or credulous<sup>41</sup> – one can perhaps usefully say that the state ‘hates’ or is ‘paranoid’ (or ‘trusts’ or is ‘friendly’) toward the other state. Yet the utility of this statement is its ability to subsume a broader pattern of decisions under a single marker; it is metaphorical not actual, and beneath it the determinants of that foreign policy orientation, that tendency, remain to be uncovered.

In the next two chapters, I argue that Pakistani *and* Indian behaviour in Afghanistan can be best understood through the lens of international rivalry (as it is described in Chapter 3). As mentioned in Chapter 3, this does not mean that rivalry is the sole motivating factor driving foreign policy decision-making for either side – rather, I posit that foregrounding the logic associated with rivalry helps explain much of the behaviour that we observe. Myriad additional factors are relevant, including economic opportunities, security concerns (for India in particular), ethnic motivations, bureaucratic interests (for the Pakistani military-intelligence apparatus, for example), political dynamics, corruption, personal jealousies and agendas, and so forth. There is no intent to deny or obscure the complexity of this reality. Yet also operating are the broader, long-term contours of a political-security relationship at the strategic level – one which invokes existential considerations for both India and Pakistan as sovereign political communities, as *states* in the most fundamental sense of the term. These are considerations that all states have and would act upon, even if for many – if not most – states in the international system the relevance of such considerations rarely rises to the surface, rarely are reflected in specific foreign policy decisions. Or, if they do, their influence in such decisions or policies are muted in comparison to more immediate and flagrant concerns, priorities, or justifications. Yet for other states, such basic and fundamental considerations are more immediately pressing; in such situations, their influence becomes visible both in specific decisions and in the general orientations a state pursues with respect to a particular foreign policy problem or situation. For India and Pakistan, the war in Afghanistan is one of these situations. In addition to, and overlapping with, the obvious and predictable consequences of a civil conflict occurring in close

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<sup>41</sup> Or, to carry the argument further, successive individuals (each presumably with unique psychological profiles, life experiences, and ideological predispositions) rotate into decision making positions and adopt broadly consistent policy preferences.

proximity (a concern for political influence, economic opportunity, immediate security implications, etc.), there are *rivalry* considerations associated with the India-Pakistan relationship itself that require unpacking. More specifically, the war in Afghanistan, and the opportunities it presents for both countries in a variety of domains, triggers concern about the long-term consequences for the rivalry. In anticipation of future conflict, gains achieved in that theatre are potentially threatening. Explanations which do not include this rivalry dynamic will be incomplete – as the next two chapters will demonstrate, rivalry considerations were *decisive* and *dominant* in terms of shaping the interventions that occurred. Playing the long-game mandates behaviour largely inexplicable by exclusive reference to the immediate context.

The case study proceeds as follows. First, in the rest of this chapter, I briefly summarize the war in Afghanistan itself, outlining the parameters of the conflict and the opportunities that were generated as a result of first American, and then NATO, intervention. Having established this background, the particulars of rivalry involvement are engaged, beginning with India's rationale for supporting the Afghan government and its interests and priorities for cultivating influence in the country (Chapter 6). Next, Pakistan's involvement is discussed, specifically its continued support for the insurgency (in particular the Taliban) as a proxy for its interests in Afghanistan (Chapter 7). The behaviour of both India and Pakistan is then assessed in the context of the expectations of the theory of rivalry intervention, in order to determine whether the patterns of the case broadly support the arguments and explanations offered in this dissertation.

### *Opportunities for Intervention*

The premise of the argument presented in the next two chapters is that rivalry concerns influenced the decision-making in both New Delhi and Islamabad with respect to involvement in the war in Afghanistan. Implicit in this argument is the assumption that the war which began in 2001 *generated* or induced intervention. A potential problem arises when one considers the clear historical fact that both India and Pakistan had long been involved – in a variety of ways – in Afghanistan, and even more so that they had previously supported various factions in the country in ongoing and oscillating civil

conflicts stretching back decades (for example during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s and during the rise of the Taliban in the 1990s). Which is to say, the post-2001 environment could be seen as nothing new under the sun; the policy-orientation of either rival merely the continuation of long-standing practice. What, in the final analysis, makes the conflict that began in 2001 particularly important, other than the new involvement of the United States, Canada, NATO and other Western international actors?

The answer lies in the transformative nature of the American intervention. Civil war has been the reality in Afghanistan for decades. Soviet withdrawal at the end of the 1980s precipitated conflict amongst various factions in the early 1990s, each vying for control of, in particular, the capital, Kabul. One of these groups, the collection of Islamist ‘students’ known as ‘the Taliban’, emerged as a dominant force in the mid-1990s, seizing control of Kabul in 1996 and acting as the nominal ruling government of the country (Maley 2002). Yet this control was not uncontested, with opposing factions, such as the Northern Alliance (NA) – a Tajik-dominated collection of disparate military groups – maintaining an active resistance against them and controlling territory of their own in the north and northeast (Saikal 2004). The American-led intervention post-9/11 dramatically re-ordered – inverted, destroyed – this prevailing political order. Taliban rule over Kabul ended in the Fall of 2001, when the United States intervened against them. Crucially, the US allied with the Northern Alliance in this effort – even using NA fighters as the ‘expeditionary force’ tasked with seizing the capital (a decision that would have significant consequences for how the subsequent conflict has played out, as discussed in the section on policy implications that ends Chapter 7). From a relatively isolated group with little control over territory, the NA was suddenly in the ascendancy – many of its members went on to occupy prominent positions in the post-Taliban government (Maley 2002; see also Table 2 on page 191). Even more importantly, the Taliban was no longer in control, but would later emerge in the form of an insurgency which persists to this day.

This is the key dynamic: the 2001 US-led intervention inverted the power structure within Afghanistan. Pre-2001, the Taliban was the central government fighting off a challenge to their authority from, primarily, the Northern Alliance. Post-2001, the Taliban was itself an insurgent group, challenging the authority of a new central government, created at the Bonn conference of 2001, supported by the US and its

international partners, and heavily influenced by former elements of the NA. This means that the war which began in 2001 marks a significant disjuncture from the civil conflicts that occurred during the 1990s, both in scope (particularly as the Taliban regrouped, reorganized, and re-emerged as an insurgency) and in orientation. For decision-makers in Islamabad and New Delhi, the situation demanded a re-evaluation of existing policy. Islamabad, which had largely supported the Taliban government during the 1990s, had vocally (and controversially, for many elements within Pakistan) supported the American invasion. If it wanted to continue its support for the Taliban, it would have to do so more or less covertly; it would also mean supporting an insurgency, rather than a centralized ruling government. For New Delhi, which had offered moderate support to the NA during the 1990s, the question became one of whether or not to support (and if so, at what level) the new central government against an ongoing insurgency. For both countries, a status quo had been upset; determining the parameters of the new state of affairs in Afghanistan – most crucially, who would be in power in Kabul over the long-term – became a vital issue. Clearly, the US and its allies would not stay forever (even if they have stayed longer than many anticipated): the future of the region, and whose interests would be protected and promoted in Afghanistan, was therefore in play and at stake.

Both Indian and Pakistani decision-making vis-à-vis Afghanistan must be understood in this context. There is of course some continuity between involvement in Afghanistan in the 1990s (or even further back) and involvement post-2001. In part this history is inescapable in trying to understand present behaviour, and the historical connections linking both India and Pakistan to Afghanistan are briefly explored in Chapters 6 & 7 while nonetheless focusing on post-2001 decision-making. Yet the consequences of the US invasion in 2001 constitute a ‘political shock’<sup>42</sup>, dramatically reshaping power structures within the country and consequently forcing a reorientation for all regional actors (India and Pakistan included) in terms of their relationship to, and interest in, said structures. For analytical purposes, therefore, it is possible to bifurcate the pre- and post-2001 eras, and to speak meaningfully of the post-2001 decisions undertaken

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<sup>42</sup> Goertz and Diehl (1995: 31) define a political shock as “a dramatic change in the international system or its subsystems that fundamentally alters the processes, relationships, and expectations that drive nation-state interactions.”

by both New Delhi and Islamabad in terms of their support for and/or against the two main domestic poles of power in Afghanistan: the government in Kabul and the Taliban insurgency. Thinking about the conflict in this way, we can articulate the basic parameters of the present case study.

First there is an ongoing civil conflict situation. The US-led invasion in October/November of 2001 (Operation Enduring Freedom) removed the Taliban from power. The Bonn conference – and resulting Bonn Agreement – of December 2001 established the basis for a new central Afghan government.<sup>43</sup> The Agreement also set the stage for more significant international involvement, appealing to the “international community” to “help...the new Afghan authorities in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces”(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2002). On 20 December 2001 the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was created through UN Security Council Resolution 1386. Beginning with a relatively limited mandate tied to security in and around Kabul, ISAF’s mission gradually expanded, with NATO ultimately assuming formal command in August 2003 (Rynning 2012). The expanding mandate was largely a function of the security situation which, rather than stabilizing in the aftermath of the Taliban’s fall, gradually deteriorated.<sup>44</sup> As early as 2002, evidence suggested that an insurgency was developing. Escalating violence between 2003 and 2006 removed any doubt, with the number of insurgent attacks tripling from 148 to 353 (Jones 2008). NATO/ISAF expanded operations to deal with the mounting threat, with troop levels rising from an initial 5,000 to over 40,000 by 2007. The insurgency was organized and perpetrated by the remaining elements of the Taliban, many of whom had fled Afghanistan for Pakistan in the wake of the US-led invasion (Rubin 2007). Benefiting from sanctuary and support, the Taliban were able to recuperate and strategize from the Pakistani side of the border (Mohan 2009).

Even as NATO/ISAF broadened its mandate, increased its troop levels, and expanded its overall security operations in an attempt to stabilize the country (it assumed

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<sup>43</sup> The Bonn conference brought together a variety of stakeholders and laid the foundation for the transition to democratic rule in Afghanistan, in particular the road toward the establishment of the Afghan constitution, which occurred in 2004. See Rubin (2004).

<sup>44</sup> ISAF’s mandate was extending from Kabul and its surrounding areas to the entire country by UNSCR 1510, passed in October 2003. Full text available at [https://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/unscr/resolution\\_1510.pdf](https://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/unscr/resolution_1510.pdf)

responsibility for security in the eastern part of the country in 2006, taking over from a smaller US-led coalition), the core purpose of its mission remained supporting the development of the new Afghan government. Following the path laid out at Bonn, a transitional government had been convened under the leadership of Hamid Karzai in 2002; a new constitution was in place by 2004, with Karzai being elected that same year as the country's first president under its writ (Mills 2007). Massive infusions of foreign aid and investment were designed to bolster the nascent Afghan government and help it develop and extend the structures and institutions necessary for effective central authority and control. The US alone has spent hundreds of billions of dollars on reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan since 2001 (for an analysis see Kapstein 2017). The international community, likewise, has extended significant aid and investment, offering approximately \$35 billion between 2001 and 2010 (Mohammed and Takenaka 2012).<sup>45</sup> In 2012, international donors committed to additional aid (approximately \$16 billion through 2016 [Putz 2016]), while the years 2015-2024 have been dubbed the 'transformation decade' for Afghanistan in an attempt to maintain international support for the country (Poole 2014). There has been frustration, of course, as the security situation in the country remains fraught despite this influx of aid and investment over time. Concerns about corruption have been pervasive (see for example Goodhand 2008; Marquette 2011; Suhrke 2013). Yet in the aggregate the capacity of the central government has no doubt expanded, with significant infrastructural improvements, expanded governance procedures, and continued training of the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF). The latter is the focus of much of the international security efforts; even as NATO/ISAF actively engaged with the insurgency, it always maintained at least a nominal emphasis on building up the ANSF so that they might take over responsibility for the security of the country in the long-term. The 'Inteqal' (the Dari and Pashtu word for 'transition') process which began in 2011 and concluded with the end of the official ISAF mission in 2014 was meant precisely to hand ownership of the security situation to the Afghans (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2013); the new and current NATO

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<sup>45</sup> For a breakdown of ODA by donor country see Poole (2014). Canada, for its part, spent approximately \$2.8CAD billion between 2001 and 2016. See Government of Canada (2018).

mission – Operation Resolute Support – is explicitly a ‘train-and-assist’ mission intended to bolster the ANSF (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2018).

While conventional interpretations of the Afghanistan conflict typically consider it to be an international war effort led by the US, NATO, and other international allies, the reality is closer to a civil war situation in which an active insurgency challenges the authority of a central government. To invoke again the definition offered by James Fearon (2007: 86): a civil war is “a violent conflict within a country fought by organized groups that aim to take power at the center or in a region, or to change government policies.” In other words, a civil war situation involves the contestation for power between (at least) two organized groups. Typically, this takes the form of an existing central or sovereign power having their political control challenged, through violence, by another group. The situation in Afghanistan conforms to these basic parameters.

It is worth distinguishing between the initial US-led effort tied to Operation Enduring Freedom, and the subsequent NATO-led international effort to support a new Afghan government and maintain stability in the country so as to facilitate the reconstruction of the various apparatuses necessary for that government to function. The former secured a swift and decisive victory and was, according to Michael O’Hanlon (2002: 47), “a masterpiece of military creativity and finesse.” Once the Taliban was out of power, however, the purpose of this initial phase was complete. With the establishment of the transitional government at Bonn, and even more with the implementation of the new constitution in 2004, a distinct new phase had begun, one in which the international community (the US, Canada, and other members of the NATO/ISAF mission) were supporters of a new sovereign government in Kabul (this is reflected in the language of the Bonn Agreement cited above, and in the subsequent UNSCRs which first created and then expanded the mandate of ISAF). Practically, of course, President Karzai was beholden to the US and NATO – his government was not capable of maintaining security, protecting its sovereignty, or exerting authority on its own. Yet even in its weakened state, the central government possessed *de jure* authority. Insofar as the international presence was explicitly positioned as an assisting force, the Taliban and other insurgent groups, even when directly attacking NATO/ISAF, were challenging the authority of the central government. It is questionable whether the Afghan government will be able to

maintain its authority after the final international (particularly US) troops depart, which is of course the main reason why a final withdrawal date has not been definitively set. This is precisely the point – ‘victory’ for the Taliban will not come the day the US finally departs, but rather the moment they overthrow the present government in Kabul (or, perhaps, arrive at some kind of negotiated, power-sharing agreement), even if in practical terms the latter is largely facilitated by the former.<sup>46</sup>

### *Sequence of Intervention*

The above discussion establishes that there was an opportunity for intervention into Afghanistan by both India and Pakistan post-2001. As mentioned, carry-over from existing support for either the NA or the Taliban likely exerted some inertial pressure to continue such policies, yet the significant and dramatic changes in the structure of the domestic situation makes reading any straightforward continuity unrealistic, particularly as regards Indian support for the Afghan government – despite some involvement and appointments to positions of power, the NA was certainly not the decisive controlling force in the new regime (indeed, elements within the NA were disappointed as to the lack of influence the group ultimately had; Hamid Karzai, for example, was a Pashtun and not a member of the NA; the latter group would have preferred one of their own to assume the presidency in 2002, such as Yunus Qanooni, Mohammad Fahim or Abdullah Abdullah). The government created at Bonn was essentially a new entity, cobbled together from various factions and groups in Afghan society (including previously exiled elites like Karzai) (Schmeidl 2016; see also Dobbins 2008). From very early on, India emerged as a significant supporter of the government (the details of this support are described in Chapter 6). Broadly, therefore, one could posit that India was the first-mover intervener in Afghanistan, with Pakistan as the balancing intervener through its support of the Taliban insurgency. Again, however, the details of the case make such a judgement difficult, and therefore require further explanation.

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<sup>46</sup> The analogue here is the Mujahideen ‘victory’ over Soviet forces in the 1980s – despite repelling Soviet troops in 1989, it was not until 1992 that the Mujahideen actually overthrew the communist government of Mohammed Najibullah.

Pakistan's post-2001 support for the Taliban is, generally speaking, a continuation of a long-standing policy intended to cultivate a sympathetic and pliant regime in Afghanistan. The ISI had been deeply involved with the Afghan mujahedeen during the fight against the Soviets in the 1980s. In the early 1990s, they supported the Pashtun warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. When Hekmatyar was unsuccessful in crafting a unified Pashtun government in Kabul, they shifted their support to the nascent Taliban movement (Rashid 2000). The links between the ISI and the Taliban in the late 1990s and in the period leading up to September 2001 are well-documented (see for example Rashid 2000; Maley 2002; Nojumi 2008; Gall 2014; Datta 2014). Pakistan has supported these various Islamist and Pashtun movements for a host of reasons. The policies of Islamization pursued by Pakistani leader General Muhammed Zia-ul-Haq during the 1980s meant that his government was sympathetic to the mujahedeen and their religious call for holy war (jihad) against the Soviet Union (Haqqani 2005). In addition, cultivating relationships with Pashtun leaders like Hekmatyar and later the Taliban was seen as a way of potentially mitigating the dangers of a Pashtun independence movement; the Pashtun ethnic group straddles the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and has long considered the border itself artificial – plans for an independent 'Pashtunistan' have existed at least as far back as British partition in 1947. This nationalism would endanger the territorial integrity of the Pakistani state. Any nationalist activity would mean that Pakistan's northwestern border would be a source of insecurity; given that the eastern border is threatened by India, with Kashmir a constant concern, the prospect of two fronts of instability is unacceptable to planners in Islamabad and Rawalpindi (these factors, and their implications, are engaged in greater depth at the beginning of Chapter 7).

A stable border, influence in Afghanistan, and the promotion of the Islamization of South Asia (whether out of genuine religious motivation or, more likely, the instrumental advantage this could offer in terms of influence [Cole 2009]); these goals have shaped Islamabad's attitude toward Afghanistan for decades. The spectre of India looms over each of them, of course, as will be discussed in Chapter 7. The important consideration here is that Islamabad's support for the Taliban insurgency cannot be seen as a *direct* response to Indian support for the new Afghan government. This intervention, even as it took on new shape and dimension in the context of post-2001 Afghanistan, was

not one-to-one ‘caused’ by Indian behaviour (compare this to, for example, the American decision to intervene in Angola, which was more immediately and directly tied to Soviet behaviour; the US had no long-standing and existing interests in Angola comparable to Pakistani interests in Afghanistan; see Chapter 9). Yet its scope, scale and intensity *were* related to apprehensions regarding Indian involvement. Which is to say, the character of the intervention was a response to Indian support for the newly-created government in Kabul. In this way, it is still appropriate to characterise Pakistan as the balancing intervener.

To summarize, the sequence of intervention in this case is not a straightforward ‘State B reacts and responds to the intervention of State A into Conflict X occurring in State C’. State B (Pakistan) was already involved in State C (Afghanistan). Yet Conflict X (the post-2001 civil war) is new, and the decision by State A (India) to intervene (in the form of support for the Kabul government) did precipitate a clear response from State B (Pakistan), insofar as it persisted in behaviour which is otherwise puzzling from the perspective of a cost-benefit analysis. Given American pressure, and the clear incentives to cooperate in terms of supporting and stabilizing Afghanistan under the writ of the Bonn-created Kabul government, Pakistan’s obstinacy – the scope and scale of its own intervention in the form of support for the Taliban insurgency – can be read as a response to (and therefore a balancing attempt against) Indian behaviour. Of course, this assertion is at the core of what has to be investigated by reference to available case evidence, a task which will be undertaken in the next two chapters.

Yet even in temporal terms, the categorization of Pakistan as balancing-intervener is justified. The American intervention in 2001 smashed the Taliban government. The newly-constituted government (first the interim government created at Bonn and subsequently the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan that emerged from the Bonn process) became the sovereign power in Afghanistan from 2001 onwards. Yet the Taliban insurgency emerged later, in very nascent form in 2002<sup>47</sup> and only recognizably as a real movement in 2004 before

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<sup>47</sup> Which is to say, the benefit of hindsight allows one to recognize the minimal and disparate attacks of 2002 as the kernels of what would later become the insurgency, whereas at the time they were not generally recognized as part of a broader coordinated effort.

escalating significantly in 2006 (Jones 2008). Nor is it clear that Pakistani support was offered from the outset, with Christine Fair (2010: 17) observing that evidence of such support is only definitive beginning in 2004. Again, the details of the case will allow for a better appreciation of the relevant dynamics. Indeed, the power of the case study approach is precisely its ability to deal with these complexities. What is of interest is not whether intervention by State A in some way automatically and mechanistically ‘causes’ intervention by State B, but rather the consequences that that initial intervention has for the perceptions and decision-making processes of State B, which are then translated into action.

I now turn, in the next two chapters, to the core analysis of the decision-making processes related to first Indian and then Pakistani intervention in Afghanistan.

## CHAPTER 6: INDIAN INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN (2001-PRESENT)

Having detailed the history and development of the India-Pakistan rivalry in the decades leading up to 2001, and the basic parameters of the Afghanistan war, including the opportunities and implications it offered in the context of that rivalry, I now turn to considerations of the two interventions themselves. In this Chapter, I detail Indian involvement and its support for the Kabul government; in Chapter 7, I turn to Pakistan's support for the Taliban insurgency. Given the nature of the case in question, and the fact that the war being examined is ongoing, the case evidence that is available largely consists of secondary reporting and the inferences that can be made given observed behaviour. In some instances, interviews with political officials, military leaders and other decision-makers have been collected and published elsewhere, giving some level of direct insight into the rationale associated with the broad policy orientations of both countries. Also useful are the diplomatic cables released by the organization WikiLeaks as part of their 'Cablegate' document dump. Though the communiqués are between American officials (specifically the American embassies in New Delhi and Islamabad reporting back to the state department in Washington) they contain candid and classified assessments of Indian and Pakistani policies and strategic interests, as well as many direct or paraphrased quotations from senior Indian and Pakistani officials regarding a range of relevant issues, including Afghanistan. These communications are typically private, meaning they are stronger evidence of true sentiment/rationale than public statements which may be tailored for public consumption. A potential weakness, however, is that statements may be moderated for American approval, or calculated to win American support for certain policy preferences. The available cables roughly cover the period between 2004 and 2010, meaning that even if the initial decision points in 2001-2 are not discussed much of the subsequent policy decisions vis-à-vis Afghanistan and, even more importantly, rationale and justification for said policies, are referenced (for a discussion of the use of Wikileaks in political science – and specifically international relations – research see Michael 2015; O'Loughlin 2016).

## **India in Afghanistan**

### *Pre-2001*

While British partition left the two countries without a contiguous border, India and Afghanistan are separated by a relatively narrow band of mountainous terrain in Pakistan's northeast (Malone 2011). Both the broad historical ties which bind the region together<sup>48</sup> and more contemporary geopolitical considerations related to security and economic interests mean that New Delhi has consistently interacted with, and cultivated influence in, Afghanistan. As David Malone (2011: 315) explains: "Afghanistan can readily be considered a part of the broader Middle East, of Central Asia, and of South Asia, forming a bridge between these geostrategically sensitive regions." This assessment mirrors the designation given to Afghanistan by Barry Buzan (2003; 2011), in the context of his theory regarding 'Regional Security Complexes' (RSCs), as a 'bridge' between multiple RSCs (specifically the Central and South Asian) – and therefore as particularly germane to an actor such as India, with extra-regional ambition.<sup>49</sup> From its birth, India has contemplated its potential role as both a regional and global power. Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's iconic post-partition leader, mulled an Indian-analogue of the American 'Monroe Doctrine' in which Central and South Asia would fall under the exclusive ambit of New Delhi, in strategic terms (Pant 2012; for a discussion of Nehru's foreign policy legacy see Kalyanaraman 2014).

In 1950, the two countries signed a 'friendship treaty' outlining the parameters for a cooperative relationship (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 1950). Relations were generally good in the subsequent years, with New Delhi enjoying regular access to the regime of Mohammed Zahir Shah in Kabul and various cultural exchanges serving to bolster person-to-person connections between the two populations. The period between 1950 and 1970 can be seen as relatively quiescent in bilateral terms (for an

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<sup>48</sup> In cultural/ethnic/linguistic/religious terms, the peoples of India/Pakistan/Afghanistan share significant linkages and common history. The Mughal empire which ruled South Asia between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries had Central Asian roots and included most of modern-day Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Going back even further, the Indus Valley Civilization of the Bronze Age spanned a similar geographical area. Today, all three countries invoke 'familial' metaphors to describe even contentious ongoing relationships. See Encyclopedia Britannica n.d.); see also Kenoyer (1991).

<sup>49</sup> Buzan and Weaver's theory of Regional Security Complexes suggests that geographical regions constitute mini-international systems, and that security concerns are most acute in a regional context. The security of states within a region overlap to a greater extent than between or across regions. See Buzan and Waever (2003) and Buzan (2011).

historical overview see Jafri 1976); both India and Afghanistan aspired to non-alignment in the context of the Cold War, to varying degrees of success. Beginning in the early 1970s, however, the realities of global great-power politics began to impinge inexorably on political and strategic dynamics in Central and South Asia. Both countries began to tilt toward the Soviet Union; each, in their own way, due to antagonisms related to Pakistan (and driven partly by Pakistan's concomitant entry into the American orbit). A series of agreements were reached during this time between New Delhi and the Afghan governments of Mohammad Daoud (president from 1973-78) and Nur Mohammed Taraki (president 1978-79) (Mustafa et. al 2017). India was generally acquiescent to first Daoud's coup against Zahir Shah in 1973 and subsequently (as Daoud's relationship with the international communist movement deteriorated) the 'Saur revolution' that led to his ouster and replacement with an explicitly communist government under Taraki. In 1979, however, the relationship was significantly fractured, as an anti-communist uprising gave way to the Soviet invasion. India reluctantly supported the Soviets in this endeavour, despite the fact that it undermined any pretense to an Indian Monroe Doctrine in the greater region (Westad 2006). Indira Gandhi, assessing Indian policy of this period (she resumed as prime minister in 1980) suggested that the Soviet invasion occurred "only after Pakistan started training Afghan rebels and sending them in to topple the government [in Afghanistan]" before adding "nevertheless India was opposed to the USSR's presence and it had told that country so" (quoted in Sharma 2011: 104). Despite this reticence, India consistently abstained on UN resolutions calling for Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan (ibid.).

Given Pakistan's clear and concerted involvement with the Afghan mujahedeen fighting against the Soviets, India's involvement in Afghanistan during the 1980s became more nakedly focused towards its rival than had hitherto been the case (though there is evidence to suggest that India had offered support to Balochi separatists in Afghanistan in the 1970s<sup>50</sup>). This included covert and clandestine activity by the Research and Analysis

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<sup>50</sup> Balochistan is an area which spans territory in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran. The question of Balochi independence is a sensitive one for Islamabad. Claims that India is supportive of Balochi insurgents have become a common theme in contemporary Indo-Pakistani relations. An Indian intelligence official is quoted in Paliwal (2017: 38) saying of the Balochi insurgency in the 1970s: "We gave them everything."

Wing (RAW) which attempted, along with the KGB, to maintain links with various Afghan groups fighting in the war; as well as more visible development activities with respect to industrial, irrigation and hydro-electric projects (Ashraf 2007). Despite these efforts, India was relatively marginalized in Afghanistan given the scope of Pakistani involvement (supported largely by the United States) and, again, its comparative reluctance to fully support the Soviet invasion (Indian and Pakistani behaviour vis-à-vis the Soviet invasion is discussed in Chapter 5).

While the Soviets withdrew their troops in 1989, continued Soviet support kept the communist regime of Mohammed Najibullah in power in Kabul until 1992, at which point Boris Yeltsin – keen for a clean break from Soviet foreign policy – suspended aid. New Delhi had continued to support Najibullah, primarily due to his anti-Pakistan orientation (Saikal 2004). When the Pakistan-backed mujahedeen toppled Najibullah in 1992 (as a more or less direct consequence of Russian abandonment), Indian involvement in Afghanistan again entered a new phase.

In 1991, the government of Narasimha Rao articulated a reorientation of policy. According to MK Bhadrakumar (2011), an Indian diplomat working, at the time, on Afghan policy, the so-called ‘Rao doctrine’ emphasized neutral engagement in Afghanistan, including “deal[ing] with whosoever was in power in Kabul and focus[ing]...on cultivating a friendly government that was sensitive to India’s vital interests and core concerns.” This included, importantly, engagement and consultation with Pakistan, at least initially. It also meant official recognition of the mujahedeen government, and the maintenance of diplomatic missions and embassies, while other nations had shuttered and pulled out. This behaviour is illuminative. It demonstrates the extent to which Indian policy was not blindly antagonistic to Pakistan, but rather calibrated to maximize Indian interests in the form of a “friendly government” in Kabul. Such a government, of course, would be one not entirely beholden or pliant to Islamabad, but the distinction is key. Already the connection between Islamism in Afghanistan and terrorism in Kashmir was apparent to New Delhi (Dixit 1996). Disrupting this connection by severing the link – namely, ISI – between the two was therefore an important security interest. Thus, Indian policy was predicated on defensive concerns, not unremitting antagonism toward Pakistan. Less psychological hostility than a recognition of the long-

term security dangers of Pakistani-directed Islamism having a foothold in the region (a perception reinforced by past Pakistani behaviour and past experience within the relationship, insofar as state-directed irregular warfare – including the use of terrorist proxies – had become an established part of Islamabad’s playbook; see Chapter 5; also Ogden 2013).

The descent of Afghanistan into full civil war during the 1990s complicated Indian policy and forced – given the close cooperation between ISI and various Islamist groups – more concerted efforts to counter Pakistani influence in the country. The provisional government that had been created in 1992 (the Islamic State of Afghanistan) was beset by in-fighting; Pakistan initially backed the Pashtun warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar against the Tajik Burhanuddin Rabbani within the governing coalition. As the Taliban emerged to challenge this government, Pakistan shifted its support from Hekmatyar to the new ‘student’ movement and its particularly severe strain of Islam. India, for its part, began cultivating a relationship with the Tajik militia leader Ahmed Shah Massoud (Saikal 2004). A former Indian intelligence official, active in Afghanistan during the time period, explained New Delhi’s rationale in this regard: “[W]e had no contacts with the Taliban in the 1990s...we knew that the Pakistanis were supporting the Taliban, and in turn, we were looking for any and all anti-Pakistan outfits in Afghanistan to support” (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 110). Former Indian Foreign Secretary K Raghunath underscored the extent to which there was consensus on this issue within the Indian government: “There was nobody who was doubting this policy [of containing the Taliban]. Nothing was to be gained, in fact, everything was to be lost by showing the slightest signs of wanting to engage” (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 106). When the Islamic State of Afghanistan government was toppled by the Taliban in 1996 (and replaced by the latter’s Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan), Rabbani joined with Massoud and other militia leaders – most of whom were fellow Tajiks – to form what became known as the Northern Alliance (NA). The NA became the primary challenger to the Taliban, receiving significant international support not only from India but also Iran, Russia, and other Central Asian governments (Maley 2002).

For India the key consideration was the connection between Islamism in Afghanistan and instability in Kashmir. Recall the discussion, in Chapter 5, of the

ongoing and recurring crises in Kashmir during the 1990s. The concomitance of security challenges in the two arenas was not a coincidence. As Sharma (2001: 108) explains:

...the fallout of the rise of fundamentalism in Afghanistan was ferocious and almost immediate, as it witnessed the rise of what proved to be long and traumatic Islamist insurgency in the Kashmir valley. The participation of 200 soldiers from the Taliban's elite brigade 055 in active combat during the Kargil conflict with Pakistan in 1999, and their more visible role during the landing of the hijacked Indian airliner IC 814 in Kandahar in December 1999...foreclosed whatever limited possibility might have existed for exploring the idea of accommodation with the Taliban.

The participation of Taliban fighters in the Kargil episode, in particular, was alarming, and underscores the nexus not only between Afghanistan and Kashmir but also between Islamist militancy and conventional Pakistani military actions. Given the history and the established pattern of behaviour in terms of 'irregular' troops presaging and abetting regular army operations, India does not see these threats as distinct and separate but rather complimentary and coordinated. The Taliban's rise was therefore not a separate issue but rather a new node in the ongoing rivalry; support for the NA tied to mitigating threats, both immediate and long-term, in this context.

Though the precise scope of New Delhi's assistance to the NA during this time period remains unknown, that which has been admitted publicly suggests considerable involvement, including financial assistance, technical support, and military training and advising. Indian military personnel based in Farkhor, Tajikistan advised the NA in active operations against the Taliban (Bedi 2002). Indian technicians serviced NA military equipment, including Mi-17 and Mi-35 attack helicopters, and provided additional high-altitude warfare equipment worth approximately USD\$10 million (ibid). An Indian field hospital in South Tajikistan near the Afghan border helped treat NA fighters, including Massoud following the suicide attack against him in September 2001 (he would die in hospital just weeks before the US intervention would empower his NA to finally overthrow the Taliban) (ibid).

The scope of this activity, however, was insufficient in terms of helping the NA overcome the Taliban on the battlefield, naturally leading to some tension between NA leaders (in particular Massoud) and Indian decision-makers. The disconnect was reflective of divergent strategic objectives. The NA's goal was to defeat the Taliban and gain control of the country, by whatever means necessary. New Delhi's main concern, on the other hand, was limiting Pakistan's influence, so as to prevent Afghanistan from becoming an incubator and staging ground for the type of Islamist violence that had become a clear part of Pakistan's strategic playbook vis-à-vis Kashmir (Ogden 2013). As early as 1992, Indian home minister YB Chavan had remarked: "the possibility of the Afghan mujahideen concentrating on the Jammu and Kashmir border now, with the help of the Pakistan army, to give a fresh impetus to militants in the valley cannot be ruled out" (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 118). In 1996, India's Minister of External Affairs IK Gujral commented on this possibility during a debate in the Indian parliament:

We have recently seen credible reports in the international media on the Taliban handing over terrorist training facilities to the Harkat-ul-Ansar [a Pakistani-based terrorist group focused on Kashmir]. It is reported that at these training camps Pakistani and other youth are being trained for terrorist activities in Kashmir (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 108).

Such concerns were corroborated in 2001, when members of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a Pakistani-backed terrorist organization committed to the Kashmir cause, were among those killed in the battle for the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e-Sharif (Bedi 2002).

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri, foreign affairs editor for the *Hindustan Times* and a member of India's National Security Advisory Board, summarizes the policy logic that follows from these observations: "ultimately the game is how do you make Afghans strong enough to fight Pakistan or to bleed Pakistan inside Afghanistan...If Pakistan were to be bogged down, it will be fine by [India]. And [India] will get another five to ten years of relative peace on [their] border with Pakistan" (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 122). This logic is reflected in the fact that a considerable amount of the money that went to supporting the NA during the late 1990s was used to counter-bribe militants known to

also be in contact with the ISI (ibid: 116). Again, the defeat of the Taliban was not the primary goal for New Delhi, but rather the frustration of Pakistani efforts and influence. Further, such an outcome was desirable not for its own sake – as a way of punishing Pakistan, or exercising some sort of cathartic revenge, or even as an offensive tactic to ‘bleed’ Pakistan for the purpose of improving the relative balance of power between the two nations – but rather for the perceived security gains that could be achieved insofar as a bogged down Pakistan might be distracted, or have resources diverted, from the Kashmir issue and the India-Pakistan border more generally. As an Indian military official was quoted saying in March 2001, explaining India’s support for the NA: “The situation in Afghanistan cannot be ignored as it impinges directly on the...Kashmir insurgency” (quoted in Bedi 2001).

In sum, the basic orientation of India’s Afghan policy in the period leading up to the American invasion of 2001 was the pursuit of limited strategic objectives vis-à-vis Pakistan through support for the Northern Alliance. Despite the fact that the NA continued to represent the fallen Islamic State of Afghanistan (and was recognized by India as well as the UN – and therefore most nations – as the legitimate ruling power in Afghanistan) the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (the Taliban government) had de facto control over most of the country including the capital of Kabul. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States utilized the NA, supplemented by American special forces, to topple the Taliban. Unlike India, and in the context of the post-9/11 moment, the US shared the NA’s strategic objective of defeating and ousting the Taliban entirely (the US also, obviously, had considerable capacity – as well as willingness – to realize such an outcome). Once accomplished, however, the question of post-Taliban government and governance in Afghanistan became the crucial issue. Not surprisingly, many leaders from the NA would play a significant role in organizing and forming these new governance structures. The historical relationship between India and the NA would therefore place New Delhi in a favourable position vis-à-vis post-2001 power structures in Kabul.

### *Post-2001*

In this section I provide first an overview of official Indian activity vis-à-vis the Afghan government. I then discuss the rationale underpinning these various activities. I conclude by arguing that the straightforward strategic, economic and security interests that help shape Indian involvement are supplemented by rivalry-related concerns that fundamentally alter the way Indian policy is crafted and pursued.

As mentioned, India's post-2001 involvement cannot be considered a straightforward continuation of pre-2001 policy. Indeed, New Delhi moved away from the NA shortly after the US invasion. Though both were happy to see the Taliban overturned, India never shared the NA's strategic goal to have a Tajik-dominated central Afghan government. Long term, the mitigation of instability and extremism would probably require some form of Pashtun involvement, considering their demographical dominance within Afghan society (Pant 2012). To the extent that Pashtuns would be an integral part of the new provisional government, India was eager to cultivate new relationships. Those elements of the NA – for example Qanooni and Adbullah – who would be politically involved moving forward would be useful, but others – in particular militant elements, long supported on the battlefield – became less relevant to Indian aims and were largely dropped. The new focus was on the emerging post-Taliban government.

The negotiations at Bonn involved in particular how the Northern Alliance would share power with other elements and groups within Afghan society. While the NA was the most powerful faction represented at Bonn (other factions were mostly representing exiled Afghan elites, for example the 'royalists' – loyal to the deposed King Zahir Shah – of the Rome Group and the Pashtun tribal leaders of the Peshawar Group, neither of which, obviously, controlled as much, if any, territory as did the NA), the international community believed that a broader-based government would be necessary for stability moving forward. For the NA, the longstanding opposition and resistance force fighting the Taliban, fresh off of victory in Kabul (in which NA officials had re-entered and reclaimed the country's various ministries, palaces and barracks), the prospect of relinquishing some of its newfound control was unlikely to be popular (Dobbins 2008). Indeed, prominent NA leader Burhanuddin Rabbani urged his followers to boycott

discussions; this exhortation was ultimately ignored, but there was genuine concern that talks could unravel (ibid).

During the negotiations, India was not automatically in favour of the NA's preferred positions. On the question of who would lead the new government, for example, the Indian delegation supported Karzai ahead of potential NA candidates (ibid.). More generally, New Delhi reoriented its support from the NA to the new government. Ahmad Wali Massoud, younger brother of the deceased NA leader Ahmed Shah Massoud, expressed frustration as to this move:

During the Resistance [by the NA] [India] were supporting, like Iran and like Russia, the Resistance [NA] against terrorism and Taliban...but since 2001 when the new government came, they completely shifted towards the new government. Now, the support that the Resistance forces enjoyed before this government, after 2001 [India] gave none of this support (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 198).

Lalit Mansingh, Indian Foreign Secretary between 1999-2001, acknowledged that "it is...true that India scaled back its military support to anti-Pakistan elements in Afghanistan after 9/11" (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 11).

Again, this underscores the extent to which Indian alignment with the NA during the 1990s was a marriage of convenience; the broader aim was always the mitigation of Pakistani influence so as to limit or prevent Islamabad's ability to export and promote destabilizing Islamist violence throughout the larger region (for example, Mansingh said of the 1990s-era support for the NA: "the friendships that India cultivated in Afghanistan are indicative of its anti-Pakistan bias...India's political, moral, and military support to the erstwhile anti-Taliban and anti-Pakistan United Front [Northern Alliance] during the 1990s is an open secret" [ibid: 11]). When the Taliban fell in 2001, the best way to achieve such an outcome was to bolster a strong central government resistant to extremist ideology and Pakistani control. Continued support for the NA might have offered certain military advantages insofar as an NA-led government would have been more unremittingly hostile to the Pashtuns and by extension Pakistan – but India knew that Tajik control of Kabul would enflame rather than subdue instability in the country, and so

shifted policy accordingly. Keep Pakistan out, but do so in a way that builds Afghanistan up, rather than merely keeps preferred partisans in charge. For this reason, New Delhi endorsed the makeup of the government that emerged from Bonn.

Table 2 is a list of the 2002 provisional government by position, with each member's ethnicity and political affiliation noted.

**Table 2: Composition of Afghan Provisional Government 2002**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
Prime Minister	Hamid Karzai	Pashtun	Rome Group
Women's Affairs	Sima Samar	Hazara	Rome Group
Defence	Mohammed Qassem Fahim	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Planning	Muhammad Mohaqqueq	Hazara	Northern Alliance
Water and Electricity	Shaker Kargar	Uzbek	Northern Alliance
Finance	Hedayat Amin Arsala	Pashtun	Rome Group
Foreign Affairs	Abdullah Abdullah	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Interior	Younous Qanooni	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Commerce	Seyyed Mustafa Kazemi	Hazara	Northern Alliance
Mines and Industries	Muhammad Alem Razm	Uzbek	Northern Alliance
Small Industries	Aref Noorzai	Pashtun	Northern Alliance
Information & Culture	Raheen Makhdoom	Persian	Rome Group
Communications	Abdul Rahim	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Labour & Social Affairs	Mir Wais Sadeq	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Hajj (Pilgrimage)	Mohammad Hanif Balkhi	Shiite	Independent
Martyrs and Disabled	Abdullah Wardak	Pashtun	Northern Alliance
Education	Ghulam Muhammad	Hazara	Rome Group
Higher Education	Sharif Faez	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Public Health	Suhaila Seddiqi	Tajik	Independent
Public Works	Abdul Khaliq Fazal	Tajik	Rome Group
Rural Development	Abdul Malik Anwar	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Urban Development	Abdul Qadir	Pashtun	Northern Alliance
Reconstruction	Muhammad Amin Farhang	Tajik	Rome Group
Transport	Sultan Hamid Sultan	Hazara	Northern Alliance
Return of Refugees	Enayatullah Nazeri	Tajik	Northern Alliance
Agriculture	Seyyed Hussein Anwari	Hazara	Northern Alliance
Irrigation	Mangal Hussein	Pashtun	Peshawar Group
Justice	Abdul Rahim Karimi	Uzbek	Northern Alliance
Air Transport & Tourism	Abdul Rehman	Nuristani	Rome Group

source: "The Afghan interim government: who's who," *The Guardian* (2006, December 6); PBS Frontline (n.d.).

As this list makes clear, the NA certainly remained the most influential group in terms of sheer numbers within the provisional administration. Yet several key positions (most obviously the prime minister's role, but also finance and reconstruction) went to members of the Rome Group. Similarly, the composition was multi-ethnic, with eleven Tajiks offset by six Pashtuns and six Hazaras (along with assorted other ethnic groups in smaller numbers). Of course, India was merely an observer and unable to dictate terms, but this outcome was largely in keeping with their stated preferences at the time, as outlined by those familiar with the negotiations (see Dobbins 2008). The historical relationship with the NA offered New Delhi clear influence (particularly with Abdullah Abdullah as Foreign Affairs minister and Mohammed Qassem Fahim in charge of Defence), while the multi-ethnic and diverse-affiliation composition furthered India's aim of a broad-based and stable central Afghan government.

While the 2001 Bonn conference set the parameters for the new Afghan government, the biggest and most important benefactor for the new regime was the United States; for all intents and purposes, the Americans were in control in Afghanistan, particularly in the early years of 2001-2003. Nonetheless, Hamid Karzai's government (first the interim, and then the constitutional, after the elections of 2004) was officially the sovereign authority, and immediately began cultivating diplomatic and international relationships in an effort to boost the (re)construction and development of the country. From the outset, India was a major donor. Significant outlays of financial and development assistance defined the early years of India's support for Kabul post-2001, moving toward more specific security assistance over time. (Direct security involvement – including, for example, the introduction of Indian military personnel – has been resisted by both Kabul and New Delhi, recognizing the likely implications for Pakistani behaviour; more recently, however, it has been floated as a possibility moving forward [for a discussion see Shukla 2017]).

In the broadest sense, India's approach to Afghanistan post-2001 was to support the central Afghan government. In response to a question posed in the Indian Parliament (the Lok Sabha) in December of 2001, Minister of External Affairs Jaswant Singh summarized the government's belief that "the future government in Afghanistan should be broad based, with equitable representation of different ethnic and religious groups" –

an emphasis driven by a desire to incorporate Tajiks and other ethnic groups sympathetic to India and limit, as much as possible, the dominance of Pashtuns (without excluding them entirely, for reasons noted above), a group with historical links to Pakistan (and the dominant ethnic group amongst the Taliban). He further stated that the “future political structure in Afghanistan should not be allowed to export terrorism or extremism.” To this end, New Delhi underscored the “importance of reconstruction and rehabilitation in post conflict Afghanistan”, pledging an initial “line of credit of approximately US\$100 million for post conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation work in Afghanistan” (Lok Sabha, Unstarred Question No. 1686 28/11/2001). That same month, doctors and technicians were dispatched to help set up field hospitals for those heavily wounded in the early fighting (Fair 2010). In a short period of time, the initial commitment would expand significantly, as the scope of the reconstruction requirements became clear and the realities of the new environment in Afghanistan presented themselves to New Delhi. Avinash Paliwal (2017: 166) believes Indian rationale at the time was undergirded by a pessimism not largely shared by the rest of the international community:

Despite the US military intervention, India was convinced that the Taliban had not been destroyed. It had only been displaced to the mountains of Afghanistan, or the tribal regions of Pakistan, from where it could easily launch an insurgency against the US forces, or be diverted towards Kashmir by the ISI.

This belief reinforced the imperative to support and solidify the embryonic government in Kabul. By the end of 2002, India’s commitment had reached approximately US\$500 million in aid and reconstruction money (Pant 2012). As Prime Minister Vajpayee declared in a parliamentary debate in November 2001, India would pursue “a maximum possible role” in Afghanistan in the years to come (“India seeks larger role,” 2001, November 28).

New Delhi quickly moved to re-establish a heavy diplomatic presence in Afghanistan; the embassy in Kabul was immediately reopened, as well as consulates in

Kandahar and Jalalabad (Hanauer and Chalk 2012).<sup>51</sup> Consulates in Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif – major commercial centres in the west and north – shortly followed. As Hanauer and Chalk (2012: 14) explain, “[t]hese diplomatic posts enable[d] India to build relationships with local leaders, facilitate trade and investment, and increase awareness of regional developments.” (They are also the source of significant Pakistani anxiety, and perhaps not coincidentally are repeated targets of Taliban attacks; see the discussion on Pakistani activity in Afghanistan in Chapter 7.) No longer reliant on the NA for local intelligence, India used its new footprint to develop “an independent understanding of intra-Pashtun political and tribal dynamics” (Paliwal 2017: 176). As Christine Fair (2010: 12) reports: “According to US, British, and Afghan officials interviewed by this author, India’s activities are not isolated to the north, where it has had traditional ties, but rather include efforts in the southern provinces and in the northeast, abutting the Pakistan border.” Again, this reflects New Delhi’s belief that a stable Afghanistan would require Pashtun support, necessitating a drift from the Tajik-dominated NA.

In February 2002, New Delhi welcomed Hamid Karzai on an official state visit. In meetings with Prime Minister Vajpayee, the two sides discussed specific reconstruction projects and cooperative activities, in particular in the fields of education, health, information technology, transportation infrastructure, industry, and energy (Ministry of External Affairs 27 February 2002). At the time, direct Indian involvement in the security sector was also contemplated. For many, given the historical relationship with the NA, it seemed like a natural arrangement, and New Delhi was willing to contribute in this regard (willing to do, as Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon later told his American counterpart, “whatever it can to help Afghanistan”<sup>52</sup>), including helping to raise the Afghan National Army. The international community demurred, however, deciding in 2002 at a conference in Geneva that regional actors should be precluded from the security

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<sup>51</sup> The alacrity with which such diplomatic links were pursued is striking; as early as November 2001, with significant portions of the country still under Taliban control, India – against the urgings of the United States – “dispatched a team of intelligence officers, diplomats, and doctors” to Bagram airbase, recently seized by NA forces (with American support) “to restart diplomatic links with Kabul” (Paliwal 2017: 181).

<sup>52</sup> WikiLeaks. FS Menon tells USDP Edelman India will empower Karzai, wait for new govt in Bangladesh. (2006, November 20). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7870\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7870_a.html). This commitment was reiterated again and again by Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary Dilip Sinha, see WikiLeaks. PM’s Kabul visit: Terrific opportunity to work with India on Afghanistan. (2005, September 2). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI6797\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI6797_a.html)

domain (Paliwal 2017). The Indian army was disappointed, but the leadership in New Delhi did not press the point. There was a recognition that such involvement might harm rather than help the Afghan government, given Islamabad's likely reaction. As a senior Indian diplomat explained to the US, "nobody serious in the Indian government is thinking about boots on the ground [in Afghanistan]," adding that no one in the government would "want to do something that the Afghans viewed unfavourably."<sup>53</sup> Only if asked by the Afghan government, the diplomat suggested, would India become involved in security affairs.

Instead, Indian leaders doubled down on, and reiterated their commitment to, supporting the economic and political development of Afghanistan. Again and again, Indian officials specified that their interest in Afghanistan was a "a peaceful, prosperous, stable and moderate Islamic state in Afghanistan."<sup>54</sup> To be sure, this type of language is often diplomatic boilerplate – Pakistani officials, for example, said similar things throughout the same time period. Unlike Pakistan, however, Indian activity largely indicated a genuine desire for their professed goals (which is to say, deed matched word). They pursued their objectives through a variety of projects, broadly consistent with the early discussions conducted with Karzai, noted above.

Infrastructure, in particular, was and is a focal point. The bulk of Indian aid was directed towards a series of significant infrastructure projects:

- The new Afghan parliament, built at a cost of US\$90 million and completed in 2015, is considered to have major symbolic implications, linking the site of Afghanistan's nascent democracy to India and the Indian people ("Modi inaugurates new Afghan parliament built by India in Kabul," 2015, December 25).
- The 218-kilometre Zaranj-Delaram road (US\$135 million), which connects Afghanistan's main Ring Road to the Iranian border, was completed in 2009; New Delhi persisted in its construction efforts on the road despite repeated and

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<sup>53</sup> Quoted in WikiLeaks. Afghan military donations: GOI ready but needs a push from GOA. (2006, February 15). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI1171\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI1171_a.html)

<sup>54</sup> WikiLeaks. Under Secretary Burns meets Indian Prime Minister Singh. (2009, June 11). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1209\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1209_a.html)

continued Taliban attacks against Indian workers, allegedly coordinated by the ISI for the explicit purpose of discouraging Indian involvement in Afghanistan.<sup>55</sup> The construction of the road was significant not only as a major piece of domestic transportation infrastructure, but insofar as it also provided a route for goods entering Afghanistan via Iran (and vice versa), thereby bypassing Pakistan. Additional smaller road construction projects included 58 kilometres of inner city roads (40 kilometres in Zaranj, 10 kilometres in Gurguri, and 8 kilometres connecting Gurguri to Razai) (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2009).

- The 202-kilometre 220 kV Double Circuit Transmission Line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul and a 220/110/20 kV substation at Kabul (approximate cost US\$111 million) helped bring electricity to Kabul and the surrounding areas (Pant 2016). Additional power substations were also constructed by India in Charikar (Tanha 2015).
- The Salma Dam power project, intended to provide irrigation for approximately 80,000 hectares of land in Herat province and electricity to thousands of homes in the area, has been a consistent feature of Indian development activity. Construction stretched over a decade, facing constant security challenges. The final cost was significantly over-budget (approximately US\$290 million, with an original estimate of US\$111 million), but the first water began churning in 2016, whereupon the dam was renamed the Afghan-India Friendship Dam (Swami 2011).

These projects constitute the foundation of India's development efforts, but they are supplemented by dozens of other, smaller contributions across a range of sectors and areas "including infrastructure, communications, education, healthcare, social welfare, training of officials, including diplomats and policemen, economic development and institution building" all of which were identified by the Afghan government as "priority

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<sup>55</sup> ISI officers allegedly offered between US\$15,000 and US\$30,000 as reward for the killing of "Indian nationals working in Afghanistan." See "Afghanistan war logs: Pakistan allegedly offering money for money for assassination of Indian road workers." *The Guardian*, July 25 2010.

areas” (D’Souza 2007: 833; for a comprehensive and recent overview of Indian development activity see Mullen 2017). From humanitarian assistance in the form of nutritional programs for Afghan youth, to private sector cooperation projects and development loans, to major food assistance (US\$100 million of wheat to help address food shortages) the scope of Indian activity in Afghanistan is considerable (D’Souza 2007). Scholarship programs offer hundreds of Afghans the opportunity to study in India each year. Cultural exchanges under the auspices of the India-Afghanistan Foundation connect writers and artists from both countries (Thottam 2011). Training opportunities transfer Indian expertise to a variety of professionals and officials from teachers to engineers to doctors to lawyers (Pant 2012). More recently, the announcement of a “New Development Partnership” between the two countries has India committing to 116 new ‘high impact’ development projects in 31 Afghan provinces (Roy 2017).

By 2017, overall Indian aid to Afghanistan totaled US\$2 billion (Mullen 2017). This figure is the culmination of a steady increase over the previous sixteen years. As mentioned above, India’s initial commitment in 2001 was US\$100 million, which was then quickly raised to \$500 million in 2002. By 2005, this figure stood at US\$550 million; by 2006, US\$650 million; 2007, US\$750 million; 2012, US\$1 billion; 2014, US\$1.5 billion; 2017, US\$2 billion. Moving forward, an additional US\$1 billion has been committed (“India reiterates commitment to help in rebuilding stable Afghanistan,” 2018, March 27). This level of aid places India fifth overall in terms of bilateral donors to Afghanistan (a position they have occupied throughout the war), behind only traditional international donors the US, the UK, Japan and Germany (Price 2013). The aid increases, moreover, came in the context of rising security challenges, often with Indian workers and personnel as the explicit targets of terrorist attacks (“Indians in Afghanistan are soft targets: Krishna,” 2010, March 21).

In addition to bilateral aid, India has supported the Afghan government through a series of preferential trade agreements, the first of which was signed in 2003 (Hanauer and Chalk 2012). Further agreements, as well as “memoranda of understanding of cooperation” in a variety of fields have helped spur private business development (Pant 2012: 7). In November 2011, the state-owned Steel Authority of India led a consortium of public and private Indian companies through a successful bid for mining rights in three

Afghan provinces – a deal which includes an “800-megawatt power plant and 200 kilometers each of road, rail and transmission lines” and is said to be worth US\$10.8 billion (Timmons 2012). Bilateral trade between the two countries has, unsurprisingly, risen since 2001, though it remains significantly lower than might be expected given the cooperative relationship between Kabul and New Delhi and the bilateral agreements that have been initiated. The 2003 agreement offered Afghanistan significant duty concessions – sometimes as high as 100% – on 38 dry fruit products. In 2011, India removed customs duties on all Afghan products except alcohol and tobacco (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2015).<sup>56</sup> In 2014, however, India ranked second (behind Pakistan) in exports for Afghan goods (with a 28% share of total exports) and just fifth in imports (at a measly 1.4% share) (United Nations Special Programme For the Economies of Central Asia, 2016). A major reason for this low figure is the issue of transit rights across Pakistan, which Islamabad has systematically refused to grant over the years. In an attempt to overcome such difficulties, India has been the driving force behind Afghan membership in the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). New Delhi believes that Afghanistan’s inclusion in the association will alleviate “issues relating to the transit and free flow of goods across borders in the region...thereby leading to the greater economic development of Afghanistan and the region as a whole” (Pant 2012: 10). Afghan membership in the SAARC would “complete...the South Asian identity” said MEA official Preeti Saran to her US counterparts in 2005.<sup>57</sup> Overall, New Delhi’s official development aid is supplemented by concerted efforts to simultaneously bolster private sector connections and thereby strengthen the Afghan economy.

As mentioned, direct involvement in the security sector was initially avoided, but this has gradually changed, particularly as the international community’s commitment to Afghanistan has waned. In 2008, in the aftermath of both the attack on the Indian embassy in Kabul (60 dead) and the devastating terrorist attack in Mumbai (166 dead),

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<sup>56</sup> According to the Indian government: “Major Indian exports to Afghanistan are man-made filaments, apparels and clothing accessories, pharma products, cereals, dairy and poultry products. Afghan exports to India primarily comprises of dry and fresh fruits” (p. 3).

<sup>57</sup> WikiLeaks. India getting serious about SAARC. (2006, April 5). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI2323\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI2323_a.html)

both of which were believed to be aided and/or orchestrated by elements within ISI, Indian officials hinted to their American counterparts that the standing policy not to be involved in security matters in Afghanistan “may be under review.”<sup>58</sup> In 2009, the US embassy in New Delhi noted in a communiqué with Washington: “Indians are well aware how allergic Pakistan authorities would be to an enhanced police training program but are also convinced that such a program is urgently needed by the floundering Afghan state.”<sup>59</sup> As Harsh V. Pant (2012: 13) observed in 2012: “The traditional Indian stance had been that while India was happy to help the Afghan government in its reconstruction efforts, it would not be directly engaged in security operations – but this increasingly became harder to sustain.”

In October 2011, a strategic partnership agreement was signed between India and Afghanistan, the first such agreement between Afghanistan and another country. As part of the deal, New Delhi agreed to “provide light weapons, as well as training in [Counter-Insurgency] and high-altitude warfare, to the Afghan army, police, and air force” (Hanauer and Chalk 2012: 22). This marked a significant shift, particularly insofar as these arrangements were broadcast to media and members of the international community. Some training of Afghan forces in India had occurred in 2007, and the Indian army had transferred a limited amount of defensive military equipment (armoured checkpoints and watchtowers) to the ANSF, but such activities were always downplayed and kept small for fear of antagonizing Islamabad (Pant 2016). By contrast, the 2011 agreement provided for “regular foreign office consultations and strategic dialogue” between the two countries, with Indian Defence Minister AK Antony declaring “India’s commitment to building the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces” (D’Souza 2014: 393). The agreement was followed by subsequent Indian affirmations as to the expanded scope of their overall involvement in Afghanistan: “Our approach of high-level political engagement and broad-based development assistance in a wide range of sectors,” declared Minister of External Affairs SM Krishna in the spring of 2012, “which have been identified by the Afghan government as priority areas for

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<sup>58</sup> WikiLeaks. India scenesetter fro Special Representative Holbrooke. (2009, February 12). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI268\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI268_a.html)

<sup>59</sup> WikiLeaks. Holbrooke-Mullen visit to India: Afghan police training. (2009, April 16). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI747\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI747_a.html)

reconstruction and development, will not only continue but is set to intensify” (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2012). By 2013, India was training over 1,000 Afghan troops (Price 2013). As NATO ended its combat mission in 2014, there were expectations that India would continue to step up in the security realm. In 2015, India provided four Mi-24 gunship helicopters to the Afghan air force. In 2018, it underwrote the purchase of an additional four Mi-24 helicopters from Belarus (Laskar 2018). These transfers mark the first provision of lethal weaponry, and in conjunction with the growing and expanding training relationship, indicate that New Delhi is indeed expanding the scope of its security involvement in Afghanistan.

In summer 2017, during his articulation of the new US strategy in Afghanistan, President Trump suggested that India might do even more in Afghanistan moving forward (Clary 2017). This possibility greatly irked Islamabad – Pakistani Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi told the Council on Foreign Relations in September 2017 that “any political or military” role for India in Afghanistan was unacceptable (Council on Foreign Relations, 2017) – yet nonetheless reinforces that reality that as the US drifts out India may ramp up in Afghanistan. Specifically, the continued fragility of the Kabul government and the stagnated growth of the ANSF may well trigger greater Indian involvement. Recent developments in this direction are consistent with New Delhi’s stated goal of creating a stable, multi-ethnic Afghan government devoid of Islamist (and by extension Pakistani) influence. As journalist Simon Tisdall remarked in 2011, albeit disparagingly, New Delhi has decided to “underwrite and, in effect, guarantee Hamid Karzai’s [now Ashraf Ghani’s] feeble Afghan government.” Ahmed Rashid summarizes New Delhi’s approach as follows: “India’s reconstruction strategy was designed to win over every sector of Afghan society, give India a high profile with Afghans, gain maximum political advantage and of course, undercut Pakistani influence” (quoted in Sharma 2011: 109).

What is important to keep in mind, of course, is that such goals and associated activities were and are a means to an end: enhanced security through the curtailment of Pakistan’s ability to employ and foment its Islamist proxies. Which is to say, development aid and support were not altruistic but functional. Further, the specific character of India’s policies was reflective of their expectations about Pakistani

behaviour; expectations derived from experience within the rivalry. There was a strong belief amongst Indian officials that an Afghanistan beholden to Islamabad would serve as a hotbed for continued radical activity, threatening Indian security both in Kashmir and in the broader region. This possibility was particularly troubling in the context of assumed future confrontation over Kashmir, in particular. Destabilization to the region could set off and foment insurgency in the disputed territory, and, as in the past, might also lead to direct Pakistani military involvement. Indeed, the period of Taliban rule in the late 1990s supported this perception (recall the discovery of LeT fighters in the battle over Mazar-e-Sharif). This takes Indian involvement beyond the standard development-aid-in-pursuit-of-interests that characterizes the foreign policy of most nations in many situations. Which is to say, accepting that most countries do not supply aid or support developmental projects for altruistic reasons (that they do so for reasons tied to their own perceived national interests), Indian behaviour is still distinct. The *scope* of Indian involvement is explicable through an appreciation of the perceptual consequences of rivalry; of the expectations regarding Pakistani behaviour outlined above.

Not even the regional dynamic is adequate to explain the size of the Indian commitment – the possibility that India’s interests are so tied up in its almost-neighbour it felt compelled to offer significant support to the nascent Afghan government. India is “by far the largest regional donor” (Mullen 2017: 6), outstripping even Russia and Iran to a considerable degree. To be sure, economic opportunities were and are a major consideration, and the desire to project Indian power more generally, as New Delhi pursues its ambition of attaining great power status. Indeed, analysis of Indian aims in Afghanistan typically foreground three basic dynamics: economics, security, and regional influence (the latter often tied to ambitions regarding power projection and great power status) (for example see the discussions in Pattanaik 2012; Pant 2012; Hanif 2009; Price 2013). It is worth discussing each of these dynamics briefly in turn. Ultimately, I do not argue that security considerations are the sole motivator for Indian behaviour. Other considerations are quite clearly part of the explanation, yet the dynamics of rivalry shape Indian perceptions such that behaviour is different than what it would otherwise be given other – important and real – incentives and interests. Which is to say, a complete

understanding of, and explanation for, behaviour is impossible without reference to rivalry.

*a. Economic Opportunities*

As alluded to above, India has real economic interests in Afghanistan. Foremost among these is access to energy-rich Central Asia, with Afghanistan serving as conduit and corridor. As a potentially crucial component of a broader energy-related competition with China, as well as a means to reduce dependency on Middle Eastern oil, India has “prioritized the region” (Joshi 2010: 22). Speaking in 2005, then-president APJ Abdul Kalam explicitly linked energy considerations to Indian foreign policy: “The convergence of our foreign policy and our domestic needs is striking in the context of our energy security. My government will give full importance to synchronizing our diplomatic activity with our need for energy to fuel our development needs” (quoted in Kiesow and Norling 2007: 86). Afghanistan is key in such efforts. As Shashank Joshi (2010: 22) explains: “India is...desirous of Tajikistan’s uranium and natural gas, has invested in Uzbek production facilities, and retains interest in a natural gas pipeline from Turkmenistan. Afghanistan furnishes a diplomatic and logistical foothold in the heart of the region”. Construction on the Afghan portion of the long awaited, and chronically fraught, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline is finally set to begin in 2018 (Gurt 2018). Crucially, security concerns are being assuaged by Taliban assurances that they will not target the pipeline – a necessary concession bolstered by Pakistan’s own desire to see the project completed (Putz 2018). Ghani, Abbassi and Indian minister of external affairs MJ Akbar were all present at a ground-breaking ceremony in February of 2018. Of course, a similar ground-breaking ceremony had already occurred in 2015 for the Turkmenistan portion, since which time the project has continued to face delays and setbacks due to recurring security concerns and disagreement between, in particular, India and Pakistan about how the pipeline should proceed (Basu and Mishra 2018). Whether the latest round of talks and agreements will overcome these difficulties remains to be seen, though history mandates skepticism. The

difficulties associated with completing agreements on the pipeline underscores the extent to which clear mutual interest can be obviated by security concerns.

Though transit and access to Central Asia is the most immediate energy-related goal, Afghanistan also has long term potential as an energy producer, with significant untapped oil and natural gas reserves (United States Department of the Interior, 2006). Most such reserves exist in the north near the border with Tajikistan, the site of traditional Indian influence in the country.

In addition to energy, Afghanistan is a potentially lucrative hub for regional trade in other goods, both as a target (though the domestic market is likely to remain weak for some time) and, again, as a transit corridor. As mentioned, the volume of trade between India and Afghanistan is substantially lower than what it might be; once again, Pakistan plays a spoiler role in this regard by systematically denying transit rights that would allow Indian-Afghan trade to traverse Pakistani territory. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA), signed in 2010 and renewed in 2016, explicitly excluded India, and Islamabad has signalled its continued objection to Indian inclusion, despite the fact that Pakistan stands to benefit economically from transit activity (Syed 2016). Alternative routes for Indian trade with Afghanistan include, in particular, entry through Iran via the Chabahar Port, which New Delhi and Tehran have explored and expanded in recent years (Haidar 2017).

Ultimately, India stands to gain from access to, and transit across, Afghan territory. Indian diplomat TCA Raghavan opined in 2007 as to the “the untapped potential of the large Indian market for Afghan goods”, citing the “need to open the borders for trade between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.”<sup>60</sup> The realization of such possibilities, however, is contingent on quelling instability in Afghanistan (as the TAPI experience makes clear), underscoring the import of India’s development activity and the first-order concern for security. These realities were discussed in a 2006 meeting between US and Indian officials: “[Indian Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary Dilip] Sinha concluded that until the security situations in Pakistan and Afghanistan are

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<sup>60</sup> Quoted in WikiLeaks. India’s contribution to Afghan reconstruction. (2008, November 7). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2874\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2874_a.html)

addressed, ‘there will be no investors for anything,’ no roads, no pipelines, even though the market exists for goods and energy.’<sup>61</sup>

*b. Regional Influence/Global Power Projection*

From a broader strategic perspective, many analysts point to Indian involvement in Afghanistan as an important “test case” for Indian ambitions as a regional, and ultimately global, power (Fair 2012).<sup>62</sup> India is keen to exert its regional dominance as a signal to China – and others – that it has arrived as a major player on the global stage, capable of wielding influence in its own geographical “backyard”. In this sense, extending influence into Central Asia constitutes the land-based parallel to India’s much-publicized naval foray into the broader Indian Ocean; like power projection on the high seas, dominating events in Afghanistan helps legitimize Indian claims to great power status.

As Pant (2010: 148) explains:

A major factor behind India’s pro-active Afghanistan agenda has been India’s attempt to carve out for itself a greater role in regional affairs, more in consonance with its rising economic and military profile. India wants to establish its credentials as a major power in the region that is willing to take responsibility for ensuring stability around its periphery. By emerging as a major donor for Afghanistan, India is trying to project itself as a significant economic power that can provide necessary aid to the needy states in its neighbourhood. Moreover, India’s long-term ambition to emerge as a ‘great power’ will be assessed by the international community in terms of its strategic capacity to deal with the instability in its own backyard.

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<sup>61</sup> WikiLeaks. MEA provides A/S Boucher with tour d’horizon of India’s regional relationships. (2006, April 13). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI2496\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI2496_a.html)

<sup>62</sup> For a discussion of Indian ambitions regarding great power status see Ogden (2011).

Regional expert Raja Mohan (2006: 19) provides a similar overview of Indian foreign policy and its goals:

India's grand strategy divides the world into three concentric circles. In the first, which encompasses the immediate neighborhood, India has sought primacy and a veto over the actions of outside powers. In the second, which encompasses the so-called extended neighborhood stretching across Asia and the Indian Ocean littoral, India has sought to balance the influence of other powers and prevent them from undercutting its interests. In the third, which includes the entire global stage, India has tried to take its place as one of the great powers, a key player in international peace and security.

"India considers its aspiration as an extra-regional power to be legitimate," writes Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh (2011: 33), "commensurate with the growing size of its economy." Exerting influence in Afghanistan is considered to be an important component of realizing these aspirations. Christine Fair (2010: 6) notes that "in many regards, India's interests in Afghanistan can be seen as merely one element within India's larger desire to be able to project its interests well beyond South Asia." It also means that once engaged, New Delhi is reticent to cede the influence it has accrued. As former Indian Army Deputy Chief Staff RK Sawhney explained in 2011: "India cannot afford to beat a retreat from Afghanistan if it wants to remain a major regional player" (quoted in Hanaeur and Chalk 2012: 13). Indian professor and national security commentator Bharat Karnad, in lamenting India's continued reliance on US security efforts in Afghanistan and arguing for more robust Indian security engagement moving forward, notes that "free-riding offers relatively poor and weak countries or states, unwilling to adequately invest in their own defence, security without sweat, but it is something a would-be great power, such as India, should eschew" (Karnad 2009).

TV Paul (2005) has noted the structural 'asymmetry' in the relationship between India and Pakistan. This asymmetry is reflected not merely in economic and military terms, but also in the corresponding scope of each state's foreign policy interests. For India, in particular, involvement in – even domination of – Afghanistan, as part of the

regional environment, constitutes a reasonable foreign policy goal. Even if Nehru's vision of an Indian 'Monroe Doctrine' in South Asia was more dream than reality in the decades following partition, recent economic growth (and the corresponding expansion of military capabilities) has brought it closer to fruition. A July 2008 US diplomatic cable from the American embassy in New Delhi references this reorientation: "Indians are increasingly more interested in their promising global future than in their tumultuous regional past."<sup>63</sup> This means that even were there no security or rivalry related concerns in Afghanistan, it is likely India would be involved in some way.

### *c. Security Concerns*

Similarly, even if rivalry were not a factor – which is to say, the dynamics of India's relationship with Pakistan were not implicated in what was happening in Afghanistan – straightforward and immediate security concerns would be present. In reality, of course, it is impossible to extricate such concerns from the history between India and Pakistan and of South Asia more generally; but conceptually, the point is that if one imagines a world in which all else is the same, save the history of rivalry outlined in Chapter 5, and that instead India and Pakistan had peaceful relations over the decades, New Delhi would still be faced with security challenges emanating from a proximate civil conflict. (Put another way, keep all else constant but remove rivalry as a variable.) The literature on the international consequences of civil wars (see for example Kathman 2011) underscores the extent to which conflicts can destabilize regions, whether rivalry is present or not. There is a contagion effect, such that civil violence spills across borders, destabilizes neighbouring and proximate countries, and even increases the probability of international conflict (Gleditsch et al. 2008). Even were India not engaged in rivalry, therefore, it would be unable to ignore instability and violence in a nearby country like Afghanistan. Any explanation that foregrounds rivalry as a factor for intervention must

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<sup>63</sup> WikiLeaks. Cool heads prevail in response to Kabul attack. (2008, July 25). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2047\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2047_a.html)

take this into account and take as evidence not just the *fact* of intervention but also its shape, scope and justification/rationale.

India's domestic problems with terrorism and insurgency (not just of the Islamic variety but also with Sikh and Maoist separatist movements) makes New Delhi sensitive to such tactics and the possible spread of instability across borders. Keeping peace in the region is therefore a stand-alone security interest. So too is mitigating the destabilizing consequences of the drug trade. "India has the largest opiate-using population in the sub-region" notes Sharma (2011: 110); the crisis is particularly acute in the populous region of Punjab (Majumder 2017). Afghanistan is the almost exclusive source of opiates (and is a source of other drugs such as marijuana), and the production and export of narcotics has proliferated as the Taliban insurgency has seized on poppy-production as a source of income (Woody 2017). Given the social consequences of drug addiction, and the violence associated with the drug trade, New Delhi has a clear interest in quelling the trafficking that originates in Afghanistan. Indian security agencies were preparing to deal with fallout from increased drug trafficking as early as the days leading up to American intervention 2001 ("A war in Afghanistan could mean more dope in Gujarat," 2001, September 26).

The key consideration for the present analysis is whether New Delhi perceives its security concerns in Afghanistan as a) primarily exogenous to, or b) driven by, Pakistani *intentions and behaviour*. Below, in adumbrating the effects of rivalry on Indian calculations, I make the case that Indian security concerns are inextricably bound to New Delhi's perceptions of Pakistani intentions and the associated consequences for the future of the international relationship – the rivalry – itself. Yet the alternative is worth briefly considering. This alternative, it should be noted, is not predicated on the argument that Pakistan's historical support for Islamism and the Taliban are irrelevant to Indian concerns vis-à-vis Afghanistan. It is undeniable that New Delhi fears the spread of Islamist violence from Afghanistan to Kashmir and India proper, and that it blames Islamabad for supporting these forces in the past. Instead, the alternative suggests that it is this fear *irrespective of Pakistan's continued involvement* that drives India's response (its intervention in Afghanistan).

There is disagreement, after all, as to the extent to which Islamabad actually controls or influences the Taliban insurgency at all. Further, when complicity is acknowledged, it is occasionally caveated that rogue elements within ISI are responsible for Pakistan's support of Islamists (in both Afghanistan and Kashmir) and therefore the policy is not directly attributable to the Pakistani leadership (see the discussion in Rashid 2009). If India believed that Islamabad was not directing, supporting or instigating Islamist activity, it would be more difficult to argue that Indian concerns in Afghanistan were rivalry-related. Even if they blamed Pakistani historically for the emergence and spread of extremism on the subcontinent, their concerns moving forward may no longer be tied to perceptions about Pakistani intentions. Ganguly and Kapur (2009), for example, liken Pakistan's support for Islamist militancy to the situation of the "sorcerer's apprentice", suggesting that having been created by Islamabad, militancy was now out of Pakistan's control and spreading on its own; a contention given credence by the emergence of the 'Pakistani' Taliban and its targeting of the Pakistani state (see also Behuria 2007). Or perhaps Islamabad's continued involvement with such forces is incidental to Indian concerns – the danger lies in the spread of the ideology and the groups that perpetrate violence in its name, whether supported by Pakistan or not. Again, this would make it difficult to argue that the international relationship with Pakistan is responsible for Indian behaviour in Afghanistan.

The distinction is not trivial. At issue is the causal mechanism triggering Indian intervention. It is also easy to confuse, given that, as mentioned, Islamist militancy in South Asia quite clearly has been linked to Pakistan historically. But if the weapon has outgrown the wielder (the apprentice broken free of the sorcerer), then it cannot be argued that India is motivated by rivalry concerns per se. Put another way, is the primary threat the Taliban itself, or is it Pakistan, with the Taliban serving as its proxy? Is the *anticipated process* (the perception regarding the future that constitutes the causal mechanism, the trigger, leading to intervention) at the sub- and transnational level (militancy) or the international level (state-to-state relationship with Pakistan)? The three basic possibilities are as follows:

*P1.* India's primary security concern vis-à-vis Afghanistan → Islamist militancy (Pakistani involvement irrelevant, incidental and/or secondary)

*P2.* India's primary security concern vis-à-vis Afghanistan → Islamist militancy as a tool of Pakistani foreign policy<sup>64</sup>

*P3.* India's primary security concern vis-à-vis Afghanistan → equal weight between Islamist militancy in and of itself, *and* Islamist militancy as a tool of Pakistani foreign policy

In each case, India is concerned with Islamist militancy (and the possibility that such militancy might spread to Kashmir and elsewhere, endangering Indian territory and interests). P1, however, does not have an international rivalry dimension, while in P3 rivalry is equally weighted with direct concern over militancy (potentially rendering the cause of the decision to intervene indeterminate). In P2, by contrast, rivalry concerns are primary and dominant.

The case for P2 is picked up below (the discussion of which simultaneously eliminates P3 insofar as the evidence clearly demonstrates that rivalry concerns were more fundamental and therefore not equally weighted). But there is evidence for P1 that is worth discussing as well. There is no question, for example, that Indian concerns about the spread of Islamist militancy are genuine and not 'merely' predicated on such militancy being a tactic employed by Pakistan in the pursuit of other aims. (For example, as prelude to conventional military confrontation, or as an alternative means to achieve Islamabad's goals vis-à-vis Kashmir, etc.). In 2007, Raghavan voiced specific concern about 'Talibanization' "creeping into the Punjab" and the "serious implications" this would have for India.<sup>65</sup> While he "bemoaned" Islamabad for not doing more to quell this

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<sup>64</sup> Note that these possibilities relate to India's *primary* security concern *as it relates to the decision to intervene*; it is almost certainly the case that *both* Islamist militancy in and of itself *and* as a function of Pakistani policy are of concern to New Delhi. The point is that P1 would point to an alternative, non-rivalry mechanism related to security concerns from a transnational threat as the main driver of intervention, while P2 is consistent with the rivalry-explanation.

<sup>65</sup> Quoted in WikiLeaks. Tour d'horizon with incoming MEA Joint Secretary for Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran. (2007, May 2). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI2101\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI2101_a.html)

phenomenon, his concern clearly lay with the perceived dangers of ‘Talibanization’ (Islamic fundamentalism) itself. Similarly, in a 2008 conversation with then-Senator John Kerry, Prime Minister Singh lamented Pakistan’s weak counter-terrorism policies but highlighted as his main concern the consequent dangers of ‘Talibanization’. He noted that Pakistan had been largely responsible for creating and supporting such forces in the past but seemed worried that Islamabad might have lost its ability to control them. Absent “control at the source”, he suggested, victory in Afghanistan might prove elusive, and ultimately the forces of Talibanization would threaten both Afghanistan *and Pakistan* over the coming years.<sup>66</sup> In December 2008, Prime Minister Singh suggested that the threat was region-wide, telling the Americans “there can be no concessions with terrorists. The terrorists operating against India were the same as those operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan.”<sup>67</sup>

Of course, the target audience of this message may be relevant for understanding its tone and content – the US has been consistently concerned with Islamist radicals taking control in Pakistan, largely because of the country’s nuclear arsenal. Singh may have been playing up these fears to gain diplomatic support from the Americans. Later comments by Indian National Security Advisor MK Narayanan might be interpreted similarly, when he exhorted the US to downplay talk of an ‘exit strategy’ lest it embolden the insurgency to simply “wait out” US withdrawal. “We must win [in Afghanistan],” he said, “to stop the forces of extreme religious ideology from gaining ground. If Afghanistan is lost, Pakistan will definitely go.”<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Indian diplomat Dilip Sinha warned against a premature US exit from Afghanistan, stating that it would embolden “fanatics...and the result will be very bad for the region.”<sup>69</sup> Again, the possibility that “Pakistan will go” (be overrun by extremists) is an abiding American fear; by invoking it, Narayanan and Sinha were perhaps trying to ensure continued American commitment to

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<sup>66</sup> Quoted in WikiLeaks. PM Singh tells codel Kerry re Pakistan: Enough is enough. (2008, December 16). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3165\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3165_a.html)

<sup>67</sup> WikiLeaks. PM Singh urges McCain codel to deliver tough message to Pakistan. (2008, December 3). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3054\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3054_a.html)

<sup>68</sup> Quoted in WikiLeaks. NSA Narayanan meets with U/S Burns. (2009, June 12). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1228\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1228_a.html)

<sup>69</sup> WikiLeaks. Indian views on Afghanistan: Eager for increased USG coordination, wary of Pakistan scheming, skeptical on R/R. (2010, February 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI334\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI334_a.html)

the cause in Afghanistan (concern that the US might leave prematurely preoccupied Indian policymakers; more on this below). Nonetheless, Singh's, Narayanan's and Sinha's assessments are in line with the 'sorcerer's apprentice' possibility outlined earlier. However they were unleashed, the concern going forward, in this interpretation, is with the forces of Islamic radicalism itself.

Undoubtedly, countering extremism was an important component of the bilateral relationship between India and Afghanistan. In August 2008, Ministry of External Affairs Under Secretary for Afghan Affairs Ghotu Ram Meena briefed American officials on meetings between Karzai and high ranking Indian officials (including Prime Minister Singh, President Patil, Vice President Ansari, External Affairs Minister Mukherjee and Leader of the Opposition LK Advani):

Meena indicated that Karzai's visit comes at a 'difficult time' for India, following a string of terrorist attacks. The regional terrorist threat, and defusing Islamic extremist networks, would be the prevailing topic for discussion, he said, pointing to the July 7 suicide attack on the Indian Embassy.<sup>70</sup>

In June 2009, Defence Minister Antony stated that India could never countenance a Taliban takeover of its "extended neighbour."<sup>71</sup> Later that year, Sinha stressed "the importance of keeping Taliban elements out of the [Afghan] government."<sup>72</sup> Around this time, the possibility that peace negotiations might offer a role for the Taliban in Afghan politics was gaining some traction (MacAskill and Tisdall 2010); India remained staunchly opposed, which might lend credence to the possibility that the Taliban itself (and not the stability of Afghanistan or the mitigation of Pakistani influence) was its primary concern. Of course, such negotiations were to be coordinated through Islamabad (Coll 2018), which might have been a factor in New Delhi's reticence (in addition to the

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<sup>70</sup> WikiLeaks. Karzai to visit India, be greeted with open arms. (2008, August 1). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2111\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2111_a.html)

<sup>71</sup> Quoted in WikiLeaks. NSA Jones discusses US-India security relationship and Pakistan with Defense Minister Antony. (2009, June 29). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1337\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1337_a.html)

<sup>72</sup> WikiLeaks. Current Indian government thinking on Afghanistan and Pakistan. (2009, November 27). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2396\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2396_a.html)

broader reality that Taliban influence would likely mean Pakistani influence in any future government). More recently, as on-the-ground realities have shifted (particularly in the wake of the end of NATO combat operations in 2014 and consequent troop withdrawals) New Delhi has been slightly more receptive to the possibility that elements of the Taliban might have a place in Afghan society and in Afghan political institutions (Fair 2011).

There is a recognition amongst analysts that Islamic militancy and terrorism constitute a core threat to Indian security. Evaluating the alacrity of Indian support for US intervention in Afghanistan in 2001, Brahma Chellaney (2001/2: 100; emphasis added) notes that “New Delhi’s action to extend full military support came voluntarily and enthusiastically...India belongs to that class of antiterror [sic] allies whose cooperation is driven by dire need, *for Islamic terrorism threatens to tear apart its pluralistic fabric.*” The emergence and growth of jihadi terrorism in the 1980s and 1990s meant that by 2001 the threat had reached fever pitch. “India’s interests in Afghanistan after the terror strikes of September 11, 2001,” writes Shanthie D’Souza (2014: 382),

need to be viewed in the context of its concerns over terrorism emanating from the extremely volatile Pakistan-Afghanistan border and spilling into India. A strong, stable, and democratic Afghanistan would reduce the dangers of extremist violence and terrorism destabilising the region.

The concerns are legitimate. As Christine Fair (2011: 181) points out:

Virtually every Islamist militant group operating in and against India (e.g. HUII, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen/Harkat-ul-Ansar, among others) trained in Afghanistan with varying connections to the Taliban and by extension al Qaeda...Naturally, India dreads a future Afghanistan that again becomes a terrorist safe-haven for groups targeting India.

Fair goes on to point out that extremism tears at “India’s domestic social fabric” by attracting disaffected members of India’s domestic Muslim population and turning them against the state. “These Islamist militant groups are actively recruiting...Indian Muslims

from across the country and even establishing Indian franchises increasingly far away from their parent institutions in Pakistan” (ibid.). Which is to say, the problem has in some ways metastasized beyond even a simply Pakistani-based (let alone Pakistani-directed) threat as the ideology itself has spread across the region. Ashok Malik, editor of the English-language Delhi newspaper *The Pioneer*, told American officials in 2008 that “Indians have become more concerned with their government’s weaknesses than with an ‘aggressive Pakistan’ as the recent spate of terrorist attacks are perceived as having been planned and executed domestically by Indian Muslim radicals living in India.”<sup>73</sup> Of course, these are public as opposed to decision-maker perceptions, but if Ashok’s observation is correct it does suggest that Indians are capable of discriminating between Islamic terrorism and Pakistani aggression, and that the former may constitute a large and growing stand-alone threat.<sup>74</sup>

Can India’s intervention in Afghanistan be explained by such concerns alone (or primarily)? Is the security threat from Islamic militancy and terrorism – irrespective of Pakistan’s role – now so acute that New Delhi believes it necessary to prevent a return of extremist rule in Kabul (in the form of a Taliban or Taliban-influenced government)? Is the scope of India’s intervention explicable absent reference to perceptions regarding future Pakistani behaviour?<sup>75</sup> The answer to these questions is no. While concern over Islamic militancy, and the corresponding interest in preventing a return of a Taliban or Taliban-influenced regime in Kabul, *are* motivating factors for Indian policy, they are *tied to* Indian perceptions about Pakistani behaviour and concern over future Pakistani

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<sup>73</sup> WikiLeaks. Mixed sentiment among Indians over Zardari government, welcoming possible along LOC. (2008, October 16). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2722\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2722_a.html)

<sup>74</sup> Of course, if Ashok is correct that Indian citizens make this distinction yet we observe that Indian officials largely do not, it undermines the argument that popular sentiment (whether through emotion or electoral pressures) is the driving force of rivalry.

<sup>75</sup> It is important to clarify that this possibility – P1 – is *not* one that is typically foregrounded with respect to Indian behaviour. It is not a ‘conventional wisdom’ that I am attempting to refute. Rather, scholars and analysts generally recognize that Pakistan’s role is important. The point is that they do so without being logically clear as to these distinct considerations (Islamism itself; Islamism as a tactic employed by Pakistan within the rivalry) with respect to India’s threat perception. Which is to say, they muddle them together, even as each points to slightly different motivations for Indian behaviour. I tease out each consideration, and foreground the rivalry dynamic as being more important for Indian calculations. In doing so, it is important to consider the logical alternative – that Islamism alone is the key – and to assess the evidence with these competing possibilities in mind. The point of addressing – and dismissing – P1 is that doing so logically supports P2. It anticipates the criticism that my argument regarding the centrality of Pakistan for Indian calculations overlooks the possibility that Indian behaviour is driven primarily by other security considerations.

intentions. For India, as Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon told the US in 2009, it was “more of a PakAf problem than an AfPak one.”<sup>76</sup> To complete the extended quotation from D’Souza (2014: 382) above, she goes on to conclude that “New Delhi’s worries [about extremism] are linked to its view that Pakistan’s objective in Afghanistan is to assure itself of ‘strategic depth’ by reinstalling a pliant Taliban regime.” Brahma Chellaney (2001/2: 101), equally, suggests that “India was disappointed that the US antiterror campaign” in Afghanistan after 2001 “targeted the child fathered by Pakistan, the Taliban, but not the procreator.” The reason for such disappointment, he argues, is the Indian knowledge that

“[t]he terrorists in Afghanistan have only one escape route from their mountain hideouts – eastward into Pakistan where they can easily blend with fellow Pashtuns. Some of these terrorists could then move to Kashmir with Pakistan’s encouragement or connivance. If that happened, India will face greater terror attacks, including major cities.

Writing in 2001, this analysis is remarkably prescient, given that Taliban fighters did indeed escape to the mountainous Pashtun regions along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, and that Indian cities did suffer major terrorist attacks in the subsequent years (Mumbai in 2006 and 2008, most prominently). Chellaney’s assessment is echoed in the words of an Indian intelligence officer who, speaking in *The Times of India* shortly after the American invasion in 2001, lamented that “The US, in its immediate self-interest, is going after only the grandson (Osama bin Laden) and son (Taliban) of terrorism, apparently overlooking the hyperactive grandfather (Pakistan)” (quoted in Sharma 2001). Similarly, the account, referenced above, of the summer 2008 meeting between Karzai and Indian officials, in which the threat of “Islamic extremist networks” was emphasized, ultimately shifted to a discussion of Pakistan’s role: “Indian and Afghan intelligence consistently point to ISI involvement in regional terrorist attacks, stating, ‘terrorism is the

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<sup>76</sup> Quoted in WikiLeaks. Codel Berman discusses bilateral, regional issues with Indian foreign secretary. (2009, April 22). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI804\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI804_a.html)

product of ISI.”<sup>77</sup> Thus, New Delhi remained, at the time its policies vis-à-vis post-2001 Afghanistan were being contemplated, fixated on the parent (Pakistan) and not the child (Taliban). The international relationship between India and Pakistan, the rivalry (its history and its implications), is inextricable from Indian security interests in Afghanistan. I now turn to a further explication of this argument, including the presentation of supporting evidence and analysis.

### **The Rivalry Explanation**

In this section, I argue that rivalry dynamics provide the most compelling explanation for Indian behaviour in Afghanistan. This is not to deny the fact that economic opportunities, regional/global power-projection ambitions, and immediate security interests are not real and motivating factors for New Delhi, but rather that the scope, scale and intensity of India’s intervention in Afghanistan is fully explicable only by recognizing the amplifying effects of the India-Pakistan international rivalry. This distinction is key. India’s intervention is in a sense overdetermined given the interests related to economics, power projection, and immediate security outlined above. Which is to say, I am not arguing that *absent* rivalry India *would not* have intervened in some way in Afghanistan. As discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, there are multiple causal paths leading to intervention; as with many social phenomenon, occasionally these causal paths or mechanisms will overlap in a particular case. The point with respect to India’s intervention is that it would not have proceeded *as it did* absent rivalry dynamics. By excavating evidence of rivalry considerations in Indian decision-making, I augment confidence in the general explanation developed in this dissertation.

The scope of the development aid that is being provided (in particular in humanitarian and human capacity [training, scholarships etc.] terms) is significantly more than is required to pursue purely economic opportunities, for example. India has prioritized a comprehensive relationship with Kabul, intended to support and solidify all sectors of the emerging Afghan state. New Delhi has even relinquished oversight and

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<sup>77</sup> WikiLeaks. Karzai to visit India, be greeted with open arms. (2008, August 1). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2111\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2111_a.html)

control of its aid efforts (in contrast to most international donors), allowing its funds and associated programs to be monitored and administered primarily by the Afghan government and other local actors (D'Souza 2014). Again, India has real economic interests at stake, but they are not primary or paramount. New Delhi has gone further than necessary and engaged in a range of activities not directly related to securing available economic gains.<sup>78</sup> Similarly, the projection of regional power certainly plays a role in New Delhi's thought process, particularly in the context of well-known global power ambitions. Yet to the extent that such a motive pushes Indian involvement in Afghanistan, it is logically secondary to security concerns; being the dominant player in one's "own backyard" presupposes that one can quell and mitigate regional instability, and that one's own security is firmly protected. Further, given that New Delhi's primary competitor for influence in Kabul, over the long-term, will likely be Pakistan, power projection is tied to India's regional competition with Islamabad. Pursuing either of the above goals (economics; power projection) is *contingent* on and *implicated* by the ongoing relationship with Pakistan. Nor does the available evidence indicate that either economics or power projection are primary goals for Indian intervention; statements from Indian officials repeatedly foreground the security domain as the main motivator for Indian behaviour.

And these security concerns are, as mentioned above, inextricably bound to the international relationship with Pakistan. Islamic militancy is seen as a creation of, and an ongoing tactic employed by, Islamabad. The fear is that Islamabad will leverage Islamic militancy to foment further unrest in Kashmir and elsewhere, and that Taliban control or influence in Afghanistan will allow Pakistan to incubate and foster additional Islamist elements for this purpose. As discussed earlier, the use of militancy as a non-conventional, in-direct method of attacking India is believed to be both useful on its own (as part of the 'thousand cuts' strategy) and also as a compliment to potential conventional operations (as evidenced in the Kashmir wars and most recently in the

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<sup>78</sup> One could argue that India's development aid is larger and more comprehensive than would have otherwise been the case in the absence of rivalry; this, however, is a difficult counterfactual to prove. Instead, one can infer from the broad range of *non-economic* activities (related to security and political influence, for example) that economic considerations *alone* do not motivate Indian behaviour.

Kargil episode; the latter of which occurred in 1999 and was therefore a recent, vivid experience for New Delhi in 2001 and shortly thereafter).

The centrality of Pakistan for Indian calculations in Afghanistan is reflected in the statements and perceptions recorded in diplomatic cables by the American embassy in New Delhi. In Appendix 1, I offer excerpts from these cables. The picture that emerges is of an Indian leadership focused on, and concerned about, Islamabad as the principal threat to security in Afghanistan. Further, Indian officials quite clearly consider security in Afghanistan to be directly connected to security in the broader region. Which is to say, they aren't worried about Pakistan merely endangering their interests in Afghanistan, but also, and primarily, with the implications for Indian security *in general*; the competition for influence in Afghanistan is quite clearly and explicitly considered to be part of the overarching, and ongoing (continuous), relationship with Pakistan.

In reading these extracts it is easy to understand how the words 'paranoia' and 'obsession' might surface in analytical appraisals of Indian strategic thinking vis-à-vis Pakistan in Afghanistan. Indian officials express comparative and consistent skepticism (indeed pessimism; one cable describes an Indian official as "relentlessly negative") in the face of their more ambivalent American counterparts. When Foreign Secretary Menon hints at Pakistani duplicity by suggesting "the problem...has to do with where the threat in Afghanistan is coming from", his American interlocutor – Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher – "assure[s]" him "that Musharraf considers the Taliban a threat...and...is determined to deal with the problem."<sup>79</sup> The consistency with which this pessimism is held is remarkable; multiple officials, at different levels of government, maintain a more-or-less uniform focus on Pakistan as the primary threat. Of course, this might be (and to a degree almost certainly is) a function of discipline within the regime – speaking with a 'single voice' diplomatically – yet it is nonetheless illuminative and consistent with the thesis that such pessimism is caused by rivalry at the international level (it is also, of course, consistent with the argument that pessimism is a result of psychological hostility; yet this thesis is

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<sup>79</sup> WikiLeaks. Boucher and Menon tour d'horizon: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and North Korea. (2006, November 14). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7767\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7767_a.html)

considerably ‘messier’ insofar as it needlessly shifts to an individual level of analysis in an effort to explain a phenomenon that is realized at a group level; the point is that *all* – or at least most – of a particular group [Indian decision-makers and officials] display a particular characteristic [suspicion toward Pakistan]; explanation at the structural level is therefore logically prior to explanation at the individual level, even if ultimately the two do not contradict [i.e. that individual psychological hostility is the product of structural conditions]). While one political party – the Indian National Congress (INC) – controlled parliament for all the years for which the cables are available (and we are consequently denied the ‘natural experiment’ of comparing the language of different parties and presumably – ostensibly – different ideological orientations to see if attitudes towards Pakistan or perceptions regarding Afghanistan shifted accordingly) it is worth noting that the INC is traditionally dovish and conciliatory (by Indian political standards) toward Pakistan. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which won the election in 2014, is the right-of-centre party more traditionally associated with tough-talk toward Pakistan. That INC officials were so persistently focused on the Pakistani security threat is therefore more revealing than if it had been the BJP making similar statements (it is a ‘harder case’ for the dovish party to be ‘hostile’ as compared to the traditionally hawkish one). Further, Indian policy toward Afghanistan has been consistent post-2014 (the trajectory for increased security involvement had already begun under the INC – for example the 2011 strategic partnership agreement – and is being carried forward by the BJP). There has been nothing to suggest that New Delhi will no longer be “committed to do whatever it can to help Afghanistan.”<sup>80</sup> Again, recent security involvement indicates that such a commitment is as strong as ever. Going further back, similarly, the BJP was in power from 1991-2004, meaning they were in charge of the initial post-2001 policy. Public statements at the time suggest a basic perception of the Pakistani threat that is consistent with the attitudes revealed in the diplomatic cables. In October 2001, for example, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) released a statement (as part of discussions with Russia on the future of Afghanistan) contending that the driver of Islamic terrorism in

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<sup>80</sup> Foreign Secretary Menon quoted in WikiLeaks. FS Menon tells USDP Edelman India will empower Karzai, wait for new govt in Bangladesh. (2006, November 20). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7870\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7870_a.html)

South Asia was “the sponsorship and support such terrorist groups have been receiving from certain countries that use terrorism as an instrument of policy” – a clear reference to Pakistan (“India, Russia reject moderate Taliban,” 2001, October 20). The theory of rivalry presented in this dissertation would not expect to find significant differences between the policies of various Indian political parties. In broad terms (minor differences inevitably occur; the point is determining whether the basic orientation shifts in a fundamental way) the consistency of the Indian approach to Afghanistan – through first a BJP administration, then the INC, before shifting back to the BJP post-2014 – reflects a foreign policy continuity in keeping with the theory’s expectations. The trajectory of the intervention, and the basic thrust of the justifications invoked in explaining that intervention, have been seemingly immune to the hawk/dove, right/left divide.

Of course, it is not simply the focus on Pakistan that is relevant, but even more so the way in which Indian officials were and are preoccupied. The expectations of the theory is that states will be concerned about how present realities impact future security. Drawing on experiences within the rivalry and the consequent reputations for behaviour that form, states view present circumstances through the prism of anticipated future crises. In this way, the theory suggests that concern about, and preoccupation with, an international rival is *not* ‘paranoid’ or ‘obsessive’ but rather predictable. (The implication here is that any state in comparable circumstances would behave similarly, thus obviating the convenient if problematic admonition, typically implicit, that the Indians or Pakistanis are uniquely ‘crazy’ in this regard.) How do the above statements conform to these expectations?

There is a clear belief amongst Indian officials that Taliban control of Afghanistan would constitute de facto Pakistani control of Afghanistan and that this would lead to significant security challenges moving forward. There is a recognition that Pakistan’s established pattern of supporting Islamic militants in Kashmir and elsewhere will continue (a reputation for such behaviour has been formed), and that India will be perpetually imperilled as a result. Pakistani-backed terrorism hangs “like the sword of Damocles” above India’s head, according to Foreign Secretary Dilip Sinha. Pakistan’s use of Islamist terrorism, moreover, is generally believed to be a component of Pakistan’s broader revisionist aims on the subcontinent (the use of the term “strategic terrorism”

captures this belief well). It is not incidental to, but a core component of, the ongoing rivalry. This perception is underscored again and again by statements which insist Islamabad is in control of the Taliban insurgency, and could “turn off the tap” any time they wished. (As discussed above, the notion that India perceives the insurgency to be anything *but* directed and controlled by Islamabad is untenable in the face of the available evidence.) The import of Indian developmental – and increasingly security – activities is tied to perceptions about what a Pakistan-controlled Afghanistan would mean for long-term Indian security. The “nightmare scenario,” according to Ambassador KC Singh, is the prospect of “permanent sanctuary in Afghanistan” for Pakistani-directed Islamic radicals. “We do not want *another* century of instability,” Singh explained (emphasis added). The reference to ‘another’ implies a previously-existing. The understanding that a sanctuary for Islamism would result in instability is predicated on the experiences of the past several decades, on the reputation for exploiting Islamism that Pakistan has established.

It must also be noted that the Indian perception that Islamabad is supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan and perpetuating Islamic militancy in the region more broadly is based on real and tangible evidence (which is to say, it is not imaginary or lacking foundation<sup>81</sup>). On the former score, the American intelligence community largely concurs (see the section on Pakistan’s intervention in Afghanistan in the next chapter). On the latter, similarly, there is an acknowledged – that is, more broadly than just in New Delhi – history and pattern (ISI links to the 2008 Mumbai attack, for example, see Burke 2010). Yet as with all evidence, it must be *interpreted*, and herein we see again the consequences of rivalry. More or less the same evidence is treated differently by, for instance, India and the US. Recall again the example provided in an earlier chapter in which American and Israeli intelligence officials, presumably with access to the same or similar information, offer slightly different appraisals as to the immanency of the Iranian nuclear threat – the former, not facing an existential threat, pushes the time horizon further than the latter, for whom the possibility of being wrong is significantly more acute, to put it mildly.

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<sup>81</sup> If it were, of course, there would be a more legitimate reason to question the basic rationality of Indian perceptions. Instead, Indian concerns are grounded in reality. “Just because you’re paranoid,” wrote Joseph Heller in his famous war novel *Catch-22*, “doesn’t mean they’re not after you.”

A similar dynamic is at play here – the US is more willing to believe that Musharraf is legitimately ambivalent about the Taliban insurgency; they know that there are real historical linkages, and that certain elements within the Pakistani government/military apparatus – namely, ISI – may have maintained operational relationships with militants. Yet they also allow for the possibility that the political leadership might not be directing such behaviour and may genuinely desire to crack down on the militancy problem (but are perhaps somewhat handcuffed by the domestic unpopularity of explicit cooperation with the international coalition in Afghanistan). Consequently, the US is (or at least was) more sanguine about the prospects of Pakistani cooperation – even if this optimism has waned over the years as little change has occurred. For New Delhi, there was no ambivalence; Musharraf, they contended, was in control of ISI, as “the organization is a disciplined part of the military structure of Pakistan” and Musharraf himself, an army officer widely held responsible for the Kargil incursion (see Rajghatta 2002), had “spent his entire adult life plotting, planning and executing schemes to undo India.” Even as Pakistan shifted from a military to democratic regime in 2008 (at least nominally a reason for optimism with respect to Pakistani bellicosity) Indian officials were dismissive, saying that “real power” adhered with the military and ISI, particularly on the issues of India and Afghanistan.

Once again, the history is illuminative; over the decades Pakistan has oscillated between military and democratic rule several times (in the 1960s under General Ayub Khan; in the 1980s under General Zia ul Haq; and in the late 1990s under Musharraf). Each reversion to democratic rule – while clearly triggering many significant micro differences – did little to alter the fundamental contours, the tone and tenor, of Pakistani foreign policy as it relates to India. Whatever promises the Americans were hearing from the Pakistani leadership (Musharraf, Asif Zardari, or otherwise), New Delhi remained committedly skeptical. As described in a cable from 2010: “The Indians tolerate [the US] message about the importance of resuming a robust dialogue with Pakistan. *However, to the Indian mind, India has been the target of numerous conventional and un-conventional attacks since Pakistan’s inception.*” Which is to say, history is a powerful instructor, and New Delhi is unwilling to trade tangible experience for ‘cheap talk’. So, when evidence emerges that the ISI is not only supporting militants in Afghanistan but directing them to

specifically target Indian citizens and assets (Walsh 2010), India is understandably less credulous than the US as to Pakistan's avowed commitments to reform.

The point is they are not objectively *wrong* as to these assessments (and therefore 'wrong' in the absolute rationalist sense) because it is, ultimately, extremely difficult if not impossible to know for sure what Pakistan's intentions actually are. (Just as the *precise* time horizon for an Iranian nuclear weapon is largely unknowable to American and Israeli intelligence). Assessing these intentions requires using whatever information is at hand to formulate a best-guess estimate as to what they might actually be. This is the irreducible nature of all such assessments in international relations. States engaged in rivalry have a vivid historical experience upon which to draw (vivid in particular because it involves security competition – often conflict, war – which implicates the very basis of a state's existence as a state; survival). This means India interprets available evidence differently than the US when it comes to Pakistani intentions moving forward. The Indian decision-makers in question do so not because they are 'emotionally-loaded' or 'psychologically-hostile' toward their Pakistani counterparts and the Pakistani state. They do so for reasons tied to the international relationship between the two countries and the various imperatives present in the international system.

This interpretation is further supported by the *importance* New Delhi attaches to achieving its aims in Afghanistan. Above, I outline Indian interests in Afghanistan across a range of domains: economic (particularly energy), strategic (projection of regional power and global ambitions) and security (particularly the rise of Islamic militancy). All are real, and all offer incentives and justifications for Indian involvement in Afghanistan. As potential *explanations* for this involvement, however, none are uniquely adequate. The tenacity with which India has pursued its objectives in Afghanistan belies any of these singular explanations. The *implications* of 'losing' Afghanistan – of essentially acquiescing to Pakistani influence in the form of resurgent or renewed Taliban control – are too great, precisely because they invite long-term security consequences. (Recall the 'century of instability' New Delhi is so keen to avoid.) As the security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated over the years, New Delhi's commitment has grown. "The cost of losing Afghanistan is too great for India," former Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan Gopaldaswamy Parthasarathy told his American interlocutors in 2006 as the

insurgency intensified. Parthasarathy was commenting on the increase in Indian aid that had recently been announced, bringing the total up, at that time, to US\$650 million.<sup>82</sup>

This dogged commitment to ‘victory’ in Afghanistan (i.e. the preclusion of Pakistani dominance) is reflected in two other themes present in the available US diplomatic cables. First, there is a constant concern about the potential of US withdrawal. New Delhi recognized that an American departure might result in victory for the Taliban and were therefore extremely motivated to forestall such a policy decision by Washington. Second, and relatedly, the prospect of negotiations with the Taliban was largely anathema to Indian thinking, insofar as they saw the Taliban almost exclusively as a Pakistani proxy.

These sentiments are also prevalent in the record of public statements made by Indian officials. In May 2011, as the July 2011 deadline for the drawdown of US troops set by President Obama drew near, PM Singh reiterated India’s commitment to Afghanistan prior to a visit to Kabul and meetings with newly re-elected Hamid Karzai: “We cannot remain unaffected by developments in Afghanistan. We take a long-term view of our partnership with Afghanistan...India’s commitment to assisting the people of Afghanistan is enduring and has weathered many storms” (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 2011, May 11). Around the same time, an Indian official was quoted saying: “Nobody committed to the security and stability of Afghanistan would want precipitous withdrawal of forces” (Parashar 2011). The comment was in reference to “speculation that [the death of Osama bin Laden] might spur a euphoric US to expedite the process of troop withdrawal...and allow Pakistan to run amok in a strategically crucial country” (Parashar 2011). In December 2011, India’s delegation to the International Afghanistan Conference in Bonn (marking the ten-year anniversary of the Bonn conference which established the new Afghan government) exhorted the international community to stay the course. Recalling that the elimination of a terrorist sanctuary was the impetus for international intervention into Afghanistan, India opined:

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<sup>82</sup> WikiLeaks. Indian counterterrorism experts urge greater Indo-US cooperation, criticize Pakistan. (2006, December 18). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI8387\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI8387_a.html)

Today, we have to ask ourselves, if that job is done, whether we have succeeded in eliminating terrorism, and the safe havens and sanctuaries from where it is emanating, right from its source. We have to ask whether, if we withdraw our holding hand, Afghanistan will be able to withstand the forces of radicalism, extremism and violence, and stand on its own feet. The answer to that question should decide the nature and level of our long-term engagement with Afghanistan...[P]olitical commitment and conference decisions alone are not enough. We need to back up our commitments with both resources and actions. We need to avert the possibility that Afghanistan is let down or made to feel abandoned by a withdrawal of assistance, at least in terms of quantity if not quality, of international assistance required, in the era after 2014...There is a real danger that as international forces withdraw from a combat role and in numbers, there will be a transition 'recession', i.e. that attention and aid will decline, just as the Afghan government's security demands increase. We should not make the mistakes of the past and let Afghanistan slip back. We must ensure that Afghanistan's security is ensured through non-interference in its internal affairs (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 2011, December 5).

Again, New Delhi was clearly concerned that the international community – and the US in particular – might abandon Afghanistan and leave it (let it 'slip back') to the forces of Islamism that had predominated throughout the 1990s. Such an eventuality would obviously be devastating to India's security interests if one accepts the rivalry explanation for India's own intervention.

The subject of negotiations with the Taliban was similarly fraught, with New Delhi staunchly opposed when the idea first began to surface around 2008-9. The common refrain from Indian officials was the impossibility of distinguishing 'good' Taliban from 'bad'. Any negotiations might allow for the return of the very Islamist (and Pakistani-backed) elements New Delhi had been so keen to keep out. Nonetheless, as the realities of the situation shifted, and as the US clearly signalled its intent to drawdown and eventually withdraw, the prospect of stability through such negotiations softened the

Indian position. As Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State for External Affairs in 2009-10, stated at the time:

New Delhi has come around to accepting dialogue with those Taliban elements who are prepared to renounce violence...But New Delhi is wary of those who, under Pakistani tutelage, might pretend to be reborn constitutionalists, but seize the first opportunity after the American withdrawal to devour the regime that compromises with them (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 213).

Recall, again, that Indian's overarching aim was and is to produce a competent, stable and multi-ethnic central Afghan government. If talking with elements of the Taliban were able to accomplish this, New Delhi was willing to acquiesce. Indian Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid specified that "this process must be a broad-based Afghan-led Afghan-owned reconciliation process, within the framework of the Afghan constitution...This dialogue must involve all sections of the Afghan society and armed opposition groups, including the Taliban" (quoted in Parashar 2013). They remained on guard, however, as the statement from Tharoor makes clear. À propos concrete plans for peace talks with the Taliban that were then being pursued by US officials, Khurshid stated:

We have from time to time reminded all stakeholders about red lines that was [sic] drawn by the world community and certainly by the participants should not be touched, should not be erased and should not be violated (quoted in Bagchi 2013).

The 'red lines' being referenced here are the pre-conditions (including the renunciation of al Qaeda and acceptance of the existing Afghan constitution) that had been established, during the Bush administration, for any discussions with the Taliban. The Obama team had largely abandoned these preconditions; New Delhi saw them as essential.

India was similarly disheartened that talks might include members of the Haqqani network (the Taliban grouped linked to the bombing of the Indian embassy in Kabul) and

derided the efforts as “opportunistic” on the part of Islamabad (which was coordinating efforts along with Washington) (quoted in Bagchi 2013). Khurshid was clear that

the reconciliation process must not undermine the legitimacy of the Afghan State and Government and the political, social and economic progress witnessed in Afghanistan over the past decade, to which members of the international community have contributed in great measure. I may emphasize here that India’s Afghanistan policy does not have an exit policy (quoted in Parashar 2013).

This statement underscores New Delhi’s apprehension as to the international community’s commitment to Afghanistan. Indian decision-makers were willing to engage in peace talks but feared that such negotiations might serve as cover for an international exit. The rest of the world might be able to go home, but India was part of the neighborhood – their security was immediately implicated, meaning they did not have the luxury of looking for a way out.

More recently, New Delhi has continued to be supportive of potential talks. In 2018, Afghan president Ashraf Ghani publicly invited insurgent groups – including the Taliban – to participate in peace negotiations. A statement from the MEA “welcomed the Afghan government’s call to armed groups to cease violence and join [the] national peace and reconciliation process that would protect the rights of all Afghans” but went on to reiterate that “there can be no compromise with terrorism and action must be taken against those who continue down the path of violence and those who finance them and provide safe havens and sanctuaries” (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 2018). This last portion is a clear reference to continued concerns about Pakistan, and suggests that New Delhi’s new acceptance of negotiations that include members of the Taliban is not a reversal of previous policy but rather an adjustment as to the means for achieving long-held goals. A stable Afghanistan not beholden to Islamabad was, is, and will be the primary concern for New Delhi. All of the developmental efforts and vocal support for the current Afghan government does not elide the fact that this is the focus. When it comes to negotiations with certain elements of the insurgency, the public stance

as to not distinguishing between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Taliban was less principled than it was calculated. As Paliwal (2017: 215-6) reports:

According to T, an intelligence analyst who worked for the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) and analyzed strategic intelligence on [Jammu and Kashmir], Pakistan, and Afghanistan from all Indian spy agencies as well as the MEA: ‘The MEA took a much more lenient approach when it came to Afghanistan. At the international level they said there should be no distinction between the Al Qaeda and the Taliban, or between good and bad Taliban. But at the same time when it came to internal discussions they used to have a milder approach and said ‘listen, if the current government in Kabul is not being [able to deliver] then we should look for other options. We are not saying directly talk to the Afghan Taliban, but at least try to engage some other elements.’ (pp. 215-16)

The point is illuminative. Discouraging negotiations early on was designed to forestall the return of Islamist elements; as the central government strained under the pressure of the insurgency, however, New Delhi was pragmatic in its outlook, gradually opening to the possibility that some members of the Taliban might help deliver the stability that was seen as all important, provided these members were not directly beholden to ISI and Pakistan.

What to make of these two, related, concerns (apprehension as to US withdrawal and negotiations with the Taliban)? I argue that they lend support to the rivalry explanation insofar as they underscore the basically *defensive* orientation of India’s intervention and Afghanistan policy.

The present analysis of India’s intervention in Afghanistan suggests the following puzzle: if the rivalry explanation is basically correct in suggesting that New Delhi’s concerns are primarily related to long-term security and potential future conflict with Pakistan, why has the Indian response not been *more* assertive in Afghanistan? Why has security involvement been limited, and even as it has increased in recent years, why does New Delhi still largely resist and rule out the introduction of Indian forces, for example? Put another way, if India sees the security implications of an Afghanistan beholden to

Islamabad as so acute, why has their response not been – particularly given their own military superiority on the subcontinent – decisive? Of course, it may be that as the US finally approaches complete withdrawal, such a forceful Indian intervention will indeed be forthcoming (the Trump administration has, in fact, nudged India to ‘do more’ in Afghanistan moving forward, see Masood 2017). Yet there is no evidence to suggest this will be the case – indeed, India remains clear that there will be no “boots from India on the ground in Afghanistan” as Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman stated in 2017 (“No Indian troops in Afghanistan,” 2017).

The answer as to New Delhi’s relative caution is the nature of rivalry as outlined in this dissertation. India’s intervention was, is, and will be primarily defensive in nature. The concern is with their own long-term security. As the larger, more powerful, status-quo state in the rivalry, India has no need to engage in offensive measures against Pakistan. Moreover, any overtly aggressive move into Afghanistan – the introduction of significant numbers of Indian troops, for example – would inevitably threaten Islamabad, prompting a reaction, thereby further undermining the very security current Indian policy is designed to maintain and protect. New Delhi is aware of this. Former Indian ambassador to the United States Arun Singh outlines the thinking well: “Any major foray in security assistance or a security role could be counter-productive...Pakistan would ratchet up its support to Taliban and Haqqani network [sic] citing India’s presence” (“Talk point,” 2017). Despite the fact that India considers Islamabad’s apprehensions to be ill-founded (for more on Pakistani calculations see Chapter 7), they cannot but recognize the likely reaction to any direct Indian security involvement in Afghanistan. As such, New Delhi’s policy must skirt the line between a) off-setting and minimizing Islamabad’s role in Afghanistan, while b) remaining restrained enough to avoid triggering a more vociferous Pakistani response (the added dynamic of Islamabad’s nuclear capability is relevant in this regard as well). The import of a) is a condition of rivalry – the belief (predicated on history, past behaviour, reputation) that Islamabad will exploit Islamist militancy in pursuit of revisionist aims. The import of b) is predicated on an appreciation of Pakistan’s current policies and clearly stated and expressed aversion to India’s presence in Afghanistan.

New Delhi's overriding concern about potential US withdrawal is appreciable in this context. As long as the Americans remained engaged in Afghanistan, New Delhi could be confident that a return to Islamist, Taliban rule was precluded. India could allow the US to be the engine and guarantor of their own preferences, thereby removing the need for direct Indian security involvement, and the consequent possibility that such involvement could further destabilize the region by prompting a major Pakistani response. Thus, Indian officials worked hard to convince their American counterparts to keep the US engaged in the fight against the Taliban. New Delhi then supplemented these efforts by providing significant financial and developmental aid intended to foster long-term stability through the creation of a viable Afghan state; as the bulk of the international coalition began to drawdown in 2014, India has had to slightly increase its security cooperation with Kabul, recognizing that a failure to do so might undermine the gains that have accrued since 2001. As mentioned, however, they remain wary of going too far, lest Pakistan feel too threatened and respond accordingly.

Similarly, initial aversion to negotiations with the Taliban gave way to pragmatic recognition that such negotiations might be necessary. This shift would not have occurred if New Delhi was motivated by offensive or power-projection concerns, or if they believed that the Taliban alone – not Pakistan – was the primary security threat in Afghanistan; keeping the Taliban out would have been the predominate interest. Instead, India is willing to countenance diminished influence in Kabul, if it means a stable Afghanistan. (The initial post-2001 decision to shift from the NA to the multi-ethnic Bonn-created government is also reflective of these priorities).

Of course, alternative interpretations are possible with respect to observed Indian behaviour. Allowing the US to do the heavy lifting (and lobbying aggressively for them to continue doing so) is also consistent with explanations which foreground economic or narrow security interests. Likewise for the Indian position on peace negotiations with the Taliban. Yet the statements made by Indian officials – both public and private – seem to support the rivalry explanation ahead of the alternatives. Again and again, Indian decision-makers and diplomats emphasized a) their desire to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a host to Islamism and associated violence; b) their perception that Pakistan was perpetuating and controlling the insurgency for the expressed purpose of

making this happen; c) their belief that Pakistan would exploit such a situation to further destabilize Kashmir and the region more broadly, in pursuit of Islamabad's established and demonstrated revisionist aims; and d) their commitment to forestalling this outcome through extensive development efforts and, increasingly (as the US and others step back), security involvement. Taken collectively, these observations support the rivalry interpretation. Moreover, statements from Indian officials are buttressed by actual Indian behaviour and policy – as mentioned earlier, deed follows word. Almost immediately following the topple of the Taliban, India emerged as a major supporter of the new Afghan government. This support was wide ranging and comprehensive, clearly intended to cement the new regime in Kabul and solidify its control over Afghan territory. As the insurgency emerged and the security situation was challenged, New Delhi steadily increased its support, becoming the largest non-traditional donor to the embattled country. Training missions were emphasized, as capacity-building became a priority. Understandable reticence for direct security involvement has given way to the transfer of military equipment, the signing of a strategic partnership, and training of the ANSF. New Delhi has made it clear that they plan on remaining heavily involved in Afghanistan moving forward; for India, there is no “exit policy.”

We see here the consequences of the *anticipated process* expected by the theory of rivalry developed in this dissertation. Indian decision-makers considered the consequences of a destabilized and Pakistani-influenced Afghanistan and anticipated that this would lead to security problems down the road (“another century of instability”). This anticipation, this belief, was the catalyst for the Indian intervention in Afghanistan. Or rather, the catalyst for the *specific* intervention (its shape, scope, purpose, scale) that we have observed over the past seventeen or so years. The other interests (economic, power-projection, narrow security) that India has would likely have generated involvement of some kind, even absent the effects of rivalry. Yet the presence of rivalry shaped the intervention that did occur. It made it larger and more intense, and significantly less likely to be abandoned or scaled back. This has major policy implications about how the rest of the international community might approach Afghanistan moving forward, and the real challenges that remain to crafting stability in that country. Before moving to a more concerted policy discussion, however, it remains

to be demonstrated that Pakistan, too, was and is motivated by rivalry dynamics in Afghanistan.

## CHAPTER 7: PAKISTANI INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN (2001-PRESENT)

In this chapter I examine the Pakistani intervention into Afghanistan. As with India's involvement covered in Chapter 6, I begin with a brief discussion of pre-2001 Pakistani activity. This history is important for contextualizing the intervention that occurred after 2001. As was the case with India, Pakistan has long been involved in Afghanistan; the continuities are relevant for understanding the nature of post-2001 involvement, as well as for clarifying and anticipating potential criticisms that the post-2001 intervention is *merely* the continuation of pre-2001 policy. As will be shown, Islamabad faced a new decision point following the American intervention, and its assessment of its interests in Afghanistan since that time were shaped by rivalry with India. The bulk of the chapter assesses the policy that was pursued – demonstrating that Pakistan was indeed engaged in Afghanistan despite proclaiming that it was not – and evaluates the decision-making logic underpinning this behaviour. Pakistan's intervention offers strong support for my argument, as decision-makers appeared to be strongly and primarily motivated by long-term security concerns related to the perceived threat from India. At the end of the Chapter, I offer an overview of both the Indian and Pakistani interventions, and evaluate them in the context of the theoretical expectations of the dissertation. I conclude with a brief discussion of the policy implications stemming from the analysis.

### **Pakistan in Afghanistan**

#### *Pre-2001*

Two overarching interests prevail during the pre-2001 time period: mitigation of Pashtun nationalism and mitigation of Indian influence. While other interests – including economic opportunities in Central Asia and tactical and strategic opportunities related to revisionism in Kashmir – are also germane, the core security motivations tied to the Pashtun and Indian questions are the driving force behind Pakistan's behaviour pre-2001. The effects of rivalry are apparent; the wars and conflicts with India loom over Pakistan's

perceptions as to the implications of Afghanistan. I return to this point following the subsequent narrative. Also pertinent is the extent to which the rise of the Taliban in the mid-1990s represented the culmination of decades of effort (often covert) on the part of Islamabad. This helps explain Pakistan's reluctance, post-2001, to abandon their erstwhile proxies.

In 1893, Britain's Indian Foreign Secretary Sir Mortimer Durand established a border demarcating Afghanistan from British India. Concern over an advancing Russian Empire dictated that a firm line be instituted which would allow Great Britain to define and protect its colonial possession. The border was not established by British decree or on the mere threat of force – a legitimate back-and-forth negotiation occurred between Durand and the Amir of Afghanistan in Kabul (Omran 2009). Yet the final agreement contained many weaknesses and anomalies, whether through the vagaries of compromise and quid-pro-quo or inexact information regarding the precise locations and boundaries of particular tribal populations. The 2,430km 'Durand Line' passes along the ridge of the Hindukush mountains, through the Khyber Pass, and bisects the region of Waziristan before arriving at the Persian frontier (modern day Iran). Presaging many of the post-colonial borders of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the Durand Line is, in the words of historian WK Fraser-Tytler (1967: 188) "illogical from the point of view of ethnography, strategy and geography." Louis Dupree (1980: 425) suggests that it is "a classic example of an artificial political boundary cutting through a culture area." Even as it ignores natural geographical fault lines (rivers, valleys, mountain passes etc.), the most important – and consequential – error is that it "cuts tribes and tribal groups in half" (Omran 2009: 186). The modern ramifications of this feature have been profound.

The Pashtun ethnic group, most prominently, was bisected by the Durand Line, splitting the population between Afghanistan and the Northwest Frontier province of British India (and, later, Pakistan).<sup>83</sup> As talk regarding Indian partition intensified mid-century, the question of Pashtun independence – the creation of 'Pashtunistan' as a distinct nation – was vocally supported by both Pashtun political leaders and Afghan elites (Maley 2002). The issue became particularly contentious once partition was

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<sup>83</sup> As of 2009, there were roughly 12 million Pashtuns in Afghanistan and 27 million in Pakistan, see Shane (2009).

achieved, as Kabul refused to recognize the Durand Line, and continued to push the cause of Pashtun independence. In 1949, Afghanistan revoked all treaties it had signed with Britain (beginning with the Durand Agreement) and even went so far as to proclaim the formal establishment of Pashtunistan, which was to include territory from the newly formed Pakistan (Kabul marked the occasion by declaring ‘Pashtunistan Day’ a national holiday in Afghanistan) (Hussain 2005). Obviously, this proposition was vehemently rejected by Pakistan and its newly formed government (though supported, unsurprisingly, by the Indian government). What might otherwise have been a positive relationship (particularly given overlapping and/or shared ethnic and religious affiliations) instead became acrimonious. While formal diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan were established in 1948 (and maintained for the immediate years thereafter), the relationship was fraught, primarily because of the Pashtun issue. In 1955, the Pakistani decision to amalgamate its four northern provinces into a single administrative unit was seen as an attempt to diminish the influence of Pashtun leaders; riots broke out in Kabul in protest, with the Pakistani embassy being overrun and the Pashtunistan flag hoisted above it (Gartenstein-Ross and Vassefi 2012). Pakistan retaliated by closing its consulates and suspending transit trade to Afghanistan. It demanded an ‘apology’ from the Afghan government that was not forthcoming (ibid.).

For Pakistan, the threat of possible Pashtun separatism was an early and acute security challenge. It is worth noting, also, that Pashtuns played a role in the first India-Pakistan conflict, occurring around this time. Pashtun tribesmen were recruited by the Pakistan Army as part of the ‘irregular’ force which pushed into Kashmir and triggered the first Kashmir War (Cloughley 1999); as discussed below, past is prologue in this regard, with the ethnically-Pashtun Taliban (and associated groups) also playing a role in the India-Pakistan conflict in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century (the utility of the Pashtuns, as well as Afghan militants more generally, in the context of Pakistani aims vis-à-vis Kashmir is picked up at the end of this section). In any event, the confluence of the Pashtun and Indian security challenges was immediate; conflict on the Western border with India (the first experience of which occurred at partition, meaning Pakistan was born sensitive to the possibility) made Pakistan’s leaders wary of unrest in the East – concomitant crises would mean a ‘two-front’ situation that would imperil the territorial

integrity of the newly-formed nation. Such concerns were compounded by the friendly relations that developed between India and Pashtun leaders, both prior to and immediately after partition. India supported Afghanistan in its border dispute with Pakistan, recognizing Afghan claims to areas on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line (Saikal 2004).

The early 1950s saw the Cold War impinge on South Asian politics. Pakistan, in particular, was slowly drawn into the US geostrategic architecture (and the broad policy of ‘containment’ of the Soviet Union that was then in the early stages of implementation); a Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement signed in Karachi in 1954 provided for military equipment and training and the placement of American advisors at the Pakistan Army’s headquarters in Rawalpindi. That same year, Pakistan joined the American-led South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO); a year later, the Baghdad Pact (McMahon 1988). All told, the period would lead to Pakistan becoming, in the words of one Pakistani leader, “America’s most allied ally in Asia” (Khan 1964: 195). At the same time, the Soviet Union – under new First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev – was becoming more assertive in its own foreign policy; the American-Pakistani relationship saw the Soviets cultivate closer ties with both Afghanistan and India (Wolpert 1982). The Pashtun question continued to be crucial: “the Pashtunistan issue [was] a major factor in motivating [Afghan Prime Minister] Daud to seek assistance from the Soviet Union to ensure Afghanistan’s security against a militarily superior Pakistan” (Hussain 2005: 72). The basic orientation of a) Afghanistan (as well as India) towards the Soviets and b) Pakistan towards the United States would have significant ramifications for broader security realities in the region in the years thereafter. For the time being, however, bilateral Afghan-Pakistani relations remained focused on the Pashtun question.

Relations did improve slightly during the 1960s. In Kabul, support for Pashtun separatism waned, and with it some of the tension with the leadership in Pakistan. Cross-border raids and skirmishes largely ceased. Nonetheless, as Maley (2002: 69) notes: “While Afghanistan pursued the issue of an independent Pashtunistan with less vigour in [this] period...the memory of the dispute was seared into the consciousness of a generation of Pakistani civilian and military leaders, who feared an insecure rear in the event of major hostilities with India.” (This point of course reinforces the notion that

strategic concern for India coloured Pakistani perceptions of Afghanistan and related security issues, even at this early juncture; the influence of the wars and conflicts of the first several decades set the parameters of the India-Pakistan rivalry very quickly.) Additionally, Cold War politics maintained a *froidueur* between the two countries, as each tilted in different directions vis-à-vis the global superpowers.

The consequences of these opposing orientations became apparent during the 1970s, when a series of upheavals ushered in a distinct new era in South and Central Asian geopolitics. As discussed in Chapter 5, the 1971 war devastated the Pakistani state, leading to the separation of its Eastern ‘wing’ into the nation of Bangladesh. One of many immediate implications was a renewed fear of irredentism and ethnic nationalism – in the aftermath of losing Bangladesh, the question of Pashtun separatism once again inspired significant anxiety in Pakistani leaders, and a corresponding deterioration in Afghan-Pakistani relations as Kabul continued to support the Pashtun movement and contest the parameters of the Durand Line. At the same time, the new civilian leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto also recognized that India’s military superiority and perceived willingness to use decisive military force (in the wake of ’71) demanded greater strategic protection. As Hussain (2005: 75) explains:

The loss of East Pakistan had changed the geostrategic environment of South Asia to the detriment of Pakistan, and Bhutto perceived that Pakistan’s defence priorities now hinged more on cooperation with Iran and even Afghanistan. Thus, one of the first states he visited, after becoming Pakistan’s President...was Afghanistan.

The two underlying facets of Pakistani interests in Afghanistan are here apparent: first, sensitivity to the Pashtun question; and second, defensive priorities in the context of the India-Pakistan rivalry. (The former, additionally, is largely contingent on the latter, as the ‘two-front’ possibility is one of the main drivers of concern vis-à-vis Pashtun separatism; put another way, ethnic separatism is bad in its own right, but concern for ethnic separatism was *amplified* by the overarching context of the international rivalry: the ‘first’ front of the Indian threat and the potential consequences of Western unrest for

vulnerabilities in the East. Again, this dynamic accords with the broader thesis regarding the effects of rivalry outlined in this dissertation.) Pakistan therefore became motivated to cultivate influence in Afghanistan, despite the difficulties in doing so given the history of fraught relations.

In 1973, a bloodless coup in Kabul overthrew the regime of Mohammad Zahir Shah. Former Prime Minister Sardar Muhammad Daud seized control with the help of Soviet-trained Afghan military officers and members of the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Daud re-centered the Pashtun issue, and even expanded his support to the Balochi ethnic group which harbored its own separatist aspirations in Pakistan's southwest (Balochistan borders Afghanistan to the north). The challenge to Pakistan's control over the Baloch region was significant. The Pakistani Army had to send four divisions to quell an uprising that was being actively supported by pro-Soviet forces linked to Kabul (Majeed and Hashmi 2014). According to Hussain (2005: 79): "Tensions between Islamabad and Kabul reached boiling point between 1974 and 1975...Regionally Daud sought Indian and Soviet assistance in confronting Pakistan." Again, in the context of the post-1971 moment, both Kabul's support for separatist movements and its cultivation of Indian aid were extremely alarming to Pakistani leaders, and reinforced the importance of mitigating the Afghan threat to Pakistan's security.

It was around this time and in this context that an important tactical decision was made:

In order to curtail Kabul's interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan, Bhutto formulated a 'forward policy' in Afghanistan that hinged on assisting the disparate Islamic groups opposed to the secularly oriented Daud regime. The policy to aid the Afghan Islamists was purely strategic and had little to do with Islamic ideology. The Afghan Islamists did not back Kabul's policy on the territorial dispute with Pakistan and were also opposed to Afghanistan's friendly relations with India. Because of this, they made ideal proxies for Pakistan to destabilise Afghanistan (Hussain 2005: 79).

We see here the beginning of Islamabad's now long-standing policy to support Islamist militants as a proxy for its interests in Afghanistan. Many of the names associated with these activities would remain familiar over the coming decades; both Ahmad Shah Masoud (eventual commander of the Northern Alliance) and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (the Pashtun warlord and leader of Hezb-i-Islami who even today retains influence in Afghanistan) received Pakistani support for attempted – though ultimately unsuccessful – uprisings against the Daud government (Roy 1986). Pakistan began a major covert operation to train Islamic militants: “The Frontier Corps, the Pakistan armed forces’ Interservices Intelligence Directorate (ISI) and the Special Services Group (SSG) of the Pakistan Army jointly handled the training. Between 1973 and 1977, the Pakistani military reportedly trained around 5000 Afghan Islamists opposed to the Daud regime” (Hussain 2005: 79-80). Important links were forged during this era – Afghan Islamists spent time in Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province, engaging with Pakistani Islamist movements, which were themselves largely funded by Saudi Arabia (and which preached the extremist Wahhabi interpretation of Islam preferred by Saudi money) (Roy 1986).

In 1977, the forces of Islamism were given an additional boost when Pakistani General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq overthrew the civilian regime in Islamabad. Under Zia, the country would undergo extensive ‘Islamization’, including the introduction of Islamic laws and the expanded influence of religious clerics and scholars in the political sphere. There was a renewed emphasis on Pakistan’s identity as a Muslim country; while this had always nominally been the case, Zia took it to a new extreme, making it the focal point of his rule. There is disagreement as to whether Zia’s policies were a reflection of his own personal religious zeal or a calculation of what was politically expedient given prevailing sentiment in the country (see the discussion in Haqqani 2005). Whatever the source, however, the practical purpose – one that Zia himself explicitly articulated – was to unify the nation in a common cause. As he explained in an interview with a British journalist in 1979:

The basis of Pakistan was Islam. The basis of Pakistan was that the Muslims of the sub-continent are a separate culture. It was on the two-nation theory that this part was carved out of the subcontinent as Pakistan... We are going back to Islam

not by choice but by the force of circumstances. If we had chosen we might as well have stayed with India [sic] (quoted in Haqqani 2005: 57-58).

This underscores the extent to which religious identity underpins South Asian rivalry (particularly as the processes begun by Zia took hold in subsequent decades). Muslim Pakistan defined itself in opposition to Hindu India. (This dynamic speaks to the ‘nature’ of the rivalry as discussed in Chapter 5; in emphasizing the strategic and security dimensions of international rivalry this dissertation, it bears repeating, simultaneously recognizes that the *content* of the rivalry, the basis upon which the opposing states identify and articulate their differences, can be along any number of dimensions: ideological, political, ethnic, religious etc.) With respect to Afghanistan, the natural consequence was increased support for Islamist forces against a pro-Indian, pro-Soviet secular regime. To recognize as much is not to contradict the argument that Pakistan was primarily motivated by security concerns. Rather, security motivations meant that supporting Islamists against secularists made sense in the context of the specific character of the India-Pakistan rivalry. Threat, in Afghanistan, came from the Afghan regime *given* their ideological affinity with pro-Soviet India. *Contra* said threat, co-religionists offered the best protection, precisely because of their antipathy (by no small measure *because* of their religion) to the secular, pro-Soviet and pro-Indian government. Admittedly, this assessment blurs what scholars often prefer to keep clear and distinct: explanation based on identity (Pakistan supports Islamists because of shared religion) vs. explanation based on strategy (Pakistan supports Islamists because of functional calculation).<sup>84</sup> Yet, as is so often the case, reality itself is a complex blend of these alternatives. The explanation offered here does emphasize strategy and calculation above identity, but nonetheless recognizes the important ways in which identity shapes and influences the manner in which strategy is formulated and pursued.

The impetus for such a policy increased with successive events in the late 1970s. In 1978, the more moderately pro-Soviet Daud regime was overthrown by the PDPA (Daud had largely turned on the political party after it had helped him seize power in

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<sup>84</sup> This distinction graphs onto the well-known ‘logic of appropriateness’ vs ‘logic of consequences’ debate made famous by March and Olsen (1995; 1998).

1973) in a Marxist coup that became known as the Saur Revolution. The PDPA under Nur Mohammad Taraki (and, subsequently, when Taraki was assassinated, under Hafizullah Amin) was more radically pro-Soviet and consequently more immediately antagonistic to Islamabad (Amstutz 1986). The immediate effect was to galvanize Islamist forces in Afghanistan in opposition to the new regime; the militants organized, trained and still-supported by the ISI and Pakistani Army became a counter-revolutionary force. The subsequent insurgency threatened to overthrow the PDPA government, with first Taraki and then Amin repeatedly requesting security assistance from Moscow to help put down the ‘Mujahideen’ fighters. In 1979, realizing that the communist government could no longer maintain power, Soviet troops intervened to take control of the country, deposing (and allegedly executing) Amin and replacing him with Babrak Karmal (Arnold 1985).

The period of the Soviet invasion is crucial for understanding Central and South Asian geopolitics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The dynamics of the current (post-2001) war in Afghanistan have been significantly shaped and influenced by the events of the 1980s. This is particularly true with respect to the pattern of Pakistani involvement that emerged at the time. Following the introduction of Soviet troops, the Islamist insurgency – spearheaded by the loosely organized Mujahideen resistance – took on international geopolitical significance. As a front in the Cold War, the US provided significant aid and support to anti-Soviet forces (for a comprehensive analysis of this conflict in the context of the Cold War see Westad 2005). Yet such support was funneled through, and coordinated by, Pakistan and, in particular, the ISI (Maley 2002). Pakistan’s motivation for this involvement was not simply to appease the US, however; Islamabad had its own clear strategic objectives tied to support for the Mujahideen. Much like the ‘two-front’ concerns related to Pashtun separatism, an Afghanistan beholden to – indeed occupied by – Soviet troops represented a significant threat to Pakistan’s security. The attempts of the mid-1970s to support Islamist uprisings testifies to Islamabad’s standing concern in this regard – the Daud regime was moderately pro-Soviet and not supplemented by the actual presence of Soviet military firepower; the Karmal regime was radically pro-Soviet and the Soviet military was now pressing up to the Pakistani border. That Pakistani support for Islamic militants would intensify post-1979 is therefore understandable (in fact, it was

the same ‘Afghan cell’ within ISI – dormant since the mid-1970s – that was reactivated by Zia to coordinate Pakistan’s anti-Soviet activity post-1979 [Hussain 2005]). Even further, India under Indira Gandhi supported the Soviet move (albeit tepidly, as described above), turning her “anti-Pakistan bias...into the other arm of a pincer movement that squeezed Pakistan on its eastern border” (Ziring 2003: 175). Historical context is again relevant. In the post-1971 era, Islamabad remained wary of secessionist movements, bringing concerns over Pashtun and Balochi nationalism into sharp relief. India’s support for the Mukti Bahini rebels in East Pakistan suggested that major military consequences could result. Support from both the Soviet Union and India to Balochi separatists during the 1970s reinforced these fears. The prospect of Afghanistan serving as a locus for Soviet and Indian perfidy was therefore extremely troubling, and warranted counter-action. The Soviet presence was largely inextricable from India, tying the anti-Soviet campaign snugly to the South Asian rivalry. It was Ghandi, after all, who had earlier signed the ‘Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation’ with the Soviets. As Ziring (2003: 175) summarizes: “Concerned that the Soviets and Indians were determined to exploit Pakistan’s domestic problems, especially its ethnic conflicts, Zia had good reason to conclude that Pakistan faced mortal danger.” Support for the Mujahideen was a way of off-setting this danger: “The ISI’s policy was a logical extension of Pakistan’s interests in Afghanistan, as conceived by the Pakistani security establishment” (Nadiri 2014: 136). Lieutenant-General Faiz Ali Chishti, a member of Zia’s inner military council, stressed these interests in a special cabinet meeting in late 1978, arguing that Pakistan should pursue anti-Soviet objectives in an attempt to install a “favourable government in Kabul” because the “defence of Pakistan lay in the defence of Afghanistan” (Chishti 1989: 205). This basic logic runs through Islamabad’s policy in Afghanistan from the 1970s to the present.

The scope of Pakistan’s anti-Soviet involvement was significant: “Throughout the decade of Soviet dominance in Afghanistan, Pakistan, with massive US military aid and money, trained tens of thousands of Islam’s fiercest fighters” (Wolpert 2010: 56). This training and support was not indiscriminate or hands off; ISI was selective as to which groups within the broader Mujahideen movement would receive aid, and subsequently active in directing and coordinating attacks against the PDPA regime and its Soviet

backers. The so-called ‘Peshawar Seven’<sup>85</sup> were selected both for their Islamist credentials but also their relative disinterest in questions of Pashtun nationalism (despite being predominately ethnically Pashtun themselves). One of the most significant tactical and strategic contributions to the Mujahideen cause was the provision of sanctuary in the form of “clandestine military camps...in various parts of the [Northwest Frontier Province] and Baluchistan” (Hussain 2005: 107). Camps were “located close to the Durand Line” including “in: Chitral, Miram-Shah (Kurram Agency), Parachinar (Kurram Agency), Warsak (near Peshawar), Spinwan and Zhob (Baluchistan)”<sup>86</sup> (ibid.). The mountainous terrain and porosity of the border meant that Mujahideen could coordinate and plan (with help from the ISI) attacks from the Pakistani side. Over two decades later, during the present war in Afghanistan, similar sanctuaries help to maintain the Taliban insurgency against US, NATO and ANSF forces.<sup>87</sup> Also like this later conflict, Pakistani policy during the 1980s was, at least ostensibly, unofficial and clandestine. Asked by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 how Islamabad would square continued support for the Mujahideen with a newly signed peace agreement (the Geneva Accords) detailing terms of ‘non-interference’ and ‘non-intervention’ in Afghanistan, Zia famously replied that Pakistan would “just lie about it. We’ve been denying our activities there for eight years” (quoted in Maley 2002: 73). This, too, foreshadows more recent Pakistani behaviour (or at the very least undermines Islamabad’s credibility in their present denials regarding alleged support for the Taliban).

The effect of Pakistani policy in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation – bolstered in no small measure by the US commitment – was to mire Soviet forces in a

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<sup>85</sup> Jabha-i-Nejat-i-Melli-Afghanistan (National Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan); Harakat-i-Inqilab-i-Islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement); Hizb-i-Islami (party of Islam) Khalis; Hizb-i-Islami (party of Islam) Hekmatyar; Jamiat-i-Islami-i-Afghanistan-JIA (the Islamic Society of Afghanistan); Mahaz-i-Melli-i-Afghanistan (The National Islamic Front of Afghanistan); and Ittehad-i-Islami (Islamic Unity).

<sup>86</sup> Refer to map on page 547.

<sup>87</sup> Indeed, the roots of the present Islamist problem in the region can largely be traced to the influx of money, the advanced training, and the relationships between Islamist militants and Pakistani operatives that occurred during this period. In the words of Hussain (2005: 122): “The Afghan conflict proved to be a training ground for the Islamic militias, which received comprehensive training in the ISI centres that gave them skills in sabotage, assassination, endurance and other techniques of guerilla warfare...Besides giving assistance in the form of military hardware and instructors, hundreds of Pakistani regular servicemen gained extensive experience in providing tactical advice and experience in waging low intensity warfare by participating in guerilla hit and run operations with the Afghan opposition.” See also Edwards (2002).

quagmire comparable in many ways to the American experience in Vietnam (and even, ironically, the current US experience in Afghanistan). By the late 1980s, Soviet leadership (in the midst of drastic reforms at home) was keen to exit Afghanistan; in 1988, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev announced plans for withdrawal, prompting the aforementioned international agreement (Geneva Accords) designed to end the conflict. By the end of 1989, the Soviets were gone, leaving the communist regime of Mohammad Najibullah (Karmal's successor) to defend against the Mujahideen (as mentioned, still supported by Pakistan and the ISI). Fighting continued, even as the US largely withdrew support in the wake of Soviet departure; Islamabad maintained its support of, in particular, the Pashtun warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (and his Hizb-i-Islami forces) as the Pakistani leadership's preferred successor to communist rule. Crucially, the return to civilian rule in Pakistan in 1988 did not fundamentally alter Pakistan's policy in this regard: "The primary objective still revolved around creating a pro-Pakistan Pushtun-dominated Islamic government in Kabul" (Hussain 2005: 137). While the newly elected leader Benazir Bhutto (daughter of former president and prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto) was more ambivalent about the wisdom of supporting Islamist forces, the basic tenor of Pakistan's foreign policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan remained consistent, underscoring the continuity of the interests and associated security challenges driving Pakistani behaviour. Najibullah's government was able to maintain power with continued money and matériel from Moscow (a sizeable 'air bridge' was instituted that delivered daily aid to Kabul). When even this support was suspended in 1992, the Mujahideen were finally successful in overthrowing the government. This was accomplished by a combination of forces, including Hekmatyar but also the Tajik forces of Ahmad Shah Masoud and former Najibullah commander Abdul Rashid Dostum (Haqqani 2005). The result was an arrangement of Mujahideen factions tenuously sharing power, dividing key positions between leaders who remained – and increasingly became – antagonistic to one another in a continued competition for control.

This basic situation lasted between 1992 and 1996. During this time, Islamabad maintained its preference and support for Hekmatyar, in the belief that his credibility with Afghan Pashtuns would produce a pro-Pakistan regime not focused on kicking up trouble with respect to Pashtun separatism. The persistence of this effort suggests a strong

commitment to the achievement of Pakistan's desired ends; not only was Islamabad in violation of the Geneva Accords of 1988, they were subsequently in violation of additional international agreements (specifically the Peshawar Accords of 1992 which created the fragile government described above) against, and subject to significant international pressure to abandon, interventionist practices in Afghanistan. Despite such disincentives, however, Islamabad remained committed, supplying Hizb-i-Islami with weapons, aid, and tactical support and extolling them to overrun the Tajik and other non-Pashtun militias with whom they competed. Over time, however, Hekmatyar proved incapable of consolidating power; the forces of Masoud and Dostum were formidable, and bolstered by increasing Iranian and, even more alarmingly for Islamabad, Indian aid. The nominal central government under Burhanuddin Rabbani was also considered problematic in this regard:

The Rabbani administration's attempts to 'flirt' with India, in addition to other 'unfriendly' acts that included the occasional closure of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border at Torkham, allegedly masterminding the harassment of Pakistani diplomats in Kabul and a generally 'hostile' attitude towards its former 'benefactors' were considered a threat to Pakistan's security interests in the region (Hussain 2005: 182).

"The ISI," Ziring (2003: 213) explains, consequently "refused to back away." Having expended significant resources to oust the Soviet-backed regime, Pakistan was loathe to abandon what its leaders "regarded as their victory in Afghanistan" (Maley 2002: 159).

Disillusionment with Hekmatyar therefore gave way to the embrace of a new force, ascendant as early as 1993, that offered the potential for a more complete realization of Pakistan's strategic aims. The Islamist 'student movement' known as the Taliban emerged as a Pashtun-dominated alternative to existing militia forces. Over a decade of war had rendered the Mujahideen increasingly unpopular amongst the Afghan population. From this disillusionment a new group of pious, doctrinaire Islamists appeared, committed to overturning the 'corrupt' factions hitherto competing for power in Kabul. From an early stage, ISI was central to this group's development:

The Taliban was Islamabad's answer to a third force between the Pashtun Afghans and the non-Pashtun Afghans. Raised, supported, and trained by the ISI and special forces of the Pakistan army, the Taliban was made the instrument not only to end the fighting in Afghanistan, but to bring the country under Pakistani control (Ziring 2003: 284).

Hussain (2004: 185) concurs with this basic assessment: "Pakistani military personnel from the ISI and the Frontier Corps served with the Taliban militia from the onset." As does Rashid (2002: 29), commenting on the early military successes of the movement:

In just a couple of weeks this unknown force had captured the second largest city in Afghanistan with the loss of just a dozen men. In Islamabad no foreign diplomat or analyst doubted that they had received considerable support from Pakistan. The fall of Kandahar was celebrated by the Pakistan government and the JUI. [Pakistani Minister of Internal Security Naseerullah] Babar took credit for the Taliban's success, telling journalists privately that the Taliban were 'our boys'.

Haqqani (2005: 97), by contrast, notes that there are disagreements as to whether ISI was involved from the beginning: "Two Pakistani accounts, one by Lieutenant General Kamal Matinuddin and the other by journalist Imtiaz Gul, suggest that Pakistani officials came into contact with the Taliban well after they had already established themselves as a significant presence in Kandahar." Nonetheless, the author notes that "whether ISI officials helped create the Taliban or simply enlisted them as allies after the movement had already become influential, Pakistani support for the Taliban was crucial" (ibid.). Particularly given the failures of Hekmatyar and Hizb-i-Islami, the successes of the Taliban prompted Islamabad to shift their resources and support decisively to the latter.

Besides effectiveness, of course, there were other characteristics that made the Taliban attractive:

...the Taliban leadership's lack of enthusiasm for Afghan nationalism or the Pashtunistan issue as compared to other Afghan groups made them, at least in theory, the ideal Pakistani clients in the morass of Afghan factional politics. In fact, the military considered this semi-literate militia essentially composed of detribalized Afghan Pashtuns, Pakistani Islamists and elements of the ISI as the most reliable instrument to realise Pakistan's geostrategic objectives in post-Soviet Afghanistan (Hussain 2005: 186).

With Pakistan's support, the Taliban turned early victories into a sweeping momentum. In early February 1995, they captured the city of Wardak, just south of Kabul. By the end of the month, they had taken Hekmatyar's headquarters on the outskirts of the capital. Finally, in September of 1996, they moved into the city itself; Masoud and the remaining militias evacuated to the north, electing to retreat rather than engage. "No Afghan force," wrote Anthony Davis (1998: 68), "either government or opposition, had ever carried out such a swift and complex series of operations over such a wide operation area. This was mobile warfare at its most effective." The influence of ISI and the Pakistani army was apparent to most observers. "To suggest that semi-literate Taliban commanders," David continued,

whose military experience had never extended beyond the hit-and-run attacks of guerilla warfare could have risen to this level of planning and execution defies belief...Covert Pakistan support for the Taliban can thus be inferred to have been fundamental if not to the movement's political inception then at least to its expansion as a regional and then national force. (ibid.: 68-9).

According to American assessments at the time, the Taliban were "armed with brand new weapons [and had] the active support of the GOP (Government of Pakistan)" (quoted in Hussain 2005: 191).

Once in power, the Taliban swiftly imposed their extreme version of Islamic rule on the country (Masoud and associated forces – by this time collectively known as the Northern Alliance [see the discussion on Indian involvement in Afghanistan in Chapter 6]

– maintained control in Northern areas, but the bulk of the country now fell under Taliban writ). Yet, as mentioned, it was not primarily their Islamist ideology that attracted Islamabad to the Taliban (see the discussion in Rashid 1998), but instead the opportunity the group provided for Pakistan to achieve its aims. As Nadiri (2014 explains): “For the first time in its history, Pakistan was allied with an Afghan government that did not maintain relations with India.” The culmination and consolidation of this breakthrough would require, however, the final defeat of the ‘anti-Pakistan’ forces that remained in the country – i.e. the Northern Alliance – which were supported by New Delhi. Islamabad therefore continued its military and logistical support to the Taliban regime: “The militia continued to receive assistance in terms of men and weaponry from Pakistani territory. Thousands of Pakistani madrassa students hailing from the Punjab, NWFP and Baluchistan bolstered the Taliban forces in late 1997” (Hussain 2005: 211). That same year,

Pakistan provided the Taliban with an estimated US\$30 million in aid. This included 600,000 tons of wheat, diesel, petroleum and kerosene fuel which was partly paid for by Saudi Arabia, arms and ammunition, aerial bombs, maintenance and spare parts for its Soviet-era military equipment such as tanks and heavy artillery, repairs and maintenance of the Taliban’s airforce and airport operations, road building, electricity supply in Kandahar and salaries. Pakistan also facilitated the Taliban’s own purchases of arms and ammunition from Ukraine and Eastern Europe (Rashid 2002: 183-4).

A 2001 report from Human Rights Watch offers a similarly comprehensive overview of Pakistan’s involvement with the regime:

Of all the foreign powers involved in efforts to sustain and manipulate the ongoing fighting, Pakistan is distinguished both by the sweep of its objectives and the scale of its efforts, which include soliciting funding for the Taliban, bankrolling Taliban operations, providing diplomatic support as the Taliban’s virtual emissaries abroad, arranging training for Taliban fighters, recruiting skilled

and unskilled manpower to serve in Taliban armies, planning and directing offensives, providing and facilitating shipments of ammunition and fuel, and on several occasions apparently directly providing combat support (quoted in Maley 2002: 221, see also Human Rights Watch 2001).

According to the report, dozens of trucks entered Afghanistan across the Durand Line on a daily basis, “carrying artillery shells, tank rounds, and rocket-propelled grenades”. With respect to military operations, it alleged “that Pakistani aircraft assisted with troop rotations of Taliban forces during combat operations in late 2000” (ibid.: 222).

A series of declassified US diplomatic cables published by the National Security Archive at George Washington University in 2007 offer further insight into Pakistan’s involvement with the Taliban regime between 1994 and 2001. Barbara Elias, in summarizing the release, notes that the documents “clearly illustrate that the Taliban was directly funded, armed and advised by Islamabad itself” (Elias 2007, “Pakistan: ‘The Taliban’s godfather’?”). For example, a document from November 1996 notes that Pakistan’s “Frontier Corps elements are utilized in command and control; training; and when necessary – combat” alongside the Taliban (Elias 2007, Document 17). In September 2000, US officials reported that

Pakistan is stepping up support to the Taliban’s military campaign in Afghanistan. Department is [sic] particularly concerned...that Islamabad may allow the Taliban to use Pakistani territory to outflank Northern Alliance positions in Afghanistan. While Pakistani support for the Taliban has been long-standing, the magnitude of recent support is unprecedented.

The cable goes on to state that “Pakistan is providing the Taliban with material, fuel, funding, technical assistance, and military advisors” while also noting “direct Pakistani involvement in Taliban military operations” (Elias 2007, Document 34). Insight as to American perceptions of Pakistani rationale is provided by an October 1995 cable entitled “Pakistani Afghan Policy: Anyone but Rabbani/Massoud – Even the Taliban.” This last qualification (*‘even the Taliban’*) is meant to highlight the reluctance –

supported by Pakistani statements offered in the cable – of Islamabad’s support for the radical group. The latter’s “obscurantist” views are “repugnant” to most Pakistanis, according to then-Pakistan Ambassador to Afghanistan Qazi Humayun. Despite this reluctance, however, the emergence of the Taliban as the most viable alternative to the Rabbani government and Tajik forces of Massoud compels Pakistani support (‘*anyone* but Rabbani/Massoud’). This again illustrates that forestalling Indian influence in Kabul (Massoud, in particular, being seen as sympathetic to, if not reliant on, New Delhi) was Islamabad’s overriding concern rather than, say, ethnic or religious affinity with the Taliban or the belief that the group would be a ready and immediate proxy for Pakistani interests more broadly (which is to say, again, that support was perceived as the best of bad options, as reactive, rather than proactive support for a willing and pliant proxy). As Elias concludes, the records “represent the most complete and comprehensive collection of declassified documentation to date on Pakistan’s aid programs to the Taliban [between 1994 and 2001], illustrating Islamabad’s firm commitment to a Taliban victory in Afghanistan” (Elias 2007, “Pakistan: ‘The Taliban’s godfather’?”). In his 2006 memoir, Pervez Musharraf (2006: 203) recounts the basic logic, as he sees it, underpinning Pakistan’s continued support for the Taliban during this time period, consistent with the evidence from the released cables:

If we had broken with them, that would have created a new enemy on our western border, or a vacuum of power [in Afghanistan] into which might have stepped the Northern Alliance, comprising anti-Pakistan elements.

By the turn of the century, Pakistan’s commitment to Taliban victory had proved effective. The NA was relegated to small pockets of territory in the North. Islamabad had attained its goal of a sympathetic – if not totally pliant – Afghan regime, one that was derived from, and had the general support of, the Pashtun ethnic group, while also being devoid of influence from India.

Of course, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and subsequent American intervention changed these circumstances drastically; the narrative is picked up in the section below on post-2001 Pakistani policy in Afghanistan. Before moving to this time period,

however, it is important to draw out the relevant implications of the preceding description and accompanying analysis for the broader arguments being advanced in this dissertation.

First, as mentioned at the outset, there were two constants running through Pakistan's interests in (and consequent behaviour toward) Afghanistan post-partition: mitigating Pashtun nationalism (in the fear it might trigger Pashtun separatism) and mitigating Indian influence (in the fear that an Indian 'pincer' might encircle Pakistan from two fronts). Also discussed above was the extent to which these concerns were connected with one another – unrest along the Durand Line was perilous in the context of anticipated and expected conflict in the East. Taken together, these interests suggest a security-related calculus that is consistent with the expectations of my theory of rivalry. Admittedly, they are not dispositive of the theory, insofar as such interests are similarly consistent with a more straight-forward, immediate-term security explanation; though the intensity of the preoccupation given 'potential' future conflict with India leans toward the rivalry interpretation.

Pakistan repeatedly pursued an agenda that reflected these concerns. They consistently supported elements within Afghanistan that they believed would downplay the Pashtun question. In the years following partition, this was the primary point of contention, one that kept frigid what might have otherwise been a friendly relationship. In the 1970s, as the domestic situation in Afghanistan shifted more overtly in the direction of Moscow and New Delhi, Pakistani fears became correspondingly more acute. Particularly troubling was the support offered Balochi separatists; the insurgency in that province required Pakistani military intervention. During this time, Islamabad began supporting anti-government Islamists in Afghanistan; this involvement amplified in the wake of the Saur Revolution in 1978 and became the focal point of Pakistani policy during the Soviet occupation of the 1980s. When the communist government finally fell in 1992, Pakistan backed the Hizb-i-Islami forces of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar as their preferred successor in Kabul; the failure of Hekmatyar to unify the Pashtuns and consolidate control in Kabul led Pakistan to shift their support to the extremist Taliban. The ISI and Pakistani Army were instrumental in securing the Taliban's victory over extant Mujahideen forces in 1996. The balance of the decade saw continued Pakistani aid give the Taliban the edge over remaining opposition forces – primarily the Northern

Alliance – and generally allowed the Islamists to exert de facto sovereign control over the majority of Afghanistan. In the Taliban, Islamabad had a proxy which would protect their security interests; simultaneously downplaying Pashtun separatism while also displaying aversion and indeed hostility towards (thereby remaining free of influence from) India.

There are, of course, alternative possible interpretations or potential explanations as to the motivators for Pakistani policy over this time period. Access to Central Asia and corresponding economic opportunities certainly played a role; Rashid (2002: 26), for example, suggests that “[a]fter the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, successive Pakistani governments were desperately keen to open up direct land routes for trade with the Central Asian Republics (CARs).” Hussain (2005: 157), likewise, notes that leaders in Islamabad considered Afghanistan a “gateway” to the CARs and that this factored into their assessments of Pakistani interests in that country (see also Abbas 2014: 64). Undoubtedly, such economic motivations factored in to the policy choices that were made, but they were not decisive. For example, the backing of insurgent forces from the 1970s onward was antithetical to the smooth relations that could have accorded greater economic access to Afghanistan and beyond. This is particularly true of the post-Soviet era, in which a unified and stable Mujahideen government could have offered the precise transit possibilities Islamabad was after. Rashid (2002: 26) recognizes as much when he writes of the choice Islamabad faced during that time period:

Either Pakistan could carry on backing Hikmetyar in a bid to bring a Pashtun group to power in Kabul which would be Pakistan-friendly, or it could change direction and urge for a power-sharing agreement between all the Afghan factions at whatever the price for the Pashtuns, so that a stable government could open the roads to Central Asia.

As we know, the Pakistani leadership chose the former, underscoring the extent to which economic considerations remained secondary in Islamabad’s calculations.

A second dynamic worth considering is the offensive potential that Pakistan’s policies provided. As has been stated, Pakistan is correctly seen to be the revisionist country in South Asia, making claim to the territory of Jammu and Kashmir currently

under Indian control. A friendly regime in Afghanistan helps facilitate these aims in several ways. First, the mitigation of Pashtun nationalism can be interpreted both defensively *and* offensively – just as a quiescent Western border precludes threat, it similarly frees up Pakistan’s military forces from having to worry about it, thereby increasing the resources available for activities in the East. Second, the support for Islamists which began in earnest in the mid-1970s had tangible links to ISI-supported terrorism and violence in Kashmir:

[T]he success of the Jihad in Afghanistan gave Pakistani strategic planners an ability to pursue a revanchist agenda against India by assisting secessionist forces in that country, especially in Kashmir and Punjab. The military’s success in waging covert low-intensity warfare in Afghanistan through Islamist proxies enabled it to take advantage of the political insurgency in India-administered Kashmir in 1989 by backing Kashmiri Islamic militants seeking to secede from the Indian Union. Some cadres from the organizations that had served in the Afghan Jihad would also serve as the ‘cannon fodder’ for the military’s Kashmir strategy (Hussain 2005: 139).

These observations are echoed elsewhere. Wirsing (2003: 119), for example, describes “Afghanistan’s crucial role...as a recruiting and training ground for would-be Kashmiri guerilla fighters” during the Taliban years (recall again that instability in Kashmir rose during the 1990s). This connection goes further back, however: “Islamabad had made use of Afghanistan as a recruitment, training, and transit point for guerilla fighters in Kashmir for some time in advance of the Taliban’s arrival” (Wirsing 2003: 120; see also Stern 2000). More generally, the ideology of Islamism and jihad (with the guerilla tactics and irregular warfare skills that are used to prosecute it) clearly had synergy across the region; the intermixing and overlapping goals, memberships and interests of the myriad jihadi groups operating in both Afghanistan and Kashmir testify to this condition. As does the tentacle-like reach of ISI within this complex network.

The recognition that Pakistan harbours revisionist aims – and actively pursues them through aggressive means such as the fomentation of instability, the state

sponsorship of terrorism and, as has been seen at various junctures in the rivalry, the use of conventional military force – is unavoidable. This dissertation’s emphasis on the defensive nature of rivalry should not be construed as a denial of such ambitions. As explained in Chapter 3, states can have both offensive and defensive motivations (in fact, almost all do, if one considers the former to include not only military aggression but also the active pursuit of any positive goal, e.g. economic access, trade opportunities, political influence, international organization membership etc.). These motivations cause states to adopt policies which reach out beyond their borders. In pursuing such aims vis-à-vis Kashmir, Pakistan has, as mentioned, adopted a policy which includes support for Islamist insurgent groups designed to destabilize Indian rule. The efficacy of this tactic has improved as a result of Pakistan’s Afghan policy – specifically the establishment of a friendly regime “that would quietly allow its territory to be employed by Kashmir-oriented militant groups supported by Islamabad” (Nadiri 2014: 139). Yet does this motivation explain Pakistan’s interventions in Afghanistan? Put differently, did the prospect of leveraging influence in Afghanistan against India – which is to say, offensive designs – drive the pursuit of said influence?

The most logical reading of the evidence suggests no. Rather than driving Islamabad’s Afghan policy, the scaling opportunities of turning the Afghan jihad toward Kashmir appears more an ancillary benefit than a prime motivator. After all, the timing is clear: support for militants in Kashmir rose during the 1990s, following the development of such tactics in Afghanistan in the 1980s; Islamabad realized that support for proxy groups could be effective, and exported the tactic elsewhere. As Byman (2005: 168) explains: “Pakistan exploited the apparatus it had set up in the 1980s to channel support to the anti-Soviet mujahedin in Afghanistan, instead directing it toward Kashmir” (see also Kux 2001). Again, this suggests that using Afghanistan to develop and amplify the Kashmir insurgency was a welcome by-product of Pakistan’s Afghan policy, not its original aim.

Of course, irrespective of the specific tactic of supporting Islamists, one could nonetheless posit that Islamabad’s concerted and sustained efforts to cultivate influence in Afghanistan remains tied to a general offensive ambition vis-à-vis India. Or, it could be reflective of a deep emotional and/or psychological hostility as per Pathological

Rivalry. Here again the evidence is suggestive but not dispositive. Pakistani behaviour in Afghanistan pre-2001 is broadly in line with the hypothesis that Islamabad was driven by aggression (rational or otherwise) towards India, but a defensive explanation accounts for the same behaviour and has fewer logical inconsistencies. For example, the persistent and acute concern regarding potential Indian influence in Afghanistan can be interpreted three ways: a) the expansion of Indian influence renders revisionism in South Asia more difficult; preventing this expansion is therefore linked to broader offensive goals (for example, the need for ‘strategic depth’ – see the discussion below – could be offensive in nature, as Pakistan plots a conventional military attack); b) the Indian presence in Afghanistan is a target for punishment; negative-affect calculus means Islamabad will lash out at such an opportunity; and c) Indian influence is a threat to Pakistani security, both in terms of fomenting insecurity by supporting Pashtun and Balochi separatists and conventionally by ‘encircling’ from the West as well as East. Because the same behaviour can be interpreted in these ways, adjudicating between the alternatives is difficult. One can point to, but cannot take as confirmatory, the various statements from Pakistani decision-makers that their concern in Afghanistan is ‘defensive’ (as when, for example, ISI intelligence chief during the 1980s Lieutenant General Akhtar Abdul Rahman stressed that support for Afghan militants was part of Pakistan’s “forward defence” plans [quoted in Haqqani 2005: 75]). These type of public (and even private) justifications may not reflect true intent. Yet they can be supplemented by additional logical analysis. If the primary motivator for intervention in Afghanistan was offensive in nature, why was Islamabad consistently *reactive* as opposed to *proactive*? The initial decision to begin supporting domestic Islamists in Afghanistan came in the mid-1970s, following the perception that a pro-Soviet, pro-Indian regime was fomenting Balochi separatism. The decision to amplify such efforts again occurred *after* the Saur Revolution, which created a Kabul government even more overtly antagonistic to Pakistan (and one more reliant on the USSR and India). The stated concern, at the time, was that the “proximity” of Soviet forces posed an existential threat (Ziring 2003: 175).

Also relevant in this regard is the concept known as ‘strategic depth’, which is generally recognized to have played a role in Pakistani perceptions vis-à-vis Afghanistan. The concept is ostensibly a military one; in the event of conventional confrontation with

India, the territory of Afghanistan could provide space for Pakistan's military forces to retreat and reorganize, forestalling potential defeat. The need for such space is accentuated by the geography of Pakistan, its narrow 'waist' rendering it particularly vulnerable to an incursion from the East that could cut the country in half (see the discussion on page 158). As William Dalrymple (2013) summarizes:

To defend themselves, Pakistani planners long ago developed a doctrine of 'strategic depth'. The idea had its origins in the debacle of 1971, when, in less than two weeks, India crushingly defeated Pakistan in their third war... According to the Pakistanis' narrative, the dismemberment of their country – which they blame on India – made it all the more important to develop and maintain friendly relations with Afghanistan, in large measure in order to have a secure refuge in the case of a future war with India. The porous border offers a route by which Pakistani leaders, troops and other assets, including its nuclear weapons, could retreat to the northwest in the case of an Indian invasion.

Strategic depth remains a controversial concept – it has been derided, for example, even in major Pakistani newspapers such as *Dawn*, see Kamran Shafi (2010) – particularly in the context of contemporary Pakistani behaviour in Afghanistan. Hence it is revisited in the section on post-2001 involvement below. Nonetheless, most observers concede that the pursuit of strategic depth likely did play a part in Pakistan's policy choices, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s (if Dalrymple is correct in suggesting that the 1971 war was formative this lends further credence to the argument that such experiences are profoundly influential for perceptions and subsequent behaviour).

The basic logic of the doctrine is defensive; while, as mentioned above, one could posit that the ultimate intent is to ensure space for a potential offensive attack – for example in anticipation of a nuclear response to a Pakistani first strike – this requires something of a leap. The simpler interpretation – that Pakistan was driven by genuine concern about an Indian military invasion – is consistent with the Rational Rivalry explanation. By comparison, it is less consistent with the Pathological Rivalry thesis; what purpose does strategic depth serve in the context of exacting revenge? Or in

‘punishing’ India? If such motivations were behind Pakistan’s Afghan policy during this period, it would mean that Pakistani references to strategic depth were either disingenuous or lacking a rational basis. With respect to the latter possibility, this would mean that Islamabad’s belief that strategic depth might be necessary would constitute a misperception deriving from paranoia or hatred – believing that India was likely to attack even when they were not, and ignoring evidence which should have made this apparent. This is the crux of the Pathological Rivalry explanation. Yet we have seen precisely where this (mis)perception comes from<sup>88</sup>: the history and experiences within the rivalry. Again, these experiences essentially forced Pakistan’s decision-makers to be concerned with the possibility of Indian aggression (to have ignored them, particularly post-1971, would have been considered derelict). Nor was such thinking exclusive to military planners – as remarked above, Pakistani policy was consistent, even as the country oscillated between military and democratic rule multiple times (in addition to the 1988 example noted earlier, a similar continuity ran through the election in 1997 and subsequent military coup in 1999). The point is not to reduce Pakistani policy during this time period to the specific search for strategic depth; as the discussion in this section makes clear, Islamabad sought a mix of goals and employed a range of tactics to achieve them. Running through this time period, however, are concerns about long-term security, particularly in the context of the rivalry with India. As we move to the post-2001 intervention into Afghanistan, this should give a sense of how long-standing and entrenched certain basic positions actually are, and where specific orientations – with respect to, for example, the Taliban – come from. As we move to the post-2001 period, this discussion of pre-2001 involvement serves to highlight the basic continuity in Pakistan’s goals and interests in Afghanistan, even as policy changed in response to new and disruptive circumstances.

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<sup>88</sup> Again, the theory is agnostic as to whether perceptions are ‘actually’ accurate.

The events of 9/11 forced the Pakistani leadership – specifically President Musharraf – into a deep reconsideration of established policy toward Afghanistan. In the context of President Bush’s dramatic “with or us or against us” ultimatum (further underscored by threats from then-Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage to “bomb [Pakistan] back into the stone age” if they chose the latter [“US ‘threatened to bomb’ Pakistan”, 2006, September 22; see also Musharraf 2006: 201]) Musharraf opted to publicly break ranks with the Afghan Taliban and align Pakistan with the US invasion of Afghanistan. He explained this decision to the Pakistani people in a televised address on September 19, 2001, the full text of which is offered in Appendix 3.

The speech is illuminative for the justifications that were offered as well as the reluctant tone in which it was delivered.<sup>89</sup> While easy to dismiss as the genuflections of a secular leader making an unpopular decision in the face of a conservative, religious population, subsequent events (explored in this section) lend the words portent. (Years later, Selig Harrison (2006) would lament that the speech, delivered in Urdu, went largely unnoticed in the US at the time.) Note in particular the ambivalence of the support offered to US aims (hardly signaling the “unstinted cooperation” Musharraf had pledged to US Secretary of State Colin Powell just a few days earlier [Sipress and Mufson 2001]), the hedging with respect to opposing the Taliban, and, tellingly, the broadside attacks and complaints against India. The latter is particularly revealing insofar as India was essentially a peripheral player with respect to the response to 9/11 and the ultimatum from the US vis-à-vis the Taliban in Afghanistan (at least at that moment in time). New Delhi had, as Musharraf notes, offered their full support for American efforts. Yet it was far too early to determine what, ultimately, the Indian role would be either in any American military operation or in the long-term future of Afghanistan. Yet for Musharraf, Indian involvement was not peripheral but central, a key (if not *the* key) consideration in determining the appropriate course of action for Pakistan. Again, the focus on India in the context of this speech can be interpreted in multiple ways: playing

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<sup>89</sup> An address at the UN, two months later, was only slightly more placatory. For the full text of that speech see United Nations (2001, November 10).

to anti-Indian sentiments in the population; evidence of paranoiac and psychological hostility toward India on the part of Musharraf himself and/or the Pakistani leadership more broadly; or as a reflection of long-term strategic concern about potential Indian involvement in Afghanistan. A fourth possibility is, of course, some combination of the three (this is indeed almost certain; no narrow explanation is likely to run unmingled). Yet if one concentrates on the *content* of the speech itself, long-term strategic concerns are clearly central.

While the usual caveats apply with respect to the veracity (or evidentiary value) of such public statements<sup>90</sup>, notice the ordering of Pakistani priorities, in which “security of the country [against] external threat” is listed as paramount. This priority, in particular, is used to justify the abandonment of the Taliban (“I give top priority to the defense of Pakistan, Defense [sic] of any other country” – e.g. the Taliban regime in Afghanistan – “comes later [given the translation, this could also mean ‘after’, or as second priority]”). More generally, the Taliban are given sympathetic treatment, with Musharraf emphasizing Pakistani efforts to support the regime diplomatically over the preceding years. Overall, the speech suggests that the decision to side with the Americans was a reluctant one, necessitated by circumstance, and dictated in the final analysis by core security concerns (with the requisite and rote references to the integrity of Islam etc.).

This initial decision point in the post-2001 era is an important one, and worth exploring in greater depth. The first consideration is whether or not Musharraf’s declared break with the Taliban was reflected in actual Pakistani policy or was simply public posturing masking continued clandestine support. Given the nature of the ultimatum offered by the US, some have argued that Musharraf’s ‘decision’ was anything but, that he was instead forced to adopt a public position against his will and, consequently, that private Pakistani policy remained unchanged from the pre-2001 era: support for the Taliban. Fair (2017: 136), for example, argues that Pakistani duplicity

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<sup>90</sup> These caveats should not be overstated, however. While recognizing the “common criticism...that public speeches may not reflect the ‘true’ personal beliefs of leaders” Jonathan Renshon (2010: 179) nonetheless points to “recent evidence that suggests that the public statements of leaders may reflect their true beliefs to a greater extent than skeptical observers would predict.” Renshon cites his earlier study (2009) which indicated strong convergence between the public and, presumably more ‘accurate’, private statements of John F. Kennedy during his time as president.

should have been apparent as early as November 2001, when Pakistan's military executed the Kunduz airlift, in which it evacuated thousands of Taliban leaders and their al-Qaeda associates, along with their Pakistani advisers from the armed forces and the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) – just as US special forces operating with...the Northern Alliance were about to take the city.

Ahmed Rashid (2001), for his part, reported that in late September 2001 up to five ISI officers travelled to Kandahar to aid the Taliban in its preparations for the American attack. In October, ISI allegedly supported the cross-border provision of weapons and ammunition to Taliban forces (Frantz 2001). Such activities have led some to argue that Musharraf's pledges were in fact empty, and support for the Taliban unbroken (see for example the discussions in Fair 2017, 2014; Rubin 2015; Nadiri 2014; Abbas 2014; Bird and Marshall 2011). Conversely, it is possible that Pakistan did, at first, legitimately break with the Taliban only to reverse that decision later (see for example Reidel 2011; Sirrs 2017; Hussain 2005; Jones 2008)<sup>91</sup> – evidence for support for the Taliban from 2002 onwards is presented below.

Parsing the alternatives is important. Continuity across the pre- and post-2001 eras (that is, a policy of support for the Taliban unbroken by the American intervention) would be *more* consistent with alternative explanations, in which emotional and psychological factors override rational considerations, or with bureaucratic interpretations of Pakistani behaviour, in which the parochial interests of, in particular, the military and intelligence apparatuses override centralized decision-making processes.<sup>92</sup> Given the dramatic disruption of American intervention – the 'political shock' that such an intervention constitutes – a dogged commitment to established policy is unlikely if Islamabad actually pursued broadly rational decision-making processes. Indeed, the contention that Pakistan's Afghanistan policy is and has been 'captured' by hard-liners in

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<sup>91</sup> It is important to point out that there is actually significant overlap between the two positions in terms of historical detail and evidence. This is because there was, and of course always would be, the maintenance of, for example, personal relationships between Pakistani officials (particularly ISI operatives) and Taliban/insurgent leaders. The question is whether these relationships, even up to and including minor operational cooperation, constituted *official* Pakistani policy.

<sup>92</sup> Christopher Darnton's (2014) conceptualization of rivalry is itself predicated on such 'parochial interests' whereby the military establishment – he looks at cases in South America – perpetuates rivalry in order to maintain their share of scarce governmental resources.

the military establishment keen on perpetuating their own institutional interests is offered as explanation for such putative continuity (Fair 2014). Similarly, insofar as a failure to adjust policy given the new reality in Afghanistan suggests the absence of a rational (re)evaluation, one might conclude that Pakistan's Afghanistan policy was beholden to non-rational impulses including emotional and/or psychological pathologies. Antagonism toward India might have therefore overridden other concerns, leading to the sacrifice of other interests (including, potentially, security) in order to maintain an anti-Northern Alliance (which, given American support for said group, would have become a de facto anti-American) stance. Focused on their enemy, beholden to the 'negative-affect calculus' of emotional rivalry, Islamabad may have simply been willing to cut off their nose to spite their face. Likewise, such a continuity would call in to question the structure of the present case study – that a 'decision' to intervene into Afghanistan post-2001 was made at all; instead, such a decision would have been made in the 1980s (or earlier) and simply maintained. This would undermine (or render superfluous) the proposition that Pakistan was engaged in a 'balancing intervention' in Afghanistan. On the other hand, if the evidence shows that a genuine reevaluation did in fact occur, this bolsters an explanation based on broadly rational decision-making processes. Of course, such an evaluation may have merely resulted in the confirmation of present policy; continuity would not, therefore, be fatal to a Rational Rivalry explanation. Still, the evaluation may have resulted in a course change, constituting visible evidence that the (re)evaluation took place (lending support to the Rational Rivalry explanation<sup>93</sup>). Crucial, in either case, is the actual rationale by which the decision was (or, perhaps, was not) made. What inferences about this thought-process can be drawn from the available evidence?

Significant tactical and material support was offered to the US in the early prosecution of Operation Enduring Freedom, including "over-flight and landing rights for US military and intelligence units[,] access to some Pakistani ports and bases[,] intelligence and immigration information, [and the facilitation of] logistical supply to

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<sup>93</sup> Support which would be, it is worth emphasizing again, suggestive rather than definitive; it is possible that the re-evaluation occurred, or could have occurred, along non-rational – emotional, psychological, bureaucratic – lines. The strength of the argument in favour of my preferred explanation rests not on any single decisive piece of evidence, but rather on the accumulation and logical interpretation of multiple observations.

military forces in Afghanistan” (Fair and Jones 2009: 167). Much of this support was considered crucial to the American effort (see the discussion in O’Hanlon 2002).

According to Bruce Riedel (2011: 67), Pakistan

immediately evacuated the Pakistani advisers among the Taliban in Afghanistan and cut off supplies to the Taliban army. The impact on the cohesion of the Taliban forces was devastating: they collapsed rapidly under the weight of American air power and a Northern Alliance revitalized with CIA support and money.<sup>94</sup>

An American diplomat affirmed this dynamic at the time, reflecting that “We did not fully understand the significance of Pakistan’s role in propping up the Taliban until their guys withdrew and things went to hell fast for the Talibs [sic]” (quoted in Frantz 2001). Islamabad also deployed military assets to the Durand Line for the purpose of closing off potential infiltration routes; indeed, many Al-Qaeda fighters were captured by Pakistani forces as they attempted to cross the border (ibid.; see also Berntsen and Pezzulo 2005, Fair 2004). Owen Sirrs (2017: 226) describes cooperation between CIA and ISI during this time period, particular in the tracking and capture of high-profile Al Qaeda operatives. As Fair and Jones (2009: 167) suggest, “US officials widely praised Pakistani contributions in this period.” These moves obviously fractured the relationship between Islamabad and the Taliban, with Hassan Abbas (2014: 119) reporting that “[Taliban

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<sup>94</sup> Note that this interpretation is in stark contrast to the one offered by Fair above, in which such evacuations were seen as evidence of Pakistani duplicity; key to adjudicating between the two interpretations is the extent to which primarily Pakistani advisers were evacuated or whether there also included large numbers of Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters. Nadiri (2014: 141) concurs with Fair’s assessment, writing that the airlifts “evacuated not only Pakistani military officers and intelligence personnel, but also Pakistani and Afghan members of the Taliban movement” citing it as “early evidence of Pakistan’s posture of accommodation vis-à-vis the Afghan Taliban.” The source of this information, however, is a piece by the journalist Seymour Hersh (2002), which is in fact ambiguous as to whether the evacuation of Taliban fighters was the explicit purpose of the airlifts, or whether Pakistani advisors took it upon themselves to “[bring] their friends with them” in the manner of the American evacuation of Saigon in 1975, whereby South Vietnamese nationals were, contra official orders, loaded onto fleeing helicopters. The parallel is obvious: there was a fear that the approaching NA – bolstered by American airpower – might slaughter Taliban fighters (as the South Vietnamese ‘collaborators’ feared communist retribution). In this formulation, Islamabad may have primarily wished to get its own people out, at which point there was inevitably many Taliban fighters who nonetheless found themselves on fleeing aircraft. This alternative explanation might help explain why the US not only approved the Kunduz airlifts, but similarly allowed them to proceed while American forces were positioned to stop them, as Hersh reports.

leader] Mullah Omar was very annoyed with Pakistani leaders for siding with the US in the military campaign in Afghanistan. Pakistan had practically ditched the Taliban in October 2001 and had even handed over the Afghan ambassador in Islamabad to the US, in the process violating all diplomatic norms.” There were those on the Pakistani side who were also opposed to the decisions being made, not only amongst the public but within the ranks of the military-intelligence establishment (Fair 2014). Such criticisms indicate that Pakistan’s policy in practice reflected the official line.

On balance, the evidence suggests that a real break or shift did occur in the immediate aftermath of the US ultimatum (Paliwal [2017: 162] describes it as a “breathtaking tactical U-turn”) – a fact often distorted by subsequent events, in which Pakistani duplicity (discussed below) colours recollections of the time period. In the context of what is now known about Pakistani support for the insurgency from as early as 2002 onward, it is easy to assume that a break did not occur, that assurances of support for the American intervention were as hollow as subsequent reassurances that no support was being offered to the insurgency. This interpretation obscures a more complex reality whereby Islamabad did shift, or at least reset, its relationship with the Taliban, and provided a modicum of support for American activities. The point is not that Pakistan flipped overnight from comprehensive support for the Taliban regime, to full-throated and committed support for the American intervention against it, and back again just a few months later – throughout the period Islamabad’s approach was reluctant, cautious and, as will be discussed below, in fact remarkably consistent as to which factors drove its policy in Afghanistan.

The decision to side with the US was nonetheless controversial within the Pakistani military establishment. In a high-level meeting convened in the days after the 9/11 attacks, several top officials challenged Musharraf, pushing for Pakistan to resist the US and sustain support for the Taliban regime (McCarthy 2002). Amongst this group was ISI director Lieutenant General Mahmood Ahmed. Musharraf resisted – the dissenters were in the minority – insisting that there was “simply no choice” (ibid.). One source describes how he attempted to convince the skeptics: “Musharraf eventually silence[ed] the dissenting generals by suggesting that if Pakistan [did] not agree to the US demands, Pakistan’s long-time enemy India [would] gladly take the place of Pakistan in assisting

the US.”<sup>95</sup> Tellingly, those opposing the decision were swiftly marginalized.<sup>96</sup> Following the incident noted above in which ISI officers met with Taliban fighters in Kandahar in late September 2001 (an incident which allegedly left Musharraf “infuriated” [Rashid 2001]), Ahmed was removed as ISI director and replaced by the more moderate Lieutenant General Ehsan ul-Haq.<sup>97</sup> Other dissenters from the meeting (for example Lieutenant General Muzaffar Usmani, Lieutenant General Jamshaid Gulzar Kiani, and Lieutenant General Mohammad Aziz Khan) were pushed out or reshuffled into less prominent roles (McCarthy 2002). These and other personnel decisions are indicative of a desire to purge ISI of elements believed to be overly-sympathetic to the Taliban cause (Rashid 2001; Woodward 2002; Grove 2007).

Recognizing again the obvious caveat that decision-makers have incentives to distort (particularly post-hoc), and are not to be considered completely trust-worthy even as they describe their own decision-making processes, Musharraf’s personal account of this historical moment is worth quoting at length. This account colours in some of the justifications contained in the September 19 speech included in Appendix 3. Of his rationale at the time, following the aforementioned American ultimatum, Musharraf writes in his memoir (pp. 201-204, *passim*):

I made a dispassionate, military-style analysis of our options, weighing the pros and cons. Emotion is all very well in drawing rooms, newspaper editorials, and movies, but it cannot be relied on for decisions like this. Underlying any leader's analysis has to be a keen awareness that on his decision hangs the fate of millions of people and the future of his country. It is at times like these that the leader is confronted by his acute loneliness.

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<sup>95</sup> See History Commons (n.d.). This account is corroborated by journalist Steve Coll (2018: 54, emphasis added): “After putting off [US Ambassador to Pakistan] Wendy Chamberlin on [September] 13<sup>th</sup>, Musharraf jawboned his generals and admirals, as well as his civilian cabinet, newspaper editors, and politicians, to prepare them for what he regarded as a necessary swerve in Pakistan’s foreign and security policy. The essence of Musharraf’s argument during these critical days was: *If Pakistan did not manage this moment of crisis to its advantage, India would.*”

<sup>96</sup> Ahmed Rashid (2008) offers a slightly different account of the meeting. According to Rashid, “there was no disagreement”, with all those present resigning themselves to the reality of the situation.

<sup>97</sup> General ul-Haq was described by CIA Islamabad station chief Robert Grenier as representing “new, more moderate leadership” in ISI, which he now believed was willing to “cooperate fully with the CIA in the war on terrorism” (quoted in Coll 2018: 90).

...

My decision was based on the well-being of my people and the best interests of my country—Pakistan always comes first. I war-gamed the United States as an adversary. There would be a violent and angry reaction if we didn't support the United States. Thus the question was: if we do not join them, can we confront them and withstand the onslaught? The answer was no, we could not, on three counts.

First was our military weakness as compared with the strength of the United States. Our military forces would be destroyed.

Second was our economic weakness. We had no oil, and we did not have the capacity to sustain our economy in the face of an attack by the United States.

Third, and worst of all, was our social weakness. We lack the homogeneity to galvanize the entire nation into an active confrontation. We could not endure a military confrontation with the United States from any point of view.

I also analyzed our national interest. First, India had already tried to step in by offering its bases to the United States. If we did not join the United States, it would accept India's offer. What would happen then? India would gain a golden opportunity with regard to Kashmir. The Indians might be tempted to undertake a limited offensive there; or, more likely, they would work with the United States and the United Nations to turn the present situation into a permanent status quo. The United States would certainly have obliged.

Second, the security of our strategic assets would be jeopardized. We did not want to lose or damage the military parity that we had achieved with India by becoming a nuclear weapons state. It is no secret that the United States has never been

comfortable with a Muslim country acquiring nuclear weapons, and the Americans undoubtedly would have taken the opportunity of an invasion to destroy such weapons. And India, needless to say, would have loved to assist the United States to the hilt.

Third, our economic infrastructure, built over half a century, would have been decimated.

The ultimate question that confronted me was whether it was in our national interest to destroy ourselves for the Taliban. Were they worth committing suicide over? The answer was a resounding no. It is true that we had assisted in the rise of the Taliban after the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan, which was then callously abandoned by the United States. For a while, at the embryonic stage, even the United States had approved of the Taliban.

...

After the Taliban came to power, we lost much of the leverage we had had with them. The peace that they brought to Afghanistan was the peace of the graveyard. Nevertheless, we still supported them, for geostrategic reasons. If we had broken with them, that would have created a new enemy on our western border, or a vacuum of power there into which might have stepped the Northern Alliance, comprising anti-Pakistan elements. The Northern Alliance was supported by Russia, India, and Iran. Now we were no longer constrained by these concerns. We had new, more deadly ones. Now we could detach from the Taliban. In any case, they did not stand a chance. Why should we put our national interest on the line for a primitive regime that would be defeated?

On the other hand, the benefits of supporting the United States were many. First, we would be able to eliminate extremism from our society and flush out the foreign terrorists in our midst. We could not do this alone; we needed the

technical and financial support of the United States to be able to find and defeat these terrorists. We had been victims of terrorism by the Taliban and al Qaeda and their associated groups for years. Earlier Pakistani governments had been hesitant about taking on the militant religious groups that were spreading extremism and fanaticism in our country. General Zia had openly courted them for political support, and Nawaz Sharif was in the process of setting himself up as "commander of the faithful," sort of a national imam. For my part, I have always been a moderate Muslim, never comfortable with the rhetoric or the ways of the extremists. I moved against them when I banned a number of extremist religious organizations in February 2001 because they were involved in sectarian militancy. But now here was a chance to confront them more boldly and openly. Second, even though being a frontline state fighting terrorism would deter foreign investment, there were certain obvious economic advantages, like loosening the stranglehold of our debt and lifting economic sanctions. Third, after being an outcast nation following our nuclear tests, we would come to center stage.

What of the domestic reaction? The mullahs would certainly oppose joining the United States and would come out into the streets. There would be an adverse reaction, too, in the North-west Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan, for obvious reasons. Sindh, specially Karachi, and Balochistan would be neutral or lukewarm. But what of the Punjab, which is the heart of Pakistan? Would it react negatively? I thought that by and large it would not. If I could make the Punjabis understand why I went with the United States, they would understand me—why unnecessarily take on a superpower, and for what? The Punjabis are a very pragmatic people. As for Karachi, which has many seminaries [sic], some of which are run by extremists from the Frontier Province, there certainly would be some street protests. But the bulk of Karachi's people would not support it. So my considered opinion, based on the ethos of the country and the inclinations of the people I knew so well, was that there would be no unbearable reaction or street protests.

This was a ruthless analysis, deliberately devoid of emotion, which I made for the sake of my country. Richard Armitage's undiplomatic language, regrettable as it was, had nothing to do with my decision. The United States would do what it had to do in its national interest, and we would do what we had to in ours. Self-interest and self-preservation were the basis of this decision.

The length of this quotation is necessary to avoid cherry-picking statements and losing the broader context in which they were offered. According to Musharraf, he considered multiple factors in assessing the pros and cons of breaking with the Taliban and siding with the US (even as he demurred as to the level of influence Pakistan actually had over the Taliban regime – “after the Taliban came to power, we lost much of the leverage we had had with them”). There were economic considerations, for example, as well as a perceived opportunity to “eliminate extremism...and flush out foreign terrorists” in Pakistani society. Musharraf nonetheless makes clear that broader geostrategic considerations were paramount. These included the dangers of an American military attack (the possibility that Bush, Armitage and company might make good on their threat), as well as the opportunities that would be afforded India should Pakistan resist the Americans in Afghanistan.

Perceptions regarding Indian behaviour loom large. Even at that early stage, New Delhi's willingness to aid the Americans was a source of concern.<sup>98</sup> If Pakistan refused the Americans, Musharraf believed that India would take advantage of an improved relationship with the US to undermine Pakistan's interests in Kashmir as well as the region more broadly. With respect to the former, he worries that “the Indians might be tempted to undertake a limited offensive there”; at the very least, they would entrench a status quo Islamabad still wanted revised. Further, Musharraf worried about Pakistan's nuclear assets – only recently tested and established – believing that both the US and India harboured designs of relieving his country of what were now considered necessary

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<sup>98</sup> Steve Coll's (2018: 55) account of a September 15 conversation between Ambassador Chamberlin and Musharraf highlights what Pakistani priorities were here: “Allowing American planes to overfly Pakistani territory would be ‘no problem,’ Musharraf said, but he asked for the US and Pakistani militaries to map out specific air corridors. ‘We are concerned that India might try to intrude into airspace the US wants to use – we are sensitive about our nuclear installations.’ Musharraf said the United States should tell India to ‘lay off and stay off.’”

implements of deterrence against Indian military superiority. Finally, justifying Islamabad's erstwhile support for the Taliban (despite reservations as to both the character and, ultimately, pliancy of the regime) Musharraf hints at the rationale undergirding Pakistani decision-making vis-à-vis Afghanistan overall: the Taliban was supported so as to forestall "a new enemy on our western border, or a vacuum of power...into which might" step "anti-Pakistan elements."

While offered here retrospectively, these concerns logically apply to how Musharraf and the Pakistani leadership would consider Afghanistan moving forward. The break from the Taliban occurred only in the face of "new, more deadly" concerns – the American threat, not to be lightly dismissed as the twin towers still smoldered – underscoring the ultimate tenuousness of the shift; as realities changed and time passed, the decision was clearly subject to re-evaluation. As the preceding pages and chapters have amply demonstrated, Pakistan had a long history in Afghanistan, bound by geography and memory; it was therefore unlikely to casually abandon an orientation grounded in those realities. They did so, rather, given (as Musharraf describes it) a "dispassionate...analysis" which considered the "well-being...and best interests" of the country.<sup>99</sup> Which is to say, there remained a broadly rational process in which security concerns were paramount (was the Taliban "worth committing suicide over? The answer was a resounding no"). The decision at this moment was to – reluctantly, ambivalently<sup>100</sup> – support the US and break with the Taliban. Nor were American requests too burdensome or decisive in this regard; they largely required passive, logistical support (access to bases and overflight clearances etc.), desistance as opposed to assistance (curtail already-existing support for the Taliban) and, as Musharraf points out, provided some benefit to Pakistan itself (targeting of al-Qaeda operatives inimical to the Pakistani establishment; certain economic advantages). This allowed for "Islamabad's approach to Afghanistan in 2001-2002" to be, according to Owen Sirrs (2017: 227), "wait-and-see" – that is, to shift and reconsider existing policy pending new information as to how realities in Afghanistan played out following the American intervention.

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<sup>99</sup> Note that this inference is not based on the 'word' of Musharraf alone but also in the context of the observed and established behaviour of Pakistan at the time – the undercutting of Taliban military effectiveness through the removal of advisers, the deployment of Pakistani military forces to the border etc.

<sup>100</sup> Musharraf would later tell Bruce Reidel (2011: 67) that the decision was "agonizing".

It did not take long for a re-evaluation to occur. As early as 2002, there is evidence of renewed Pakistani support for what was then a re-emerging Taliban force.<sup>101</sup> Seth Jones (2008: 32) describes the situation at the time in Afghanistan:

In the spring and summer of 2002, Taliban and other forces began offensive operations to overthrow the Afghan government and coerce the withdrawal of US and coalition forces...By 2003 the Taliban and allied insurgent groups had slowly pushed their way into rural areas of the east and south, co-opting some locals and coercing others through targeted killing.

In some ways a striking replay of the Taliban's first decisive victories of the mid-1990s, Pakistan played an important role in this resurgence. "In 2003, ISI began creating a new Taliban," Sirrs (2017: 227) reports, "capable of filling the power vacuum [in Afghanistan] and securing Pakistan's interests." The modes of this assistance and support were myriad, and are explored in greater detail below.

First, however, it is important to consider the *decision* to renew support for the Taliban – or, more precisely, to lend support (leveraging, to be sure, established relationships dating to the late 1990s and before) to this 'new' Taliban insurgency that was then emerging in Afghanistan. This is the crux of the present case study – having suspended support for their Taliban client, what caused the Pakistani leadership to initiate a new intervention, in 2002-2003, that would – as any familiar with the realities of the Afghanistan war now recognize – have devastating consequences for stability in the region?

Unpacking this further, we can identify the following turning points over the relevant time period, pertaining to Pakistani decision-making:

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<sup>101</sup> In addition to more straightforward evidence – statements, actions, reported behaviour – there are also more subtle indications as to the shift that occurred around this time. For example Gall (2014: 68) reports that in the first couple of years after 9/11 – roughly the time frame in which Pakistan was committed to breaking with the Taliban – Friday sermons in the mosques of Quetta (the Pakistani city that would become the site of the Afghan Taliban leadership during the later insurgency) "emphasized Musharraf's policy of 'Pakistan First'. There were men from Pakistani intelligence present, and some mullahs were even arrested for talking out of line." A few years later, however, as Islamabad shifted its policy, "speakers began openly urging the faithful to go wage jihad in Afghanistan", a message Pakistani intelligence no longer felt it necessary to curtail.

T1) American threat/ultimatum regarding Taliban and impending American intervention in Afghanistan.

T2) Decision to acquiesce to American pressure by cutting ties with Taliban.

T3) American/Coalition intervention.

T4) Decision to offer support for emerging Taliban-led insurgency.

While simplified, this timeline is useful for understanding the logical sequence of decision points for Islamabad. Both T1 and T3 are *events* or *actions*, each triggering a subsequent *decision* – T2 and T4 – from the Pakistani leadership. We've already demonstrated that the US threat led to the decision at T2; Pakistan begrudgingly recognized that its interests were best served by bending to American will in Afghanistan. (This does not mean that Pakistan was necessarily compelled by the threat of American military action against them; just as important were the *rivalry* implications – what the American ultimatum meant for Indian involvement in Afghanistan; more on this below). Yet, as the timeline suggests, something *changed* such that the actual American and international intervention led to a new decision – T4 – to essentially reverse T2 and instead support a new and emerging Taliban force, this time in the form of a guerilla insurgency targeting American and coalition (later NATO/ISAF) troops and, importantly, the new Afghan government that the intervention had created. (Note that the insurgency's emergence roughly coincided with the creation of the Bonn government in 2002; its acceleration from roughly 2004 onwards likewise coincided with the first Afghan election that year which affirmed Hamid Karzai as president, entrenching what Islamabad saw as an Indian-influenced regime.) The key consideration, therefore, is the effect of T3 and its aftermath. What happened as a result of T3, or in the intervening time between T3 and T4, that culminated in the decision at T4?

To answer this question we can revisit the logic associated with T2, as described above. Presumably (and particularly given their relative proximity in time), the basic rationale and thought process employed at T4 is the same as that applied at T2 – after all, much remained constant, including the leadership. We know that at T2 there were two overriding Pakistani concerns: 1) US military action (“the onslaught”, as Musharraf

describes it) and 2) India's potential role in Afghanistan. Recall that the first dynamic mentioned following Musharraf's invocation of the "national interest" was the possibility that India would take advantage of any Pakistani hesitancy by aligning with the US and using it as pretext or opportunity for some type of aggression against Pakistan (an offensive in Kashmir; concretization of the status quo in Kashmir; and perhaps most alarmingly, seizure of Pakistani nuclear assets). Musharraf allegedly used the spectre of Indian cooperation with the US to convince skeptics in the military establishment that Pakistan should instead take the initiative and side with American demands. The Indian bugaboo similarly featured in public statements made at the time, helping to convince the public at large that Pakistan should side with the US. As Bruce Reidel (2011: 67) summarizes: "Musharraf put it succinctly – Pakistan's policy derived from its concerns about India. There would be no role for India in the Afghan war." While the US threat was not irrelevant, helping to tip the scales toward cooperation, the Indian dynamic was likely decisive; the rivalry-associated *advantages* (cooperation with the US forestalling otherwise-unchallenged Indian participation and the potential dangers that would result) made it unnecessary to defy the American ultimatum, even if there remained some rivalry-related reasons for maintaining support for the Taliban (the same reasons that drove support prior to 9/11). The American intervention was, it should be clear, a significant political shock, demanding a recalibration of standing policy for all regional actors. The decision at T2 reflects this reality.<sup>102</sup> Yet while the *policy* changed, the motivating rationale largely did not: Islamabad remained focused on preventing Indian influence in Afghanistan.

What, then, can these dynamics tell us about the decision at T4? Here again we see a *policy* shift (a *new* decision), yet in keeping with T2, I argue, a consistent motivating rationale. The latter half of Reidel's summary is worth revisiting and

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<sup>102</sup> Or, more precisely, the *impending* American intervention is reflected in T2; American signalling following 9/11 was quite clear and there was little doubt on the part of any nation that the US was sincere with respect to its intention to intervene in Afghanistan. Note that Musharraf did broadcast his desire to "save the Taliban" by forestalling the US invasion, even trying to convince Taliban leader Mullah Omar to hand over Osama bin Laden to the Americans (Omar, beholden to the Pashtun cultural practice of protecting 'guests', steadfastly refused). These efforts failed, but this was clearly the preferred outcome for Pakistan, as it would have preserved the gains of the late 1990s by keeping the Taliban in power. Once American involvement was inevitable, however, the calculation became one of adjusting policy to reflect impending new realities.

emphasizing: “*There would be no role for India in the Afghan war.*” Reidel meant this as a description of how the decision at T2 was made, but it could equally apply to the ongoing rationale through which an assessment of T3 – the actual American/international intervention – was filtered. As such, it is necessary to assess T3 itself – what aspects or dynamics of the intervention might have induced a policy shift at T4, assuming a rivalry-related motivation for Pakistani decision-making? We would expect to see aspects of the intervention, or developments associated with it, which might lead to increased (or at least, the perception of increased) Indian influence or involvement in Afghanistan. Such developments would then trigger a re-evaluation in Islamabad, causing them to flip on the American intervention, given that the intervention might be producing the exact circumstances Pakistan’s own participation was meant to exclude.

Keen on maintaining a light military footprint (as part of then-Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld’s vision of an agile, modern American military), the US entered Afghanistan with a small contingent – “approximately 100 Central Intelligence Agency officers [and] 350 U.S. Special Forces soldiers” (Jones 2008: 7) – and used, as their main fighting force, the Northern Alliance (approximately 15,000 fighters). As discussed in the chapter on Indian involvement in Afghanistan, the US took advantage of an already-existing enemy of the Taliban, essentially supercharging one side of an ongoing if low-boil civil conflict to decisively alter the political status quo in the country. Through the use of, in particular, air power and tactical strikes the US was able to effectuate the collapse of the Taliban in little less than three months (for detailed accounts of this phase of the war see Woodward 2002; Biddle 2002, 2005/6; Schroen 2005; Andres et al. 2005/6; Berntsen and Pezullo 2005). The American decision to pursue what became known as the “Afghan Model” of warfare (support for an indigenous proxy force) was predicated on its own interests and the desire to overthrow the Taliban with as few American casualties as possible – in this, the model was strikingly effective (O’Hanlon 2002). Less consideration, by contrast, was given to the regional ramifications associated with intervening in this way, *even as Islamabad explicitly lobbied against the empowerment of the NA and exhorted the US to pursue alternative options.*

As described above, Indian and Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan during the 1990s came in the form of support for competing proxy forces: the mostly ethnic-Tajik

Northern Alliance (India) and the almost entirely ethnic-Pashtun Taliban (Pakistan). Obviously, the decision on the part of the United States to side with the Northern Alliance was alarming for Islamabad; American involvement, given their military capacity, would likely prove decisive. Musharraf expressed anxiety that “the Northern Alliance...would take over Afghanistan” (Woodward 2002: 260). As William Dalrymple (2013) explains:

By aligning with the Tajiks of the northern provinces against the Pashtuns of the south, the US...was unwittingly taking sides in a complex civil war that has been going on since the 1970s.

Pakistani concerns were ignored at the time. Among Musharraf’s early requests, for example, was that time be given for Pakistan to form a “moderate Taliban” government and, at the very least, that the NA not be the expeditionary force tasked with seizing and occupying Kabul (Rubin and Rashid 2008). Officially, the US claimed that it did not give the order for the NA to enter Kabul, preferring a UN mandate for the capital, with NA forces stopped north of the city; nonetheless, in early November 2001, as it became clear that Taliban forces were largely retreating from the capital into strongholds further south, the NA moved in, and the Americans did not stop them. While cognizant of the promises that had been made<sup>103</sup> and aware of the complications that might arise from Tajik and Uzbek forces seizing a predominately Pashtun city, American calculations were ultimately driven by the desire to achieve military objectives. Woodward (2002: 264), for example, reports that for Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld, “the real question...was how will the taking of Kabul affect the mission of pursuing al Qaeda and other bad guys.” Keeping promises to Pakistan was less of a priority.

What was an ancillary consideration for the US was, by contrast, a central one for Pakistan. As Fair (2017: 139) summarizes:

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<sup>103</sup> In early November, as the NA was making steady territorial gains moving south, President Bush assured Musharraf that he “fully [understood] your concern about the Northern Alliance” and that “we will encourage [the NA] to head south, across the Shamali Plains, but not into the city of Kabul” (quoted in Woodward 2002: 260-61).

...the United States failed to honor its commitment to Musharraf to prevent the Northern Alliance from taking Kabul, unaware that Pakistan regarded the Northern Alliance as an Indian proxy. As Musharraf saw it, the United States had handed the keys of Kabul to his country's nemesis.

Allowing the NA to occupy territory in the north – their traditional seat of power and far from the Pakistan border – was one thing, but allowing them into the country's capital, potentially granting them central control of Afghanistan, was too much for the Pakistani leadership. Musharraf was “shocked” by what he referred to as a hostile “occupation” (Harding 2001). The reaction was not limited to the Pakistani president: “Privately, Pakistani diplomats admit they feel betrayed by their new allies in Washington, who failed to halt the alliance's advance” (ibid.). Hamid Gul, a former ISI chief, was even more pointed, accusing the Americans of “deceiving Pakistan” and suggesting that Musharraf “should do a lot of explaining” (quoted in Reddy 2002: 267); these sentiments were likely shared within the military and intelligence apparatuses. The US as well as leaders of the NA tried to mollify concerns by publicly insisting that a UN-backed multi-ethnic government was the desired administrative structure in Kabul (Moore 2001). The reality, however, was that the Northern Alliance was in control for the time being, with Taliban fighters pushed toward the mountainous regions near the Pakistan border.

The fall of Kabul marked a significant shift in the war – hostilities entered a new phase, away from larger battles toward guerilla-type hit-and-run engagements (a portent of things to come). The effectiveness of such tactics was augmented not only by the terrain in the south but, additionally, the porosity of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Many Taliban fighters retreated to the Pakistani side to recuperate, reorganize, and strategize future attacks (Behuria 2007; Yusuf 2014). It is the provision of these safe havens that many experts identify as the first significant contribution from Pakistan to the new Taliban insurgency. By allowing Taliban leader Mullah Omar space to operate (it was later determined that Omar and much of the leadership re-settled in Quetta, Pakistan), and Taliban fighters avenues of retreat into territory off-limits to American airpower, Pakistan effectively undermined efforts to eradicate the Taliban as a fighting

force in 2002.<sup>104</sup> Over time, it also allowed them to gather renewed strength as an insurgency against American, international, and eventually newly-constituted Afghan forces. Sirrs (2017: 227) describes ISI's involvement as follows:

The Taliban leadership was conveniently on hand [in Pakistan], sheltering in safe houses run by the ISI in Quetta, while the insurgent training infrastructure from the 1980s and 1990s was quietly reactivated. ISI and Taliban recruiters resumed trolling the fifty-plus Deobandist madrassas in the greater Quetta area to fill the ranks of their new army. Once a month, the heads of many of these religious schools met with ISI officials in Quetta, where recruitment quotas were agreed. Thus trained and armed, the new Taliban began infiltrating into southern Afghanistan, establishing a presence in the weaker and more impoverished provinces like Zabul before linking up with existing Taliban pockets in Uruzgan and Helmand.

Carlotta Gall (2014: 67), similarly, reports that “the ISI was offering satellite telephones and motorbikes, and telling former Taliban members they had to go and fight [in Afghanistan].” Officially, Pakistan maintained nominal support for what was now a major international coalition operating in Afghanistan, with the Pakistani military conducting anti-terrorist and counter-insurgent operations in its northern areas along the border such as the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), Balochistan, and the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP). Yet such operations were highly selective, drawing “clear distinction[s] between ‘foreign’ insurgents (predominately Uzbeks, Arabs and Chechens) and Taliban-aligned Pashtun fighters – the so-called ‘good jihadis’, who could still potentially serve Pakistan’s strategic interests” (Bird and Marshall 2011: 193). This despite “lavish” American aid designed to ensure Islamabad’s genuine support for

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<sup>104</sup> Owen Sirrs (2017: 231) argues that “a new Taliban could not have been reborn after...2001 were it not” for the sanctuary and assistance offered by Pakistan. A 2006 study commissioned by the Special Security Initiative of the Policy Action group (“Insurgency and Terrorism in Afghanistan: Who is Fighting and Why?”) concluded that “the insurgency cannot survive without its sanctuary in Pakistan, which provided freedom of movement, safe havens, logistics and training facilities, a base for recruitment, communications for command and control, and a secure environment of collaboration with foreign extremist groups” (quoted in Rashid 2008: 368).

coalition priorities (ibid.: 194). Periodic arrests of Taliban leaders did occur, but such “crackdowns [were] limited in scope and...largely concerned with checking the autonomy of the Taliban leadership or satisfying external demands for greater Pakistani effort” (Nadiri 2014: 143). Sanctuary, training, and control – as the insurgency emerged, Pakistan played a significant role in gathering its kindling, stoking its flames, and causing it to spread.

Before proceeding with a more detailed description of Pakistan’s involvement over subsequent years, it is worth pausing to assess the 2001-2003 time period in the context of the decision-making timeline outlined above. Recall that our purpose over the preceding few pages was to assess the dynamics of the American intervention into Afghanistan (the event occurring at T3 of the timeline) that might have led to Pakistan’s *volte face* at T4 in which they opted to support (indeed, help create) the new Taliban insurgency. My contention is that Pakistan’s decision-making rationale was in fact consistent during this time period and it was, rather, the changing *circumstances* of the situation in Afghanistan that triggered the policy reversal. The decision at T2 (to end the existing relationship with the Taliban regime) was a challenging one; Pakistani President Musharraf faced public opposition as well as opposition from high ranking members within the military.<sup>105</sup> Ultimately, the combination of a coercive threat from the US and, even more importantly, the belief that resisting US demands would advantage India at Pakistan’s expense, leading to potential security threats in the form of Indian aggression, led Islamabad to tentatively support the American intervention. Yet, as we have seen, subsequent events led, not to Pakistan keeping India out, but rather the precise increase in

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<sup>105</sup> Carlotta Gall (2014: 53) describes the implications of the decision, as well as the extent to which the US failed to appreciate them at the time: “For years American officials failed to recognize the huge investment in time, money, and military effort that Pakistan had put into the Taliban from 1994 to 2001. It was much more than the infiltration of a single intelligence operative. It was a seven-year bloody campaign waged by the Pakistani military. It was the continuation of a policy to dominate Afghanistan pursued by Pakistan since the early 1970s when it first began supporting Afghan Islamists. It meant that when Musharraf agreed to cooperate with America after 9/11 and abandon the Taliban, he was going against nearly thirty years of Pakistani strategic thinking.” Gall suggests that the sunk costs as well as the “institutional thinking” of the military establishment made it tough for Musharraf to break from standing policy; I suggest, by contrast, that the unchanged strategic interest *that drove the policy in the first place* – fear of India – made it difficult, and only drastically changed circumstances (the American intervention) forced the revision. Gall’s account over-emphasizes the inertial force of foreign policy, rather than asking what accounts for such policy in the first instance. After all, a sunk costs/institutional inertia explanation *cannot account for change*, meaning it cannot explain why Pakistan shifted policy in 2001.

Indian influence that Musharraf had originally feared. The initial selection of the Northern Alliance as a proxy force was unwelcome in this regard – essentially a complete reversal of the ‘victory’ Pakistan had achieved during the 1990s in terms of installing their own preferred client in Kabul (the first time over many decades in which Pakistan felt their northern neighbour was beholden to their, and not New Delhi’s, interests). Pakistan was clear in its demands that the NA not be allowed to move into the south, and in particular not be allowed to capture Kabul. Nadiri (2014: 147) summarizes the concern: “Pakistan continued to view the [Northern Alliance] as a credible threat because of its substantial military gains and the political and economic relationship [it] had developed with New Delhi during the intra-mujahideen war of the 1990s.” As the Taliban slipped south away from the NA and American air power, they became the one force buffering a hostile Indian-proxy from the Pakistani border.

Recall, also, that around this time New Delhi made its first significant pledges toward the reconstruction of Afghanistan. As detailed in Chapter 6, India quickly became a major donor to the nascent, NA-influenced Bonn-created regime in Kabul. Again, this was unwelcome in Islamabad, further undermining their clear and stated position that there be “no role for India in the Afghan war.” New Delhi’s rapid move to open both old and new embassies and consulates (particularly in the south near the border) likewise emphasized the extent to which India had a foothold in the new Afghanistan.<sup>106</sup> Responding to these new circumstances, Islamabad not only offered sanctuary to retreating Taliban forces (re-activating old networks and relationships) but similarly provided active assistance and training. A new intervention into Afghanistan had begun – support for an insurgency against a new central government and its international (the US and, shortly, NATO) backers. The same fears of Indian influence that drove the decision at T2 led to the decision at T4, even as the policy changed. The intervention that Pakistan conducted from 2002 onward was intended to balance against India and forestall strategic

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<sup>106</sup> For example, Nadiri (2014: 153) writes: “Pakistani suspicion of Indian influence in Afghanistan was evident as early as 2003, after New Delhi reestablished its diplomatic presence in Kabul, Jalalabad, and Kandahar, and opened consulates for the first time in Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif. Islamabad perceived these actions as an effort to undermine Pakistani relations with Kabul. This was particularly true for the Jalalabad and Kandahar consulates, which Islamabad suspected were being used by New Delhi to funnel cash and arms to the Baloch irredentist movement in Pakistan.” Pakistani Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali claimed the July 2003 bombing of a mosque in Quetta was aided by Indian intelligence officials working from the Kandahar and Herat consulates (ibid.).

advantage from accruing to New Delhi, owing to the belief that any such advantage might lead to security challenges in the future.

Evidence in support of this contention is somewhat difficult to obtain, insofar as Pakistan's *official* position remained that of support for the Afghan government and the NATO/ISAF mission. This means that, unlike India, which could be open about their own intervention in the form of development activity, Islamabad denied its involvement, and spoke more cryptically about potential justifications for its behaviour. Nonetheless, there exists snippets of information, in the form of reporting, interviews, and leaked classified material that help illustrate what Pakistan was doing in Afghanistan after 2003 as well as provide insight into their motivations for such activity.

### **Pakistan's Support for the Insurgency**

Establishing that Pakistan's top-down policy in Afghanistan was and is support for the Taliban is crucial for the present case study. After all, Islamabad officially denies this involvement. In a terse exchange with regional expert Barnett Rubin at the Council on Foreign Relations in 2006, for example, Musharraf dismissed the notion that Pakistan was helping the Taliban. "We are not supporting [the] Taliban," Musharraf said, "We are not supporting anyone."<sup>107</sup> He went on to explicate what "official" Pakistani policy was at the time: "We are totally neutral toward Afghanistan. We support the Bonn process. We support – actually, we are totally in support of President Karzai" (*ibid.*). If Pakistan were 'neutral' – even more, actually supported the Afghan government from 2002 onward, aligning them with India – it would not be possible to argue that some form of 'balancing intervention' *against* India was taking place. However, as will be shown, the evidence is clear that Pakistan was not neutral in the manner Musharraf describes, and indeed engaged in behaviour that directly undermined the Afghan government. As to the more equivocal possibility, which suggests that any support flowing from Pakistan to the Taliban was/is the product of lower-level (or retired) intelligence officials gone 'rogue' rather than policy sanctioned by top-level decision-makers, this too would be problematic for the present argument. If this were the case, the contention that Pakistan's intervention

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<sup>107</sup> For full transcript see Council on Foreign Relations (2006).

post-2001 was the product of broader, international factors such as rivalry would be suspect. It is therefore necessary to provide evidence not only that Pakistani operatives are involved in helping the Taliban, but further that such activity is directed by the Pakistani leadership. Doing so is a necessary prelude to the argument, presented in the subsequent section, that the rationale behind the intervention is predicated on rivalry-related concerns.

By 2003, insurgent training camps on the Pakistani side of the border had proliferated, abetted and often organized by ISI. Recruitment campaigns were widespread and aggressive, with the *madrassa* system (funded originally by Saudi Arabia going back decades) producing no shortage of available and committed jihadi graduates (Sirrs 2017). In Afghanistan, the attention had shifted to post-conflict reconstruction, with the US and other international allies more or less convinced that the Taliban was a spent, defeated force. Any kinetic operations were focussed primarily on al-Qaeda and associated terrorist groups, a mission for which Pakistan remained a more or less reliable partner. As mentioned, subsequent events allow for the re-interpretation of evidence from this time period such that one sees the seeds of an insurgency – supported by Pakistan – slowly taking route. At the time, however, it was generally believed that a wide-spread, long-term, organized guerilla insurgency was unlikely to persist in Afghanistan.<sup>108</sup>

As Steve Coll (2018: 198) reports, however: “The [US] Joint Special Operations Command first collected concrete evidence of an organized Taliban revival early in 2004.” Having simmered below boil, this was the year the security landscape in Afghanistan would change drastically, from the “pockets of resistance” Rumsfeld dismissively mentioned in his end-of-combat-operations speech the year before to a recognized and alarming new reality of active, significant insurgency. There are several reasons why the insurgency may have ramped up at this point in time (beyond merely the natural momentum of the reorganization and recruitment activities begun earlier). First, the United States had largely shifted its focus to the war in Iraq. This left Islamabad (and

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<sup>108</sup> Donald Rumsfeld announced the end of major-combat operations in May 2003 (“Rumsfeld: Major combat over in Afghanistan,” 2003, May 1). Consider also the following description by Rhode and Sanger (2007): “Two years after the Taliban fell to an American-led coalition, a group of NATO ambassadors landed in Kabul, Afghanistan to survey what appeared to be a triumph...they thundered around the country in Black Hawk helicopters, with little fear for their safety...At a briefing from the United States Central Command, they were told that the Taliban were now a ‘spent force’.”

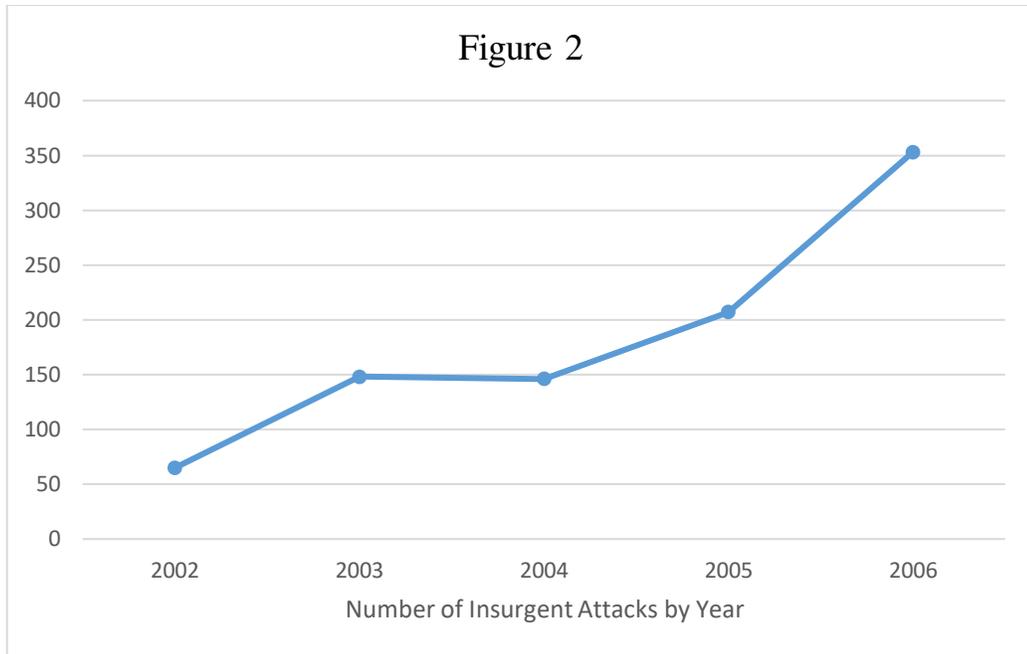
other regional actors, including India, it must be said) concerned over the American commitment and by extension the long-term prospects for governance and security in Afghanistan. If the US left (and, despite the now NATO-led ISAF mission, an American departure would effectively undermine the potency of the international coalition), Pakistan wanted to be sure they could protect their long-standing security interests.<sup>109</sup> These interests would not be protected, Islamabad believed, by the Bonn-created government. Thus, the 2004 Afghan election that solidified Hamid Karzai as president is potentially also related to the timing of the insurgency's efflorescence.<sup>110</sup> It is worth noting, finally, that 2004 also marks the beginning of the tenure of Lieutenant General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani as head of ISI. Brought in to replace the "moderate" Ehsan ul-Haq, Kayani would become, by many accounts, the architect of ISI's support for the insurgency (in 2008 Kayani would succeed Musharraf as Chief of the Army, thus retaining an overall position of authority with respect to ISI and military operations vis-à-vis Afghanistan). Kayani's appointment in 2004 is a reflection of the anxiety produced by the aforementioned dynamics, each of which served to generate concern about the future of Afghanistan, and Pakistan's ability to secure its own interests within that future.

Figure 2 shows the increase in insurgent attacks over the relevant time period, while Figure 3 graphs the number of fatalities which resulted.

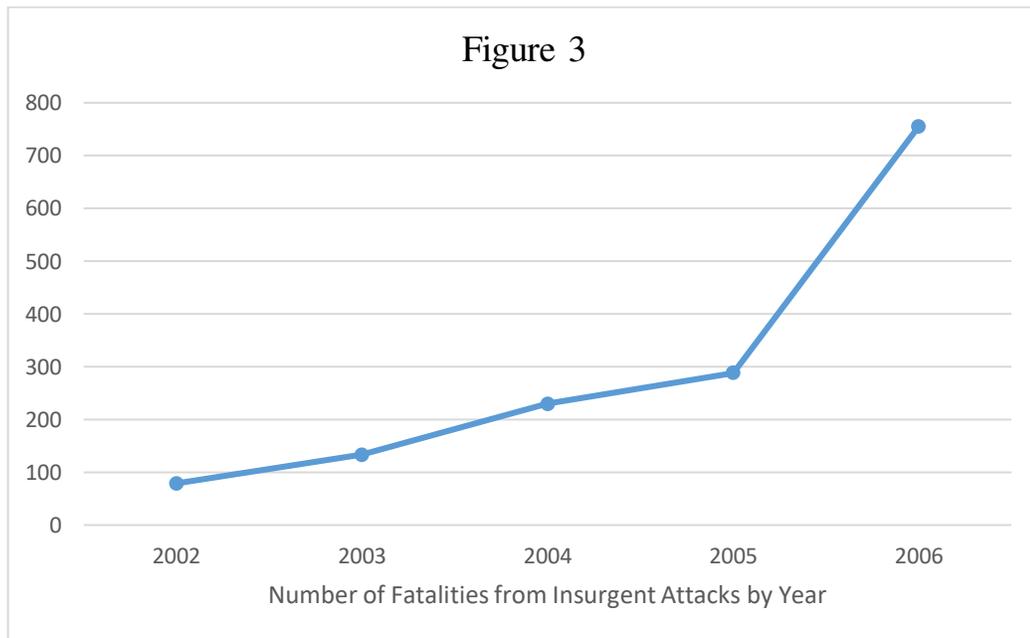
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<sup>109</sup> Journalist and regional expert Carlotta Gall (2014: 77) reports: "By 2004, with the United States embroiled in the war in Iraq, Musharraf's generals began to think that the Americans would soon leave Afghanistan. The prospect gave them reason to strengthen links with Pakistan's main asset and former ally in Afghanistan, the Taliban."

<sup>110</sup> According to Steve Coll (2018: 217), Afghan intelligence chief Amrullah Saleh believed the "consolidation of Karzai's government between 2003 and 2005 explained the timing of [the] Pakistani turn." "What made them switch?" Coll quotes Saleh as saying, "Parliamentary elections, presidential elections, Afghan consensus [that] we will make the new order work, and the growing, positive relationship of Afghanistan with India."



*source:* Jones 2008



*source:* Jones 2008

This data is published by Jones (2008) and taken from the RAND-MIPT Terrorism Database (RAND, n.d.); Jones states that the RAND-MIPT data is probably a conservative estimate of both attacks and fatalities “because most improvised explosive

device and armed attacks were never reported in the press.” The trends, nonetheless, are clear, with a steady increase in violence over the years 2002-2006.

Reidel (2011: 81-2) links this uptick with the Kayani take-over, noting that

in 2004-06 the ISI was actively encouraging a Taliban revival and assisting their war effort after two years of training Taliban on a large scale in Quetta and other locations. This was when Kayani took over the ISI. Some ISI camps had 2,000-4,000 recruits at a time, and one commander estimated that 80 percent of his fighters has attended such a camp. Several said ISI officers were members of the Quetta shura [the Taliban leadership council] and even participated in Taliban attacks inside Pakistan.

Fair (2017: 136) concurs, summarizing that “by 2005, with strong Pakistani support, the Afghan Taliban, along with support from the Waziristan-based Haqqani Network, had launched an insurgent campaign against the US and ISAF missions.”<sup>111</sup> In addition to sanctuary and recruiting, ISI helped “provide the Taliban with fuel, ammunition, and other logistical support, and they hold strategy meetings with the Taliban to discuss when to increase or ease up on operations” (Gall 2014: 129). By 2006, writes Sirrs (2017: 228), “the full impact of ISI’s efforts to revive the Taliban was being felt inside Afghanistan, especially in the south. For the first time, Taliban forces were standing their ground, catching the NATO-led coalition by surprise.” NATO/ISAF were forced to face up to this reality. Lieutenant General Michael Maples, then-Director of the US Defense Intelligence Agency, offered the following summary to the US congress in February 2006:

In 2005, Taliban and other anti-coalition movement groups increased attacks by 20% over 2004. Insurgents also increased suicide attacks almost four-fold, more than doubled improvised explosive devices attacks and increasingly used beheadings to terrorize the local population. This more active enemy will continue

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<sup>111</sup> The Haqqani Network, an organization formed during the Soviet jihad, takes its name from a *madrassa* in northern Pakistan; run by patriarch Jalaludin Haqqani and more recently his son Sirajuddin Haqqani, the group is a sub-set of, but nonetheless partially autonomous from, the broader Taliban movement. It is the organization in Afghanistan most closely linked to ISI. See Ruttig (2009).

to negatively impact Afghan government and international efforts to create a stable Afghanistan. We judge insurgents now represent a greater threat to the expansion of Afghan government authority than at any point since late 2001, and will be active this spring.<sup>112</sup>

That spring, in fact, the Taliban launched their largest offensive since 2001 (Rohde and Sanger 2007). Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said at the time that “there was no doubt that people were surprised that the Taliban was able to regroup and come back in a large, well-organized force” (ibid.). In October of 2006, NATO assumed security responsibilities for the entire country, largely as a response to the deteriorating security situation.

While publicly the US and its allies maintained the position that Pakistan was a crucial ally in Afghanistan (2006 was the year the US and Pakistan entered into a formal “strategic partnership”<sup>113</sup>), privately frustration was beginning to mount as evidence of ISI’s activities accumulated. As a way of deflecting blame and justifying continued American financial and military support, it was often speculated that Pakistani involvement with the Taliban was the product of low-level, ‘rogue’ agents operating outside of officially-sanctioned channels (Johnson and Mason 2008; see also the discussions in Waldman 2010 and Sirrs 2017). The “rogue ISI” hypothesis may have allowed high-level officials in both the US and Pakistan to save face publicly, but was increasingly belied by evidence of sanctioned ISI complicity (see Guistozzi 2007; Jones 2010). By 2008,

American and NATO intelligence [became] clearer, informed by harder evidence. It showed that Musharraf and Kayani had authorized deniable support to the [Taliban] movement, stopping short of weapons supply – the reporting showed that they were very cautious about directly providing money and weapons to the Taliban because they feared they could get caught and pay a price in the international system. Retired ISI officers, nongovernmental organizations, and

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<sup>112</sup> For full text see US Defense Intelligence Agency (2006).

<sup>113</sup> See Office of the Press Secretary (2006).

other cutouts supplied the Taliban to reduce this risk. American intelligence reporting on individual, serving ISI case officers, who managed contacts with the Quetta Shura or the Haqqanis or Lashkar-e-Taiba, which fought in Kashmir, also showed that they were clearly in the Pakistan Army's chain of command. This reporting belied any 'rogue ISI' hypothesis (Coll 2018: 289).

This was not a problem that could be blamed on a renegade intelligence agency, unable to break pre-existing ties and beholden to Islamist sympathies in its lower ranks. Rather, the policy pursued by the ISI during this time was the specific strategy coordinated by Kayani, Musharraf, and the top Pakistani leadership.

Interviews conducted by Matt Waldman (2010) provide some of the clearest, first-hand evidence as to the involvement of ISI with the insurgency. Speaking with active Taliban insurgents, high-level Taliban intermediaries, former Taliban commanders, and Afghan elders, Waldman (2010: 5) found evidence "that support to the Afghan insurgency is official ISI policy." "Interviews strongly suggest that the ISI has representatives on the [Quetta] Shura," he writes, referring to the Taliban's leadership council, "either as participants or observers, and the agency is thus involved at the highest level of the movement" (Waldman 2010: 6). "Every commander knows about the involvement of the ISI in the leadership," one Taliban commander said, "but we do not discuss it because we do not trust each other, and they are much stronger than us...Everyone sees the sun in the sky but cannot say it is the sun" (quoted in Waldman 2010: 6). Another opined that "all our plans and strategy [sic] are made in Pakistan and step by step it is brought to us, for military or other activities" (quoted in Waldman 2010: 10). A Taliban insurgent operating in Afghanistan's tumultuous south explained that "the ISI gives orders to the Taliban to attack road contractors, schools or aid workers. They tell our commander and he orders us. They say it is the Taliban's plan, we know it is their [the ISI's] plan" (quoted in Waldman 2010: 12). Additional interviews highlight: the

continued porosity of the border<sup>114</sup>, the provision of funding, munitions and supplies<sup>115</sup>; training and recruitment<sup>116</sup>; and the special role of the Haqqani Network<sup>117</sup>.

In 2010, a cache of over 90,000 secret US intelligence files relating to the war in Afghanistan was released by WikiLeaks. Known collectively as the “Afghanistan war logs” and published in conjunction with the *Guardian*, the *New York Times*, and *Der Spiegel*, the documents offered unique insight as to the on-the-ground realities of the NATO/ISAF campaign and the scope of the security challenge from 2004-2010. Among the more arresting revelations were the details of Pakistani involvement provided by the raw intelligence data (Walsh 2010). The documents are primarily intelligence reports about insurgent activity, threat assessments about potential attacks, accounts of meetings with prominent individuals and intelligence assets, and assessments of security challenges. In Appendix 4, I have compiled excerpts from the Afghanistan war logs which provide further evidence of Pakistan’s, and in particular ISI’s, direct involvement with the Taliban insurgency. Of course, these are American documents, detailing American intelligence and assessments (sometimes shared from and/or with other NATO

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<sup>114</sup> “A former Taliban minister said there continued to be close cooperation on cross-border movement between the Taliban and ISI or military, of which he had seen written evidence: ‘I have seen a letter from the Taliban governor in Helmand to Pakistani officials, one year ago, which asks for them to let some vehicles go through the border, giving their type and number plate’” (Waldman 2010: 13).

<sup>115</sup> “[I]nterviews suggest that Pakistan continues to give extensive support to the insurgency in terms of funding, munitions and supplies. As a south-eastern commander put it: ‘We receive lots of training, weapons, ammunition and expenses from the Pakistan government...Everyone knows Pakistan gives money, it goes centrally, then flow down.’ Another commander from a central province said: ‘Of course, it’s a huge project [the insurgency], it needs huge funding, IEDs, ammunition, training, needs everything, all of this has been given by Pakistan. We do not have facilities to produce any of this...We get 10,000 Pakistani rupees (\$120) per month for each Talib. This money comes from Pakistan, first to the [shadow] provincial governor, then to the district commander, then to the group commander. It is from the Pakistan government’” (Waldman 2010: 14).

<sup>116</sup> “Commanders described their own experiences in Pakistani madrassas and training camps, highlighted below, which suggest a large-scale, well-organized system. One southern commander attended a madrasa in Quetta for four years to 2008. There were 500-600 students, most of whom were Afghan, and some 60-70 graduated every year. He said: ‘Everyone was saying jihad [in Afghanistan] is good. All our teachers were saying this as well. Everyday jihad was discussed’...At certain times, groups of students from the madrasa would attend military training camps in Pakistan (to learn how to make and lay IEDs, for example) or spend a period fighting in Afghanistan, which could range from 10-20 days to several months” (Waldman 2010: 15).

<sup>117</sup> “...it appears the ISI reportedly had a central role in the genesis (in some ways, re-emergence) of the Haqqani group after the intervention in 2001. The district commander described how he and many former Talibs and jihadi fighters were living in Pakistan, doing ordinary jobs. But in 2003-2004 the ‘Pakistani military and ISI’ were actively ‘trying to reconnect us, encouraging us to join back together, and urging us to fight. They said if you go back we will give you money, weapons, support’” (Waldman 2010: 17).

and coalition partners or Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security [NDS]), and are not therefore 'smoking gun' evidence as would be, for example, internal Pakistani documents detailing actual policy and the relationships the military and ISI have with the insurgency. Nonetheless, both the scope and level of specificity contained in the documents suggest the basic veracity of the accounts; details may error (an attack that does not occur; a speculation which does not bear out), but the broader picture of Pakistan's role is brought into focus.

As mentioned, not all of the specific details contained in the documents can be considered accurate. Some reports, indeed, defy credulity, as for example WL71 in which an IED was supposedly made up look like a copy of the Quran or WL29 which describes a plot to poison the beer on American bases. Writing in the *Guardian*, Peter Galbraith (2010) muses: "surely the ISI did not plot to poison Kabul-bound beer, an enormously complex operation with limited pay off since US troops are not allowed to drink alcohol in Afghanistan"; yet even acknowledging the "inconsistent quality of the intelligence" he nonetheless concludes that "the WikiLeaks documents show a continued relationship between the ISI and the Taliban." The excerpts contained in Appendix 4 support this interpretation. Consider, for example, the provision of equipment and weaponry – including the motorcycles mentioned in WL33, the bomb material in WL30, the rocket detonators in WL5, and, perhaps most alarmingly, the shoulder-fired Stinger missiles in WL10 (which threatened NATO aircraft and were not discussed publicly by NATO officials). Some reports are very specific in detailing the support that was provided, for example WL14 in which the transport of weapons and ammunition on "65 trucks" is described down to the date and location of the transfer, all facilitated by ISI General Hamid Gul.<sup>118</sup> In addition to weapons, there are repeated references to payment and funding (see WL23, WL24, WL26, WL40, WL42, WL56, WL72), highlighting the extent to which Pakistan helped underwrite the insurgency more broadly. Other reports detail ISI's active participation in planning and coordination, for example WL41, which

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<sup>118</sup> Gul features prominently in the documents; ostensibly 'retired', the former head of ISI was in charge of running ISI's operations in Afghanistan. The notion that such a high-profile figure could operate 'outside' of top-level sanction is difficult to believe, though some proponents of the 'rogue ISI' hypothesis have used Gul's known history as a hardliner as evidence that his activities in Afghanistan after 2002 are part of a personal campaign.

anticipates the presence of an ISI operative (“Captain Younis”) during an upcoming attack in September 2007. Similarly, WL47 describes an ISI officer’s role in planning potential suicide attacks against coalition and Afghan troops (WL21 details similar involvement from Hamid Gul himself) while WL64 outlines an ISI-directed plot to assassinate President Karzai. WL9 and WL10 each describe ISI as helping to plan an attack on the Indian embassy in Kabul (more on the importance of these reports below). Finally, WL27 reports on ISI’s presence and participation in the training of suicide attackers in camps on the Pakistani side of the border. These are just highlights meant to convey what becomes apparent from a close reading of the excerpts in total: the clear, consistent, and deep involvement of Pakistan’s intelligence agency with an insurgency in Afghanistan committed to attacking both NATO/Coalition forces and the ANSF (WL6 recounts a meeting between an ISI official and representatives of al Qaeda, the Taliban, Hizb-e-Islami [the group of warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar] and the Haqqani Network intended to “reinvigorate the current effort against the US forces in [Afghanistan] by increasing the number of attacks”).

The documents also serve to corroborate the information contained in Waldman’s (2010) interviews with current and former Taliban commanders and fighters. The provision of weapons, ammunition, and supplies; the coordination of attacks and the specification of targets; the broader control over strategy; the training at camps on the Pakistani side of the border; and the physical presence of ISI operatives embedded with, and fighting alongside, the Taliban. All of these claims are supported by the intelligence assessments contained in the War Logs release.

This evidence can be added to other on-the-ground reporting and analysis conducted by journalists and regional experts. Carlotta Gall (2014) and Steve Coll (2018), in particular, have written exhaustively-researched books, drawing on years of experience and travel in the region, which concentrate extensively on the issue of Pakistani support for the Taliban. Of this support, Gall (2014: 159) writes:

Pakistan denied all this. In every interview, officials insisted that they wanted a stable Afghanistan and were working to defeat terrorism. But Pakistan’s actions tell a different story. Even as its militants at home were surging out of control, and

the cost in lives and stability to Pakistan was becoming exorbitant, Pakistan's military leaders continued to pursue a policy of using the Taliban to attack the Afghan government and NATO forces in Afghanistan.

As quoted in Chapter 5, but worth revisiting now, Coll (2018: 667) calls the "failure to solve the riddle of ISI and to stop its covert interference in Afghanistan" the "greatest strategic failure of the...war." Even after nearly seventeen years, the riddle continues to elude the international community. The year 2010 was the deadliest of the war in terms of coalition casualties, marking the culmination of a steady and unbroken increase since 2003, as the insurgency accelerated in size and scale (iCasualties.org, n.d.). In 2011, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen delivered stunning testimony to congress; in discussing the ongoing security challenges in Afghanistan, Admiral Mullen explicitly identified Pakistan's role vis-à-vis the insurgency:

A second, but no less worrisome, challenge we face is the impunity with which certain extremist groups are allowed to operate from Pakistani soil. The Haqqani network for one acts as a veritable arm of Pakistan's Internal Services Intelligence agency. With ISI support, Haqqani operatives planned and conducted that truck bomb attack [in Wardak province] as well as the assault on our embassy. We also have credible intelligence that they were behind the June 28 attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul and a host of other smaller, but effective operations (US Armed Services Committee 2011).

This was among the first times an American or NATO official spoke in such direct terms, and certainly Mullen was the most high-profile to offer an assessment of this kind in public. His decision to do so likely derived from the frustration felt by the Americans and their allies as they considered the steady stream of intelligence regarding Pakistan's activities, the fallout out from the attacks Mullen mentions (and others), and the impregnable denialism of Pakistani officials.

While the trend of coalition fatalities has tapered since its peak in 2010 (coinciding with a drawdown in overall troop levels), the security situation has remained

fraught. The ISAF was disbanded in 2014, as NATO's official combat operations came to a close. The decision to end the official combat phase was as much about war fatigue and political promises as it was about any discernible progress on the ground.<sup>119</sup> Since then, the US and other partners have been involved in Operation Resolute Support, or Resolute Support Mission (RSM), intended to train and assist Afghan security forces as they continue the fight against the Taliban and affiliated insurgent groups. As mentioned in Chapter 5, this fight seems to be trending in the wrong direction, with IED attacks rampant<sup>120</sup> and the Taliban re-taking control of larger and larger swaths of territory. Post-2010, Pakistan's involvement with the insurgency has continued; there is evidence, in particular, of Islamabad attempting to control any embryonic negotiations between the Taliban and the Afghan government (along with US/NATO). Those Taliban who have been involved in, or attempted to initiate, negotiations absent Pakistani approval have, for example, been subject to seizure and arrest, unlike more compliant counterparts (Fair 2017). This amounts to an effective veto on any reconciliation attempts.

### *Summary*

This section has provided evidence of Pakistan's support for the Taliban insurgency. Taken in its totality, there seems little doubt as to the role of Pakistani operatives, in particular those of its intelligence agency ISI, in fomenting instability in Afghanistan and undermining both the international mission and the nascent Afghan government. Further, the evidence does not support the 'rogue agency' hypothesis; even if top-level decision-makers were not directing day-to-day operations, the overall strategy of supporting the insurgency was almost certainly sanctioned by President Musharraf, General Kayani, and other top Pakistani decision-makers.<sup>121</sup> Having established such

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<sup>119</sup> Even as the US officially announced the end of combat operations, complete with optimistic appraisals and public pronouncements of improving security and positive trends, Lieutenant General Joseph Anderson, the departing US commander of forces in Afghanistan, could not hide his concerns: "The fact that we are in less places, the fact that there are less of us as a coalition, is obviously concerning" (quoted in Azam 2014).

<sup>120</sup> According to a UN report released in February 2018, the years 2016 and 2017 were the most deadly for civilians since the war began, with most fatalities attributable to either suicide attacks or IEDs. For full text of report see United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (2017).

<sup>121</sup> Even as Pakistan transitioned to nominal democratic rule in 2008, there was continuity in Pakistani behaviour. This offers two basic logical possibilities: 1) the regime of President Zardari deliberately

behaviour as Pakistani policy, the task now is to explain it. Earlier, the timeline regarding the initial decision points facing Islamabad in 2001-2003 was explored, with an explanation for the policy reversal that saw first a break and then a reengagement with the Taliban during that time period. I argued that Pakistan's rationale was consistent – an overriding concern with, and fear regarding, potential Indian involvement in Afghanistan – while changing circumstances generated the changing policy that was observed. In the next section, I explore this rivalry explanation in the context of the post-2001 intervention as a whole; given the behaviour outlined in the pages above, what inferences can be made about Pakistani motivations regarding Afghanistan?

### **The Rivalry Explanation**

Despite a general consensus on the part of US/NATO that Pakistan is engaged in the behaviour described above, *dealing* with that behaviour has remained the “riddle” that Coll describes, one that has resisted solution, leading to the “strategic failure” that is now all but assured in Afghanistan. The nature of this riddle, or puzzle, is hinted at by Gall when she writes that “even as its militants at home were surging out of control” – i.e. creating a major domestic security challenge – “and the cost in lives and stability to

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maintained existing policy; or 2) the military/intelligence establishment maintained the policies irrespective of the desires of the Zardari government. With respect to the second possibility, some have suggested that on issues of security the military does not defer to the civilian leadership (see the discussions in Nadiri 2014; Bird and Marshall 2011). There is little evidence, however, that Zardari or subsequent civilian leaders have fought particularly hard against the military's handling of Afghanistan, or have attempted to drastically change course. (That said, a US diplomatic cable from February 2009 did provide the following assessment: “[President] Zardari and [Prime Minister] Gilani agree that Pakistan's biggest threat comes from a growing militant insurgency on the Pak-Afghan border. The military and ISI have not yet made that leap; they still view India as their principle threat and Afghanistan as strategic depth in a possible conflict with India.” See WikiLeaks. Scen setter for General Kayani's visit to Washington. (2009, February 19). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD365\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD365_a.html). Ultimately, whether reality corresponds to possibility 1 or 2 is irrelevant; throughout its history, Pakistan has oscillated between overt military rule and tenuous civilian/democratic government, with most observers recognizing that the military is the final arbiter, particularly on issues of security. In this sense, what the military decides *is* Pakistan's policy with respect to the issue. That said, there is good reason to believe – particularly given the continuity observed in previous eras with respect to Afghanistan policy – that the PPP elected government (and, subsequently, the Pakistan Muslim League government which succeeded it in 2013) responded to the same situational constraints as did the military leadership during Musharraf's time as president from 2001-2008. In any case, Nadiri (2014: 152) observes: “the relationship between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban has remained largely unchanged since the extrication of the military from the Pakistan government and return to civilian rule in 2008.”

Pakistan was becoming exorbitant” – which is to say, both security costs but also the negative consequences of instability more generally, which include lost economic opportunities and even diplomatic isolation – “Pakistan’s...leader’s continued to pursue a policy of using the Taliban to attack the Afghan government and NATO forces in Afghanistan.” The implied question is: why did Pakistan continue to support an insurgency as the immediate costs of such behaviour rose and became, by dint of most outside observers, prohibitive?

Faced with such behaviour, many analysts have employed the language of ‘paranoia’ and ‘obsession’. Frederick Kagan (2012: 103), for example, argues that “Those in the Pakistani leadership who believe that India is up to no good in Afghanistan will always find ‘proof’ of their paranoia. The fear is irrational, and reality is almost irrelevant in addressing it.” Even more muted assessments drift into this territory, as when Vanda Felbab-Brown (2018) of the Brookings Institution writes of “Pakistan’s paranoia of India’s engagement in Afghanistan” in the context of a proposed increase in India’s role post-2018. William Dalrymple (2013), for his part, describes General Kayani’s “burning obsession” for “India’s presence in Afghanistan.”

Frédéric Grare (2010: 17) talks that about the “paranoia [that] feeds [Pakistan’s] strategic outlook, hence the floating accusations of terrorism and sabotage, conspiracy theories regarding Indian consulates in Afghanistan, and allegations of Indian support for the Baloch and Wazir insurgencies.” Dexter Filkins (2008), writing in the *New York Times* suggests that

The most common theory offered to explain Pakistan’s continued contact with Islamic militants is the country’s obsession with India...Pakistan’s officer corps remains obsessed by the prospect of Indian domination of Afghanistan should the Americans leave.

The point is not to police the language analysts and scholars use in describing Pakistani foreign policy (it is understandable that one might use a word such as ‘paranoid’ as shorthand for the cautious, constant – yes, even obsessive – focus that Islamabad keeps on India) but rather the *implications of thinking about Pakistani foreign policy in this*

way. Not only does it lead to quasi-fatalist positions with respect to policy options (as Kagan concludes: “reality is irrelevant in addressing” Pakistani perceptions, so why bother trying) but also, from a theoretical point of view, it suggests that Pakistan’s behaviour is either unsystematic and capricious, or that it is predicated on the personal failings/emotions and psychological pathologies of its leaders (e.g. it is *Kayani’s* “burning obsession” driving policy; the implication being that a different decision-maker might have a different focus) or of entire institutions (the ISI or the “officer corps”). If unsystematic, then not subject to generalizable explanations; if psychological, subject to explanations at the individual level of analysis. I argue, by contrast, that Pakistan’s behaviour is explicable through an appreciation of the international pressures associated with ongoing rivalry, and that it is generalizable to other instances of rivalry in the international system, irrespective of psychological or emotional factors associated with individual leaders or decision-makers. In this section I outline this rivalry explanation.

Pakistan’s primary aim is to *keep India out* of Afghanistan and, perhaps more realistically, *minimize their presence/influence* as much as possible. Steve Coll (2018) recounts a meeting between President Karzai and Kayani in 2010, as the possibility of negotiations with the Taliban was picking up momentum. According to Coll (2018: 427, emphasis added), Kayani suggested to Karzai that he had the power to reign in the Taliban:

The heart of Kayani’s offer to Karzai was ‘We can help you sort out the insurgency – we can turn it off,’ as a NATO diplomat briefed on the discussion soon after described it. In exchange, *Pakistan would expect Karzai to ‘end’ – that was the word Kayani used, according to these accounts – Indian influence in Afghanistan.*

No role whatsoever for India. This is, of course, in keeping with Pakistan’s position toward Afghanistan going back decades; preventing Indian influence so as to preclude a security threat from the East *and* the West (as discussed on pages 232-256 above), a position tied to the history of the India-Pakistan relationship. Kayani himself had declared in a speech in 2001: “Strategically, we cannot have an Afghan army on our western

border which has an Indian mindset and capabilities to take on Pakistan” (quoted in Basit 2015). The implications of such a scenario were and are considered sufficient to warrant opposition to any and all Indian involvement in the country, *particularly* when Islamabad had comparatively *lost* their own influence as they did following the Taliban’s ouster in 2001. The stakes had become incredibly high – “existential”, in the words of Pande (2016).

These concerns are similarly reflected in the US diplomatic cables sent from the American embassy in Islamabad to the State Department, in which US diplomats recount their conversations with Pakistani officials as well as offer assessments as to Pakistani priorities in Afghanistan. Extracts from the cables are offered in Appendix 5.

It goes without saying that not all Pakistani statements – even those made in private, as most of the quoted statements were – can be taken at face value. Much is standard diplomatic obfuscation; the denial of any aggressive behaviour whatsoever, and the insistence that “Pakistan and the US had a convergence of interests” in Afghanistan, when their actions belied such a claim. Yet they are nonetheless illuminating for the picture they paint of Pakistani priorities. We see, for example, a clear emphasis on the Balochistan issue; Pakistani officials repeatedly pointed to perceived Indian support for rebels in the province:

“India was also providing support and cash to ‘feudal tribals’ who were making trouble in Balochistan...”

“the GOP had evidence that a ‘proxy force’ (i.e. India) was putting significant amounts of money into Balochistan...”

“Musharraf...alluded to Indian support to the rebellious Bugti tribe, blaming both the Bugtis and Indian intelligence agencies for a recent series of fatal bombings in Quetta and telling Boucher that he has sigint [signals intelligence] to prove Indian complicity.”

“Ali added that ‘we all know’ that India has ‘activities’ in the region [of Balochistan].”

“He added that India would need to gain Pakistan’s trust and indicated that reducing the Indian footprint in Afghanistan and halting Indian support of militants in Balochistan would be steps in the right direction.”

In the context of these concerns, much was made of the Indian consulates that had been established (or re-established) following 2001: “Musharraf began by discussing reports of Afghan-Indian intelligence operations against Pakistan. He cited the growing number of Indian consulates in Afghanistan and continued Indian involvement in adverse activities in Pakistan.” In an otherwise “cordial” meeting between Afghan and Pakistani officials, friction arose due to the Pakistani side’s inability to get past the issue of “India using Afghanistan as a base for nefarious operations in Balochistan and the Tribal Areas.” The question of the consulates in particular frustrated the Afghan government, insofar as they were unable to “disabuse the GOP of its misimpression regarding the nature and extent of the official Indian presence in Afghanistan”, insisting that only six, and not the twelve Pakistan alleged, “official Indian posts” were open in Afghanistan. The Americans commented in an endnote that they were “not surprised that the ‘Indian consulate’ conspiracy took up much of [Afghan Foreign Minister] Spanta’s visit [with Pakistani officials], as Pakistani interlocutors at every level subscribed to the theory.” In such assessments we see again why the word ‘paranoid’ might be employed (or, indeed, ‘conspiracy theory’, as was the case here) in describing Pakistan’s position regarding Indian influence. Without question, the topic of Indian support for Balochi rebels was afforded an importance by Islamabad well-above what Washington, Kabul or, certainly, New Delhi believed appropriate or commensurate with realities on the ground.<sup>122</sup> Yet the depths of this perception amongst Pakistani officials – “interlocutors at every level subscribed to the theory” – suggests a systematic cause, a collective ‘paranoia’ that

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<sup>122</sup> Musharraf did not reserve these talking points for behind closed doors, but also repeated them publicly following meetings with Afghan and American officials. See Gall (2006).

cannot thereby be explained by what is conventionally meant by the term: irrationality at the individual level.

It is important to note that despite “frustration” regarding Pakistan’s persistence on this point, it is not as though the claims are entirely baseless. Even Kagan (2012: 103) – who as described above believes “Pakistani perceptions of Indian intentions [in Afghanistan are] badly skewed” – writes that “India has...done just enough in Afghanistan to support Pakistani conspiracy theories...reports of Indian intelligence operatives in Afghanistan are frequent and credible enough to maintain Pakistani suspicions.” Christine Fair (2010: 14), likewise observes with respect to Pakistan claims about the consulates:

Drawing upon my fieldwork in Iran (where India has a consulate in Xahidan, which abuts Pakistan’s restive Baloch province), Afghanistan, and India, anecdotal evidence suggests that, while Pakistan’s most sweeping claims are ill-founded, Indian claims to complete innocence also are unlikely to be true.

Consider also the following extended passage from Coll (2018: 428):

Kayani and Pasha were particularly aggravated that the NDS was protecting armed Baluch separatists from the Bugti tribe who were fighting the Pakistan Army in Pakistan’s Baluchistan Province. One Bugti leader lived in a safe house on Street 13 in Kabul under NDS protection. Baluch fighters trained in Kandahar, Kayani and Pasha reported, citing intelligence collected in part by the Pakistani embassy in Kabul. Pakistani diplomats lived near the Kabul safe house and documented the Bugti leader’s take-out orders from a local Lebanese taverna<sup>123</sup>: The man was wanted for terrorism in Pakistan, yet he was enjoying kebab and

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<sup>123</sup> Perhaps unrelatedly, though the coincidence is intriguing, a restaurant called the ‘Taverna du Liban’ in Kabul was attacked by a suicide bomber and two gunmen in January 2014; twenty-four people, including two Americans and two Canadians, were killed. The Taliban claimed responsibility, saying the attack was in retaliation for Coalition airstrikes earlier that week. Though there is likely no direct connection to the Balochistan issue, if the restaurant is indeed the same one mentioned by the Pakistani diplomats – almost certain, given their description of its location – it nonetheless demonstrates that the Balochi rebel leader was moving freely in a diplomatic zone populated by high-ranking Afghan and international staff. See Urquhart and Graham-Harrison (2014).

shelter with NDS connivance, the Pakistanis claimed. Karzai should make sure that India's diplomatic, business, and humanitarian projects around Afghanistan did not become covert launching pads for destabilizing Pakistan. It seemed obvious to them [the Pakistanis] that Afghanistan remained an essential aspect of India's strategy of containing Pakistan. With its booming economy and expanding defence budget, India was a kind of irreversible tide, gathering influence in the region, including in Afghanistan. The Pakistanis saw India's spy service, the Research and Analysis Wing, or RAW, behind every rock, Indian officials complained. True, this was unfair; India carried out reconstruction and humanitarian projects in Afghanistan in the same way many other countries did. There were about four thousand Indians in the country but more than half of those were cooks and maintenance workers on NATO bases who were recruited from labor contractors in the Persian Gulf – they never left the bases. Yet in fairness to Kayani it was not as if RAW had dropped out of covert action specifically designed to undermine Pakistani stability.

Avinash Paliwal (2017: 238-9) similarly describes Indian involvement in Balochistan, including the relationship with Afghan intelligence through which such activity was made possible:

Soon after 2002 India began developing its covert infrastructure to develop what Indian officials called their 'Baloch' and 'Pashtun' cards. Afghanistan's intelligence agency, the National Directorate of Security (NDS), then under Mohammad Arif Sarwari, who had an excellent rapport with India since the civil war years, was a strong ally. With Karzai's permission, Arif began dispatching NDS officers for training to India, unlocking new and heightened levels of intelligence cooperation. Arif's successor, Amrullah Saleh, also had a close relationship with Narayanan. Though various (serving and retired) Indian intelligence officers acknowledge this relationship, [former Assistant Director of the Joint Intelligence Committee at India's National Security Council Secretariat Benoy] Khare, who knew its nuts-and-bolts, is categorical that India remains

‘very close to the NDS.’ Though he denies that such links translate into joint offensive operations against Pakistan, the latter’s allegation of a R&AW-NDS ‘nexus’, more broadly if not on specific operations, is accurate.

In 2004, a major insurrection in the province broke out, requiring the deployment of the Pakistani military. The consequences were felt in Afghanistan: “Pakistan’s allegations of India training Baloch insurgents in Afghanistan with Karzai’s help, and the subsequent attacks on Indian assets in Afghanistan, came in this context” (Paliwal 2017: 240). Again, Paliwal notes that while specific claims regarding the participation of Indian special “commandos” in the insurrection were likely “incorrect”, “that the NDS chief [Amrullah] Saleh was closely engaged with the Baloch rebels as well as [Indian National Security Advisor MK Narayanan] was amply clear” (Paliwal 2017: 240). Pakistani concerns about Indian activity were not, therefore, completely unfounded, only ‘exaggerated’, according to those – Washington, Kabul, New Delhi – inconvenienced by the claims. Of course, by standard measures this assessment of ‘exaggeration’ is likely correct; for Pakistan, however, such exaggeration (or overwrought concern) was inevitable *in the context of rivalry*. Which is to say, in the context of a decades-long conflictual relationship<sup>124</sup> squeezed by the imperatives for security and survival mandated by the international system.

That Indian activity seemed to occur in conjunction with NDS (and therefore the Afghan government) was precise confirmation of Pakistani fears as to what would occur if India were to gain influence in Afghanistan post-2001. Unrest along the Eastern border – requiring the deployment of conventional military forces away from the West – such as that which occurred in Balochistan in 2004 (violence continued until a ceasefire in 2008) is the exact scenario Pakistan’s Afghan policy has been designed for decades to prevent. The belief was that an Afghanistan beholden to India would foment such unrest and/or allow India access to do it themselves.<sup>125</sup> There was even concern, as the so-called

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<sup>124</sup> Recall that Indian support for Balochi rebels stretches back decades, to as early as the 1970s: of the period, an Indian intelligence official said of Indian support to the rebels: “we gave them everything” (quoted in Paliwal 2017: 38).

<sup>125</sup> In assessing “the Pakistan’s government’s own perception of its security requirements” a cable from September 2009 highlights “the perception of India as the primary threat to the Pakistani state that colors its perceptions of the conflict in Afghanistan and Pakistan’s security needs. The Pakistani establishment fears

Pakistani Taliban (an entity separate from the Afghan version and known also by the name Tehrik-e-Taliban) emerged in 2007 and took aim at the Pakistani state, that India – again, through Afghanistan – was helping stimulate instability inside Pakistan by supporting the group. “Under the old adage ‘The enemy of my enemy is my friend’,” writes Coll (2018: 647), “there seemed scope for Afghan intelligence to cooperate with the Pakistani Taliban.” While Pakistani suspicions were strong despite a relative dearth of concrete evidence<sup>126</sup>, there again was just enough smoke to suggest fire. In 2013, Pakistani Taliban leader Latif Mehsud was in Afghanistan under the protection of NDS, only to be snatched up by the US (Mehsud had allegedly been involved in the failed 2010 Times Square bombing plot) and eventually handed over to Pakistani authorities (Bhatnagar and Mohan 2016). In 2017, a former Pakistani Taliban commander claimed that RAW and NDS “provided safe heavens [sic] to terrorist organizations in Afghanistan” (Zaidi 2017).<sup>127</sup> This in addition to any classified intelligence Islamabad may have collected regarding such activities.<sup>128</sup> While many – correctly – saw the emergence of the Pakistani Taliban as blowback for the decades Pakistan had spent fostering Islamism in the region (see Ganguly and Kapur 2010), it was also true that their presence rekindled concerns regarding Pashtun separatism or, at the very least, the possibility of instability in Pashtun areas which might require military action.<sup>129</sup> Indeed, the Pakistan army was forced to undertake significant operations to quell the Pakistani Taliban (losing thousands of soldiers in the process) (Siddiqi 2011). Whether in the form

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a pro-India government in Afghanistan would allow India to operate a proxy war against Pakistan from its territory.”

<sup>126</sup> Consider, for example, the following observations from Michael O’Hanlon (2010): “At the headquarters of the Pakistani spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence directorate, I was told that India was suspected of providing explosives to Tehrik-i-Taliban extremists through Afghanistan.”

<sup>127</sup> The veracity of the confession has been challenged, however, see “Ehsanullah Esan’s India claims and Pakistan’s favorite narrative,” (2017, April 26).

<sup>128</sup> Reports from two Pakistan-based, government-sponsored think tanks have made further claims regarding Indian involvement in Balochistan and FATA. See Wazir (2011) and Kehtran (2017). Both articles claim that Pakistani intelligence is in possession of concrete evidence of RAW involvement in Balochistan and the tribal areas.

<sup>129</sup> Many of the sub-groups within the Pakistani Taliban are Punjabi and not Pashtun, but the group as a whole is most active in the northern areas, particularly Waziristan and FATA (now part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). In any event, the possibility of Pashtun nationalism – one of the driving forces behind Pakistani concerns regarding Afghanistan since partition – has resurfaced in the context of greatly instability along the border. There has been a synergy between the Balochi insurgency and this dynamic; Ganguly and Howenstein (2009: 134) note the “alliance of northern Baluchis with tribes in FATA in an effort to form an ethnically Pashtun province in Pakistan.” In this context, Indian instigation along the border would be seen as extremely problematic by Islamabad.

of support for Balochi rebels or for Tehrik-e-Taliban, Islamabad was concerned that India would leverage domestic groups against them, both because this specific tactic had been employed in the past (i.e. before 2001, particularly in the mid-1970s), and because of associated fears of a potential two-front problem in any direct confrontation with India.

This latter fear is accentuated by an important consequence of rivalry: the belief that (another) conventional confrontation is possible, even likely. It is for this reason that Pakistan has maintained its military's conventional posture, rather than adapting to counter-insurgency requirements which would be helpful in dealing with domestic militant groups and terrorists like the Pakistani Taliban. This refusal has led to much criticism and confusion from, in particular, the United States<sup>130</sup>, particularly as domestic extremists appear to represent a larger, more immediate threat to the Pakistani state (more on the significance of the threat from the Pakistani Taliban below). As Fair and Jones (2009: 162) summarize: "Pakistan prefers to retain its conventional focus against India and hesitates to adopt a counter-insurgency orientation, viewing such operations against internal threats as residing at the lower end of a conventional-conflict spectrum." And elsewhere:

The army is a conventional force primarily geared towards a conflict with India, a configuration which it prefers. In the early months of General Ashfaq Kayani's tenure as chief of army staff from the end of 2007, US officials were optimistic that Pakistan would formally adopt a counter-insurgency strategy. Since then, Kayani has frequently said that the army will not become a counter-insurgency force; rather, the bulk of the army will remain deployed along the Indian border (Fair and Jones 2009: 163).

Again, this dogged refusal to adjust military posture elicits the perception that Pakistan is 'obsessed' with the Indian threat; and, much like assessments of the Balochistan issue,

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<sup>130</sup> Recall here Washington's consternation in the mid-1980s that much of its military aid went to equipment and planning directed towards India rather than the guerilla fight against the Soviets. This pattern has repeated itself post-2001. For example Grare (2010: 18) points out that of the first USD\$15 billion the US "ostensibly [offered Pakistan] as reimbursement [for] expenses in the war on terror" USD\$4 billion was "spent on conventional equipment for its army and air force."

this, in a vacuum, may indeed be a fair characterization. Yet having fought multiple conventional wars with India in the past, Pakistan believes that it may have to do so again in the future (*experience* is a major part of its calculation); to abandon a posture which prepares them for such an eventuality would be derelict, by this view. For Pakistan, the prospect of such a conflict is existential<sup>131</sup>, underscoring the extent to which the India-focused orientation is unlikely to change. That it has survived over a decade of intense diplomatic pressure and billions upon billions of US military aid intended, essentially, to “buy” Pakistani compliance and support in the counter-insurgent, counter-terrorist focused US/NATO operation in Afghanistan is further evidence to this effect.<sup>132</sup>

To summarize, briefly, we can glean two basic dynamics at play with respect to Pakistan’s intervention in Afghanistan in the form of its support for the Taliban insurgency. First, it’s goal is no role for India whatsoever in the country. Second, its concern regarding any failure to achieve this goal stems from the fear that Indian influence in Afghanistan will lead to destabilization along or near its Eastern border. An Afghanistan in which India has a major role, up to and including close relationships with the Afghan military and security institutions (recall that many prominent Afghan security and intelligence officials were drawn from, or had connections with, the India-aligned Northern Alliance) would allow it to engage in this behaviour, either for the purpose of diverting Pakistan’s military resources away from the West or, more nefariously, as part of a coordinated two-front offensive. They believe this destabilization activity likely to occur, given the history of the relationship in which similar tactics were employed and, perhaps even more importantly, *have to assume it will occur* because they consider the implications potentially existential (particularly in the context of repeated past conflicts, including the war in 1971 which saw the country lose nearly half its territory and over half of its population). In the context of a future conflict, to be faced by a ‘pincer-movement’, with two hostile borders and therefore two-fronts, would be devastating. Given that the basic assumption is that this conflict will eventually occur, it logically

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<sup>131</sup> The perception can be linked to ISI behaviour in Afghanistan. As Sirrs (2017: 7, emphasis added) explains in his assessment of the intelligence agency: “Reflecting the siege mentality of its army master, ISI believes it is engaged in an *existential war for national survival* in the face of India’s expanding military capabilities not to mention New Delhi’s aspirations for great power status.”

<sup>132</sup> Fair (2017: 140) estimates that since 2001 Pakistan has received approximately \$33 billion “in security and economic assistance as well as CSF [Coalition Support Funds] reimbursements.”

follows that preventing Indian influence in Afghanistan – precluding the two-front possibility – takes on extreme importance.

We see here the contours of a policy which resembles the parameters of *strategic depth* discussed earlier. Recall, however, that the notion of strategic depth is now much derided, dismissed by many Pakistani leaders, particularly civilians and diplomats, as outmoded and irrelevant (Felbab-Brown 2016). I suggest, however, that there are two related but distinct versions of strategic depth, and that understanding Pakistan's post-2001 policy in Afghanistan requires appreciating the distinction between them. The first version involves political and military *domination* of Afghanistan, allowing the movement of military troops and assets on an extended – 'deep' – battlefield in the context of war with India. As discussed earlier, the geographical realities of the Pakistani state render it vulnerable to quick and/or bisecting forays from the East. Having space to retreat would therefore be useful if India were to attack. This is the version of strategic depth that many consider outmoded, particularly in the context of the nuclear capabilities both India and Pakistan now possess.

A second version of strategic depth involves the *preclusion* of *Indian* dominance in Afghanistan, maintaining an at-best friendly and at-worst neutral Afghan government. This version is less about battlefield tactics than it is about *reducing vulnerabilities*. Fair (2014: 104) captures the distinction between the two versions well:

Some describe strategic depth as a geographical concept, even though few Pakistani security managers have advocated thinking of Afghanistan in those terms – that is, as a physical space in which Pakistan could safely disperse its personnel and assets during a war with India... The more common understanding of strategic depth requires the cultivation of a 'friendly regime, expectedly an Islamist one, in Kabul that would enable Pakistan to avoid traditional insecurity or at least neutralize its western tribal borderlands and avoid future Afghan governments with strong links to New Delhi' (Weinbaum 1991: 498-99).<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Quotation from Weinbaum (1991).

Note that the quotation Fair enlists is from Weinbaum (1991), meaning the second, broader understanding of strategic depth was known and articulated well before the present period (it is not, therefore, a revision as realities have shifted).

Assessing both Pakistan's priorities and associated policies in Afghanistan it is clear that the second version applies more than the first. Kayani himself stressed as much in conversation with American officials, as documented in a US diplomatic cable from February 2009:

Kayani said he had no desire to control Afghanistan. In fact, he said, anyone who wanted to control Afghanistan was ignorant of history, since no one has ever controlled it. Kayani noted there had been confusion about the policy of 'strategic depth' but for him 'strategic depth' meant a peaceful Afghanistan 'on his back.'

Kayani repeated these sentiments in a press conference a year later: "We want a strategic depth in Afghanistan but do not want to control it...A peaceful and friendly Afghanistan can provide Pakistan strategic depth" (quoted in "Kayani spells out terms for regional stability," 2010, February 2). Now, one must of course be skeptical of the statement that Kayani merely desires a "peaceful Afghanistan"; Pakistani policy has all but ensured that Afghanistan remains mired in conflict. The qualifier "friendly" offered in the second statement is key, aligning his view with the version of strategic depth that requires an Afghanistan that is *not hostile* to Pakistan, even if it is not wholly controlled by them (recall that even during the late 1990s, the Taliban was not totally pliant; rather, they could be relied upon to a) keep India out and b) downplay Pashtun nationalism). It is about reducing vulnerability, not securing control of territory.

Yet those critics who dismiss the concept of strategic depth by pointing to its modern unworkability criticize primarily the maximal rather than the minimal version. For example, Kamran Shahi (2010) mocks the concept as 'poppycock' in a widely-read editorial for the Pakistani newspaper *Dawn*, pointing out how difficult, in practice, a full on military retreat into Afghan territory would ultimately be. Shahi similarly wonders how Pakistan would be received given that "most Afghans hate our guts", something which was true even during the Taliban era when the Afghan government was "propped

into power” and “paid for” by Pakistan. Velbab-Brown (2016: 128), likewise suggests that “while always exaggerated, Pakistan long ago abandoned such a strategy.” Nadiri (2014: 155), for his part, suggests that “given...changes in the Afghan political context, and the presence of powerful external allies of the Afghan government, strategic depth as originally conceived is an implausible proposition.” Nonetheless all three authors concede that more limited objectives like “a friendly government in Kabul” (Shahi 2010), or the prevention of “encirclement by hostile powers in Afghanistan and India” (Felbab-Brown 2016), or “blocking Indian influence in Afghanistan, particularly in areas abutting the Pakistani border” (Nadiri 2014: 155) *are* relevant for understanding Pakistani policy. Thus while they ostensibly dismiss “strategic depth”, they simultaneously affirm its basic validity.

Parsing all of this may be largely semantical, but given the centrality of the concept of “strategic depth” in discussions of Pakistani foreign policy (Christine Fair [2014] devotes an entire chapter to it in her comprehensive history of Pakistan’s military-strategic culture), and the ubiquity with which it is invoked in analyzing Pakistan policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan, it is worthwhile having an understanding of how the concept relates to the analysis presented in this dissertation. Broadly speaking, Pakistan has pursued the minimal version of strategic depth in Afghanistan post-2001. This has resulted in the behaviour described above, in which the Taliban (an entity Pakistan knows would keep India out) is supported in its efforts to undermine the Afghan government (efforts which bring it, inevitably, into conflict with the US/NATO forces undergirding said government).

Not only is this strategy intended to undermine Indian influence in Afghanistan in a general sense, there is further evidence that India has been the *specific* target of Pakistani efforts. As the Afghanistan War Logs demonstrate, for example, Indian assets and personnel were frequently singled out for attack. Several of these reports are highlighted here:

According to WL9, for example, the Indian embassy in Kabul, the Indian consulate in Kandahar, the Indian road construction company called the Border Road Organization (BRO) (an organization Rubin and Siddique (2006:14) call

“semi-military”), in charge of building the Zaranj-Delaram road, and the Indian Tibetan Border Police, the group charged with security for the BRO project, were all targeted for attack by ISI. The report also indicates that BRO had already been the subject of an attack in February 2006.

WL11, similarly, speaks of possible attacks against the Indian embassy, to be “commanded by ISI”. WL18 details a plot to “kidnap important persons from foreign diplomatic offices” including “representatives from the Indian consulate.”

WL25 describes a plot directed by ISI to blow up the ring road – constructed by India and a major piece of New Delhi’s infrastructure contribution in Afghanistan.

WL36 reports that “the ISI Department of Pakistan has ordered Taliban and other Islamic party members to kidnap foreign citizens from within Afghanistan. They are especially to kidnap India nationals. Once they have been kidnapped, the Taliban or Islamic group is to take pictures or video and then kill the hostages.”

WL46 reports a plot involving an ISI operative known as “Sarkateep” to attack the Indian embassy in Kabul, as well as the consulates in Jalalabad, Herat, Kandahar and Mezar-e-Sharif.

WL49 tells of an ISI-led plot to target the Indian company (through the kidnapping and assassination of employees and engineers) tasked by the Afghan government to install a communication system for telephone and internet in Kabul.

WL50 addresses concerns from an Afghan government official about a sustained, ISI-backed effort to attack the Indian consulate in Jalalabad (Nangarhar province).

WL56 reports a standing offer from Serajuddin Haqqani, one of the leaders of the Haqqani Network, “to eliminate Indian nationals working in [Afghanistan], in

exchange for amounts between 15,000 and 30,000 USD.” The offer was allegedly ordered by ISI.

In keeping with the aforementioned Pakistani focus on the Indian embassy and consulates, several attacks have targeted these installations. Perhaps the most prominent was the 2008 attack on the embassy in Kabul, “allegedly directed by Pakistan’s intelligence service”, which killed fifty-eight and wounded dozens of others (Curtis 2012: 264). Evidence linking ISI to the operation is robust. Before the attack, “the National Security Agency intercepted communications between ISI officers and the Taliban indicating planning was under way for a big attack in Afghanistan” (Sirrs 2017: 238). Though unable to determine the target and thus prevent the bombing, “a cellphone found in the embassy wreckage enabled investigators to trace phone calls made by the perpetrators to an ISI officer in Peshawar” (ibid.). The CIA and NDS both concluded that the attack had been coordinated by ISI through the Haqqani Network, operating out of North Waziristan. As Steve Coll (2018: 308) summarizes: “The strike was effectively an act of guerilla war by the Pakistan Army against [the] Indian military.” Just fifteen months later, in 2009, another attack against the embassy occurred, this time killing seventeen and wounding over seventy others. The Afghan government stated its belief that this second attack “was planned and implemented from outside Afghan borders” by the same elements responsible for the 2008 bombing (e.g. ISI) (Faiez and Magnier 2009). More recently, a major blast on May 31, 2017 killed over eighty in the international section of Kabul, near the Indian and German embassies. NDS once again blamed the Haqqani Network and ISI for the bombing (Arnold 2017); though it is unclear whether the Indian embassy was the explicit target, given the history, it is not likely that the proximity of the blast was a coincidence.

In addition to the main embassy in Kabul, Indian consulates throughout Afghanistan have similarly been subject to repeated attack. Below is a timeline of attacks and attempted attacks against Indian diplomatic posts (including the first two embassy bombings noted above) from 2004 to 2016 in Afghanistan.

**Attacks Against Indian embassy/consulates in Afghanistan 2004-2016  
(data from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to  
Terrorism [START] Global Terrorism Database)**

24 January 2006 – attack on Indian consulate in Kandahar.

*“In one of two related attacks, unknown perpetrators threw a hand grenade at the Indian consulate in Kandahar (Province), Afghanistan, but it exploded outside, causing no casualties. It was not reported whether or not there was property damage, and there were no reported claims of responsibility for the attack.”*<sup>134</sup>

5 April 2006 – attack on Indian consulate in Herat.

*“An unknown number of unknown perpetrators detonated a bomb near the Indian consulate in the city of Herat, Afghanistan. No one was injured or killed in the blast. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.”*<sup>135</sup>

13 December 2007 – attack on Indian consulate in Jalalabad.

*“Two improvised explosive devices were thrown outside the Indian consulate in the city of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan. There were no casualties or damage. Afghan Islamic Press reported that a similar incident was reported several days before. The Taliban was suspected in both attacks.”*<sup>136</sup>

7 July 2008 – attack on Indian embassy in Kabul.

*“On Monday morning at 8:30, 58 were killed and 141 wounded when a suicide car bomber targeted the Indian Embassy in Kabul, Kabul province, Afghanistan. The suicide bomber detonated 220 pounds of explosives near a row of metal turnstiles outside the embassy gates after being denied access to enter the embassy. Seventeen students and four Indian nationals, in addition to dozens of Afghan men who line up every morning to apply for visas, were killed in the attack. Two diplomatic vehicles and several nearby shops were also damaged or destroyed in the blast. Although authorities held the Taliban responsible for the bombing attack, a spokesman for the Taliban's Zabihullah Mujahed*

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<sup>134</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 200601240018]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>135</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 200604050018]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>136</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 200712130008]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

*group denied responsibility on 07/08/2008 on Tuesday to Agence France-Presse. No claim of responsibility was made for the incident.”<sup>137</sup>*

8 Oct 2009 – attack on Indian embassy in Kabul.

*“On Thursday morning at about 0830, in Kabul, Kabul, Afghanistan, a suicide bomber detonated his vehicle-borne improvised explosive device near the outer wall of the Indian Embassy, killing 12 police officers and civilians, injuring at least 83 police officers and civilians, and damaging the embassy, many vehicles, many residences, and many shops. The Indian embassy was located near Afghanistan's Ministry of Interior, which was also damaged. The Taliban claimed responsibility.”<sup>138</sup>*

3 August 2013 – attack on Indian consulate in Jalalabad.

*“Three assailants wearing explosives-laden vests attempted to ram their vehicle into the Indian Consulate in Jalalabad city, Nangarhar province, Afghanistan. Two assailants opened fire on the checkpoint guards and one assailant detonated a vest. Nine civilians and three assailants were killed and 22 other people were injured in the attack. No group claimed responsibility for the incident; however, the police commissioner attributed the attack to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Haqqani Network.”<sup>139</sup>*

13 March 2014 – attempted attack on Indian consulate in Kandahar city.

*“A suicide bomber attempted to detonate an explosives-laden vest at the Indian Consulate in Kandahar city, Kandahar province, Afghanistan. The assailant was killed and the explosives-laden vest was defused by authorities. No group claimed responsibility for the incident.”<sup>140</sup>*

23 May 2014 – attack on Indian consulate in Herat.

*“Assailants opened fire on the Indian consulate in Herat province, Afghanistan. Three assailants were killed and two police officers were wounded in the attack. No group*

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<sup>137</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 200807070003]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>138</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 200910080005]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>139</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 201308040008]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>140</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 201403120035]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

*claimed responsibility for the incident; however, sources attributed the attack to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Taliban.*”<sup>141</sup>

20 December 2015 – attempted attack on Indian consulate in Jalalabad.

*“An suicide bomber attempted to attack the Indian consulate in Jalalabad, Nangarhar province, Afghanistan. The assailant was detained before reaching his target and confessed to being a member of the Taliban.*”<sup>142</sup>

3 January 2016 – attack on Indian consulate in Mazar-e-Sharif.

*“Assailants armed with rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and firearms attacked the Indian consulate in Mazari Sharif city, Balkh province, Afghanistan. Seven people, including a police officer, and all six assailants were killed and eight others were injured in the ensuing clash that lasted until January 5, 2016. No group claimed responsibility; however, sources attributed the attack to Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM).*”<sup>143</sup>

8 January 2016 – attempted attack on Indian consulate in Herat.

*“An explosives-laden vehicle was discovered and defused near the Indian consulate in Herat province, Afghanistan. No group claimed responsibility for the incident; however, one person was arrested in connection with the attempted attack.*”<sup>144</sup>

2 March 2016 – attack on Indian consulate in Jalalabad.

*“A suicide bomber detonated an explosives-laden vehicle at the entrance of the Indian consulate in Jalalabad, Nangarhar, Afghanistan. Additional assailants stormed the consulate and opened fire. At least two people and four assailants were killed and 19 people were injured in the blast and ensuing clash; the victims included civilians and security force members. The Khorasan Chapter of the Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack. Authorities also suspected Taliban involvement.*”<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 201405230002]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>142</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 201512200020]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>143</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 201601030010]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>144</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 201601080019]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

<sup>145</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2017). Global Terrorism Database [ID# 201603020001]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

While not all attacks were as deadly or well-planned as the 2008 embassy bombing, the above timeline indicates a clear pattern of behaviour – the systematic targeting of Indian diplomatic installations. Though it is not possible to directly attribute ISI or Pakistani-complicity in each and every incident, the known-links between the Taliban/Haqqani Network and the Pakistani intelligence agency (as made clear by the Afghanistan War Logs release) allow for a reasonable inference that the frequency of the attacks is partly due to ISI pressure; doubly so considering Islamabad’s repeated and well-known objections to India’s diplomatic presence, particularly in the south, and the belief that the consulates there were being used to help support Balochi and Pashtun rebels.

Diplomatic installations were not the only Indian targets during this time period. Indian construction workers – recall that infrastructure development was a major feature of New Delhi’s involvement in Afghanistan – also faced consistent security challenges, to the point that New Delhi cited the killings of Indian workers as proof that Pakistan was seeking to discourage India’s presence in Afghanistan. In 2010, for example, a spate of terrorist attacks against Indians led Minister of External Affairs SM Krishna to declare that Indians had become “soft targets” in Afghanistan for terrorist organizations keen on derailing Indian-Afghan relations (“Indians in Afghanistan are soft targets,” 2010, March 21). (Such concerns were also communicated extensively to the US, as evidenced by the statements recorded in US diplomatic cables from New Delhi, quoted in Appendix 1). Though the road was comparatively short (approximately 215km), the construction of the Zaranj-Delaram road took four years, primarily due to security challenges and the frequent attacks which delayed its completion (129 Afghans were killed during construction, as well as six Indians) (“India hands over strategic highway to Afghanistan,” 2009, January 23). In addition to attacks on road workers, the 26 February 2010 attack on the Hamid Guesthouse in Kabul resulted in 18 casualties, nine of whom were Indian; the guest house was for foreign workers, and was known to be popular with Indian doctors (Rubin 2010). In 2013, an ISI-directed Taliban plot to blow up the Salma Dam (now known as the ‘India-Afghanistan Friendship Dam’), another centrepiece of India’s infrastructure efforts and at the time still under construction, was foiled by NDS (Bhatnagar and Mohan 2016; Ghanizada 2013). More recently, in 2017, a checkpoint

near the dam was attacked by gunmen, killing ten policemen (“Taliban attack checkpoint near India-made dam in Afghanistan,” 2017, June 25). In April 2012, the Afghan parliament – built by India – was one of a spate of targets in a large, coordinated Taliban attack (“Taliban strike across Afghanistan in ‘spring offensive’,” 2012, April 16).<sup>146</sup> The parliament was struck again in 2015 (Weaver 2015) and most recently in 2017, when a bus leaving with government personnel exploded (Rasmussen 2017). (Of course, attacks on the Afghan parliament have meaning beyond the fact that the building was constructed by India, but it is nonetheless another piece of India’s developmental assistance which has encountered acts of sabotage and terrorism.) The purpose of such attacks, according to Bhatnagar and Mohan (2016: 96), is likely to “deter India...from investing in such projects in the future.”

In addition to physical attacks, Pakistan has attempted to limit Indian influence in other ways. They persistently denied India transit rights for trade with Afghanistan, for example. This induced great consternation in New Delhi, given the centrality of regional economic opportunities in India’s broader quest for great power status. Despite clear incentives to cooperate on economic issues (more on this below), Pakistan has preferred to frustrate rather than facilitate Indian trade, transit, and investment. They are well positioned to do so, given that India lacks contiguity with Afghanistan and therefore cannot access the country directly. Which is not to say that Pakistan has been completely and totally obstructionist; projects have been implemented and moved forward, for example the TAPI pipeline and the Afghan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA), signed in 2010, which was to allow Afghan products to transit Pakistan en route to India (but not vice versa). As discussed earlier, however, TAPI has been famously delayed, and skepticism persists even as the Afghan portion of the pipeline has finally begun construction in 2018 (Putz 2018). The APTTA, meanwhile, fell apart in 2017 as a result of Pakistan’s refusal to extend reciprocal transit rights to India as part of the deal (Haider 2015). According to one report: “Pakistan keeps blocking exports and transit trade to Afghanistan with trucks stranded on both sides of the border, often with perishable

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<sup>146</sup> Of this set of attacks Felbab-Brown (2016: 128-9) writes: “the April 2012 attack against the Afghan parliament...while perpetrated by the Haqqani network, [has] been...linked by US intelligence officers to the ISI.”

goods” (“Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan trade,” 2017, November 13). Pakistan’s obstinacy on the issue of transit rights has forced India to pursue alternative trade routes, including the Chabahar sea port in Iran (as discussed on page 203) (“Afghanistan no longer depends on Pakistan for transit trade,” 2017, November 16).

We see in this activity further evidence of Pakistan’s goal to minimize and discourage India’s presence in Afghanistan. Note also that, from Islamabad’s point of view, the attacks on Indian assets are largely *reactive*; a response to perceived Indian aggression, either in fomenting instability on Pakistani territory or, more generally, in terms of New Delhi’s attempts to actively cultivate greater influence in the country (for example by opening the consulates in the first place, and in the billions of dollars spent on infrastructure and investment). For most of the international community, India’s presence was and is viewed positively. For Pakistan, in the context of rivalry, even putatively benign Indian behaviour is considered potentially aggressive. Rivalry, after all, is a condition of ongoing and unbroken conflict. When considered in this light, the establishment of diplomatic outposts (which, as all governments know, double as, at a minimum, intelligence gathering operations) just miles from the Pakistani border was inevitably alarming. More generally, India’s growth potential in terms of linking through Afghanistan to Central Asia is viewed negatively in Pakistan because of the *implications* of Indian growth for the rivalry. India is not merely a ‘competitor’ for regional influence and economic growth (a competition Pakistan is, and has been, losing spectacularly) but an *adversary* in the precise sense of the term (meaning at-present and ongoing). Whatever the typical influence of absolute vs. relative gains in generic international relationships<sup>147</sup>, it is logical to assume that relative gains matter in rivalry. This proposition is reflected in Pakistan’s behaviour vis-à-vis India in Afghanistan.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> For an early overview of this consequential debate see Powell (1991).

<sup>148</sup> The question of whether India is also concerned primarily with relative gains in this context is less clear; Pakistan is a quasi-gate keeper with respect to India’s access (particularly in terms of trade) and so can opt to forgo its own economic gain to prevent India from realizing theirs. India, by contrast, is less able to ‘block’ Pakistan’s trade access and so is not faced with the same trade-off. Given how crucial Central Asian energy is to Indian growth potential, moreover, it is possible that cooperation with Pakistan would constitute both absolute *and* relative gains (further increasing the gap between the countries even as Pakistan benefits). Finally, the opening of alternative trade routes such as that through Chabahar allows India to largely avoid the dilemma by bypassing Pakistan altogether. Recall also that the Chabahar port is connected to Kabul via the Zaranj-Delaram road, one of the first major Indian projects to be announced and financed in Afghanistan.

Like India, Pakistan became increasingly concerned, particular at the turn of the decade and shortly thereafter, about a potential US withdrawal from Afghanistan. This may seem counter-intuitive, considering that the insurgency that Pakistan fuelled and supported often took direct aim at the US and international presence. Yet the prospect of American and international withdrawal meant dealing with the reality of a post-US/NATO Afghanistan; in reality, both the Indian and Pakistani interventions were always about shaping this future, and both worried that a precipitous US pullout would leave them in a subordinate position. Shortly before his death, US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke was tasked with crafting some type of negotiated power-sharing end to the war. In the context of that effort, he flew to Pakistan to meet with General Kayani. “It was all India all the time,” Holbrooke said of the meeting, “the Pakistanis see everything through the prism of India” (quoted in Coll 2018: 406). Holbrooke’s take-away from the talks was that “the Pakistanis believe that if we leave [Afghanistan], the Indians are going to move in” (ibid.). Sirrs (2017: 235) writes of the negotiation efforts at the time:

ISI was not going to allow any settlement that did not include Pakistani interests. At a minimum, those interests included resolving the Afghan-Pakistan border dispute, creating a pro-Pakistan...government in Kabul and sharply reducing the Indian presence in Afghanistan.

Obviously, the Taliban themselves were not as committed to these positions, and some of the less-hardline elements of the insurgency would have likely entertained an agreement that maintained, for example, the influence of Tajiks and former-NA officials (indeed, to do so was a prerequisite of the talks then being initiated). As mentioned earlier, the result was that many of the Taliban who showed an interest in the negotiations were arrested in Pakistan; such arrests amounted to a Pakistani veto.<sup>149</sup> Since that time, the prospect of negotiations has largely stalled. The 2011 strategic partnership agreement between India

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<sup>149</sup> As one Pakistan official said with regard to such efforts: “We picked up [Taliban leader Abdul Ghani] Baradar and the others because they were trying to make a deal without us...We protect the Taliban. They are dependent on us. We are not going to allow them to make a deal with Karzai and the Indians” (quoted in Filkins 2010).

and Afghanistan reinforced, for Islamabad, the depth of their relationship, further eroding any Pakistani enthusiasm for negotiations which might entrench the present Afghan regime. Following the 2014 presidential election, in which Ashraf Ghani succeeded Karzai, there was an attempt in Kabul to shift the relationship with Pakistan. Ghani went out of his way to cultivate good relations, sending Afghan troops to the border to aid the Pakistani military in operations against anti-Pakistan militants, and suspending several weapons acquisition contracts with India (Panda 2015; Boone 2015). On the basis of this new goodwill, there were again talks of potential negotiations, this time with a seemingly more eager Islamabad (Ahmed and Goldstein 2015). These talks failed to materialize, however, and Ghani has more recently adopted a critical tone toward Pakistan, accusing Islamabad of coordinating terror attacks in Afghanistan in January 2018, and describing Pakistan as the “center of Taliban terrorism” (Constable 2018). As the Taliban gains ground, the prospects of negotiations continue to “fizzle”, writes Christine Fair (2017: 140): “The reason for this is simple: Pakistan and its proxy, the Taliban are winning. Why would they negotiate?” The prospect of impending, or even eventual, US withdrawal reinforces Pakistan’s resolve to maintain its activities in the furtherance of its objectives.

Taken as a whole, Pakistan’s post-2001 intervention into Afghanistan is consistent with the expectations of Rational Rivalry. The initial decision to cut ties with the Taliban was predicated on an assessment of what policy would minimize India’s presence and influence in Afghanistan. The subsequent reversal, likewise, occurred as it became clear that the trajectory of the American intervention would not achieve this goal, but indeed its opposite (the US partnering with the Northern Alliance was crucial to this perception, given the history of the NA). As India launched into their own intervention in support of the new Afghan government – the establishment of a robust diplomatic presence (re-opening of old consulates, the opening of new ones), major aid and development assistance, including massive infrastructure projects, and extensive training of Afghan officials across a range of domains, all lubricated by close ties with former NA officials now in government – Pakistan resorted to support for a re-emerging Taliban insurgency against the new regime in Kabul. Indeed, Pakistan’s intelligence agency, ISI, was deeply involved in the *creation* of the insurgency through sanctuary, recruitment, training and material support. While difficult to establish a one-to-one causal relationship,

available evidence suggests that as India steadily increased its involvement in Afghanistan (through ever-growing development assistance, and larger and more comprehensive training programs etc.) the insurgency also escalated, pushed on by Pakistani assistance. The eruption of a rebellion in Balochistan in 2004, Paliwal (2017) notes, was followed by direct attacks on Indian assets in Afghanistan; Islamabad believed that newly-opened Indian consulates were supporting the Balochi rebels. Pakistan persisted in its efforts despite intense diplomatic pressure from the US and the international community, and in the face of genuine costs associated with the policy (more on this below). They systematically targeted Indian interests, including diplomatic installations, infrastructure projects, and personnel (ISI, via the Haqqani Network, allegedly had a standing USD\$15,000-\$30,000 bounty on Indian nationals) in an attempt to discourage India's presence. As talk turned to potential negotiations with the Taliban, Islamabad ensured that no such negotiations could proceed without their approval, for fear that any deal might undermine their goal of an Afghan regime devoid of Indian influence (it was not, in other words, about getting the Taliban *in* so much as it was keeping India *out*). Behind closed doors, to both the US and the Afghan government, Pakistani leaders repeated their concerns about India's presence; in one meeting with President Karzai, General Kayani essentially offered a quid pro quo: end India's role altogether, and Pakistan would reign in the insurgency. Much of this was apparently confirmed in 2015 by former president Musharraf in an interview with *The Guardian* newspaper, where he intimated that Pakistan's support for the Taliban was retaliation against a Karzai government that had "helped India stab Pakistan in the back" (quoted in Boone 2015). Frustrated by what Musharraf saw as Karzai's deference to India (sending Afghan cadets to India rather than Pakistan for military training, for example) he went on to say: "Obviously we were looking for some groups to counter this Indian action against Pakistan...That is where the intelligence work comes in. Intelligence being in contact with Taliban groups. Definitely they were in contact, and they should be" (ibid.).<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Interestingly, Musharraf is hopeful in the interview that such policies could end (while of course insisting that India also give up supporting proxies in Afghanistan). His more benign, conciliatory attitude here might suggest that the policies he pursued while in charge had less to do with his personal attitudes and more about the exigencies of office. This is reminiscent of interviews conducted by Ashutosh Misra (2010) with retired Pakistani generals; discussing the ongoing Siachen Glacier dispute, Misra (2010: 134) notes that retired generals conceded that the dispute was costly and ill-advised, "but serving officials are

Musharraf's comments support the preceding analysis. Pakistan systematically attempted to exclude and minimize India's presence, largely in reaction to India's own intervention into Afghanistan. The *anticipated process* of leaving such an intervention unchecked involved potential future Indian aggression – the fomentation of instability along the Durand Line and the associated potential of a two-front conflict.

### **Assessing Alternative Explanations for Pakistan's behavior**

Of course, if the decision to support the Taliban, and engage in anti-Indian activity more generally, is simply straightforwardly rational – which is to say, Pakistan's post-2001 intervention corresponds to an evaluation of costs and benefits – than the rivalry explanation offered here is superfluous. It would not be necessary to construct a 'theory of rivalry' to describe what could be explained via a more basic rationalist model. As explained in Chapter 3, while the theory presented here is broadly, procedurally rational, it nonetheless deviates from conventional expectations about what constitutes rational behaviour on the part of a state. That Pakistan's behaviour does not conform to such expectations is, in fact, what drives so much confusion about their priorities in Afghanistan. Again and again, observers (whether academics, journalists, or officials outside of Pakistan) have pointed out that Pakistani behaviour *runs against* Islamabad's own interests. In the broadest sense, there is consensus that a *stable* Afghanistan should be desirable. As Fair (2008: 216) concludes: "it is clearly in Pakistan's interests to have a stable Afghanistan." Hanaeur and Chalk (2012: 36) likewise suggest: "the India-centric approach of the ISI and military has directly undermined Pakistan's ability to achieve its broader national goals." This is a message US officials have spent years trying to impart.<sup>151</sup> It is also the source of the language noted earlier, in which Pakistan is

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hesitant to say that on record." In other words, attitudes and views appear to shift once an individual exits an official decision-making capacity. This is generally inconsistent with the view that rivalry decisions are the product of individual animosities or hatreds. (Recall also Renshon and Kahneman's [2017] findings that 'hawkish' biases prevail in international decision-making, and the associated critique I offer in Chapter 3).

<sup>151</sup> In preparation for General Kayani's 2009 trip to Washington, for example, the directive from Islamabad station to the State Department was: "The single biggest message Kayani should hear in Washington is that [Pakistani] support [for the Taliban] must end. It is now counterproductive to Pakistan's own interests..." WikiLeaks. Scen setter for General Kayani's visit to Washington. (2009, February 19). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD365\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD365_a.html)

described as ‘paranoid’, ‘obsessed’ or ‘neuralgic’ in its focus on India as the driver of its Afghan policy. The Rational Rivalry explanation demonstrates how such terms are inaccurate insofar as there are systematic and predictable reasons behind the policy; yet it also accounts for the confusion the policy elicits by explaining why more straightforward, obvious interests are sacrificed for rivalry-related reasons.

Specifically, Pakistan’s Afghan policy undermines both its immediate (and potentially long-term) security and its economic interests. The security dimension relates to the rise of Islamic militancy within Pakistan, and the increasing threat Islamists pose to the Pakistani state. As mentioned, beginning as early as 2005 the tribal areas in the West and North saw the rise of the Pakistani Taliban, or Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP), an offshoot of the Afghan Taliban with a distinct agenda related to challenging the central Pakistani government. The 2007 Red Mosque incident, in which members of the Pakistani Taliban seized control of the Lal Masjid mosque in Islamabad and engaged in a stand-off with Pakistani security forces, demonstrated that the threat of the group extended in from the tribal areas to the capital itself. By 2008, the TTP was even threatening to take control of major cities such as Peshawar and Karachi (Iqbal and De Silva 2013). In contrast to the lacklustre counter-insurgency efforts against militants focused on Afghanistan, the Pakistani military has been engaged in an extended campaign against anti-Pakistan militants since at least 2004. Over 120,000 troops have been deployed in this effort, incurring extensive casualties (Weinbaum 2017). More generally, “fatalities in Pakistan since 2003, as a result of terrorist violence, have exceeded 50,000 and nearly half of these are civilians and members of Pakistan’s security forces” (Bhatnagar and Mohan 2016: 89). Bhatnagar and Mohan (2016: 89) suggest that these deaths represent, in part, “massive blowback...from [Pakistan’s] policy of using violent nonstate actors.” This conclusion is echoed elsewhere, as many consider Islamic militancy aimed at the Pakistani state as ‘chickens come home to roost’ in the sense the Pakistan itself was responsible for stoking such forces going back decades.

There are indeed more or less direct links between Pakistan’s Afghan policy, specifically, and these new security challenges. Pakistan’s “accommodation” for the Afghan Taliban, writes Nadiri (2014: 152), “has created the political space for more revisionist and internally focused forms of militancy to expand within Pakistan,

threatening Pakistan's domestic security." Weinbaum and Harder (2008: 31) paint a similar picture:

Pakistan has seen growing challenges in recent years to its legitimacy and authority. These challenges have included a surge in militant Islamism, mounting provincial and tribal unrest, and the weakening of the institutional capacity of the state. All three are apparent in its western border areas, and can be traced in large measure to its Afghan policies. By indulging and supporting extremists as a tool to retain and hold influence in Afghanistan, Pakistan introduced changes that undermined its ability to maintain its writ within its own borders.

In 2004, a Pakistani observer remarked: "Today's WANA [a city in Waziristan home to anti-Pakistan militants] is the creation of yesterday's Afghanistan...For the Pakistani state [TTP leader] Nek Mohammad represents its own creation" (quoted in Behuria 2007: 717). As Dalrymple (2013) colourfully summarizes: "the fear of being squeezed in an Indian nutcracker is so great that it has led ISI to take steps that put Pakistan's own security at risk."

And yet, even as the TTP gained ground in 2007-2008, controlling larger swaths of territory and threatening major population centres, Islamabad refused to a) end its support for militancy full stop (the insistence on distinguishing between 'good' (Afghan) and 'bad' (Pakistani) Taliban inevitably fuelled both groups, given the synergy between them [Weinbaum 2017]) or b) reorient its military capabilities towards counter-insurgency (as the US and the international community had been urging them to do for years). Its troops were "trained to fight a conventional war with India [and had] very limited capacity for effective counter-insurgency" (Weinbaum and Harder 2008: 33). As mentioned earlier, it continued to use American money to purchase military hardware geared toward India rather than for the counter-insurgency capabilities for which it was intended. Despite the clear and present danger of Islamism, Pakistani leaders remained focused on the state's long-standing rival. There was a failure to recognize, suggest Ganguly and Kapur (2010: 57) "that, despite past successes, the costs of supporting militancy [had come to] outweigh its benefits." In 2014, a string of major terrorist attacks

in Pakistan (most prominently the massacre of 132 school children in Peshawar) seemed to shake Islamabad's calculus somewhat; a more concerted counter-insurgent campaign known as Operation Zarb-e-Azb ('strike of the prophet's sword') in which "the Pakistani military promised a comprehensive operation in the region [specifically, North Waziristan] and determined to 'eliminate these terrorists regardless of hue and color, along with their sanctuaries'" Felbab-Brown 2016: 134<sup>152</sup>). Nonetheless, "there are reasons to doubt how comprehensive and impartial the campaign's choice of militant targets has been. For one, the Pakistani military seems to have given the Afghan Taliban ample time to clear out from the territory and move into Afghanistan" (ibid.). While Operation Zarb-e-Azb proved moderately successful in terms of weakening the TTP (the public backlash following the Peshawar school attack also undermined support for the group), "the military has likely achieved only a temporary victory in Pakistan's long-term fight against extremism" (Weinbaum 2017: 46). The TTP, though weakened, continues to mount major terrorist attacks throughout the country. Key to resolving the issue of militancy more conclusively is Pakistan's policy in Afghanistan. A stable and effective Afghan military is necessary to eliminate the safe havens that TTP and other anti-Pakistan militants use to coordinate and plan attacks (in an ironic reversal of the long-standing reality of Afghan militants using territory in Pakistan for the same purposes): "The TTP and other anti-state forces cannot be entirely defeated so long as they are still able to find sanctuary across the border in Afghanistan" (Weinbaum 2017: 53). And yet, Pakistan continues to hedge, convinced that its ties with the Afghan Taliban, and the campaign to destabilize Afghanistan, is a necessary bulwark against Indian influence moving forward. As Weinbaum (2017: 52) concludes: "the continued patronizing of Afghan Taliban insurgents undermines chances for the kind of stable, unified Afghanistan that can...be to Pakistan's advantage." Despite the fact that Islamic militancy likely constitutes the most significant immediate threat to the country, Pakistan remains concerned with the long-term threat from India.

This is a puzzle, according to Nadiri (2014: 155-6), insofar as one would not expect a rational actor "to accommodate the Afghan Taliban, particularly in light of the costs this accommodation has carried for Pakistani internal and external security."

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<sup>152</sup> Quotation taken from Khan and Walsh (2014).

“Pakistan has departed from structural expectations of security-seeking behaviour,” he argues, and “to explain this deviation” one must highlight “a set of domestic-level imbalances” including “organizational culture, domestic coalitions, and grassroots militancy [which combine] with external security considerations to explain Islamabad’s risky and ultimately destabilizing choice to accommodate the Taliban after 2001” (Nadiri 2014: 168). I argue, by contrast, that the resort to domestic-level considerations is unnecessary for understanding the basic orientation of Pakistani policy; rather, Pakistan’s ‘risky behaviour’ is a condition of the perceptions that are generated within rivalry – given the history of interactions between India and Pakistan, and the consequent belief that future conflict is likely, Pakistan considers itself to be involved in an ongoing confrontation. This fundamentally alters their decision-making calculus; while they certainly recognize that Islamic militancy is a threat and a problem (consider General Kayani’s 2012 remarks in which he “described militancy in FATA as a grave security challenge confronting Pakistan” [Bhatnagar and Mohan 2016: 89]) they nonetheless continue to see India as the largest and most significant security challenge. This belief is not a consequence of personal animosities, domestic politics, or even the organizational culture of the military-intelligence establishment, but rather the dynamics of rivalry and the pressures of the international system.

The other feature of Pakistan’s Afghan policy which is considered puzzling is the negative economic consequences that result from the destabilization of Afghanistan. Weinbaum and Harder (2008: 27), for example, note that “Pakistan’s commercial interests in Afghanistan require a stable neighbour.” Obviously Pakistan, like India, has economic interests in the region, including access to Central Asian energy and the expansion of markets for Pakistani goods. Fair (2008: 216) offers a useful overview of the basic situation:

...it is clearly in Pakistan’s interests to have a stable Afghanistan. A prosperous neighbor would no doubt create numerous opportunities for Pakistani products and services. If Afghanistan were to be pacified and safe roads and other lines of communications could be constructed and safely utilized, Pakistan would have access to the Central Asian markets that it craves. Similarly, a stable Afghanistan

would make critical gas pipelines more feasible (e.g. the proposed Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline).

That India and Pakistan in fact *share* many of these interests has been held out as the basis for potential cooperation between Islamabad and New Delhi; the prospect of economic gains, in this scenario, overcoming any security concerns. As Bhatnagar and Mohan (2016: 98) summarize:

A stable Afghanistan is in the interest of both India and Pakistan, as well as all the major powers. Greater connectivity between Central Asia, South Asia, and the Persian Gulf as a result of prolonged stability in Afghanistan would bring great benefits to both countries and the region as a whole through enhanced trade and energy cooperation.

This was the hope behind, for example, the 2011 ‘Silk Road’ initiative spearheaded by the US, which attempted “to entangle Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and other regional actors in a web of economic interdependence and cooperative relations” (Velbab-Brown 2016: 137). The project created a forum for discussion – the Istanbul Process – which persists to this day, though the more comprehensive economic cooperation originally envisioned has failed to materialize. While bilateral trade with Afghanistan has increased significantly since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 (when it stood at just USD\$25 million) it nonetheless remains significantly below its potential given the ongoing instability and security challenges which Pakistan has, in large measure, perpetuated with its policies (Fair 2008). Recall the example of the APTTA, which Islamabad effectively scuttled through its refusal to extend reciprocal transit rights to India. Pakistan has continuously sacrificed its economic interests at the altar of rivalry, preferring instead to block and frustrate India rather than craft policies which might improve its own, rather dreary, economic outlook (recent growth rates have stagnated, as the economy goes from “bad to worse” [Mangi 2018]).

It is important to note that, much like the situation vis-à-vis security and the threat of domestic militants, Islamabad has not abandoned its economic interests altogether; it

has engaged in development projects in Afghanistan, including offering over USD\$300 million in assistance, “most of which has been directed toward the construction of roads and railways that would connect Pakistan to the energy-rich CARs” (Hanauer and Chalk 2012: 30). The TAPI pipeline, likewise, despite significant delays, continues to inch forward. Opportunities for expanded trade are pursued, and Pakistan remains keen to expand the bilateral relationship with Afghanistan in this regard. Yet to the extent that there is a trade-off between economic opportunity and policies which might enhance Indian interests, Pakistan has opted for obstructionism over cooperation. More broadly, they have continued their support for the insurgency, and have thereby undermined the stability which all agree is a prerequisite for the maximization of potential economic gains. The ‘carrot’ of such gains, available through the cessation of destabilizing activities and cooperation with India and other regional actors, has been insufficiently appealing to alter behaviour. Again, this presents a conundrum for a standard rationalist explanation (particularly in conjunction with the security-related reasons to change course noted above). By contrast, this behaviour is consistent with the expectations of rivalry behaviour; prospective economic gains are simply overwhelmed by the exigencies of rivalry and the associated perceptions they engender: the belief that India is an ongoing, potentially existential threat.

A final consideration that must be addressed is the possibility that Pakistan’s Afghan intervention is produced by *aggressive* anti-Indian designs. (This is the evaluation India itself, for example, has formed.) This possibility was addressed earlier with respect to Pakistan’s pre-2001 Afghan policy (see pages 232-256) and the basic reasons for dismissing it at that point obtain here as well. There is no question that the Taliban insurgency helps to fuel Islamism in the region more broadly. There are clear synergies between the forces of extremism in Afghanistan and the Pakistani tribal regions on one hand, and in Kashmir on the other. This relationship is evident, for example, in the presence in Afghanistan of groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, which has been traditionally focused on the Kashmir issue. It also remains true that Pakistan *does* harbour revisionist designs with respect to Kashmir, and thereby engages in behaviour that is aggressive,

including supporting violence and terrorism intended to ‘bleed’ India.<sup>153</sup> An Afghanistan which can serve as an incubator to such groups is helpful in this effort. The argument that Pakistan’s Afghan policy is fundamentally defensive should not be taken as dismissing or denying such motivations. As was the case with respect to pre-2001 policy, however, the benefits associated with pursuing aggressive anti-Indian designs are *ancillary*; they are not the primary motivators for the intervention.

### **Assessing the Interventions**

Having detailed the Indian and Pakistani interventions in Afghanistan, providing evidence and analysis of both *what* they are doing and *why* they are doing it, we can now briefly evaluate what the Afghanistan case as a whole says with respect to the influence of rivalry on civil conflict intervention. It is worth pointing out that in addition to the within-case inferences that can be made with respect to each intervention, we also have in reality *two* cases for the purposes of comparison (Case 1: Indian intervention; Case 2: Pakistani intervention). In this section I assess the implications of the above within-case evidence and use that assessment as an entry to comparisons between the interventions.

I began by looking at each country’s involvement in Afghanistan pre-2001, going back roughly to partition and the creation of modern-day India and Pakistan in 1947. These discussions were necessary context for the post-2001 discussion, insofar as both India and Pakistan had standing policy in Afghanistan at the time of the American intervention, and this history was relevant for understanding what post-2001 policy would become. During the pre-2001 time period, Afghanistan constituted a peripheral though not insignificant node in India-Pakistan relations (primary concerns included Kashmir, the rest of the border, up until 1971 East Pakistan, the development of nuclear weapons, etc.) with each pursuing its own interests through support to various regimes and/or domestic Afghan factions. New Delhi enjoyed the upper hand for the bulk of this time period, given Afghan-Pakistani disputes about the parameters of the Durand Line

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<sup>153</sup> During the course of the Afghan insurgency there have been, for example, high-profile terrorist attacks – most notably those in Mumbai in 2008, in which the ISI was strongly implicated – targeting India proper. Conflict over Kashmir has similarly continued, with frequent violations of cease fires along the LoC and stops and starts in the official Composite Dialogue peace process between the countries.

and Pakistan's concerns regarding Afghan-supported Pashtun nationalism. This was reinforced as Afghanistan moved into the Soviet (and by extension Indian) orbit in the mid- and late-1970s. The period of the Mujahideen resistance against the Soviet-backed communist government during the 1980s was particularly formative; the US funnelled much of its support for the Mujahideen through Pakistan, and Islamabad developed many of the techniques, networks and expertise for the support of Islamic militants which became a standard piece of their foreign policy playbook. The communist government finally fell in 1992, initiating a brief period of intra-Mujahideen conflict, before the rise of the Taliban in the mid-1990s. When the Taliban seized power, Pakistan finally had a regime in Kabul that was anti-Indian. New Delhi, by contrast, supported the remaining anti-Taliban force in the country, the Northern Alliance, in what amounted to a low-boil but ongoing civil conflict.

The basic structure of this conflict was upended by American intervention in 2001. The US selected the NA as their local proxy, essentially supercharging the NA campaign against the Taliban government through the use of overwhelming American air power. The Taliban was swiftly defeated, and NA fighters entered Kabul triumphantly in November 2001. Shortly thereafter, the Taliban re-emerged as an anti-government insurgency, initiating a new period of civil war which persists to this day. In this scenario, India has intervened on behalf of the Kabul government, while Pakistan has intervened on the side of the insurgency.

The decision-making tied to each of these interventions reflect *anticipated processes* related to the consequences of *not* intervening. Evaluations were made by both New Delhi and Islamabad as to the potential consequences of deferring to the other in terms of influence within Afghanistan. For India, the opportunity associated with the overthrow of the Taliban – which had for years been the source of region-wide Islamic extremism and associated terrorism and violence in both Kashmir and India proper – was to consolidate a friendly Kabul regime, one that would enhance India's security vis-à-vis the ongoing Pakistani campaign to target India and, eventually, revise the status quo in Kashmir. The basis for this perception was the decades of Pakistani behaviour in which they attempted to achieve these goals. For Pakistan, the overthrow of the Taliban represented the reversal of a perceived 'victory' achieved in the late 1990s – the

consolidation of an Afghan regime absent Indian influence that would thereby not create security concerns along its Eastern border. Initially, the American ultimatum to either join or resist US efforts in Afghanistan was filtered through the prism of this interest; they knew the Taliban was ‘gone’ (although futile diplomatic efforts were made to forestall this outcome), and decided that joining with the US (and dropping support for the Taliban) was the best means by which to minimize Indian involvement in the coming post-Taliban era. As the US pursued its narrow security agenda, however, this calculation proved faulty: the empowering of the NA essentially guaranteed significant Indian involvement, as did the composition of the transitional government, which quickly developed close diplomatic and economic ties to New Delhi. Reacting to this reality, Pakistan shifted gears, moving to support – in fact, breathe life into – an embryonic Taliban revival. Again, the consequences of not doing so were considered too great, as an ‘encircling’ India acting through an India-friendly Afghan regime presented the possibility of Indian-fuelled instability in the tribal areas (including Balochi and potentially Pashtun separatism) and even a ‘two-front’ situation in the case of conventional conflict. The basis of this perception was also the decades of experience in the relationship, in which India had engaged in such behaviour and, as evidenced particularly in 1971 but also in other conflicts, deployed military force to decisive effect. The sequence of events indicates that India was largely the ‘first-mover’, seizing an opportunity to consolidate a friendly regime in Kabul, with Pakistan as ‘balancer’ reacting to this attempt by undermining it through support for an insurgency against that regime.

Neither intervention was caused by emotional or psychological hatred (or ‘negative-affect’) as would be expected by the theory of rivalry (Pathological Rivalry) which foregrounds such dynamics. There is simply too little evidence to support such an explanation. The interventions were the product of broadly rational decision-making processes in which the consequences of alternatives were assessed, and this was consistent across multiple leaders and administrations in both countries. The decisive consideration was long-term security given presumed future conflict in the context of ongoing, unbroken rivalry. Both interventions were therefore fundamentally *defensive* in

their orientation.<sup>154</sup> That said, the interventions were not strictly ‘rational’ in the typical understanding of the term, insofar as there were obvious and immediate interests which *should* have (but did not) produce different policies. This contention is more difficult to prove in the Indian case, insofar as the economic, security and rivalry pressures all pushed in more or less the same direction (toward intervention). Nonetheless, the *intensity* and *scope* of the intervention suggests rivalry concerns were decisive. The Pakistani case is clearer, as immediate economic/security interests contradicted rivalry interests, with the latter winning out (toward support for the insurgency). In this way, rivalry can be said to alter a state’s basic preference structure with respect to its rational decision-making calculus; the weight of past experience is such that long-term assessments as to probable outcomes (specifically, that conflict is almost *certain* to occur) tilts preferences toward defensive policies. While the *content* of these calculations differed for both India and Pakistan in the Afghanistan case (in terms of what the relevant experiences were, what form concerns about the future took, and what the resulting policies looked like) the basic structure was the same; this structure, I argue, is the consequence of international rivalry, an appreciation of which is necessary for understanding and explaining what India and Pakistan have done, and to a large extent are doing, in Afghanistan post-2001. This explanation is superior to typical and widespread assessments of Indian and (in particular) Pakistani behaviour which implicitly or explicitly suggest that decision-making is beholden to ‘obsession’ or ‘paranoia’, or to unique domestic dynamics tied to organizational culture, domestic politics, public pressures, or religious and/or ethnic affiliations.

What are the implications of these findings for the generalizability of the rational theory of rivalry and its consequences for civil conflict intervention? First, and most fundamentally, it suggests that the findings *are* generalizable; because it does not rely on

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<sup>154</sup> Again, this is not a comment on the *broader* intentions of either side. That is, I am not arguing that both India and Pakistan are ‘defensive’ or ‘satisfied’ states in general, and that any security competition between them is merely a consequence of misperception. Rather, the *specific* interventions themselves are defensive. The consequences of rivalry – the experiences of conflict and the reputations for hostility that result – do of course promote cautious interpretations of present behaviour. Thus one rival’s intervention is viewed as aggressive by the other, reinforcing the import of one’s own defensive intervention. But again, this (security dilemma-like) dynamic is contained within the space of the intervention itself, and need not necessarily apply to the larger relationship. As mentioned, for example, one need not deny that Pakistan is revisionist and India status quo with respect to Kashmir.

idiosyncratic explanations tied to particular leaders or more complex and contingent explanations linked to (potentially multiple) domestic variables, there is a greater likelihood that the basic dynamics at work can be found in other cases. Thus, other instances of civil conflict intervention may also be amenable to the rivalry explanation. Second, and relatedly, the consequences of rivalry can be considered quite powerful; in both the India and Pakistan cases, we see other, non-rivalry considerations basically overwhelmed by the dictates of rivalry. Thus, in exploring other rivalries in the international system, there is a good chance that whatever the particular circumstances at work and the potentially different bases of rivalry that might exist – ideological, religious, ethnic, positional, regional, etc. – the preference structure of rivalry that is created through multiple and ongoing interactions as filtered through the imperatives of the international system should be operative. Which is to say, cases which differ on multiple dimensions, with unique histories and circumstances, are nonetheless amenable to analysis through a single theoretical framework. The next two chapters engage this possibility through case studies of other civil conflict interventions involving international rivals.

### **Policy Implications<sup>155</sup>**

I conclude this chapter with a short policy discussion. While the scope of the Afghanistan war precludes a comprehensive engagement with policy considerations, it is a natural outgrowth of the preceding analysis to comment on those facets of policy which are implicated by the above findings. This is particularly true insofar as Pakistan's continued support for the insurgency has been identified by many as a crucial factor in the failure to achieve stability even after nearly two decades of fighting. The inability to change Pakistan's policy remains, recall, the "great strategic failure" of the war effort, according to Steve Coll (and he is not alone in this assessment). Before briefly commenting on future prospects, the balance of the present discussion is retrospective and diagnostic – in other words, *assuming* failure in Afghanistan, what might policy makers have done to avoid such an outcome (lessons which will be important moving

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<sup>155</sup> Portions of this section are informed by Mitton (2014).

forward, in the context of the next international crisis or impasse which might require some form of international response)?

Two main tracks of international (primarily American) policy in Afghanistan since 2001 are relevant here. These are the relationships that were cultivated with India and Pakistan, respectively. With respect to the former, a decision was made to pursue increased cooperation and closer relations. The signing of the US-India civilian nuclear agreement in 2005, for example, sent a clear message to Pakistan that US-Indian relations were a priority for Washington. Predictably, Islamabad viewed such developments as indicative of America's true allegiances in the region. "American strategists," Fair (2012: 250) writes,

did not recognize the impossibility of successfully pursuing the twinned policies of cultivating Pakistan's support in the struggle against violent Islamist extremism (at a significant cost to the Pakistani state) while also pledging American support to help India become a global power. Equally problematic, the United States has encouraged Indian involvement in Afghanistan without regard to Pakistan's concerns...

Of course, it could be argued that policymakers were aware of the basic trade-off at stake, and simply valued the benefits of a closer relationship with India more than Pakistan's cooperation in Afghanistan. Yet this recognition does not obviate the fact that US-Indian rapprochement *did* serve to anger the Pakistanis. More likely, given the much-publicized emphasis on Pakistan's importance to coalition success, the US felt it could manoeuvre between the two, with significant aid and diplomatic tact off-setting any resentment over perceived biases toward India. As the rivalry framework would predict, however, Islamabad has not been so understanding, viewing US support as essentially zero-sum. Ultimately, US support for India, and concomitant increases in Indian activity in Afghanistan, have significantly exacerbated Pakistan's rivalry-related fears and insecurities. Most recently, the Trump administration suggested publicly that India could do even "more" in Afghanistan, such as stepping up on the security front, particularly as the US edges (slowly but, one would imagine, inevitably) toward the exit. There is

recognition, of course, that this would likely anger the Pakistanis (see Clary 2017); the US may be willing to deal with such an outcome. But they should be aware just how *entrenched* that opposition is likely to be, and that it will be exceedingly difficult to ‘change’ Pakistani perceptions using other policy levers (this last fact should be clear given the minimal effect approximately USD\$33 billion in aid has had over the last seventeen years, frustration over which led the administration to announce in January 2018 that it would suspend roughly USD\$255 million in aid to Islamabad).

Beyond the diplomatic embrace of India, however, the most central pivot point in terms of American policy is likely the decision to empower the NA in 2001 and, subsequently, allow it to occupy Kabul. As discussed above, this was a decision largely beholden to the exigencies of the moment and the priority of securing military victory over the Taliban and al Qaida with minimal US casualties. While US policymakers were peripherally aware that such a move was not desired by Pakistan, they did not assign proper weight to the long term implications of intervening in this way, of empowering a force considered to be one side of an ongoing proxy conflict between two proximate regional rivals. They may have believed that such dynamics were alterable or manageable (particularly if there was the perception that India-Pakistan animosity was anyway emotional or ‘primordial’ or in some other sense non-rational). By 2009, they were largely disabused of this belief, as made clear by the analysis of Islamabad station sent back to the State Department as part of a strategy review: “A grand bargain that promises development or military assistance in exchange for severing ties [with the Taliban] will be insufficient to wean Pakistan from policies that reflect accurately its most deep-seated fears.”<sup>156</sup> There is no guarantee that an alternative choice in 2001 would have made a significant difference; to the extent that India would have still had incentives to cultivate ties with a post-Taliban regime it is overwhelmingly likely that Pakistan would have responded by attempting to mitigate that influence through an intervention of its own.

The point is not to suggest that policymakers made fatal mistakes in either the execution of Operation Enduring Freedom or in building closer ties with New Delhi over

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<sup>156</sup> WikiLeaks. Reviewing our Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy. (2009, September 23). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2295\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2295_a.html)

the past decade and a half. The benefits of either action (swift military victory; a strong relationship with a viable regional partner) might well outweigh the present costs. But to the extent that each of these developments helped created an environment in which the India-Pakistan rivalry has become central to the war in Afghanistan, policymakers should be made aware of the trade-offs that were generated. If, as is widely acknowledged, Pakistan's continued support of militant groups in Afghanistan is a key inhibitor of stabilization efforts and overall mission success, then a better appreciation of regional political and strategic realities – and how US/NATO actions impacted them – might have afforded alternative courses of action and an avoidance or mitigation of the Pakistani problem. Musharraf's early concerns about the Northern Alliance could have been taken more seriously. Recognizing the pre-existing civil war situation, the US and its allies may have opted to minimize tensions by remaining relatively neutral as to who would hold power in a post-Taliban era. A more purposeful Pakistani role in this regard (one that went beyond simply being a logistical convenience) might have been useful – given their influence with the Taliban and many Pashtuns more generally – and simultaneously alleviated Pakistani fears regarding strategic encirclement as India's proxy remained marginal rather than central to power structures in Afghanistan. Similarly, greater sensitivity as to the *extent* of Islamabad's Indian concerns might have engendered more diplomatic caution in dealing with New Delhi. At the very least, as mentioned above, the impossibility of a "twinned" policy would have been recognized.

## CHAPTER 8: THE SYRIAN-ISRAELI RIVALRY AND INTERVENTION IN LEBANON (1975-1985)

*“It is better to judge dispositions, not intentions” – Israel Defence Force Chief of Staff (1974-78)  
Mordecai Gur<sup>157</sup>*

In this chapter, I investigate Israeli and Syrian intervention in Lebanon from 1975 to 1985. This time period includes the Lebanese civil war (1975-76) as well as what is known as the Lebanon War (1982-1985), which was triggered by direct Israeli intervention into Lebanon as part of ‘Operation Peace for Galilee’. More generally, the period is understood as a protracted Israeli-Syrian confrontation in Lebanon, occurring in the context of prolonged violence and domestic political turmoil in the country. The case is illuminative as a comparative exercise vis-à-vis the detailed case study of the India-Pakistan rivalry and intervention in Afghanistan outlined in previous chapters. Specifically, what can the theory of rivalry intervention developed in this dissertation tell us about Israeli and Syrian behaviour in Lebanon? Do the specifics of the case lend support to the basic claims of Rational Rivalry theory and the related explanation for how and why rivals engage in off-setting, balancing interventions in extra-dyadic civil conflicts? Were Syrian and Israeli decision-makers motivated by hatred of each other, seeking to block and punish each other at any opportunity? Alternatively, were the interventions predicated on straightforward assessments of immediate interests (economic, security, etc.)? Or, as Rational Rivalry would predict, were decision-makers primarily concerned with the *long-term* security implications of unchecked intervention, and the strategic advantages that would accrue to their rival should influence and control in Lebanon be achieved?

As the following evidence makes clear, the facts of the case support the Rational Rivalry explanation. As was the case with India and Pakistan in Afghanistan, both Israel and Syria were primarily concerned about the potential implications for the broader rivalry than they were the immediate outcomes of the civil conflict and/or political struggle in Lebanon. They pursued their intervention strategies in a manner that was predictable and rational from the perspective of ongoing, continuous rivalry and

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<sup>157</sup> Memorandum of Conversation March 12, 1975. Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections.

expectations about future conflict. Indeed, the patterns of intervention, and the associated rationale for behaviour, are remarkably consistent with the findings of the India-Pakistan case. Syrian-Israeli intervention in Lebanon therefore supports the theory of rivalry and the explanation for rivalry intervention developed in this dissertation.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I offer a brief overview of the Syrian-Israeli rivalry, providing the context in which both states considered the Lebanese theatre in 1975. Next, I describe the domestic circumstances in Lebanon, outlining the basic parameters of the civil conflict situation and the opportunities for intervention that were present at the time. I then detail both Syrian and Israeli behaviour vis-à-vis Lebanon from 1975-1985, a period which included complex, evolving policies on the part of each rival, the sequence of which is important for assessing the validity of the Rational Rivalry explanation. Finally, I conclude by assessing the overall fit of the case with the expectations derived from the India-Pakistan case presented in Chapter 7.

### **The Syrian-Israeli Rivalry<sup>158</sup>**

As part of the broader Arab-Israeli rivalry, the relationship between Israel and Syria has been marked by repeated confrontation and war. Three wars have been fought (in 1948, 1967 and 1973) along with numerous crises and disputes; Israel's territorial acquisitions in the Golan Heights during the 1967 war in particular have generated prolonged and enduring hostility, as Syria has consistently expressed its desire to re-

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<sup>158</sup> Though all historical writing is fraught with complexity and subject to potential biases related to the interpretation of documentary evidence (seminal contributions on the philosophy of history as an academic discipline include Collingwood 1936, Carr 1961, and the essays collected in White 2010) this is particularly true of historical interpretations of the Arab-Israeli conflict. An ongoing debate exists amongst historians with respect to major aspects of the conflict, often – though not always – turning on which side – Arab or Israeli – is most culpable for perpetuating violence (with the so-called “New Historians” challenging traditional – “Old” – scholars by introducing more evidence from the Arab perspective). See for example the discussions in Shlaim (2004), Slater (2002) and Karsh (1997). This section attempts to avoid such controversies by offering a straightforward – to the extent this is possible – narrative of the series of events that constitute the ongoing Syrian-Israeli rivalry, eschewing judgement as to culpability while nonetheless addressing perceptions and intentions where appropriate. Obviously the question of historiography cannot be sidestepped entirely, but the focus of this dissertation on the cumulative effects of prolonged and ongoing conflict (the reality of which neither side of the ‘New Historians’ debate contests) minimizes the centrality of such considerations. Further, the following historical narrative draws on accounts from both ‘old’ historians (such as Moshe Moaz and Itamar Rabinovich) and ‘new’ (such as Benny Morris and Avi Shlaim).

establish pre-1967 borders. Following the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty of 1979, Syria became Israel's primary antagonist in the region, its desire to revise the status quo tempered by an asymmetry in conventional military capabilities. In this section, I offer a brief account of the development of the rivalry up to the period of intervention in Lebanon (1975-1985) which is the focus of the latter half of the chapter. As was the case in Chapter 5 vis-à-vis the India-Pakistan rivalry, these conflicts and crises are crucial in terms of establishing the context in which the interventions of interest occurred. The rivalry reputations that informed threat assessments in 1975 were the product of repeated interactions in the preceding decades, leading to both specific and general attributions regarding likely future behaviour (a dynamic well-captured by the quotation which opens the Chapter from Israeli Defence Force Chief of Staff (1974-78) Mordecai Gur; the depth of experience for both states offered powerful evidence regarding what the other side was likely to do – its *disposition* – irrespective of what it insisted its actual intentions to be).

### *Nature of the Rivalry*

The identity of Israel as a Jewish state and the predominately Muslim character of the Arab nations arrayed against it (including Syria) mean that the Arab-Israeli conflict has an inescapable religious/ethnic dimension. The Palestinian issue in many ways at the centre of the dispute is fundamentally a question about the rights of an ethnic and religious minority vis-à-vis the Jewish majority in Israel. For a nation like Syria, solidarity with the Palestinian cause is largely predicated on identification with their co-ethnics/co-religionists. Antagonism toward Israel, similarly, is often justified – particularly when appealing to the public, or on the part of the public itself – in thinly-veiled (indeed, sometimes not veiled at all) xenophobic and anti-Semitic terms. Israeli fears, likewise, are often justified by pointing out that in a regional context, they are a relatively small Jewish population encircled by much larger Arab neighbours (while portions of the Israeli population engage in xenophobic rhetoric of their own). Yet as we will see, the driving consideration behind the Israeli-Syrian rivalry, specifically, is *territory*. The creation of the state of Israel in 1948 immediately triggered a dispute over first, the existence of the state at all; second, its ability to claim sovereignty over a patch

of land in the former British Palestine; and later, third, over the parameters of its borders. After the war in 1967, the territorial dimension would grow even more acute. The point is not to obscure the religious/ethnic component of the rivalry – indeed, the *genesis* of the territorial dispute is rooted in a) the perceived need for a distinct Jewish state and b) the unwillingness/inability of Palestinian Arabs to live as a minority within it. This led to the civil war in 1948, the subsequent Arab intervention, and the decades of conflict which have ensued. Which is to say, religion and ethnicity – and the emotions of hatred and hostility which, unfortunately, commitment to these identifies can often produce – are baked into the clay of the dispute; this is not a reality the present analysis is meant to deny. Rather, *once set in motion*, territory became the most salient dimension for Israeli and Syrian leaders and, as conflicts and disputes accumulated, the dynamics of rivalry became operative. The rivalry is therefore strikingly similar to the India-Pakistan rivalry in many ways: a political shock in the form of the creation of a new state,<sup>159</sup> predicated on an ethnic/religious character; a subsequent war over the territorial parameters of the new state(s); continued dissatisfaction with the territorial status quo; ongoing conflicts and confrontations. Like the India-Pakistan rivalry, the Syrian-Israeli is regional, territorial, *and* religious/ethnic. Also like the India-Pakistan case, moreover, these dimensions now operate through the logic of rivalry whereby past behaviour engenders the anticipation of future conflict which produces prudent, pessimistic, and fundamentally defensive policy.

#### *1948 Arab-Israeli war*

Following a state of civil war in British Palestine in 1947, the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 precipitated inter-state conflict between the new Jewish entity and several of its Arab neighbours. Forces from Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq (as well as smaller contingents from Saudi Arabia and Yemen) intervened in May of 1948 to prosecute the Palestinian cause (Ilan 1996; Shlaim 2007). The coalition was far from a united front, and military planning was allegedly poor between the various Arab

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<sup>159</sup> Technically two in the case of India and Pakistan, though practically the creation of Pakistan was akin to a succession from an-already existing Indian state.

capitals; even the purported goals of the invasion were unclear, as different justifications were invoked at different times, ranging from the destruction of the Jewish state to simply the protection of its Arab population (see the discussion in Morris 2008). Several stages of fighting occurred – with intermittent truces and cease-fires – until armistice agreements were signed in 1949, bringing hostilities to an end. The result of the war left Israel with more territory than had been envisioned by UN partition plans.<sup>160</sup>

Even as it occurred in the context of a larger Arab-Israeli conflict, we concern ourselves here with the Syrian-Israeli relationship specifically.<sup>161</sup> Syrian involvement predated the introduction of regular troops in 1948, with Damascus sending irregular troops to support Palestinian fighters during the civil war in 1947 (Tal 2003). This was followed by the introduction of approximately 3,000 regular Syrian troops in May 1948.<sup>162</sup> Though, as mentioned, Israel was successful in extending its boundaries overall, Syria was able to capture “three small areas west of its international boundary with Palestine, falling within the Palestine territory awarded to Israel by the UN” (Rabil 2003: 6). This included a “strategic border area north of [Lake Tiberias]” (Maoz 1995: 19). The total size of the three areas was nonetheless small, approximately 66.5 square kilometers of land (Landis 2007). Yet, as will be discussed below, these areas would largely “become the focus of the [Syrian-Israeli] conflict” over the subsequent two decades (Moaz 1995: 19).

Compared to other fronts and the involvement of the other Arab forces, regular Syrian activity in the war was relatively limited, owing partly to the ineffectiveness of Syrian military training and arms/equipment. Joshua Landis (2007) argues, additionally, that “inter-Arab” considerations were actually foremost for Damascus, with concerns over Transjordan gains, and the future balance of power in the Arab world, outweighing any desire to eliminate the Israeli state (see also Slater 2002; for a discussion of the inter-Arab dimension across several Arab-Israeli wars see Kober 2002); Moshe Maoz (1995), for his part, suggests that the prospect of potential Israeli retaliation modulated Syrian

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<sup>160</sup> As Rabil (2003: 5) explains: Israel’s forces were able to repel the Arab armies...with the result that Israel expanded its boundaries beyond those demarcated by the 1947 UN partition resolution.”

<sup>161</sup> The historiography of the Arab-Israeli conflict has increasingly emphasized the utility of thinking about the conflict in these disaggregated, bilateral terms. See footnote 158 above.

<sup>162</sup> By the end of the war the number had increased to roughly 8,000 (Knudsen 2001).

behaviour. The result, in any event, was a “cautious policy in Palestine” (Landis 2007: 196). Towards the end of the conflict, Syria attempted to fortify and entrench its limited territorial gains by introducing additional troops to areas it controlled in what is now southern Lebanon, in order “to secure the Syrian flank against deep Israeli intrusion into Lebanon, which was outflanking the Syrian deployment from the west to the east” (Tal 2003: 426). (Even at this incipient stage, therefore, the territory of southern Lebanon was recognized as important in strategic terms.)

Disagreements as to territorial dispensations in these and other areas along the Syrian-Israeli border (particularly in the region of Lake Tiberias) coloured the conclusion of official hostilities. Indeed, the relatively limited scope of Syria’s involvement does not obviate the basic incompatibility of Syrian and Israeli aims in the war. Syria was in fact the last Arab power to sign an armistice with Israel, doing so in July 1949 (Egypt, Transjordan, and Lebanon had signed them earlier; only Iraq refused to sign one at all). Damascus insisted on seeing its territorial gains reflected in the agreement, even suggesting that a full peace agreement was possible so long as it left Syria “in possession of half the Jordan River (the line running down its middle from north to south) and half the Sea of Galilee [Lake Tiberias], along with the (Israeli) strip of territory along its eastern shoreline” (Morris 2008: 389). The Israelis rejected the offer. Ultimately the armistice agreement designated the disputed areas as Demilitarized Zones (DMZs), though disagreement persisted as to whether they were technically Israeli territory in which military deployment was barred (the Israeli point of view) or neutral territory in which neither country was sovereign (the Syrian position) (Morris 2008; for additional accounts of the armistice negotiations see Shalev 1993; Drysdale and Hinnebusch 1991; and Rabinovich 1991). The confusion became the basis for subsequent “violent disputes and clashes which erupted periodically” between the two countries throughout the 1950s (Moaz 1995: 21). Thus, despite the relatively limited scope of direct Israeli-Syrian fighting during the 1948 war, the relationship between the two countries became “the most acrimonious” of all the bilateral relationships in the Arab-Israeli conflict (Rabinovich 2008: 177).

### *Border disputes (1949-1967)*

As mentioned, the contested territory of the DMZs – “small, yet strategically significant patches of land” (Muslih 1993: 611) – became the basis for repeated clashes in the years after the war.<sup>163</sup> Muslih (1993) calls them the “armistice disputes”, reflecting the extent to which conflicting interpretations of the 20 July 1948 agreement served as justification for competing claims and consequent hostilities.<sup>164</sup> “From 1951 to 1956,” writes Donald Neff (1994: 29), “the overarching dispute” between Israel and Syria “was over the sovereignty of the DMZs.” Though remaining below the level of all-out war, this early period of the rivalry was crucial for locking in conflict between the two countries. A clear pattern of behaviour emerged, such that the regular use of military force became entrenched as a means by which to contest and protect opposing territorial claims. As Rabil (2003: 14) summarizes: “Israel’s continuous annexation of the DMZ and Syria’s determination to check Israeli advances dominated much of the history” of the period. In the immediate aftermath of the war, Israel attempted to bolster its hold on the disputed areas by establishing settlements “manned by farmer-soldiers” (Rabil 2003: 9), arguing that even if the DMZs precluded military deployments, Israeli sovereignty allowed for development activity. Syria disputed this interpretation, and the Israeli activities resulted in minor skirmishes between Israeli and Syrian forces (Neff 1994). Following these sporadic, low-level exchanges, a more significant impasse arose in 1951 over Israel’s planned drainage project of Lake Hula, intended to reclaim large portions of land for cultivation.<sup>165</sup> Syria objected to the project, arguing that it would alter the topography of

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<sup>163</sup> Muslih’s (1993: 613) overview of the situation is useful: “At issue was the DMZ, an area of less than 100 square miles stretching from above Lake Huleh to south of the Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberias). The zone was composed of three separate sectors of land along the Israel-Syria border. The northern sector was formed by Syrian, Palestinian, and Israeli villages, while the central and southern sectors were more important from a strategic point of view because they were heavily populated and straddled the Jordan River between the Sea of Galilee and Lake Huleh.”

<sup>164</sup> Moaz (1995: 27) describes the basic positions: “From Israel’s point of view, these zones were clearly situated within its sovereign territory delimited by the United Nations partition resolution of 1947, and thus could be exploited for economic development and other civilian activities, without any restrictions. Syria, on the other hand, which had occupied these zones during the 1948 war and evacuated them under the 1949 Armistice Agreement, not only denied Israel’s sovereignty over these areas, but claimed a *locus standis* (or a recognized authority of intervention) in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).”

<sup>165</sup> Though the lake itself was not in the DMZ, the Israeli plan required part of the work to occur in the disputed territory, and the effects of the drainage would similarly have effected the area.

the area and accord a military advantage to Israeli forces (Rabil 2003). “Rather than settling this dispute by agreement,” writes Moaz (1995: 28),

Israel adopted a ‘brinkmanship policy’ towards Syria and continued operations after a few days; Israeli workers were then fired at by local Arabs, apparently Syrian proxies or soldiers. The situation deteriorated further, with more exchanges of fire between the two parties, apparently adopting ‘extreme positions’. Israel, in particular, ‘hardened’ its stance and late in March 1951 forcibly evacuated the inhabitants of two Arab villages in the DMZ. A few days later, Israel, for the first time since the 1948 war, dispatched a patrol to al-Hamma village which was nominally under Israeli sovereignty but in fact under Syrian domination. The Syrian army shot and killed seven Israeli soldiers (formally policemen) of that patrol...Israel...reacted by bombing a Syrian military outpost and a police station near al-Hamma, as well as by destroying several Syrian villages inside the DMZ. Two women were killed and six men wounded in the air attack.

A month later, in May, Syria and Israeli troops fought for control of a village in the disputed territory north of Lake Tiberias, resulting in casualties on both sides (ibid.). The dispute was ultimately settled via UN intervention and consecutive Security Council resolutions (92 & 93) outlining conditions for withdrawal (United Nations Security Council Resolution 92, 1951 & United Nations Security Council Resolution 93, 1951), though in practical terms the result was a “de facto division of the DMZs” (Neff 1994: 31). According to Neff (1994: 31):

Syria gained control of the village of al-Hamma in the southern zone, all of the tiny northern zone and, in the central zone, the uninhabited narrow strip of land on the east side of the Jordan River. Israel took the rest: most of the southern DMZ, including the villages of Nuqayb and al-Samra, and all of the central sector west of the Jordan.

There is disagreement as to which side behaved more aggressively in the dispute (both in terms of initiation and once hostilities had begun<sup>166</sup>). In either event, however, it and earlier clashes helped establish the use of force as the *modus vivendi* with respect to the disputed territories. According to Moaz (1995: 28), for example, the Israelis became “convinced...that the conflict with Syria was a zero-sum struggle, and that Israel should unilaterally pursue its development projects without trying to secure Syrian consent.” At the same time, he notes the “deep sense of fear...among many Syrians of what they considered Israeli aggression and expansionism”<sup>167</sup> (Moaz 1995: 32). These lessons and perceptions were reinforced by subsequent skirmishes, such as the dispute in late 1955 and early 1956 over Syrian fishing rights in Lake Tiberias, which resulted in a major Israeli military raid and subsequent Syrian retaliation (Slater 2002). “The Israeli raid,”

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<sup>166</sup> Moaz (1995), for examples, writes about the “clamour for war in Syria” that he believes triggered the Syrian push into Israeli territory in May, as a response to Israeli attacks over the Hula drainage project. Conversely, Shalev (1993: 45-49) asserts that “in the first years of the armistice regime it was Israel that tried unilaterally to effect changes in the status quo in the DMZ... [initiating] activity on the ground to change the status quo in its favor and secure full control of the area. Many of the ensuing incidents were triggered by Israel’s attempts to extend the areas under cultivation on Arab-owned land, with the Syrians opening fire in response” (quoted in Slater 2002: 88).

<sup>167</sup> In support of this interpretation Moaz (1995: 32) cites “British diplomatic reports from Damascus during the early 1950s: [There had been] ‘an increasing fear of the growing power of Israel and the threat which that involves’; ‘Syria’s external affairs may be summed up as acute fear of Israel...Syrians are obsessed with the danger of Israeli expansion’; and, according to a senior Syrian leader: ‘In the eyes of the Syrian people as a whole, Israeli aggression was Syria’s danger No. 1.’” Moaz additionally points to an Israeli Foreign Office research paper published in early 1953 as evidence of “Israeli perceptions of hostile Syrian intentions (as well as Syrian perceptions of Israel)”, citing the following passage: “Of all Arab states, Syria has always stood out in the first line in its attitude and action against Zionism and Israel. This extreme approach – which is not typical only of Shishakli’s Syria has stemmed from several basic reasons... Syria has been the cradle of the Arab nationalist movement...hence its Arab-racial and Muslim sensitivity and intense opposition to European colonization and to its extensions, either real or imaginary in the Arab and Islamic East... The ambition to implement the union of ‘Natural Syria’, is one of the most important causes for Syria’s extreme attitudes towards Israel... The Syrian nationalists are worried about a Christian-Jewish (and anti-Muslim) association [i.e. between Lebanon and Israel]...hence Syria’s interest in the Galilee, and its ambition to sever it from Israel...cutting off...the water sources in the north from Israel. Syrian politicians...believe that Israel will not be satisfied with its territory and present boundaries...the enhanced immigration to Israel...the economic difficulties and the scarcity of land and water sources...would prompt Israel in the not so far distant future to look for new living space. Its expansionist tendency would be northward...the fear of Israel in Syria is great and hence its extremism and the strong desire to harm Israel and hasten its defeat...Syria regards itself – and justly – as the only Arab country that had not been defeated in the war against Israel...Syria demands today...to divide the DMZ...by delimiting the Jordan, Lake Tiberias and the Hula as the border [as this would] give Syria an opportunity to intervene in Israel’s water projects and disrupt [them]...The transfer of part of the territory of Mandatory Palestine to Syria would promote the prestige of the rulers and would help to strengthen their position in Syria...Shishakli’s insecure position forces him to adopt extremism and to use many anti-Israeli slogans and threats...The changes for a real peace between Syria and Israel are very slim, for according to objective geographic factors, the very existence of Israel poses a security problem, and hurts Syrian national feelings and the chances for Arab unity” (quoted in Moaz 1995: 35).

writes Moaz (1995: 52), “further induced Syria to strengthen its military force, purchase more Soviet arms, entrench its military and political ties with Egypt, and seek a military alliance with Jordan and Lebanon.” In discussions with Beirut, Syria emphasized the strategic importance of the Beqa valley, particularly in the context of a potential Israeli attack (*ibid.*). (The question of the Beqa would become central with respect to Syrian perceptions of Lebanon between 1975-1985, as discussed below.)

After 1956, the focus of the confrontations shifted further to the question of water resources and water rights (for a comprehensive treatment of the water-dimension during this time period see Sosland 2008, esp. Chapter 3). “In the ten years prior to the 1967 war,” writes Neff (1994: 35), “Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria all sought to build diversion projects to gain their share of the Jordan River.” These projects generated another series of clashes (three incidents – in 1962, 1964 and 1966 – once again warranting UN intervention) between Israeli and Syrian forces.<sup>168</sup> The brief union between Syria and Egypt in 1958-1961 (forming the United Arab Republic) likely exacerbated Israeli fears of Syrian aggression (tied now to a potential coordinated two-front attack)<sup>169</sup>, while Israel’s persistent development projects and settlement activity – backed by force when necessary – reinforced Syrian perceptions as to Israel’s expansionist designs. There was general apprehension throughout the period that another war was likely, even certain. The armistice agreements, after all, were (quite explicitly) not considered to be peace agreements, and relations between Israel and Syria, in particular, continued to be hostile.

In 1964, likely frustrated by their inability to prevent Israeli water projects, Syria embarked on its own diversion project on the Jordan river, channelling tributaries as far

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<sup>168</sup> Rabil (2003: 15-16) describes the typical “pattern of action and reaction” characterizing many such clashes: “Israel would move tractors and equipment, often guarded by police, into disputed areas of the DMZ. From its high ground positions, Syria would fire at those advancing, and would frequently shell Israeli settlements in the Huleh Valley. Israel would retaliate with excessive raids on Syrian positions, including the use of air power.”

<sup>169</sup> Moaz (1995: 70) writes that “according to Israeli allegations and complaints, during the UAR period (1958-61) numerous attacks were made by Syrian troops against Israeli villages along the border as well as fishing and police boats on Lake Tiberias, namely: 100 attacks during 1958; 50 during 1959; 67 during 1960; and 25 during 1961.” He also points out, however, that “at least several of these verbal and military attacks against Israel were provoked by Israeli military assaults and actions against Syrian positions.” Nonetheless, Knudsen (2001: 217) argues that “the prospect of the Syrians working in tandem with Egypt and armed with Soviet hardware was of great concern to Israeli military strategists.”

north as the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon. This prompted yet another series of clashes, with Israel eventually preventing completion of the project through air strikes, destroying Syrian engineering equipment in the process (Muslih 1993). By 1966, the escalation of the Jordan river dispute had marked “a new and violent phase...in the Syrian-Israeli confrontation” (Moaz 1995: 74). Damascus sponsored Palestinian guerilla operations<sup>170</sup> inside Israel, while Syrian regular forces initiated border incidents against the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) (Oren 2002). These “ever-accelerating acts of violence” would eventually lead to the outbreak of war in 1967 (Neff 1994: 37).

The period between the wars was clearly one of continued and ongoing conflict. Disagreements over the dispensation of the DMZs, further complicated by the vital water resources which flowed through them and the surrounding areas, effectively precluded any abatement of violence post-1948. The means by which disputes were settled became established, and each side came to believe that retaliation and future skirmishes were inevitable. Israel’s behaviour reflected the belief that its own interests and policies were best pursued through force, and that any negotiation with Damascus was largely futile given demonstrated Syrian intransigence (while declarations and resolutions from the UN were mostly ineffective in altering on-the-ground realities). Any attempts to cultivate, develop and/or settle the land that Israel believed was rightly its territory (on the basis of the UN partition plan of 1947) were met inescapably by Syrian hostility (the Arab states had, of course, rejected the UN plan, and Syria had successfully fought to gain some of the territory in 1948). Conversely, for Syria, the persistent Israeli efforts in this regard, and the decisive use of force to retaliate against Syrian attempts to block them, suggested that Israel was implacably expansive, driven to use and seize greater portions of land through the exercise of superior military power. These basic perceptions were of course amplified and coloured by the symbolic and ideational incongruities of a Jewish state confronting an Arab (and primarily Muslim) adversary; additionally, the Palestinian question, domestic political changes and turmoil (particularly in Syria, where a neo-Bathist regime seized power in 1966 on a platform of hostility toward Israel), and the other fronts in the Arab-Israeli conflict (most prominently the Egyptian), all played a role

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<sup>170</sup> The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded in 1964; Damascus also had close connections with Yasir Arafat’s Fatah organization, another Palestinian liberation movement.

in complicating the bilateral relationship. Yet the broader pattern of Israeli-Syrian relations during this period corresponds with the basic structure of rivalry we saw, for example, in the India-Pakistan case: an initial war; an unsatisfactory (for at least one party, though in this case there were two) territorial divide; a cycle of small and recurring clashes eventually escalating to another major confrontation.

### *1967 Arab-Israeli war*

Though the conflict itself was brief (it is often referred to as the ‘Six Day War’) the literature on the 1967 Arab-Israeli war is voluminous, reflecting the extent to which the events of June 5-10 would reshape (quite literally) the landscape of the Middle East in their aftermath (for useful overviews of the war see Dupuy 1978; Morris 2001; Pollack 2002; Oren 2002; Louis and Shlaim 2012). Once again, here, we concentrate primarily on the Israeli-Syrian portion of a war that involved multiple fronts. The impact of the conflict for Syria was devastating; a sweeping Israeli victory saw Syrian forces decimated and Israel in control of large swaths of new territory, including the Golan Heights. Much like the 1971 war between India and Pakistan, the lessons derived from the 1967 war would reverberate across subsequent decades. If 1948 opened the door to rivalry, and the inter-war border disputes laid the framework, the war in 1967 cast the conflict in stone – the scope of the territorial dispute was significantly expanded, and the dispensation to use force confirmed – for both sides.

As mentioned above, the 1967 war (at least on the Syrian front) was largely a product of the “cycle of raids and retaliations” between Israel and Syria during the inter-war period (Rabil 2003: 19). Oren (2002) recounts that Israeli leaders had become so frustrated by Syrian attacks by the spring of 1967 (in particular the Syrian-sponsored Palestinian raids) that they committed to full-scale retaliation at the next provocation. The moment came in April 1967; following a Palestinian attack on Israeli infrastructure along the border, Israeli tractors were moved in to the southern DMZ, where they were promptly fired upon by Syrian forces looking down from the Golan Heights. This gave the Israelis justification for retaliation, launching air strikes against Syrian villages, and downing several Syrian war planes in a dog fight over Damascus (Knudsen 2001).

The momentum for war continued over the subsequent month (according to Shlaim [2012b: 104], the air battle described above “started the countdown to the” war). Finally, on 5 June, Israel launched a surprise attack on Egypt, destroying the bulk of the Egyptian air force before it could leave the ground. Whether the decision was primarily defensive (a pre-emptive attack in anticipation of an impending Arab invasion) or offensive (an unprovoked aggression designed to seize additional territory), is the subject of significant controversy and disagreement, both in the region, between the participants, and even amongst historians.<sup>171</sup> In either event, once hostilities had begun in the west, the northern front with Syria opened as well. In truth, news of Egypt’s decisive defeat (accomplished in just a few hours) had already travelled to Damascus via Moscow, meaning the anticipated two-front advantage had been obviated: “Syria must have realized then that it was defeated even before the first Syrian shot was fired” (Knudsen 2001: 219). This knowledge greatly tempered the Syrian enthusiasm for war, though it was too late to avoid conflict entirely (Seale 1990). Moaz (1995: 101) describes the early action:

originally two Syrian armoured columns were assigned to break through towards Tiberias and Upper Galilee respectively, but in fact Syrian troops conducted only two small ground attacks on two Israeli *kibbutzim* [settlements] near the international boundary. Earlier, in the late morning hours of 5 June, Syrian planes attacked several targets in northern Israel, notably in the Haifa Bay area, and Tiberias. Israel shot down ten Syrian MiGs and subsequently attacked Syrian airfields, and destroyed two-thirds of the Syrian air force within one hour.

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<sup>171</sup> Shlaim (2012a: 22) describes the basic positions as follows: “With few exceptions, Israelis regard this war as a defensive war, a morally justified war, and a war of no-choice, a war imposed on them by their predatory Arab foes. In the Arab world, this war is viewed as a wilful act of aggression with a secret agenda of territorial expansion.” The academic debate has for the most part tilted toward the Israeli interpretation (citing as evidence *inter alia* the massive mobilization of Egyptian troops into the Sinai peninsula and the conclusion of a defence treaty between Egypt and Jordan on 30 May, to supplement the one already-existing between Egypt and Syria), though the interpretation is not without qualification or debate (see the discussion in Kurtulus 2007).

The defeat on the Syrian side thus quickly became as decisive as that of Egypt (Jordan, also, was dispatched in relatively short order).

The question then became how far Israeli leaders wanted to press their advantage. A decision was made on 6 June to remilitarize the DMZs. Subsequent deliberations considered the possibility of going even further, taking the Golan Heights, a mountainous plateau which looked down on the Israeli settlements in the Galilee, and even potentially moving all the way to Damascus. On 9 June, after intercepting intelligence which suggested that Egypt and Syria were ready to surrender in order to forestall further destruction of their armed forces, Israel opted to “capture...maximal military lines” (in the words of then-Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan, quoted in Shlaim 2012a: 51). Again, the rationale for this particular decision is disputed – security precaution or land-grab<sup>172</sup> – but the practical effect was the same no matter the underlying motivation.<sup>173</sup> Though the remaining Syrian forces managed to put up more resistance than had been anticipated, Israeli forces were able to capture a large portion of the Golan Heights – roughly 1,250 square kilometres – by 10 June, at which point the war was ended through cease-fire agreement. The final Israeli position put them less than 60 kilometres (with clear-sight lines given their raised vantage point) from Damascus. In addition to territorial gains in the Golan, Israel had similarly captured major swaths of territory from Egypt (the Sinai Peninsula) and from Jordan (the West Bank of the Jordan river). These expanded Israeli borders post-1967 were and are the basis for much subsequent Arab-Israeli tension (particularly on the Syrian front, where the issue remains largely unresolved to this day).

With respect to the Golan Heights, specifically, Israel’s new position presented Damascus with acute security concerns. According to Muslih (1993: 625-26): “From a geostrategic point of view, the Syrians consider the Golan a critical natural defense against Israel.” Mount Hermon, in the northern part of the Golan, is of “exceptional

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<sup>172</sup> Even if motivated by security concerns, the move was in violation of an existing cease-fire agreement.

<sup>173</sup> The internal Israeli debates outlined by Oren (2002) – see also Shlaim (2012a) – suggest that ‘hawkish’ (those in favour of capturing the Golan, such as IDF Chief of Staff Yitzhak Rabin and head of the IDF’s Northern Command David Elazar) and ‘dovish’ (those against it, such as, initially, Dayan and even at the time of execution Prime Minister Levi Eshkol) arguments differed on the ‘necessity’ of the move for Israeli security; for the former the safety of Israeli settlements in the Galilee, and the protection of water resources including the upper reaches of the Jordan river, would be enhanced and the ability of Syrian forces to stage future attacks against Israel diminished; for the latter the move would be needlessly provocative and ensure that Syria would make future attempts to reclaim the area by force.

strategic value because it offers a commanding position overlooking southern Lebanon, the Golan plateau, and much of southern Syria and northern Israel” (ibid.: 621). In addition to the objective strategic disadvantages Israel’s occupation of the Golan presented, the very act of seizing the territory (in addition to the various border activities and incursions that had been a regular feature of the post-1948 period, as well as the initial expansion of Israel’s borders in the 1948 war itself) reinforced the Syrian perception that Israel was expansionist and willing to use force to achieve its goals. “As Syria saw it,” writes Rabinovich (2008: 227), “Israel captured the Golan in a war of aggression, characteristic of an inherently expansionist and aggressive state.” Of course, it is also true (and is at least part of if not the major reason behind the Israeli move in 1967) that the Golan offers Syria significant offensive potential against Israel, looking down as it does on “Israeli metropolitan centers” (ibid.: 621). Thus there was similarly a defensive consideration for Israel; again, the pattern of Syrian behaviour up to and including the 1967 war suggested that ownership of the plateau translated into Syrian military activity from its heights.<sup>174</sup>

Negotiations in the aftermath of the war naturally centered on the question of control over the Golan. Here again discrepant interpretations exist. There is general recognition that Israel offered to return (at least some of) the Golan in exchange for a comprehensive peace agreement (embodied in UN Resolution 242<sup>175</sup> of November 1967 and typically referred to as the “land for peace” formula) that would include Syrian recognition of Israel’s right to exist. Yet while some suggest that Syria’s refusal to accede to the agreement reflected a continued commitment to the destruction of Israel (support

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<sup>174</sup> In describing the Israeli position in late June 1967, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Earle Wheeler wrote to US Secretary of Defence Robert McNamara the following: “solely on military considerations from the Israel point of view...Israel must hold the commanding terrain [in the Golan] east of the boundary of 4 June 1967 which overlooks the Galilee area. To provide a defense-in-depth, Israel would need to strip about 15 miles wide...inside the Syrian border [which] would give Israel control of the terrain which Syria has used effectively in harassing in the border area... This line would provide protection for the Israeli villages on the east bank of Lake Tiberias.” “Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 13 (2): 122-126. In his biography of Moshe Dayan, Shabtai Tevet (1972: 353) describes the Minister of Defence’s attitude following the war: “As he had opposed the withdrawal from Sinai in 1957, Dayan now emphatically opposed the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sharm e-Sheikh, in order to prevent a third blockade of the Straits of Tiran; from the Gaza Strip, to prevent its reverting to a convenient base for the Egyptian aggression against Israel; and from the Golan Heights, so that the Syrians could not renew their bombardments of the settlements below.”

<sup>175</sup> Full text: [http://undocs.org/S/RES/242\(1967\)](http://undocs.org/S/RES/242(1967))

for Palestinian guerilla activities continued in the aftermath of 1967) and that explicit recognition of Israel remained “anathema” (Moaz 1995), others argue that the Israeli position was more cynical, never fully communicating to Damascus the particulars of what was offered and quickly reversing its position anyway, moving instead to expel Syrian villagers (up to 130,000) and replacing them with Israeli settlers (Slater 2002).

And so, much like in the previous war, the end of active large-scale operations represented little more than a precarious pause; now, instead of three small strips of land (the DMZs), the territorial dispute involved a large piece of strategically vital terrain. “Consequently,” writes Moaz (1995: 104)

in the aftermath of the June 1967 war, the historic dispute between Damascus and Jerusalem reached its highest point since 1948. For, in addition to its ideological antagonism, its commitment to the Palestinian plight, and its search for domestic legitimacy, the Syrian regime now had other crucial motives for its conflict with Israel: the painful defeat of the army, the loss of the Golan Heights, and the deployment of Israeli troops 40 miles from the Syrian capital.

The next several years would see Damascus focus on reversing this reality by, as mentioned, continuing its support for Palestinian guerillas in order to destabilize the Israeli position (mainly through Lebanese territory, it is worth pointing out) and, even more significantly, embarking on an ambitious program to rebuild Syrian military power to the point of “strategic parity” with the IDF (Sela 1998). For Jerusalem, an increasingly firm commitment to control of the Golan was necessary *in response* to these Syrian activities. Rabil (2003: 36) notes, for example, that Israel’s “defensive” justifications for holding onto the Heights were “reinforced by Syria’s belligerent attitude” over time. For Damascus, of course, this ‘attitude’ was merely a reflection of the policies necessary to overturn an unsatisfactory and, from their point of view, untenable status quo.

This situation, and the outcome of the 1967 war more broadly, led almost inexorably to the next major Arab-Israeli conflict in 1973. Before moving to a discussion of that war, however, it is worth briefly considering the effects of the 1967 war on the Syrian-Israeli rivalry. This is an opportunity to step back from the specific historical

details of the case (the myriad unique dimensions of the conflict associated with ideology, ethnicity, particular political personalities, etc.) to assess in general terms the progression of the relationship. As mentioned, the conditions for rivalry were germinated by the initial Arab-Israeli war in 1948. Subsequent disputes over territory and water resources signalled that the conflict was ongoing, with steady escalation culminating in a second major war in 1967. In the lead up, both Israel and Syria were concerned with what they perceived to be the aggressive behaviour of the other side; Israel's settlement and development projects, and Syria's support for Palestinian guerillas and the Syrian military's cross-border attacks on Israeli assets and personnel.<sup>176</sup> These concerns were rooted in divergent interpretations of the 1949 armistice agreement and subsequent UN resolutions which spelled out the dispensation of the demilitarized zones between the two countries. The 1967 war further entrenched existing fears and perceptions in both Jerusalem and Damascus. For Israel, Syria formed part of a hostile Arab coalition intent on rolling back its borders, even challenging its existence. For Syria, Israel was an inherently expansionist power, a perception powerfully confirmed by their seizure of the Golan Heights. Now, post-1967, with the conditions for conflict still acute (primarily in the form of disputed, strategically vital territory) there was little likelihood that these basic perceptions would be altered; any move to pursue what from one's own perspective were legitimate interests would invariably be interpreted as further evidence of hostile intent (given both past experiences in which force *was* used and the imperatives of security and self-help in the international system, which combined to counsel caution and pessimism).

### *1973 Arab-Israeli war*

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<sup>176</sup> Muslih's (1993: 631) assessment of the 1948-1967 period is instructive in this regard: "The Israeli policies and actions provided, in Syria's view, confirmation of Israeli expansionism and ingrained hostility toward the Arab world. At the same time, Syria's adoption of a tough line regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict and its attempts to contain Israel's territorial advances in a manner that violated the armistice agreement also played a role in keeping the conflict alive and in causing the border friction between 1949 and 1967." Abraham Rabinovich (2004: 12), likewise, writes: "As Israel saw it, it had twice in one generation – in 1958 and 1967 – been forced into wars of survival by Arab states which wished to destroy it. Israel believed it had the moral right, the strategic need, and the military strength to demand border changes. The Arabs, for their part, regarded Israel as a usurper of Arab land."

These experiences continued to accrue in the period between 1967 and 1973. Once again, Syrian-Israeli relations were punctuated by intermittent crises and clashes, undergirded by an atmosphere of preparation for future war. Damascus stepped up its support of Palestinian guerillas – the PLO merged with Yasir Arafat’s Fatah group in 1968 – and even created its own irregular militant Palestinian group, al-Saiqa (itself part of the PLO), giving them greater control over Palestinian activities (Morris 2001). When the PLO was forced out of Jordan in 1970, Syria became its primary state sponsor while its operations shifted to southern Lebanon (a move which would become relevant in the context of the coming Israeli-Syrian conflict in that country).<sup>177</sup> At the same time, Syrian leaders (first Saleh Jadid and then, after a 1970 military coup, Hafiz al-Asad) turned to the Soviet Union for massive military aid and equipment transfers in a concerted effort to rebuild and strengthen the Syrian military’s conventional capabilities (Ginat 2000).

Shortly after taking power, Asad affirmed military cooperation with Egypt, again setting the stage for a potential two-front posture vis-à-vis Israel (Seale 1990). The driving goal behind Syrian foreign policy during the period was the reclamation of the Golan Heights, which was considered to be an absolute imperative (Rabinovich 2008). As Muslih (1993: 627) notes, for “Syrian planners...the Golan plateau in Syrian hands provides a defensive depth that is indispensable for the security of Syria, while a Golan controlled by Israel poses a lethal threat to the Syrian heartland.” Thus while some highlight the “emotional” salience of the Golan issue – Asad’s biographer Patrick Seale describes the loss of the Golan as a “a badge of Syria’s defeat [in 1967], an emblem of hatred between Syria and Israel and a cross Asad had to bear” – there were clear and sufficient security reasons undergirding Syrian policy (symbolic considerations being presumably secondary in the face of enemy artillery arranged at an elevated position less than 60km from one’s capital). Of course, as mentioned above, Israel had its own security reasons to hold on to the area, which were amplified by Syrian attempts to reclaim it.

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<sup>177</sup> Moaz (1995: 117) describes Syrian activity in the immediate after-war period: “With Syrian encouragement and direction, the various guerilla groups carried out, particularly during the late 1960s, many military operations inside Israel (and Jordan), the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan – from the territories of Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria. From mid-1969 Syrian troops also periodically attacked Israeli targets in the Golan.” Israel retaliated to these provocations, and periodically shot down Syrian war planes. In 1969, Syrian artillery shelled Israeli positions in the Golan. Additional skirmishes occurred in April and June 1970 (ibid.).

Between 1971 and 1973, Damascus continued to escalate its pressure on Israel in the Golan via both guerilla attacks and conventional artillery and air strikes, with Israel responding by targeting Palestinian positions in southern Lebanon and Syrian forces in Syria proper. In September 1973, the situation deteriorated further; a major air battle resulted in significant losses for the Syrian air force, and Damascus deployed additional forces to the cease-fire line (Knudsen 2001). On the Egyptian front, as well, forces were mobilized and there appeared to be general preparations for an offensive. Nonetheless, Israeli leaders did not believe that war was imminent; the lessons of 1967 convinced them that Arab forces remained too weak to challenge the IDF (Knudsen 2001). Crucially, however, even this perceived superiority did not forestall the belief that war was coming *at some point*; Israeli leaders simply believed that they had a few more years before it occurred. For example in early September, in assessing the prospects for war, Dayan stated: “Six years have already passed since the Six Day War and we talk now about a period of four more years. We have become accustomed that every ten years we fight” (quoted in Moaz 1995: 126)<sup>178</sup>. Thus one of the basic propositions of Rational Rivalry – that rivals’ anticipate future conflict – is not undermined by Israel’s surprise at the events of October 1973.

That said, the Israelis were indeed caught off guard when, on 6 October (the day of Yom Kippur, hence the practice of referring to the conflict as the ‘Yom Kippur War’) Egyptian and Syrian forces launched a coordinated invasion of Israeli-controlled territory on the Sinai and in the Golan.<sup>179</sup> “With the initial advantage of surprise and superior numbers,” writes Slater (2002: 93), “Syrian forces overran most of the Golan, with advance units even approaching the Jordan river.”<sup>180</sup> Here they stopped short, and there is disagreement as to whether this reflected limited Syrian war aims (intended to merely regain the Golan, see Drysdale and Hinnebusch 1991) or Israeli counter-pressure thwarting what was in fact intended to be a deeper penetration into Israeli territory (see Bregman 2016). In any event, the initially successful thrust was quickly reversed, as

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<sup>178</sup> Moaz (1995: 125) further writes of Dayan: “For a long time (since 1967, according to himself) he had assessed that Egypt and Syria would never resign themselves to Israel’s occupation of Sinai and the Golan, and sooner or later they would renew the war against Israel.”

<sup>179</sup> For an overview of the historiography of the 1973 war see Berkerman-Boys (2013).

<sup>180</sup> For useful overviews of the Syrian campaign see Dupuy (1978) and Seale (1990).

Israeli forces recaptured the Golan within a week, and actually pushed past the 1967 lines, drawing even closer to Damascus. By 24 October, partly as a result of American pressure, a new – albeit tenuous – cease-fire had been fashioned (Knudsen 2001).

Despite the reversal, and the similar outcome to that of the 1967 war, the respective moods in Jerusalem and Damascus were drastically different than they had been six years earlier.<sup>181</sup> The aura of Israeli invincibility had been shattered by the early successes of the Syrian forces (indeed, Israel's turn-around in the Golan was partly a result of Egypt's decision not to press the IDF in the Sinai, much to Syria's consternation, which allowed Israel to shift its forces to the northern front; better coordination between the two attacking Arab armies may have, though it is unlikely, changed the outcome of the war; more likely it would have at least prolonged and intensified the battle). In the spring of 1974, Damascus launched another limited war in an attempt to capture Mount Hermon (the Israelis had nipped in to take it on 22 October just prior to the initial cease-fire taking effect), before submitting to another, more comprehensive cease-fire (Shlomo 2001). On 31 May 1974, the two sides reached a disengagement agreement that shifted the pre-1973 lines only marginally (Moaz 1995).

Again, the experience of the 1973 war was important for shaping the context of the ongoing Syrian-Israeli rivalry. For Israel, Syria's surprise invasion reinforced the notion that Damascus was keen to revise the territorial status quo through force, and that underestimating their military strength was an invitation to attack (Dayan called this latter lesson an "earthquake" [quoted in Moaz 1995: 133]). Moreover, the initial Syrian push further into Israeli territory – whether or not Syrian war plans were, in fact, limited – certainly exacerbated Israeli fears that Damascus harboured aggressive aims beyond simply the reclamation of the Golan Heights. Conversely, Syria once again saw itself on the wrong side of a relatively decisive military defeat. An Israeli push toward Damascus was stalled, according to some accounts, by American diplomatic intervention (Knudsen 2001). Asad himself believed that Israel was deterred from further advance by the Syrian

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<sup>181</sup> As Seale (1990: 211) describes: "The Syrian army had fought its way forward and now as stubbornly fought its way back. But instead of being able to threaten Israel, Syria found its own capital coming within range of Israeli artillery. Nevertheless it was not like 1867. There was no shame in had happened, nothing to conceal from the public or to lie about. The army was neither broken nor defeated. Israel had not destroyed it as a fighting force."

military (Seale 1990). The implication of either possibility was, for Syrian decision-makers, that Israel was indeed aggressive and would take the capital if left to their own devices, absent diplomatic pressure and/or deterrent force.

### **Israeli and Syrian Perceptions in 1975**

For both sides, the events of 1973 largely affirmed existing fears. The cumulative effect of rivalry up until the mid-1970s was to shape perceptions in Jerusalem and Damascus toward caution and pessimism. In this section, I offer an assessment of Israeli and Syrian perceptions in the lead up to their respective interventions in Lebanon. To do so I draw on the relevant secondary historical literature, memoirs, political biographies of relevant decision-makers, and archival sources. With respect to the latter, particularly illuminating are the reports and transcripts, available in US archives, of American – and specifically Henry Kissinger’s – diplomatic efforts in the region from 1974-1976. It was the US Secretary of State who had been instrumental in crafting the disengagement agreement of 1974, and it was he who took up steerage of subsequent negotiations for a more comprehensive peace deal. In order to massage such an agreement into existence, Kissinger and his team both hosted visiting Arab and Israeli delegations in Washington and, particularly during the summer of 1975, “shuttled” back and forth from the various regional capitals (primarily Cairo, Jerusalem, and Damascus). In meetings with state leaders and top decision-makers, perceptions were often relayed directly to Kissinger and his team.<sup>182</sup> What emerges from these and other sources is a sense of the strategic moment: both states remained wary of one another, citing their experiences over the preceding decades, believing that renewed conflict was all but a foregone conclusion. Moreover, security concerns *mandated* that leaders consider present policy, including potential concessions and the character of any putative peace deals, in the context of this belief about future conflict.

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<sup>182</sup> The caveat noted in Chapter 5 with respect to Indian and Pakistani statements to US officials recorded in US diplomatic cables is of course also applicable here; it is nonetheless reasonable to assume that both Syrian and Israeli leaders had incentives to more or less accurately articulate their concerns and priorities, given the context of high-stakes peace negotiations and the fact they were being conducted in private.

In addition to the history of conflict described above, it is also important to consider wider regional developments occurring at the time. Particularly important was the possibility of an Egyptian-Israeli peace (or, in the moderated language of the moment, ‘non-belligerency’) agreement. As will be shown, this possibility (which became a reality in September 1975 through the ‘Sinai II’ deal, before being consolidated by the Camp David accords in 1978 and the Egyptian-Israeli agreement of 1979) altered the strategic environment for both Israeli and Syria, effectively removing one of the two major fronts that had characterized previous Arab-Israeli conflicts. The second relevant dynamic was the Palestinian issue; the PLO was becoming more of a significant force, demanding a voice in regional negotiations and expanding its operations, particularly in southern Lebanon (having moved its headquarters to Beirut in 1970). The results of these dynamics are reflected in both Israeli and Syrian priorities and concerns at the time. For Jerusalem, the increasing threat from PLO attacks offset some of the security gains of the Egyptian deal, and indeed focused its security concerns on the northern front, which included the Golan and the dispute with Syria. For Damascus, the loss of a potential second front in a future conflict with Israel greatly accentuated their security concerns – coordination with Egypt (even if not always perfectly executed) had been a cornerstone of Syrian strategy in previous wars. This led, in part, to greater involvement with irregular, proxy forces such as the PLO (particularly al-Saiqa, the Palestinian group under more or less direct Syrian control) in the belief that conventional military options against Israel had become more limited.

This section is important for understanding how Israel and Syria approached the Lebanese issue. It establishes the extent to which rivalry considerations were prevalent at the moment each state was faced with an opportunity for intervention into the civil conflict that broke out in Lebanon in 1975. Though the specific history of the rivalry, outlined above, is unique, I argue that the cumulative effect was similar to that observed in the India-Pakistan rivalry in Chapter 5. Much as Indian and Pakistani perceptions of one another in the late-1990s were coloured by the lens of ongoing international rivalry, so too were Syria and Israel beholden to their historical relationship in the mid-1970s. In 2001, this shaped how India and Pakistan considered the Afghanistan war in 2001; their interventions (not merely the *act* of intervention but also the specific *form* that

intervention took) were largely the product of rivalry-related dynamics. Establishing Syrian and Israeli perceptions in the mid-1970s (and highlighting the influence of rivalry in shaping them) is a prelude to making a similar argument with respect to their interventions in Lebanon.

Yitzhak Rabin became Israeli Prime Minister in June of 1974; he describes the moment in his memoirs, and what his challenges were in the wake of the 1973 war:

Being prime minister is very different from being a candidate for the post. I was almost physically aware of the enormous weight of responsibility that I now bore. The wounds of the Israeli people were still fresh and painful after the recent war, and deep fissures undermined its faith in its leaders and government (Rabin 1979: 242).

With respect to the negotiations which concluded the war (recall that these occurred as late as May 1974), he is cautious, even pessimistic: “The disengagement-of-forces agreement with Egypt – already being implemented – and a similar agreement with Syria signed three days before would stabilize the cease-fire on both fronts. *Yet no one had any doubts that these agreements were of limited duration*” (ibid., emphasis added). Which is to say, there was an apparently unanimous belief that hostilities would resume, sooner or later. The priority, given such an assumption, was to “make a supreme effort to strengthen the IDF” as “only a very powerful IDF could convince the Arab leaders that the only course open to them was political negotiations” (ibid.). The belief that only a powerful deterrent could placate Damascus reflected the perception that Syria remained hostile. For Rabin, and other Israeli leaders, this was the inescapable lesson not only of 1973 but of the entire history of the Syrian-Israeli relationship since 1948. As Moaz (1995: 141) summarizes:

Rabin, like his predecessor, Golda Meir, and like most Israelis, continued to consider Syria as Israel’s most implacable and dangerous foe, and the Golan Heights as a vital area for defending Galilee and Israel’s main water resources. Nearly all Israeli Jews, including political and military analysts, did not perceive

the Syrian 1973 offensive as being motivated by Syria's ambition to recover merely the Golan Heights, but rather as a war aimed at capturing parts of northern Israel and, given the opportunity, eliminating Israel altogether. These perceptions derived [partly] from the collective memory of Syrian active belligerency prior to the 1967 war.

For Israel, in other words, the effects of 1973 were again confirmation of Syrian aggression; moving forward, this mandated continued vigilance with respect to Israeli security, rendering any concessions in pursuit of peace difficult – even if, as Israeli leaders insisted, they were keen on such an outcome.

Rabin communicated such concerns to US President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger during a visit to Washington in 1975:

Rabin: We know we cannot achieve peace by military means; conditions do not allow this. It happened in 1949, in 1956, in 1967, in 1973....We have no interest in war but have an interest in defending ourselves. Without being able to defend ourselves we will not survive. When we talk of peace, I mean by this our existence as a Jewish state with boundaries we can defend with their defenses – not to depend on others to send their own troops. That would be the end of us.

...

The Arabs stress total Israeli withdrawal to the pre-June 1967 lines, which we consider practically indefensible. In the past when they moved their troops, we either had to wait for the attack or pre-empt....So the problem for Israel as far as an overall settlement is concerned is not to be in a position that in a few years, whenever they move, we have to go to a preemptive war. The real fact that they can move near to our borders means that we would have to mobilize and they can destroy our economy by requiring total mobilization.

...

Therefore, in terms of the readiness of Israel for a final peace and the needs for Israel's security, the 1967 lines with respect to Egypt and Syria does not allow for security arrangements which are required for a small country of three million people against a composition of states who total 60-to-65 million. We are ready to try to achieve peace, but the gap on these three issues is wide. We have not sensed an Arab readiness to come close to the essentials of peace as we see them from our point of view.

...

Ben-Gurion said Israel can win 20 wars and it will not solve the problem; but the Arabs need to win only once and it would mean the end of Israel.<sup>183</sup>

With respect to the Golan specifically, Rabin stressed that the movement of Israeli settlements to accommodate territorial concessions was not in and of itself the issue, but rather the implications for Israeli defence which such movements would produce: "It is not only a question of settlements. It is also the destruction of our defensive line which would have to be rebuilt and would take at least two or three years."<sup>184</sup> Again, a belief that Syria was likely to attack in the future meant that maintaining defensive lines was not merely a preference but, from the Israeli point of view, a necessity; failure to do so "would mean the end of Israel" – it's very survival was at stake.

This logic was comprehensively articulated by then-Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Yigal Allon in an article published in the journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1976. Allon laid out the Israeli position with respect to its borders, offering direct insight into the rationale guiding Israeli foreign and defence policy at the time. Several apposite passages are included here:

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<sup>183</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation Wednesday, June 11, 1975," Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections.

<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*

...a military defeat of Israel would mean the physical extinction of a large part of its population and the political elimination of the Jewish state. In highly realistic and clear terms, therefore, the Arab states can permit themselves a series of military defeats while Israel cannot afford to lose a single war. Nor does this reflect a historical trauma in any sense. *To lose a single war is to lose everything, and this is a most real and stark fact.* (p. 39, emphasis added)

In essence, that Israel today still exists is due only to its success in maintaining such defensive strength. Without it, Israel would never have seen the light of day or would already have been eliminated in the first years of its existence. *Such were the Arab intentions, and it was fortunate that the Arab states had not the strength to realize them.* (p. 39, emphasis added)

The polarized asymmetry between the size and intentions of the Arab states and those of Israel, and the extreme contrast in the anticipated fate of each side in the event of military defeat, obliges Israel to maintain constantly that measure of strength enabling it to defend itself in every regional conflict and against any regional combination of strength confronting it, without the help of any foreign army. *To our deep regret, this is the first imperative facing us, the imperative to survive. And I would venture to say every other state in our place would behave exactly as we do.* (p. 40, emphasis added)

The purpose of defensible borders is thus to correct this weakness, to provide Israel with the requisite minimal strategic depth, as well as lines which have topographical strategic significance. (p. 42)

In the northeastern sector, the 1949 line left Syria on the dominating Golan Heights, controlling the Huleh Valley and the Galilee Basin at their foothills, and including the sources of the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee from which Israel draws a vital part of its water supply. *Moreover, after 1949 Syria not only repeatedly shelled the Israeli villages located at the Golan foothills but also*

*attempted to divert the sources of the Jordan and thereby deprive Israel of a vital source of water. Even more important, the Golan Heights served in past wars as the most convenient base for the Syrian army to make swift and major attacks upon Galilee, ultimately aimed at the conquest of the entire northern part of our country.* (p. 46, emphasis added)

While the strategic zone in the central sector is crucial to Israel's security, so, too, is a zone on the Golan Heights. *As past experience has demonstrated, a border not encompassing the Golan Heights would again invite the easy shelling of the villages below in the Huleh Valley, the Galilee Basin and eastern Galilee.* More important than the danger of renewed Syrian shelling and sniping at Israeli villagers and fishermen below, which is basically a tactical question, is that Israel needs an effective defense line on the Golan Heights for two cardinal strategic reasons: first, to preclude any new Syrian attempts to deny Israel its essential water resources and, second, to prevent a massive Syrian attack on the whole of Galilee, either independently or in coordination with other Arab armies on Israel's other frontiers. (p. 48, emphasis added)

To sum up, there were numerous bitterly deficient points in the pre-1967 lines, and these proposals encompass minimal corrections to them required for an overall peace settlement. *The necessity for these corrections is all the more apparent when it is realized that Israel not only faces the military strength of its contiguous neighbors, but may also have to face the combined strength of many other Arab countries. This has already happened to no small extent in the 1973 war, when contingents from Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Jordan and other Arab countries participated in the fighting together with the armies of Egypt and Syria.* Thus, in a very practical sense, solid defense lines are indispensable to Israel in order to withstand the attacks of the entire Arab world. In addition, these may well be supported by contingents of so-called volunteers who can be sent from certain countries from outside the area that are hostile to Israel. (p. 49)

But just as peace itself is one of the prime elements of national security, so, too, is the ability to defend oneself a prime guaranty for the maintenance of peace. In view of the marked asymmetry existing between the war aims of those participating in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and in light of the unstable internal and regional relations among the Arab states, one should be especially careful to uphold these principles here; *this applies even more so to the case of Israel, for whom the threat of total obliteration is always present.* (p. 51)

We see in these passages three consistent themes. First, that Israel's primary concern (at least as far as Allon is concerned) is *survival*, and that this concern derives from the conditions in which Israel finds itself (as is clear when he says that "every other state in our place would behave exactly as we do."). Second, and relatedly, that Israel's appreciation of these conditions stems at least in part from past experiences (Allon highlights specific instances of Arab – indeed Syrian – aggression and also references the 1948, 1967 and 1973 wars). And, third, that Israel firmly anticipates renewed conflict. Taken together, these perceptions reinforce one another, and mandate the type of policy – the use of force to maintain 'defensible borders' – that Allon outlines in the article.

On the Syrian side, similarly, perceptions were driven by the dynamics of rivalry. In a 9 March 1975 meeting with the Americans in Damascus, for example, President Asad said, à propos Israel and the future: "You know our view. Of course, we're not optimistic. *We think it will be inevitable that there will be another war.*"<sup>185</sup> A few days later, on 15 March, Asad tried to assure Kissinger of Syria's peaceful intentions, while expressing doubt peace was possible given Syrian impressions of Israeli intentions, as per an assessment of Israeli behaviour:

...as I said before, we are for peace. War cannot be a hobby for any sane person. I have emphasized this. Peace is that situation which preserves justice for human beings. Otherwise it would be surrender rather than peace. Open declarations

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<sup>185</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation Sunday March 9, 1975," Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections, emphasis added.

before our people could never be a maneuver. We don't like maneuvering and our people wouldn't stand for it. We want peace. I say it all the time. It is my conviction that it is in Syria's interest. My talk of peace is for our people – not for Israel. Peace would be our gain. This is a matter of our conviction. *But Israeli behavior doesn't give us evidence the Israelis want peace.*<sup>186</sup>

Asad maintained that Syria was willing to entertain peace with Israel, but that a return to pre-1967 borders (i.e. the return of the Golan Heights) was the *sine qua non* of any agreement. Given Israel's own attitudes outlined above, an agreement that included a return to pre-1967 lines (and therefore the return of the Golan to Syria) was unlikely. In a meeting with President Ford and Secretary Kissinger in Washington on 20 June 1975, Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs Abd al-Halim Khaddam reiterated Damascus' concerns: "The Israeli attitude arouses our suspicion – for example, the new settlements and new construction; Israel says they won't withdraw."<sup>187</sup> Khaddam went on to lament the publication of a map "by the Labour Party [then the ruling party in Israel] showing the Golan, Gaza and the West Bank as part of Israel."<sup>188</sup> Clearly the fear was that such a map reflected Israeli attitudes about its permanent hold on these areas, thus reinforcing

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<sup>186</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation March 15, 1975," Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections, , emphasis added.

<sup>187</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation Friday, June 20, 1975," Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections. Khaddam's remarks regarding the influence of public opinion are also worth noting here as potentially discrepant evidence with respect to my argument that public attitudes do not play a significant role in perpetuating international rivalry. Khaddam worries that acquiescing to certain Israeli moves "would give a bad impression in the Arab world." "We can't ignore public opinion," he says, as justification for Syrian resistance. Later, he reiterates this point, saying "We can't afford to ignore Arab public opinion. If Israel can't ignore the views of a few settlers on the Golan, how can we ignore the views of 100 million Arabs?" The argument that Syria's anti-Israel stance was and is partly driven by anti-Israeli sentiment both within Syria and in the Arab world more generally is well known. Without question, there is great hostility toward Israel amongst the various Arab populations in the region. On balance, however, such explicit references to the influence of public opinion are rare amongst Syrian decision-makers. In this case, Khaddam appears to be using an appeal to the pressures of public opinion almost as a way of indicating that his 'hands are tied' with respect to opposing Israel i.e. that the Syrian leadership has no choice in the matter; this position is of course largely (though, it must be said, not entirely) undermined by the autocratic nature of the Syrian military regime.

<sup>188</sup> This concern echoes the "cartographic aggression" episode with respect to the Indian publication of a map showing ownership of the Siachen Glacier and the subsequent Pakistani reaction which, at least in part, led to actual armed conflict over the disputed mountain territory in the mid-1980s. See the discussion on pp. 140-42 in Chapter 5.

Syrian perceptions with respect to Israel's expansionism, and the futility of any peace talks to roll back Israel's existing territorial gains.

Ultimately negotiations between Asad and Kissinger soured, as the Americans focused primarily on crafting an Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement (what would become the 'Sinai II' disengagement agreement signed in September 1975) that effectively isolated Syria<sup>189</sup>. Asad was angered by this approach, believing it left Syria vulnerable. While Kissinger saw it as a way of precluding another Arab-Israeli war, "to Asad it sounded more like a death sentence for Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians who [without Egypt] would be...unable to present any credible check upon Israel's ambitions" (Seale 1990: 256). Patrick Seale (1990: 260-1), Asad's British biographer, continues: "The removal of Egypt, the largest and strongest of the Arab states, left the rest of the Arab world with a sharply heightened sense of insecurity. Who would now defend it? Who could act as a brake on Israel's expansion or deter it from striking at will?" Implicit in these anxieties is, of course, the presumption that the Arab world would *need* defending – that absent a 'brake' Israel's expansion would proceed apace. Just as Damascus pointed to Egypt's role in previous conflicts as proof that their participation was vital, the experience of such conflicts (and Israel's associated reputation for aggression, in Syrian eyes) was the basis for the concern that without Egypt the Syrians would be additionally vulnerable *next time*.

Partly to offset this putatively increased vulnerability, Syria cultivated closer ties with the PLO and turned toward other Arab neighbours, particularly Jordan and Lebanon. With respect to the Palestinians,

Asad was aware of the need for Syria and the PLO to stand together as Egypt slipped further out of the Arab camp. He was already looking to his defences. On 8 March [1975], with Kissinger back in the Middle East for the Sinai Two shuttle, Asad announced his readiness to establish a joint military and political command with the PLO (Seale 1990: 257).

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<sup>189</sup> Sinai II would set the stage "for the 1978 Camp David Accords...and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of March 1979 – all of which excluded Syria and turned it into the leading Arab adversary for Israel" (Moaz 1995: 132).

Rabinovich (2008: 183) describes the “special relationship which [Syria] was trying to forge with the PLO” while Moaz (1995: 154) notes the “special efforts” being made by Asad to create a “strategic alliance with Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians.” From the Syrian point of view, “such an alliance, it would seem, would be relatively easy to form and dominate [and would be] crucial to Syria’s defensive/offensive system vis-à-vis Israel” (ibid.). Laurie Brand (1990: 23) labels this approach Asad’s ‘Levant Security Doctrine’ and suggests that “this concept of Syrian security became increasingly salient in the late 1970s, following the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreements that culminated in the Camp David accords.” The possibility of a so-called ‘Eastern Front’ against Israel – comprised of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq – would play a role in how *both* Syria and Israel would view the Lebanon crisis when it arose. As such, a more complete discussion of this dynamic is reserved for the section on the Lebanese conflict below. For the moment, it is merely important to highlight how the pursuit of greater Arab solidarity in the north and east is consistent with the notion that “once Egypt decided on a separate peace with Israel, Syria’s security situation became very vulnerable” (Knudsen 2001: 223).

For Israel, also, the progress on peace with Egypt shifted their focus to the northern front. The effective elimination of one major front in the Arab-Israeli conflict (though of course this, too, was not taken for granted; suspicion vis-à-vis Egypt would persist, but be tempered by the institutional arrangements embodied in the various Egyptian-Israeli agreements and the moderating influence of the United States) did not alleviate Israeli concerns about future conflict; rather, Israeli leaders believed that Asad would stoke further conflict, perhaps even in an effort to derail Egyptian-Israeli negotiations. More broadly, the moves being made by Damascus, noted above, did not go unnoticed, including the acceleration of Syrian-sponsored PLO attacks<sup>190</sup> and, in particular, the cultivation of closer ties with Arab neighbours such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq. In a meeting with Kissinger on 9 March 1975, Rabin raised the spectre of

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<sup>190</sup> Then-Israeli Minister of Defence Shimon Peres (1995: 195) decried, in reference to such activities, the “scourge of cross-border terrorism [that] had to be confronted.” In January 1975 Israel complained directly to the UN about PLO attacks emanating from Lebanon, specifically citing the role of “the Syrian sponsored and supported terror grouping ‘As-Saiqa’ [sic]”. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1975).

Asad's proposed "unified command" with the PLO, suggesting that such an arrangement would effectively provide Syria with tactical control over the 'Fatahland' (the term used to refer to PLO territory in southern Lebanon).<sup>191</sup> Three days later, during a meeting on 12 March, Kissinger asked the Israelis whether they thought "war [was] a serious option" being contemplated by Asad. "The aim is to create a coalition," replied Peres, "[h]e will try, I think, to heat things [up] in Lebanon, in Fatahland...Asad is warming them up for the start of war."<sup>192</sup> Later that summer, in a conversation with Kissinger on 22 August, Peres lamented: "let's face it, even if we shall have agreement with the Egyptians, terror will be continued by the PLO, which we shall have to take into account."<sup>193</sup> These concerns, moreover, were tied to Syria's broader moves regarding an Arab coalition in the north and east:

We don't know exactly what will happen on the part of Syria, Iraq and Jordan. We are certainly uneasy about the new connections between [King] Hussein [of Jordan] and Assad, and how do you say, the rapprochement between Iraq and Syria creates a threatening band around Israel, which would include Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. They are fortifying all along the frontiers, including Jordan.<sup>194</sup>

As will be shown below, these new dynamics played a significant part in how Israeli leaders would approach the Lebanese issue over the coming years.

To summarize, Israeli and Syrian perceptions by the mid-1970s – following the 1973 war and in the lead up to the civil war in Lebanon – were powerfully shaped by the dynamics of rivalry. For Israel, Syrian hostility was evident given over two decades of aggressive acts along the northern border. Past Syrian behaviour led to the inference that future war was overwhelming likely, and the existential implications of such a war

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<sup>191</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation March 9, 1975," Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections.

<sup>192</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation March 12, 1975," Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections.

<sup>193</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation August 22, 1975," Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Digital Collections.

<sup>194</sup> *ibid.*

mandated resolute defensive policy, including the maintenance of the Israeli position in the Golan Heights. For Syria, the very fact that Israel was in possession of the Golan – as a consequence of the 1967 war – was proof that they were “an expansionist state seeking to dominate the region” (Rabil 2003: 45). For Damascus, past Israeli behaviour was confirmation of this belief, which likewise led to the inference that future Israeli aggression was almost certain. Given Israel’s demonstrated military superiority (and the proximity of, for example, IDF troops to Damascus from their perch in the Golan) this too had existential implications. The result was a policy dedicated to recovering the Golan as well as of internal (rapaciously building the Syrian military, primarily through their relationship with the Soviet Union) and external (coordinating closer ties with Arab neighbours, particularly as Egypt negotiated peace with Israel) balancing.

This, then, is the context in which both states approached the developing situation in Lebanon in 1975. In relatively short order, both Syria and Israel would intervene into that country’s civil strife; I argue that international rivalry is essential to understanding the decision to intervene as well as the particular form each respective intervention would take.

### **Lebanon (1975-1985)**

The Israeli and Syrian interventions into Lebanon are examined over a period of roughly ten years, from 1975 to 1985. Several distinct phases can be identified, beginning with the eighteen-month civil war which broke out in 1975, and culminating in the Israeli withdrawal in 1985 following what is known as the Lebanon War. Syrian and Israeli involvement evolved and shifted across these phases, often in seemingly direct response to the behaviour and involvement of the other side. In order to trace and evaluate the interventions, this section is organized chronologically, inter-splicing descriptions of the domestic Lebanese situation at each stage of what can be usefully considered a ten-year crisis with descriptions and assessments of the various iterations of both Syrian and Israeli involvement. Given the protracted and iterated nature of the interventions, the analysis of both Syrian and Israeli rationale is segmented, with smaller sections cut into the narrative as it goes, rather than assessed *in toto* in stand-alone subsections at the end.

Ultimately, the logic and evidence presented in this section supports the assertion that rivalry dynamics were the primary factor driving Syrian and Israeli behaviour; both states were concerned with the long-term security implications of either allowing instability to consume Lebanon or ceding influence to their rival (particularly insofar as the former was considered tantamount to the latter). In so doing, they sacrificed more immediate interests, and yet their rationale was systematic not emotional (or paranoid) – they simply behaved according to an altered calculus, one shaped by the contours of an ongoing rivalry and the associated perceptions and priorities that are described in the pages above.

#### *Lebanese civil war (1975-76)*

The civil war in Lebanon began in 1975, though its eruption was the culmination of long-simmering tension and conflict within a severely fragmented society. A distinct, predominately Christian community has existed on and around Mount Lebanon stretching back centuries; modern Lebanon, however, is a construct of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, arising from the post-WWI collapse of the Ottoman Empire. In 1920, the British and French – pursuant to the Sykes-Picot agreement – divvied up the Middle East into separate spheres of influence and control. As part of their mandate, France created a new political entity (carving much of it from historical Syria) covering an area larger than Mount Lebanon and naming it ‘Greater Lebanon’; in addition to the Maronite Christian communities of the Mount, this new entity included both Shia and Sunni Muslim minorities, as well as a community of Druze (an esoteric religion with elements of Islamic mysticism) (Traboulsi 2007).

In 1926 the country gained nominal independence – becoming what O’Ballance (1998: vii) calls a “multireligious republic” – though continuing to be heavily influenced both politically and economically by France. In 1943, a new constitution was established, marking a more complete departure from French control; the basis for the constitution was a power-sharing arrangement amongst the main religious groups; specific political offices were reserved for either Christian or Muslim candidates (for example the president was to be Christian, the prime minister Sunni, and the speaker of parliament

Shia) while a ratio was established such that there were six Christian parliamentarians for every five Muslim members (the ratio was designed to reflect the relative proportion of each group in the wider population, according to somewhat dubious census data) (Firro 2002). This formulation came to be known as ‘confessionalism’ (a *de jure* mix of politics and religion) and was moderately effective in stitching together an otherwise patchwork society bifurcated along religious lines. The seeds of instability were almost immediately apparent, however: the system apportioned political power on the basis of a demographical snapshot, and thus preserved a status quo that, over time, no longer reflected the makeup of a growing society. There is evidence that even the 1943 pact over-represented traditional Christian power (Traboulsi 2007); a few decades later, as the Muslim population grew at faster rates, the constitutional setup no longer accomplished the equitable distribution that was its ostensible aim. Rising tensions between the various communities, as well as regional pressures related to the volatile geopolitics of the wider Middle East, led to periodic political crises – including one in 1958 that required US intervention (Gerges 1993) – until, as Rabinovich (1985: 43) describes: “[i]n the spring of 1975, the Lebanese political system finally collapsed under the persistent pressure of rival internal and external forces.” The precipitating event of the war was the killing of a busload of Palestinians by Christian ‘Phalangist’ forces on 13 April 1975, which triggered escalating reprisal attacks by Muslim and Christian forces; violence was first concentrated in Beirut but eventually spread along confessional lines across the country culminating in a state of full civil war (Abraham 1996).

The specifics of the conflict are complex, and are not engaged in significant detail here. Instead, a brief summary is helpful for providing parameters and context of the subsequent Israeli and Syrian interventions. Various factions and armed groups participated in the war, each with their own particular interests and grievances, though two broad camps are typically identified. Under one umbrella were Christian/Rightist forces, the largest group of which were Phalangist forces under the leadership of Pierre Gemayel. Also prominent in this camp were the so-called ‘Tigers’ (the armed wing of the centre-right Free National Party) led by Camille Chamoun. The main opposing camp is typically identified as including Muslim/Leftists groups, the largest of which was headed by Druze political leader Kamal Junblatt. Also prominent within this camp were armed

factions of the Socialist and Communist political parties. In addition to these two main camps, two distinct Palestinian groups were involved – one dominated by Fatah and loyal to Yasir Arafat; the other by Al-Saiqa and therefore pro-Syrian. The Palestinians were broadly sympathetic to the Muslim cause and often fought alongside them, but were not contesting for central control of Lebanon in the same way; rather, they were interested in maintaining the Palestinian presence in the south, and were effectively a foreign entity operating on Lebanese soil.<sup>195</sup> Finally, the Lebanese government itself was a separate actor; it remained nominally split between Christian and Muslim political leaders, and therefore attempted to remain neutral. The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), initially still under the government's control, included both Christian and Muslim factions. Virtually none of these alignments were to remain static over the course of the war with, in particular, the LAF eventually splitting and the two factions aligning themselves with their co-religionists. Fighting lasted for eighteen months, culminating in a tenuous cease-fire agreement negotiated at a conference in Riyadh in October 1976. This outcome left the pro-government, Christian/Rightist forces in the ascendancy under the guise of a new power-sharing agreement backed by the creation of an Arab Deterrent Force (ADF) meant to maintain stability. Though the ADF was comprised of contingents from several regional Arab powers (including Jordan and Saudi Arabia), the dominant force was Syria, and Damascus exerted effective hegemony over the Lebanese government.

The period of the civil war described here clearly constitutes an opportunity for intervention for both Syria and Israel. As was the case with respect to Afghanistan and the India-Pakistan rivalry, geographic proximity is also a relevant consideration here; as a regional rivalry, Israel and Syria were likely to be concerned with a proximate civil conflict destabilizing a neighbouring state and the potential implications of such a conflict for the dynamics of the rivalry itself. Lebanon is bordered by Israel to the south and Syria to the east, serving essentially as a buffer between the rivals on what would otherwise be an extended frontier (the two share a smaller contiguous border, of course, in the region of the Golan plateau). As will be shown, this dimension played significantly on the minds of both Israeli and Syrian leaders; indeed, previous experience in the rivalry

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<sup>195</sup> For a discussion of the Palestinian role in the civil war see Hudson (1978).

– during both major wars<sup>196</sup> and lower-level, intermittent crises<sup>197</sup> – suggested that Lebanese territory was strategically significant.

### *Syrian intervention 1975-76*

Syria was the first to intervene, doing so initially at the diplomatic and political level by sending Foreign Minister Khaddam to Beirut in May 1975 in order to craft a political compromise at the cabinet level; a new power-sharing deal was instituted in late June, leading to a temporary abatement in violence (Dawisha 1980). Fighting renewed in late August, however, this time with the LAF entering the fray on the side of the Christian militias. Syria made another attempt at diplomatic peacemaking, but the crisis deteriorated out of control, and over the fall months the total collapse of the Lebanese state appeared increasingly likely.<sup>198</sup>

Syria was also involved during this period indirectly, lending support to Palestinian groups that had traditionally acted as proxies for Syrian interests, particularly in southern Lebanon; such groups had been helpful vis-à-vis Israel, serving as both offensive assets and as a defensive bulwark across the Beqa valley.<sup>199</sup> When these groups appealed to Damascus for support in the conflict, Asad complied, supplying them with arms and ammunition, some of which passed from the Palestinians to the Muslim/Leftist militias battling for control of the Lebanese state.<sup>200</sup> In January 1976, when pro-government Christian forces threatened to overwhelm Palestinian and Muslim positions in Tripoli and Zahlé (the latter the capital city of the Beqa valley governorate), “Damascus...dispatched two brigades of the Syrian-controlled PLA (Palestine Liberation

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<sup>196</sup> In describing Syrian concerns regarding the territory of Lebanon, Muslih (1993: 626) observes that “during the 1973 war, Israeli aircraft did try to outflank Syrian aircraft defenses through Lebanon.”

<sup>197</sup> In particular, from the Israeli point of view, the use of southern Lebanon as a launching pad for frequent Palestinian guerilla attacks against Israeli territory.

<sup>198</sup> As Dawisha (1980: 92) describes, “By this time...an almost complete attitudinal polarization had occurred between the indigenous warring parties in Lebanon.”

<sup>199</sup> Rabinovich (2008: 247) argues that “Israel figure[d] prominently in Asad’s assessment of Lebanon and the Lebanese arena”, and that Asad’s “original investment in Lebanon [in] the early 1970s [including cultivation of, and support for, the PLO] was conceived...as part of the effort to ‘organize’ (in his biographers language) Syria’s Arab environment into a strategic asset vis-à-vis Israel.”

<sup>200</sup> Weinberger (1986: 12) describes this initial phase of Syrian involvement as playing “the role of mediator, while simultaneously supplying military assistance to the Lebanese insurgents.”

Army)”<sup>201</sup> in order “to defend the Lebanese-Palestinian radical forces against Christian attacks” (Moaz 1995: 164). Yet Syria’s position was not simply comprehensive support for the Muslim/Leftist position. In March 1976, for example, Damascus directed the PLA as well as al-Saiqa to stall the advance of Muslim/Leftist forces on the presidential palace of Suleiman Franjeh (Dawisha 1980; for an analysis of this episode in terms of deterrence theory see Harvey 1995).

The Syrian goals in this phase were to protect the Palestinians while forestalling the complete collapse of the Lebanese state. In this way, the initial period of Syrian involvement can be seen as continuation of a policy the original aim of which was related to the rivalry with Israel; keeping a pliant force in southern Lebanon that can serve as an extension of Syrian military strategy along Israel’s northern border. This was best achieved through the maintenance of the status quo, hence the diplomatic attempts to broker a political compromise, the support for the Palestinians and by extension Muslim/Leftists to prevent the loss of the PLO position in the south and elsewhere (Christian/Rightist forces largely blamed the PLO for destabilizing the country in the first place and wished to see them expelled from Lebanon), and finally the direction of Syrian-controlled Palestinian forces to prevent the overthrow of the Christian regime. According to Rabinovich (1985: 48), “Asad was determined to prevent both Lebanon’s partition and a clear-cut victory by the radical revisionists and their Palestinian supporters.” Fear of a collapsing Lebanese state related to concerns “about the [potential] military weakness of Lebanon, which in [Syria’s] opinion was fraught with potential dangers for Syria in time of war with Israel” (Avi-Ran 1991: 7). Fear of a radical victory, by contrast, was based on the perception that it “would...probably provoke Israeli intervention on the side of the beleaguered Christians” (Rabinovich 1985: 48). Yet Damascus was not willing, at that point, to either support or acquiesce to a decisive Christian victory. First, as mentioned, this would endanger the Palestinian groups Syria controlled, influenced, and relied upon. Second, a regime in Beirut totally in Christian control could “[opt] for closer cooperation with Israel” (Rabil 2003: 49). As Seale (1990: 276) summarizes, Asad “envisaged two

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<sup>201</sup> The PLA was created in 1964 ostensibly to serve as the military wing of the PLO; however, it never actually came under PLO control and instead became a proxy force for various Arab governments, particularly Syria.

possible outcomes, both equally horrendous: either the Maronites would set up a separate state, which would bring Israel in as its protector, or the radicals with Palestinian backing would beat the Maronies, which would bring Israel in as punisher.” These realities left Syria with few options, and resulted in the delicately balanced – and sometimes contradictory – intervention that was pursued in the early months of the war.

As the conflict proceeded, however, it became clear that greater Syrian involvement would be needed to forestall the collapse of the Lebanese state. Frustrated with the perceived intransigence of the Muslim/Leftist leader Junblatt, Damascus cut supplies to radical forces. Asad also directed the PLA and al-Saiqa to side definitively with status quo, pro-government forces. This meant Syrian-directed Palestinian forces attacking the regular PLO, a move which drew condemnation, not surprisingly, from across the Arab world. Then, on 1 June 1976, approximately 30,000 regular Syrian troops moved into Lebanon in support of Christian forces (Weinberger 1986). In addition to attacks on the Muslim/Leftist forces led by Junblatt, this also brought Syrian troops into direct conflict with Palestinians. The move sent shockwaves across the Arab world and was interpreted “as an astonishing, and to many a profoundly shocking, reversal of alliances” (Seale 1990: 285). Seale (1990: 285) characterizes the sentiment as shock over “the lion of Arabism...slaughtering Arabism’s sacred cow.” Anti-Syrian protests broke out across the region, with some accusing Asad of participating in a secret US-Israeli plot to take control in Lebanon.

The practical effects of direct intervention were immediate, changing the tide of the conflict in favour of Christian forces which had been teetering on the edge of defeat. Intense fighting continued over the summer, but by mid-October the PLO-Muslim/Leftist axis had largely been defeated and Christian Maronite control – backed by the Syrian army – reaffirmed in most of Lebanon. The Riyadh conference mentioned above set the parameters of a new constitutional arrangement, and legitimized the Syrian presence (they became the official ‘guests’ of the Lebanese government) through the formation of the ADF, in which Syria was the dominant force (with funding from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) (Deeb 1980).

Much like the Pakistani decision to abandon its initial support for the American intervention in Afghanistan and the Bonn-created Afghan government by turning to

support the Taliban insurgency, the Syrian *volte-face* – in terms of its abandonment of its traditional allies in favour of direct support for their Christian opponents – helps elucidate the logic underpinning Syrian policy. As in the Pakistan case, what at first appears an “astonishing reversal” is in fact reflective of a consistent rationale. As it was for Islamabad, Damascus’ decision was fundamentally predicated on rivalry concerns. Asad’s decision, argues Rabinovich (1985: 48),

was not a conspiracy, which many contributors to the polemical literature on the Lebanese civil war claimed as an explanation of the complexities of Syria’s policy in Lebanon and its about-face in 1976. Nor was it then a drive to realize the vision of a Greater Syria centered in Damascus. It was the product of a new Syrian foreign policy devised in the aftermath of and under the impact of the October War [of 1973].

Specifically, the policy was predicated on ensuring a ‘united’ or ‘Eastern’ front against Israel by retaining influence in both Lebanon and Jordan, thus precluding the possibility of flanking Israeli attacks through either country. As Rabinovich implies, the lessons of previous wars – both 1973 but also, I would argue, 1967 and 1948 – as well as the new regional realities post-Sinai II, shaped the form of this policy as well as the intensity with which it was pursued. The decisive Syrian fear, as the war in Lebanon spiralled out of control in 1976, was that instability and, even worse, a PLO-backed Muslim/Leftist victory, would invite Israeli intervention.

Such an intervention would have been disastrous for Syrian security, opening up a new potential front against Israel in the event of war. According to Avi-Ran (1991: 8): “The Syrians feared that in a war the Israeli forces might outflank the Golan Heights from the west via ‘Fatahland’ and the Bekaa Valley, or reach the Syrian industrial centers in the North (Homs, Hama) via the Bekaa.” Weinberger (1986: 271) concurs, noting that officials in Damascus recognized that “Syria’s line of defense was vulnerable to an Israeli attack across Lebanese territory directed at its ‘soft western underbelly’.” As Patrick Seale (1990: 276) documents, these concerns weighed heavily on Asad, who felt his “environment bristling with perils.” “He could not allow the Lebanese crisis to rot,”

writes Seale (1990: 276), “the longer it continued, the greater Israel’s opportunities. In his mind it was as clear as a mathematical formula.” Rabil (2003: 51) summarizes the implications well:

President Asad realized that he had to immediately intervene in order to prevent the military downfall of the Christian side. Israel would not stand idly by and witness the creation of a radical country, swarming with Palestinian militants, along its border. It would undoubtedly help the Maronites create their own state, thus establishing a permanent foothold in Lebanon. Israel could easily then use Lebanon to militarily outflank Syria’s defenses. At this point, it becomes clear that the idea of Syrian intervention in Lebanon was born out of Asad’s strategic security needs rather than his ideological convictions about Greater Syria.<sup>202</sup>

Nor was this belief unique to Asad. “Syrian decision-makers” more generally, writes Dawisha (1980: 73) – including Foreign Minister Kaddam, Air Force and National Security Chief Naji Jamil, and Chief of Staff Hikmat Shihabi – “were convinced that the partition of Lebanon would give Israel the pretext to move into Southern Lebanon and occupy the area up to the Litani River.” Such an outcome would, the Syrians concluded, “provide Israel with a new front in any future confrontation with Syria” and was therefore unacceptable (*ibid.*: 74).

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<sup>202</sup> The mention of ‘Greater Syria’ refers to the possibility that Syrian intervention was motivated by ethnic/religious/cultural identity factors. Historically, Syria was and is intimately connected with the Lebanese state and its people. As mentioned above, the creation of modern-day Lebanon occurred by incorporating territory of what had historically been considered ‘Greater Syria’ into a new state centered on Mount Lebanon and the city of Beirut. Thus many of the inhabitants of Lebanon, in particular the Muslim communities in the north, south and along the coast, identify to varying degrees with the Syrian nation. Politically, the Ba’thist regime of Hafiz al-Asad was keen to emphasize this relationship, making frequent references to Lebanon as part of ‘Greater Syria’ and of the Lebanese people as ‘brothers’ to their Syrian counterparts. In light of such comments some have suggested that perhaps the motivation for intervention had something to do with ethnic or national solidarity, with the shared identities of the Syrian and Lebanese people. Rabinovich (1985: 53-54) dispatches this explanation effectively: “The need to justify and legitimize a controversial intervention and a controversial policy in Lebanon induced Asad and his regime to develop and emphasize themes that were either implicit or inconsequential during the early phases of Syria’s intervention. Most notable among them was the notion of a Greater Syria. As we saw, Asad’s decision to intervene in Lebanon was not made in order to implement that notion. But when the conflict with the Palestinians and the Lebanese left developed, this vision became useful to justify their subjugation.”

The belief that Israel would seize an opportunity to intervene in Lebanon, and even more importantly the *fear* this induced in Damascus, was predicated on several factors. First, Israel had been involved with Christian forces during the civil war (this activity is described below), meaning they had already flirted with an involvement that could be easily expanded. Second, again, the experiences of previous wars had suggested that Israel recognized the strategic opportunities afforded by Lebanese territory (as when, in 1973, Lebanese air space was used to outflank Syrian air defences). Israeli raids into southern Lebanon, similarly, had been consistent features over the previous decade. And third, more generally, the vulnerability that an Israeli intervention would induce – *in the context of expectations about future conflict* – mandated that Syria work to preclude such a possibility.

Here we see clearly the effects of rivalry. Taken in isolation, a costly intervention – one that drew intense criticism from the Arab world and even led to a *froideur* in the Syrian-Soviet relationship, no small consideration given the extent of Soviet military patronage (Karsh 1991) – in which Syria abandoned and indeed attacked their long-standing clients and allies (let alone their spiritual brethren and the core of the Arab cause) the Palestinians, would be difficult to explain. As mentioned, many in the Arab world were accordingly confused and outraged. Yet in the context of ongoing rivalry with Israel, the rationale behind the move is explicable. The overriding concern was the threat from Israel. Seale (1990: 288, emphasis added) summarizes Asad’s attitude to the criticism he faced with regards to the intervention:

From first to last Asad remained convinced that, whatever the outside pressures on him, his intervention had been tactically and morally correct and that he had been impelled by the highest principles. He had been forced to act by the blindness and ambition of men *who could not grasp the nature of his life-and-death struggle with Israel.*

It was this rationale, this preoccupation with the “life-and-death” struggle with Israel – established over the course of multiple wars and crises since 1948 – that guided Syrian policy throughout the 1975-6 period in Lebanon. Even as “changes in circumstances

required changes in policy – from mediation and indirect intervention to direct military intervention and several changes of allies – Syrian goals remained constant throughout the war: to put an end to it in a way that would keep Lebanon from in any way enabling Israel to threaten Syria” (Jorun 2014: 61).

Again, the parallels with the Pakistan case are worth making explicit; in each instance, a *change* in policy reflected a *consistent* preference calculus confronting new circumstances. In Afghanistan, Pakistan’s initial decision to abandon the Taliban and support the American intervention was designed to minimize India’s role and thereby preclude advantages from accruing to India which would threaten Pakistan in the future. Once the American intervention occurred, however, it became clear that India’s role would be significant in the new Afghan state. Pakistan therefore reversed its decision and reengaged with a Taliban insurgency which was taking aim at the Indian-supported Afghan government.

Here, we can think of the Syrian intervention during 1975-76 in terms of four turning points:

T1) Civil war breaks out in Lebanon.

T2) Diplomatic intervention to preserve status-quo & indirect intervention in support of PLO-Muslim/Leftists.

T3) Civil war escalates threatening breakdown of Lebanese state.

T4) Direct intervention in support of Christian/Rightists.

T1 and T3 are events, while T2 and T4 represent decisions by the Syrian leadership. At T1, Damascus was faced with the prospect of a destabilized neighbour, one that had hitherto allowed Syria to manage and direct Palestinian forces based in Lebanon as part of Syria’s broad military strategy vis-à-vis Israel. In order to protect this situation, and hopefully prevent the expulsion of the PLO by Christian militias, Syria attempted to craft a diplomatic solution while simultaneously providing arms and aid to PLO (and by extension Muslim/Leftist) forces. Over time, however, and certainly by the start of the new year in 1976, it became clear that no diplomatic solution was possible, and that the violent disintegration of the Lebanese state was a real possibility, with the PLO and

Muslim/Leftist forces in the ascendancy (the period of roughly December 1975 – January 1976 can be considered T3). Israel had already become involved through indirect support to Christian forces, and the prospect of a total Christian defeat suggested to Damascus – for a variety of reasons noted above – that full scale Israeli intervention was possible, even likely. Thus, at T4, Syria decided to send in regular troops, this time on the side of the Christians so as to prevent their defeat, re-establish stability in the country, and forestall potential Israeli invasion. The key is that Syrian assessments of both T1 and T3 resulted in decisions (at T2 and T4, respectively) which had a single, consistent aim: minimize Israel’s influence in Lebanon, and thereby Jerusalem’s ability to use Lebanese territory to antagonize and/or threaten Syria.

#### *Israeli intervention 1975-76*

In the years leading up to the civil war, Israel had conducted numerous raids into Lebanon in retaliation for Palestinian cross-border attacks and terrorist activities, and this practice continued once war broke out.<sup>203</sup> In terms of new involvement, however, Israel’s activities remained relatively limited. Israel’s interests in Lebanon were two-fold at the time. First, there was a genuine identification with the Christian population as another non-Muslim religious minority in the region. Second, and much more importantly, there was the security issue related to the Palestinian threat. As mentioned above, the “scourge” of cross-border terrorism had become a major issue for Israeli leaders, particularly in the context of improving Egyptian-Israeli relations. Quelling such activities was a priority. As a contiguous state, Israel was obviously concerned with instability in Lebanon. Ironically, however, given the PLO presence in the south and its relative autonomy from the Lebanese government, the outbreak of civil war did little – at first – to fundamentally alter the security situation for Israel. They were concerned with the safety of Christian communities, but were not prepared to commit fully to their protection or to intervene directly on their behalf.<sup>204</sup> Instead, Israel was focused on potential Syrian involvement.

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<sup>203</sup> Primarily in the south, but also into Beirut itself, as on 13 April 1973 when Israeli commandos executed three Fatah leaders in their apartments (Dawisha 1980).

<sup>204</sup> As Rabin (1979: 281) notes in his memoirs: “Israel felt a natural affinity to the Christian community of Lebanon, but under no circumstances could we undertake political or military responsibility for its fate.”

Weinberger (1986: 269, emphasis in original) summarizes Jerusalem's position effectively:

Israel's behaviour during the Lebanese Civil War was reactive to Syria. Israel was at first primarily concerned with the *direction* of Syrian alignments, fearing that Syrian support for traditional allies in Lebanon would strengthen the PLO's capabilities against Israel. Once Syria shifted alignments, Israel's main priority was to limit the *intensity* and geographic scope of Syria's military presence within range of Israel's northern border.

This reference to 'limiting the intensity and geographic scope' of intervention refers to the so-called 'red line' agreement between Israel and Syria, explored in greater detail below. First it is important to note the limited Israeli intervention that followed from their apprehension regarding initial Syrian involvement.

This intervention took the form of aid and support to Christian forces. As mentioned, Israel did not identify sufficiently with the Christian cause to intervene more comprehensively, but recall that during this initial phase Syria had not yet gone beyond indirect intervention either. At this point, concerned only with the 'direction' of Syria's aid to PLO-Muslim/Leftist forces, Israel moved to balance Syrian efforts by offering aid to the Christian/Rightist side. They did this through arms transfers and aid estimated to be worth about USD\$100 million (Weinberger 1986). Obviously, Israel had a preference for the Maronites over the Muslims, particular given the former shared Jerusalem's antagonistic view of the PLO. A Lebanese state controlled by Muslim/Leftists forces was likely to offer even greater free-reign to the Palestinians than was already the case, and would also certainly be closely aligned with Syria, exacerbating Israeli security concerns on both counts. The Israelis were well aware of the so-called 'Eastern Front' strategy tying Syrian together with Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, but unlike Damascus – which considered such Arab solidarity necessary for defence – Jerusalem saw it as a potential offensive threat. Israel's focus during this phase was primarily on southern Lebanon, which they considered to be in their legitimate sphere of influence. All told, however, Israeli involvement remained limited, meant primarily to offset Syrian contributions to

PLO-Muslim/Leftist forces and to retain the ability to retaliate against PLO attacks from the south.

As the prospect of direct Syrian intervention increased, however, Israel's interest became more acute. The prospect of Syrian troops arrayed along Israel's northern border was not something Israeli leaders were likely to tolerate. Rabin (1979: 280, emphasis in original) writes of the moment: "...it was clear that if the Syrian army occupied southern Lebanon, we would be forced to take pragmatic steps to push it back. Israel could not tolerate having Syrian troops stationed along *two* of her borders!" In fact, it seemed possible that a direct Syrian intervention could very well precipitate the very Israeli intervention it was designed to preclude; in fact, Jerusalem explicitly warned as much: "Through the United States, Israel made it clear to the Syrians that it considered the intervention of foreign armed forces in Lebanon a grave threat to its security, something that Israel would not allow to happen" (Rabin 2003: 51-52). Henry Kissinger (1999), as ever at the centre of Middle East developments at the time, describes his communications with Rabin on the issue: "In case of Syrian intervention, Israeli forces would occupy 'as quietly as they can' strategic positions in southern Lebanon." Damascus' use of the PLA and al-Saiqa in January 1976, noted above, was particularly alarming to Israel, which saw such activity as a probe by Syria and a portent of potential direct intervention. As Weinberger (1986: 282) describes, the Israeli response was clear:

Defense Minister Shimon Peres emphasized...that the presence of a large number of guerilla forces in Lebanon and the possible entry of the Syrian Army into Lebanon were two problems with direct repercussions for Israel's security. He warned that 'if Syria invades Lebanon, Israel will undertake the necessary defensive measures'.

Asad was aware of these threats, of course, and obviously did not wish to provoke an Israeli counter-intervention which might bring on a direct conflict that a) he knew Syria was unlikely to win and b) was the precise outcome his own forays into Lebanon were designed to prevent. This catch-22 was solved via a backchannel arrangement, brokered by the US, which came to be known as the 'red line' agreement. The specifics of this

agreement are telling, and constitute solid evidence as to the priorities of both Israel and Syria in the Lebanese theatre. As such, it is worth exploring in detail.

### *Red-Line Agreement*

The direct Syrian intervention that brought the Lebanese civil war to a close in October 1976, described above, did not trigger the large-scale Israeli response that Israeli decision-makers had threatened would occur in the event of Syrian troops deploying into Lebanon. Why? The answer is a tacit agreement reached between the rivals – with the US as a partial architect and intermediary – that protected, at least initially, the core security concerns of each side. As described above, Syria's main concern was preventing the collapse of the Lebanese state lest Israel take advantage of such instability to move into Lebanon and exert control and influence over the country. They saw the trajectory of the conflict heading in this direction, and therefore calculated that direct intervention was necessary to forestall such an outcome. On the Israeli side, the prospect of Syrian troops deployed in *southern* Lebanon was untenable. This would expand Israel's vulnerability to attacks on multiple fronts (at the very moment they believed they were reducing vulnerability in the Sinai through negotiations with Egypt). Neither state, in other words, was driven primarily by offensive considerations, but rather by security concerns associated with the presence of their rival in Lebanon. Of course, it was very difficult to communicate these concerns directly, let alone arrive at any type of understanding, for precisely the reasons that the security concerns existed in the first place: mistrust and perceived hostile intentions.

Into this conundrum stepped Kissinger and the US diplomatic team. By going through the US, Israel was able to communicate to Asad what would, and what would not, be acceptable in terms of Syrian intervention. This would allow Asad to move in and stabilize Lebanon without prompting an Israeli invasion. Over a period in the spring of 1976, messages were passed back and forth through the Americans, and the basic parameters of Israel's 'red-line' in Lebanon were established. These included a geographical dimension, but also stipulations as to the scope, scale and intensity of Syrian

activities, including what types of weapons systems could be introduced to certain areas. According to Israeli journalist Ze'ev Schiff, the deal had the following stipulations:

(1) The Syrian army would not enter southern Lebanon and would not cross a line starting south of Sidon, on the coast, and running east to Aysiya and from there towards the Syrian border; (2) the Syrian army in Lebanon would not be equipped with surface-to-air missile batteries; (3) and the Syrian army would not use its air force against the Christians in Lebanon.<sup>205</sup>

Because the agreement was unwritten, there are discrepancies as to what was actually included, so the above parameters cannot be considered definitive. In his memoirs, Kissinger, for example, simply writes of the deal that “Israel would not tolerate movement of Syrian forces beyond an area of ten kilometers south of the Damascus-Beirut axis.” Rabin (1979: 280), likewise, notes that the red-line “was not marked out on any map” but that “we later made it clear that we meant a line running directly east from Sidon to the Lebanese-Syrian border.” The Litani river is also often used as the de facto red-line (see for example Rabinovich 1985; Moaz 1995; Ben-Yehuda and Sandler 2002; Mays 2004) which places it slightly further south than the Sidon-line. This discrepancy likely mirrors the fluidity of the line in practice, as circumstances changed and both sides continued to communicate through an intermediary.

In any event, the red-line did result in Syria entering Lebanon without the immediate looming threat of an Israeli counter-move. The red-line conditions were broadly respected by Damascus over the summer and fall of 1976, during which time, as described above, Syrian forces were able to effectuate a cease-fire and nominal end to the civil war. The restrictions associated with the red-line prevented this move from being decisive, however. Most significantly, given that Syrian forces were precluded from entering the south, the PLO continued to operate in that part of the country; as such the October 1976 resolution to the war was not complete and violence and instability continued in areas not open to Syrian intervention.

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<sup>205</sup> Quoted in Rabil (2003: 52).

Here we see one of the striking features of the red-line arrangement: Israel's policy amounted to a protective umbrella over a guerilla organization whose primary target was and continued to be the Israeli state. Jerusalem was aware of the irony, but nonetheless preferred to keep Syria out of southern Lebanon rather than allow them in to subdue the PLO (Syria had, in fact, communicated their willingness to do as much). As Rabin (1979: 280, emphasis added) writes:

...because the Syrians were prevented from moving south of the 'red line', southern Lebanon became a haven for the terrorists. *We had foreseen such an eventuality and preferred it to Syrian military control of the area bordering our territory.* But that did not reduce the absurdity of the new situation: PLO terrorists, Israel's sworn foes, found asylum under an Israeli 'deterrence umbrella' intended against the Syrians.

In other words the clear, ongoing, and demonstrable threat from Palestinian attacks was preferable to the *possible* threat from Syrian forces in control of areas along the border. This decision is bizarre in the context of immediate security interests, but explicable by reference to the long-term security calculus conditioned by international rivalry. As Weinberger (1986: 280, emphasis added) observes, "*In the short term*, it was in Israel's interest to allow Syria to attack Palestinian positions in Lebanon; *in the long term*, however, a substantial Syrian presence in Lebanon could contribute to an effective Eastern Front strategy." Israel was focused instead on the long-term. Evron (2013: 56, emphasis added) provides a useful overview of the logic at work:

Israel...faced a major dilemma which was also to recur later: to accept Syrian deployment in the south as a pacifying measure but that would allow the south to be turned into a Syrian military base. *Israeli suspicions of long-term Syrian intentions persisted, however, and Israel decided to maintain its opposition to [Syrian deployment].*

Again, this decision reflects striking evidence in support of the rivalry argument: a clear trade-off between immediate and visible security threats as compared to a potential, long-term threat, and the preference to protect against the latter as opposed to the former. Yet for Israel, conditioned by rivalry, the possibility was *not* a trade-off between one certain (the PLO) and one possible (Syria) threat, but rather between one known and manageable threat as against an *overwhelmingly likely* and more severe threat. Convinced that Syria would attack in the future, acquiescing to their presence in the south was not to flirt with possible danger but rather court certain strategic vulnerability. Given the existential anxiety described by Allon and others above, this was not something any Israeli decision-maker would be willing to do.

As Evron alludes to in the quotation above, this was a dilemma that would “recur” again moving forward. Which is to say, the position of both Syria and Israel vis-à-vis the red line would not remain static. Following the civil war – again, ostensibly though not definitively ended in October 1976 – a new tenuous phase in the Lebanese crisis began. Syria, through the ADF, retained basic control of Lebanon north of the Litani river, while Israel continued to cultivate ties with Christian forces in the south. In other words, the respective Syrian and Israeli interventions in Lebanon continued. I now turn to an examination of this period.

### *Israel and Syria in Lebanon 1977-1981*

The close of the Lebanese civil war did not end the broader Lebanese crisis. The underlying tensions in Lebanese society persisted, and were now supplemented by a de facto partition of the country into southern (Israeli) and northern (Syrian) spheres of influence. Nor were each state’s activities confined to their particular zone. As Weinberger (1986: 286) describes:

Essentially, Syrian and Israeli policies were mirror images of each other. In northern and central Lebanon, Syria intervened directly while Israel offered covert assistance to the groups it favoured. Below the Litani River, Israel became

progressively more actively involved while Syrian interference remained largely covert.

In the south, protected by Israel's deterrent umbrella vis-à-vis Syria, the PLO intensified its activities against Israel. Cross-border raids proliferated, leading to repeated Israeli reprisals and counter-raids (Shilon et al 2012).<sup>206</sup> This prompted Israel to enhance its defensive infrastructure along its northern border, and to cultivate greater links with Christian communities and militias in southern Lebanon (Rabinovich 1985).

Yet even as the threat from the PLO intensified, Israel remained firm in its commitment to the principles of the red line, continuing to oppose the deployment of Syrian forces to quell instability. In January 1977, for example, Syrian troops entered the city of Nabatiya, some "seven kilometres to the south of the southernmost line of deployment of the Syrian force" (Avi-Ran 1991: 98) – which is to say, below Israel's geographical red-line, by anyone's measure. Once again,

The Syrian move faced Israel with a difficult question: what was preferable in Southern Lebanon – the presence of the Palestinians, or of the Syrian army, which might perhaps restrain the Palestinians but whose existence in the area constituted a security risk for Israel? The evaluation of the Israeli prime minister was that the risk created by the precedent of a Syrian presence in the South was greater than its advantages and thus Israel transmitted to Syria, via the United States, an ultimatum demanding that it withdraw its forces from Nabatiye (Avi-Ran 1991: 98).

Evron (2013: 62) provides a similar assessment of the episode:

Israeli decision-makers were forced to confront once more...the trade-off between immediate current security and long-term basic security. It was understood that

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<sup>206</sup> Some such reprisals included the movement of significant numbers of Israeli forces into Lebanese territory. In 1978, the IDF deployed troops into southern Lebanon as part of Operation Litani in response to the so-called 'Coastal Road Massacre' in which a team of Palestinian guerillas had penetrated into Israeli territory and killed 38 Israeli citizens (Paul et. al 2013).

Syrian deployment along the border would probably diminish the threat of PLO activity. Indeed, one might add that in the view of Syria's cautious and controlled behaviour in the Golan Heights, Syrian deployment could have completely precluded terrorism from the north. On the other hand, Syria might use its deployment in the south as an additional springboard for a conventional attack in Israel. Israel eventually decided to oppose the Syrian move very strongly.

The Nabatiye incident therefore reinforces the centrality of rivalry concerns for Israel; not only was long-term security preferred when Syrian intervention was being contemplated and the initial red-line agreement crafted but now, in the face of amplified PLO activity, it remained the priority.

At the same time, the tentative alliance-of-convenience between Christian/Rightist forces and Syria began to crumble. Syrian forces had not withdrawn from Lebanon in 1976, instead staying on to ensure stability and maintain their influence and control over Beirut. Their presence increasingly worried the Maronites, who were "apprehensive that Syria intended to continue its control over Lebanon, attempting to disarm the Christians of their heavy weapons and renewing its alliance with the PLO and the Lebanese left" (Moaz 1995: 167). Bashir Jumayyil, son of Maronite patriarch Pierre Jumayyil and an emerging leader of the dominant faction within the Christian alliance, sought to offset these concerns by cultivating closer ties with Israel. Indeed, Israel had continued its war-time policy of supplying Christian forces through sea ports in the north; this practice intensified at Bashir's request (Zamir 1999). For Israel, support for the Christians was seen as a means by which to erode Syrian influence in Lebanon; the red-line agreement notwithstanding, Syrian control over Lebanon remained a security threat. The goal of Bashir and the Christian front more broadly increasingly became the expulsion of Syrian forces from Lebanon, making them natural Israeli allies. Support for Christian forces in the north against Syria was mirrored by amplified support for, and even coordination with, Christians in the south against the PLO (Moaz 1995).

Recognizing that their control over Lebanon could never be consolidated absent a presence in the south, Syria undertook to cultivate ties to Muslim forces in the area, in part leading to the general rapprochement with their previously-scorned Muslim-PLO

allies (Rabinovich 1985; Shilon et al. 2012). Gradually the situation between the Maronites and the Syrians deteriorated; in early 1978, fighting broke out, first in Beirut and then spreading elsewhere. The violence was stopped by both international and Israeli pressure (Israeli fighter jets flew over Beirut, and Jerusalem warned that it would not permit the 'genocide' of Christians by Syrian forces) (Maoz 1995). At the same time, the success of Egyptian-Israeli negotiations on a peace agreement were shifting Israel's attention more and more to the Lebanese theatre. "It was Lebanon's misfortune," writes Rabinovich (1985: 95), "that the Egyptian-Israeli détente did not ease the broader Arab-Israeli conflict, but tended rather to telescope it and focus it on the Palestinian issue." There was thus an increased desire on the part of Jerusalem – now led by Menachem Begin's Likud government – to deal with the Palestinian issue and the threat emanating from Lebanon more broadly. Begin therefore greatly expanded Israel's support for and cooperation with Bashir's forces in the north, and Christian militias – in particular the South Lebanon Army (SLA) led by Saad Haddad – in the south (Perlmutter 1987).

Partly as a result of this pressure, Syria chose to remove and reposition some of its forces in 1980. They ceded their positions in Beirut and elsewhere to the PLO, but retained a presence along the Beirut-Damascus highway, and concentrated their remaining forces in the strategically important Beqa Valley. According to Rabinovich (1985: 113-14):

The new deployment was a statement of priorities. However weakened, the Ba'thi regime was determined to uphold its influence in Beirut, the political center, and to preserve a strong defensive position in the Beqa valley. The Beqa, which Syria had administered directly since 1976, was not only contested but was strategically crucial. If Israel ever sought to outflank Syria's main defense line, it could do so either through northern Jordan or through the Beqa valley. The latter option was the more likely, and a strong Syrian defensive line there seemed vital to Syria's military and political planners.

The move further underscores the continued centrality of rivalry concerns with respect to Syria's presence in Lebanon; control over Lebanon was desirable but, in the face of

significant opposition to Syria's presence, the most important consideration remained the consolidation of defensive lines against a future Israeli attack.

These priorities were put to the test in the spring of 1981. In an attempt to link the Christian heartland to the Christian town of Zahlé, located in the Beqa valley, Maronite forces moved into the area. "The move to Zahle [was] interpreted by Syria as an attempt to change the status quo and to undermine Syria's position in the part of Lebanon most vital to its interests" (ibid.: 115). The Christian-Israeli connection further suggested the "possibility of Israeli troops or their Lebanese allies in the Beqa valley" and was therefore "most unsettling for Syria's leaders" (ibid.: 116). O'Ballance (1998: 106), likewise, suggests that "Syria certainly did not want a [Maronite]-held Zahle bastion blocking the main highway from Damascus, Zahle being only ten miles from the Syrian border." As a result of these priorities, Syrian forces moved to expel the Maronites from the city. Fighting became intense, and Syria eventually employed combat helicopters to break the deadlock (Avi-Ran 1991). The introduction of such assets was a violation of the red-line agreement; Israel responded by shooting down two Syrian helicopters on 28 April (O'Ballance 1998). The decision was a controversial one in Israel; several Israeli officials – including Deputy Minister of Defense Mordechai Tzipori – worried about being drawn into a war on the Christians behalf (the move into Zahlé, after all, had been a Maronite decision). Yet Begin insisted that the protection of the Christians against aerial attack was necessary because Israel had publicly committed to such a position – failure to act would erode Israeli credibility vis-à-vis Syria and thereby invite further provocations, perhaps in southern Lebanon (Shilon et al. 2012). In response to Israel's downing of the helicopters, Syria introduced Surface-to-Air (SAM) missiles into Zahlé as well as "long-range missiles in Syrian territory along the Lebanese border" (Rabinovich 1985: 118). An Israeli plan to destroy the missile installations was stalled by inclement weather conditions<sup>207</sup>, allowing for last minute US-negotiations which, although they failed to convince Asad to remove the missiles, delayed any Israeli action through the June 1981 Israeli elections. With the so-called 'missile crisis' unresolved, the red line agreement had

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<sup>207</sup> The moment again reflects the divergent perceptions of the two sides and the associated effects of rivalry. As Shilon et al. (2012: 368, emphasis added) write: "The deployment of batteries of anti-air missiles along the Beqaa Valley and Scud missiles near Damascus was meant mainly to warn Israel that it should avoid exacerbating the situation. *But Begin saw the deployment as a real threat.*"

crumbled, and conflict between Israel and Syria on Lebanese soil appeared increasingly likely. In July, increased Israeli-PLO fighting along the Israel-Lebanon border intensified; Israeli leaders now worried that Palestinian infrastructure could be protected by the ‘umbrella’ provided by the newly-installed Syrian missiles. A decision was therefore reached to enter south Lebanon to deal with the Palestinian threat more definitively, leading to the 1982 Lebanon war.

### *Assessing Syrian and Israeli interventions 1977-1981*

Before moving on to a discussion of the 1982 Lebanon war it is important to briefly assess the Syrian and Israeli interventions during the 1977-1981 period in the context of the expectations of Rational Rivalry. As described above, the Syrian and Israeli positions were determined by the outcome of the 1975-76 civil war and in particular the tacit red line agreement which allowed Syria to directly intervene into Lebanon in the area north of the Litani river. This geographical limitation meant that instability continued in southern Lebanon, which Israel attempted to mitigate both through direct action and via increased coordination with sympathetic Christian militias in the area (Israel remained unwilling to abandon the red line, even as it meant instability – and associated security threats – continued). Syrian and Israeli behaviour was not static, however, as each also indirectly supported forces hostile to their rival: Israel supporting the Christians in the north; and after 1977, Syria supporting the PLO in the south. These basic policies reflect an ongoing interest in minimizing their rivals’ respective influence in the country. The breakdown of the red line arrangement resulted not only from the policies of proxy support for contending forces, but also through the machinations of domestic Lebanese actors. Christian forces exacerbated the security situation to their advantage by provoking Syrian attacks and turning to Israel for support, as in the case of the crisis over Zahlé. The PLO, likewise, continued its attacks against Israel, provoking Israeli retaliations which exacerbated Syrian fears about Israeli penetration into Lebanon. Operation Litani in 1978, for example, which brought the IDF as far north as the Litani river and thereby in close proximity to Syrian forces, suggested to Damascus that Israel’s designs in Lebanon may not have been satisfied by the red line arrangement.

And yet, in this last case, Syria was cautious to avoid direct military confrontation with Israel.<sup>208</sup> Israel, likewise, made it clear that it did not wish to be drawn into a war against Syria: either over Syrian attacks against Christians in Beirut (Rabinovich 1985) or over the crisis in Zahlé (Shilon et. al 2012). Both Jerusalem and Damascus were careful, in other words, not to provoke all out-conflict with one another on Lebanese soil, this despite all the attendant policies which were aimed at curbing each other's influence in the country and in the face of concerted attempts by both states' proxies to draw them in further (the PLO, the SLA, and the Maronite front led by Bashir Jumayyil all saw potential advantages to their respective positions in instigating more direct Syrian-Israeli conflict and in many cases worked to bring it about). Thus Israeli and Syrian involvement in Lebanon during this period remained fundamentally defensive, concerned primarily with forestalling Lebanese territory from becoming a staging point or source of strategic advantage in a potential future conflict. In this way, the interventions were consistent with the priorities identified during the 1975-76 civil war and with the broad expectations of Rational Rivalry outlined in this dissertation.

#### *Lebanon War (1982-85)*

The collapse of the red line arrangement set the stage for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The roots of the war lay in the escalating crises described above, in particular the development of PLO infrastructure in the south and the simultaneous Syrian military presence in the adjacent Beqa valley; the latter dynamic exacerbated Israeli fears not only of the PLO (which might be supported and protected by proximate Syrian forces) but of a direct Syrian attack more generally.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> As Rabinovich (1985:111) writes of this case: "It was significant that Syria did not intervene on behalf of its Palestinian and Lebanese allies, despite the proximity of Syrian troops and the scope and duration of the operation. This failure was indeed criticized by rivals of the Ba'thi regime, but it was determined not to be drawn into war with Israel when the latter had a decisive military advantage." The Israelis, for their part, were equally careful about triggering conflict with Syria as part of Operation Litani. Bregman (2016: 173), for example, writes that "special precautions were taken by the Israelis not to provoke the Syrians in any way."

<sup>209</sup> According to Rabinovich (1985: 122): "For Israel the presence of the Syrian missiles in the Beqa valley was not only a violation of the 1976 'red line' agreement, but a serious threat and a step toward an increasingly offensive Syrian posture in Lebanon."

The triggering event of the invasion was the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador to the UK in London by a Palestinian hit squad on 3 June 1982. The event gave the Israeli leadership the political capital required to justify military action. Two days later, the Israeli cabinet approved ‘Operation Peace for Galilee’ and on 6 June a “90,000-strong invasion force, combining armour, infantry and artillery, with substantial air and naval support” entered southern Lebanon (O’Ballance 1998: 113). The stated purpose of the operation was to push back the PLO and create a 40km buffer zone along the border, thereby putting Israeli territory out of range for Palestinian rocket and mortar attacks. This limited objective was swiftly achieved, but the IDF pushed beyond it; three columns of Israeli troops advanced deeper into Lebanese territory: one along the coast toward Beirut, one in the central mountainous region toward the Beirut-Damascus highway, and another in the east down from the Golan toward the Beqa valley. This last thrust put the IDF into direct conflict with Syrian forces (Bregman 2016).

On 9 June, the Israeli air force destroyed the Syrian SAM network in the valley, and aerial dogfights between Israeli and Syrian fighter jets resulted in a comprehensive Israeli victory in the skies (Seale 1990). Syrian forces then engaged the IDF in ground battles in an attempt to thwart their advance both toward the Beirut-Damascus highway and across the Beqa valley. Despite being outmatched in terms of military hardware, Syrian forces were able to slow the Israeli momentum, until a ceasefire was reached – under international pressure – on 11 June. This ceasefire applied only to the eastern sector and to Syrian and Israeli forces, and therefore did not extend to the PLO in the west and along the coast. On that front, Israel swept toward Beirut, reaching the outskirts of the capital by 13 June.<sup>210</sup> On 15 June, Israeli forces had reached and captured portions of the Beirut-Damascus highway in the central sector, cutting off the PLO, as well as a contingent of Syrian ADF troops, in Beirut from Damascus. Approaching the city from two sides, the Israelis began what would become a 73-day siege; by mid-August 1982 the initial, primary phase in the war had come to a close with an Israeli victory (Moaz 1995).

Before moving on to a description of the subsequent phases of the war it is worthwhile pausing to consider what Israeli and Syrian behaviour in this initial period

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<sup>210</sup> The Syrian-Israeli ceasefire had been extended to include the PLO on 12 June but had quickly fallen apart (Gabriel 1984).

tells us about their respective priorities. First, the historical record is clear that the initial Israeli insistence that their war aims were limited to clearing the PLO from the south were disingenuous<sup>211</sup>; the intention was always to expand the conflict into other parts of Lebanon, including in the central and eastern regions, and to eliminate or diminish the Syrian presence by destroying Syrian SAM installations and pushing Syrian troops from their positions in the Beqa valley. The key question is why did Israel feel it necessary to initiate conflict with Syria in 1982?

One popular explanation points to the influence of Prime Minister Begin and his Defence Minister Ariel Sharon (see for example Perlmutter 1982; Avi-Ran 1991; Seale 1990; Freilich 2012; and the discussion of idiosyncratic vs. strategic explanations of the war in Yaniv and Lieber 1983). In this formulation, Begin's deep hostility for the PLO and his ideational affinity for Lebanon's Christians combined with Sharon's excessive hawkishness<sup>212</sup> to produce a war of 'choice' (one that was ill-conceived, according to popular Israeli posterity; see the discussion in Inbar 2008). Sharon, in particular, is often blamed for escalating the war by expanding it beyond its original aims, against the wishes of the Israeli cabinet (see the discussion in Schulze 1998).<sup>213</sup>

While there is no question that Israel initiated the war and therefore it was a 'choice' in the basic sense of the word, an alternative to the idiosyncratic thesis is offered by Rabinovich (1985) when he suggests that Israeli calculations were driven by concern over the long-term prospects of the Lebanese situation and a favourable historical moment whereby conditions were propitious for a move *now* rather than *later*. He notes that in Jerusalem's eyes, Syria's presence in the Beqa valley, and particularly the installation of the SAM sites, was "not only a violation of the 1976 'red line' agreement, but a serious threat and a step toward an increasingly offensive Syrian posture in Lebanon" (Rabinovich 1985: 122). Further:

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<sup>211</sup> These limited war aims had been explicitly laid out by Begin in Knesset on 6 June, including the insistence that Israel wished to avoid conflict with Syria: "We do not want war with Syria. From this podium I call on President Asad to instruct the Syrian army not to attack Israel's soldiers" (quoted in Sucharov 2012: 94).

<sup>212</sup> Shilon et al. (2012: 367) write that "since being appointed defense minister, Ariel Sharon had tried to bring about an invasion of Lebanon" intimating that his use of "moral arguments...sounded as if they had come directly from Begin's mouth" was part of a personal campaign to bring about a war.

<sup>213</sup> Zeev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari (1984: 39), for example, describe the Israeli invasion as "born of the ambition of one willfull, reckless man." They further state: "One individual – Defense Minister Ariel Sharon – arrogated the authority to conduct a major military venture as he saw fit" (ibid.: 301).

The Syrian armed forces were already impressive, with three armored divisions, two mechanized divisions, six independent armored or mechanized brigades, over 400 combat airplanes, two missile regiments, and several independent commando and paratrooper regiments. If their build-up continued at the same pace, Syrian leaders might within two or three years, perhaps sooner, decide that they had the capacity to challenge Israel. By that time the Egyptian-Israeli relationship might have deteriorated, and Egypt would have absorbed the new American-made weapons systems. Other currently favorable circumstances, the Iraqi preoccupation with Iran and the Syrian-Jordanian hostility, might also change, Israelis reasoned. The Arab world, unable to contend with Israel's might in 1981 and 1982, might well be able to threaten it in 1983 and 1984 (Rabinovich 1985: 132-33).

One can take this argument further; given the *assumption* of future conflict conditioned by rivalry, the Israeli incentive to select to fight at an opportune moment – to engage in what they would essentially consider a preemptive war – would have been particularly strong.

Shilon et al. (2012) describe the internal debates that occurred between Israeli decision-makers in the lead up to the war. Two basic options were discussed. One involved a smaller scale operation that would focus on the PLO in the south and create a buffer zone to prevent future rocket attacks (in essence the invasion plan that was initially announced but not adhered to). The second was a larger move which would include pushing to Beirut and confronting the Syrians in the east (the invasion plan that was eventually implemented). Without doubt, Sharon was the loudest voice pushing for the expanded version, while other cabinet members demurred, apparently “shocked that Sharon would not be satisfied with simply removing the Katyusha [the Soviet-made rocket launcher used by the PLO] threat and...instead [preferred] a plan by which Israel could end up reaching Beirut and confronting Syria” (Shilon et. al 2012: 370). Begin attempted to placate both sides, delaying a cabinet vote when it became clear that no consensus had been reached. Nonetheless, Shilon et al. (2012: 370) note, “there is no

doubt that Begin's vision [for Lebanon] suited the [expanded plan]." They further quote Avigdor Ben-Gal, the Israeli general who would command Israeli forces along the eastern column against Syria, describing Sharon's presentation of the invasion plan to Begin in which the prime minister "approved all plans" (quoted in Shilon et al. 2012: 377). In any event, while the perception that Sharon 'deceived' his fellow cabinet ministers as to the scope of the invasion plan is plausible in certain respects – the push to Beirut was reported after the fact, essentially as a *fait accompli*, and never in the end voted on by other cabinet members – it is less plausible that Begin himself was unaware of, or opposed to, the expanded option.

Ultimately, it is beyond the scope of the present discussion to adjudicate decisively between the competing interpretations of this specific Israeli decision. Of the possibilities that exist, however, the notion that Begin and Sharon were driven by the desire to settle Israel's security issues in the context of a perceived ongoing – and growing – threat from the Syrian presence in Lebanon is consistent with the general argument that rivalry considerations were relevant to Israeli decision making in Lebanon throughout the 1975-1985 period. If one considers the 1982 decision in the context of the breakdown of the red line agreement (and in particular the introduction of SAMs into the Beqa), for example, it becomes less of a rash departure from hitherto limited involvement than a logical response to a deteriorating security situation within a protracted crisis. Recall that the entire *point* of the original red line agreement was specifying how Syria could *avoid* an Israeli invasion of Lebanon; which is to say, there was a standing threat for Israel to invade if the conditions of the red line agreement were violated. Syria quite clearly violated the red line by placing SAMs in the Beqa. Therefore the Israeli move is logical according to the exact same priorities that determined the red line agreement in the first place.

As for Syria, it is clear that their response to the Israeli invasion during this period reflects the unavoidable but reluctant defence of their vital Lebanese positions. Knudsen (2001: 225), for example, describes the 1982 war as "the conflict Asad did not want." Over the first few days of the war, as the Israelis targeted the PLO, "it was still possible for Asad to believe that he was not the prime target and, in spite of the provocative

movements of Israeli forces, he took great care not to be sucked in” (Seale 1990: 380). In order to avoid direct conflict with Israel, according to Moaz (1995: 175):

The Syrians were even ready to put up with the destruction of the PLO bases in southern Lebanon; but when the Israeli army advanced towards the strategic town of Jezzín, the Syrian army launched an abortive counter-attack and also introduced more ground-to-air missile batteries into the area.

As the IDF moved north, “there was no further Israeli pretence of avoiding combat with the Syrians nor room for doubt in Asad’s mind that Israel aimed to destroy him. Now the question for him was: Would Sharon’s armies surge forward to the Beirut-Damascus road, cutting off Syrian forces in Beirut and the mountains, or would they turn east and threaten Damascus itself?” (Seale 1990: 382). Given these perceptions, the Syrian forces dug in; protecting their positions in the Beqa valley and along the Beirut-Damascus highway was not about fighting for influence in Lebanon, but rather for the security and protection of the Syrian state itself.

The state of affairs in Lebanon after August/September 1982 represented a reversal of the previous situation: whereas before Israel had supported Christian forces against Syrian control in the north, now Syria endeavoured to undermine Israeli control through support for the PLO in and around Beirut. Several events conspired to undermine the apparent Israeli victory. The assassination of Bashir Jumayyil on 14 September (who had been elected Lebanese president just days before) eliminated Israel’s staunchest supporter amongst the Christian/Maronite coalition. The subsequent massacre of Palestinians by Maronite forces in the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatila – widely interpreted as revenge for Bashir’s killing – similarly eroded international support for the Israeli position and galvanized domestic Lebanese opposition against their continued presence. Bashir’s brother Amin ascended to the presidency, and proved to be more amenable to the Syrian position. Amin was skeptical of the Israeli presence, believing that they intended to stay on and dominate the Lebanese government. He therefore began advocating for the complete withdrawal of all foreign military forces from the country (O’Ballance 1998). In May 1983, a tentative deal was reached outlining the withdrawal of

Israeli forces from Lebanon. As part of the agreement, however, the Israelis insisted that Syrian and PLO forces similarly withdraw from the country, a proposition Asad adamantly rejected, effectively scuttling the deal (Rabil 2003).

The period between 1983-1985 thus became defined by Syrian attempts to force the withdrawal of Israeli forces through a proxy campaign centered on support for the PLO, the Druze militia and, increasingly, Shia guerillas (including Amal and the recently formed Iranian-backed Hezbollah). In January 1983, Syria once again introduced SAMs into the Beqa, and generally refortified their military positions in the east (O'Ballance 1998). Fighting continued in and around Beirut, while Israeli positions further south came under repeated attack by Shia forces, leading to significant casualties. As a consequence, domestic Israeli support for the mission steadily eroded (Bregman 2016). Eventually, in early 1985, the decision to unilaterally withdraw was made, absent any final political deal or security arrangements with the Lebanese state. Israel did, however, create a 10km wide security buffer along the Israel-Lebanon border, placing it under the control of the SLA, in order to protect itself from PLO and Shia attacks into Israeli territory (Moaz 1995).

Syria, meanwhile, moved to consolidate its position in Israel's wake. As Rabinovich (1985: 187-88) writes:

By the fall of 1983 it had become clear that in the course of the preceding year Syria had come more than full circle in Lebanon. The defeated power of September 1982 had not only reestablished its hegemony there but had increased its influence and used the centrality and saliency of the Lebanese crisis to enhance its regional standing and prestige.

Moaz (1995: 179), similarly, concludes that

Syria managed not only to force the Israeli army out of Lebanon, by proxy, while redeploying its own forces and missile batteries in strategic locations, but, by means of political manipulation, assassination, and intimidation, it also gradually extended its influence over most Lebanese power centres.

Through the Shia militias, in particular, Damascus was able to exert influence over the Lebanese government, crafting a political arrangement that protected the Syrian position throughout the country. The Amin government faltered, and the Maronite coalition saw its position erode in the face of challenges from the Shia and Druze militias. The 1985 Tripartite Agreement between the three warring factions (Christian, Shia, and Druze) reflected Syria's interests, specifying that "Lebanon cannot be allowed to be the gateway through which Israel may attack or threaten Syria" (quoted in Jorun 2014: 66). Though instability would continue in the years to come, the moment essentially reflected the end of Israeli and Syrian competition in Lebanon. Syria's presence in Lebanon would be further institutionalized in the 1989 Taif Agreement and again in 1991 in the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination. Full Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon would only occur in 2005, following the assassination of the Lebanese politician Rafik Hariri and accompanying outrage from the Lebanese public, which blamed Damascus for the murder.

The behaviour of Israel and Syria during the reversal of the 1983-85 period provides further evidence of their respective priorities in Lebanon. Israel, having come to the cusp of control in Beirut – the high point of which was likely the election of Bashir Jumayyil – was reluctant to cede their gains. Only steadily decreasing domestic support for the occupation, combined with a confluence of events which eroded their position (including Bashir's assassination and the international outcry following the massacres at Sabra and Shatila) led to their begrudging withdrawal. The cost of their presence had become prohibitive. Yet their insistence that, as part of the May 1983 agreement, Syrian forces should similarly withdraw from Lebanon reflects their desire to salvage the most important goal of the invasion. A failed attempt in 1984 to reach an agreement with Damascus – brokered through the US – regarding mutual withdrawal similarly reflects this priority (Rabinovich 1985).

Syria, for its part, was more successful in achieving its aims. Rather than accept the outcome of the 1982 Israeli invasion, Damascus worked tirelessly to undermine it, supporting proxy forces against Israel in Beirut and other areas, including the south. Assad was clearly unwilling to allow the Israeli presence to go unchallenged. Syria similarly moved to re-establish its defensive positions in the Beqa valley, consistent with previous

policy in which a Syrian military presence in the area was considered vital for defence against potential Israeli attack. Yet the goal of Syria's policy remained Israeli withdrawal during this period, not gratuitous attacks for the sake of punishing their rivals. For example Rabinovich (1985: 191) writes:

In 1983 and 1984 Syria's attitude toward the prospect of an Israeli departure from southern Lebanon had been the subject of debate and speculation. There were those who argued that Syria wanted Israel to remain and bleed further. Others held that for a small price Syria would be interested in having Israel leave southern Lebanon, particularly its eastern part. As it turned out, Syria was not asked in 1985 to pay any price *and for its part did not seek to obstruct Israel's departure.*

In other words, even as Israel found itself in a vulnerable position in the south, subject to repeated attacks – primarily from Syrian-backed Shia guerillas – the Syrian priority was expediting Israeli withdrawal, not bleeding them further. Similarly, the language in the 1985 Tripartite Agreement – indeed, Jorun (2014: 66) notes that an “entire chapter” was devoted to security cooperation between Lebanon and Syria, with a heavy focus on the Israeli threat – reflects Syria's continuing focus on Israel, and the place of the Lebanese theatre in the context of the broader Syrian-Israeli rivalry. This is consistent with Syria's priorities throughout the 1975-1985 period.

### **Evaluating the Rational Rivalry Explanation**

I conclude the chapter by offering a general evaluation of Syrian and Israeli intervention into Lebanon in the context of Rational Rivalry. It is helpful, in this effort, to juxtapose the Syrian-Israeli case with the findings from the India-Pakistan case; what do the similarities and differences between the two suggest with respect to the effects of rivalry on the decision to intervene in civil conflict? Are the observations of the India-Pakistan case reflected in the observations made in this chapter? Are there additional dynamics that may be theoretically relevant in the development of the Rational Rivalry

explanation for civil war intervention? How compelling is this explanation, ultimately, for Syrian and Israeli intervention into Lebanon between 1975-1985?

Several key similarities between the two cases have already been alluded to above: the creation of a state; a territorial dispute; recurring crises; multiple wars – all leading to the establishment of rivalry dynamics based on past experiences and the anticipation of future conflict. Both cases similarly involve regional rivalries with asymmetrical military capabilities and ethnic/religious dimensions. Interestingly, both rivalries also began in 1948, meaning the global geopolitical context was held constant. There are therefore multiple dimensions along which the cases are matched; as pathway cases, this can be beneficial insofar as the basic similarities should mean that the hypothesized causal mechanism is present and operating in the same way in both cases. Of course, the basic similarity does limit potential generalizability, but this concern is offset by the advantages of confirming the presence of the hypothesized causal mechanism beyond the original case. This helps to refine our understanding of what Rational Rivalry looks like – consistency across the cases does not definitively confirm the explanation nor suggest that it is generalizable to all cases of rivalry interventions, but it does give us confidence that the proposed dynamics are real and therefore worth exploring in still additional cases.

There are of course important differences between the cases as well. This is largely unavoidable in the laboratory that is the real world, which makes it extremely difficult to match cases across all dimensions. Nonetheless, one of the benefits of the case study approach is its ability to deal with historical complexity; as such, it is possible to make reasoned assessments of how the differences between cases effect the arguments being made and, additionally, how the new information can be leveraged for further theory development.

With respect to the development of rivalry over time, the attitudes and perceptions of each set of decision-makers are remarkably consistent. Syrian decision-makers were as convinced of Israel's aggression and expansionism as Pakistani decision-makers were of India's. The same holds in a comparison of Israeli and Indian attitudes toward Syria and Pakistan, respectively. Both sets of rivals became convinced that the other side was intent on aggression against them, referencing past experience as support for the belief that

future conflict was likely. The 1967 seizure of the Golan is comparable in terms of its effect on Syrian perceptions to the 1971 war and its effect on Pakistan; both wars involved the loss of considerable territory, and corresponding anxiety about additional such defeats. The recurring mini-crises and intermittent clashes, often over disputed territory (the DMZs and the Golan in the Syrian-Israeli rivalry; Kashmir and the Rann of Kutch in the India-Pakistan rivalry) similarly reflect a comparable conflict pattern. Of course, because we are comparing these perceptions across two *rivalries* it is impossible to make any claims that such attitudes are unique to rivalries alone or that some variable other than recurring conflict is not driving the perceptions that are observed. The point, at this juncture, is not to make any causal or generalizable claim with respect to the relationship between recurring conflict and the perception of intentions between states. Rather, it is simply to observe the similarity of perceptions across two cases in which a theoretical claim is made that such perceptions are relevant to the decision to intervene in a civil conflict. That said, the evidence afforded by the available history of each rivalry does *suggest* that the experience of recurring conflict helps to shape the perceptions that are observed, even if such within-case evidence is insufficient for a broader causal claim. The key consideration, ultimately, is that perceptions in the Syrian-Israeli rivalry on the cusp of intervention into Lebanon in 1975 were similar to those in the India-Pakistan rivalry in the lead up to intervention into Afghanistan in 2001.

With respect to intervention itself, in the India-Pakistan case<sup>214</sup> we observed that both states evaluated their interests in Afghanistan through the prism of a long-term strategic calculus; economic and immediate security interests were overridden by the desire to protect against potential security threats related to future conflict with their rival. For example, Pakistan sacrificed both the potential economic gains of a stable Afghanistan and the security gains of quelling Islamic militancy in favour of the perceived long-term benefit of using Islamic militancy to offset the strategic threat of an Afghanistan beholden to India. Though economic considerations were less prevalent with respect to the Lebanese crisis – neither Syria nor Israel appeared to sacrifice significant economic interests through their activities in Lebanon, save the inevitable economic

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<sup>214</sup> While there were technically two cases of intervention – the Indian intervention; the Pakistani intervention – for ease of reference I collapse the two for the purpose of discussion.

disruption that instability and conflict produce – the security dimension was central. The most striking example is the Israeli articulation of their ‘red line’ in southern Lebanon. This episode – and the tradeoff it involved – constituted clear evidence that Israel was willing to sacrifice their immediate security in favour of protecting long-term security vis-à-vis their rival. The present and ongoing security threat from PLO cross-border terrorism (which was considerable, and a major issue for Israeli decision-makers) was preferred to Syrian deployment in the south, which would have solved the PLO problem but presented a strategic disadvantage in a potential future conflict with Syria. It was this latter situation that was deemed intolerable. Similarly, during the Israeli invasion of 1982, the Syrian positions in the Beqa valley and along the Beirut-Damascus highway were challenged by superior Israeli military power. So important were these positions to the perceived defence of the Syrian state, however, that Damascus chose to dig in and fight the Israeli advance – at great cost – rather than pull back to Syrian territory. While this example is not as clear cut as the red line situation (the immediate security threat was a military attack from Syria’s rival, blurring any potential ‘trade-off’ between the short- and long-term) it does suggest the extent to which Damascus viewed their security as inextricably tied to the Lebanese theatre. Relinquishing their position in Lebanon was unacceptable from the point of view of strategic vulnerability vis-à-vis Israel, who might use their control of either the Beqa or the Beirut-Damascus highway to launch a direct attack against Syrian territory. It was this larger possibility – the assumption and expectation of an Israeli attack “aimed to destroy” Syria, as Asad believed – that drove the decision to stay and fight in Lebanon, rather than any commitment to protect Lebanon itself.

In the India-Pakistan case, I argued that Pakistani and Indian support for their preferred proxies was less about shared aims – a desire to see a particular side ‘win’ in the civil conflict in Afghanistan – than it was the utility the proxy could provide in pursuit of broader, rivalry-related aims. This was evident in the Indian relationship with the Northern Alliance in the 1990s, and particularly in Pakistani support for the Taliban both before and after 2001. Rather than any shared Islamic, ideational, or ethnic identity, support was driven by functional goals. And yet, it was somewhat difficult to refute the possibility that shared identity played a role, because the fact remained that Pakistan, an

explicitly Islamic state, was supporting Islamic militants. The shared-identity conundrum is present also in the Syrian-Israeli case. For one, there are those who argue that Israeli support for the Christians in Lebanon was driven, at least in part, by an identification with the Christian cause as a fellow non-Muslim community in the predominately Muslim-region. Syrian support for the PLO (both in Lebanon but also throughout the Arab-Israeli conflict), likewise, is often linked to identity factors. And yet the Syrian case offers striking evidence to undermine the argument that such considerations drove their intervention into Lebanon. While the Syrians initially supported the PLO-Muslim side, they switched their support to the opposing Christian forces in early 1976, and indeed intervened decisively on the Christians' behalf. Later, they reverted again to the PLO. This oscillating support is indicative of Syrian priorities; Damascus was concerned with its own interests in Lebanon – namely, preventing the collapse of the Lebanese state so as to forestall potential Israeli intervention – and did not immediately care *which* domestic faction allowed them to achieve their goals. Later, as Israeli influence on the Christian side increased, it was advantageous to support the PLO. Again, the shift was less about shared identity than about rivalry-related concerns.

Both the interventions into Afghanistan and the interventions into Lebanon occurred over an extended period of time, and both included changes in policy (this is particularly true of the Lebanese case). Yet both also displayed a remarkable consistency in terms of the goals that were pursued. In Afghanistan, we saw that Pakistan's initial policy reversal actually reflected a consistent rationale confronted by changing circumstances. The priority was always minimizing Indian influence, even as the (perceived) best policy to achieve that priority shifted. The same holds true with respect to Israeli and Syrian behaviour in Lebanon. The Syrian policy-reversal described above is logically consistent if their priority was preventing and mitigating Israeli involvement. Even the Israeli invasion of 1982 – at first consideration a brash departure from the cautious, defensive policy pursued in Lebanon up to that point – can be interpreted as a logically consistent response to changing circumstances; in the context of greater flexibility following rapprochement with Egypt and concern regarding the growing Syrian military and its presence in Lebanon, the decision can be seen as an Israeli attempt to forestall a future strategic threat; which is to say, again, precisely the goal of previous

Israeli policy vis-à-vis Lebanon. Indeed, the multiple phases of the Lebanese crisis between 1975-1985 provides even more detailed evidence as to the consistent priorities and rationale of both Syria and Israel over the course of their interventions than the comparatively static Indian and Pakistani interventions in Afghanistan. As circumstances changed, new decision points arose, and each time Israel and Syria adjusted according to a rationale consistent with rivalry concerns.

Yet the comparative chaos of the Lebanese crisis is also an important difference between the two cases. We see, for example, multiple forms of intervention in Lebanon as compared to Afghanistan. Both Israel and Syria employed diplomatic, indirect, and direct intervention at various points during the ten-year period under consideration. By contrast, India and Pakistan have limited themselves to primarily indirect intervention in Afghanistan. Perhaps most significantly, we saw in the Lebanese theatre direct conflict between Syria and Israel while no such confrontation has occurred in Afghanistan. On one hand, the differences in the forms of interventions between the two cases is potentially salutary for the generalizability of the rivalry explanation: rivalry dynamics may explain direct and indirect (or some combination of the two) interventions, and need not be limited to one specific form or type. On the other hand, these differences suggest the presence of confounding variables which themselves may be responsible for driving the interventions in each case.

With respect to explaining the differences, three factors immediately suggest themselves. First, in the India-Pakistan case, both rivals have nuclear capabilities – given that a mutual nuclear deterrent is known to preclude direct conflict, it may also mitigate direct intervention into a civil conflict, given that such an intervention may be seen to increase the risk of direct confrontation (as occurred in Lebanon, for example). In the Syrian-Israeli rivalry, by contrast, only one side (Israel) possessed a nuclear capability. Second, no analogue to the American and international presence in Afghanistan existed in Lebanon. While a small UN force was deployed in southern Lebanon following Operation Litani in 1978, its effect was negligible as compared to the influence of US/NATO forces in Afghanistan. Super-power politics were important at the periphery of the Lebanese crisis (in particular US diplomatic involvement, but also Soviet influence vis-à-vis Syria) but again not at a level comparable to the centrality of American

behaviour in Afghanistan. The US/NATO presence may therefore have played a moderating role with respect to Indian and Pakistani intervention. Finally, third, the geography of Lebanon vis-à-vis Syria and Israel differs in important respects from that of Afghanistan vis-à-vis India and Pakistan. In the latter case, only Pakistan shares a contiguous border with the state experiencing civil conflict; while India is a proximate country, and the civil conflict is undoubtedly considered through a regional lens, the immediate geostrategic implications are felt more acutely by Pakistan given its shared border with Afghanistan. (It is therefore only Pakistan that concerns itself with ‘strategic depth’ in Afghanistan.) By contrast, both Israel and Syria are contiguous with Lebanon – as mentioned, Lebanon serves as a buffer between northern Israel and eastern Syria – meaning *both* states consider it through a similar geostrategic lens. Each country believes Lebanon to be directly implicated in its defensive position. This dynamic could explain the comparatively more intense and direct interventions conducted by Syria and Israel into Lebanon.

Whether one or some combination of these factors explains the differences observed, none logically undermines the rational rivalry argument. The motivating factor for each intervention could still be rivalry-related, while overarching factors constrict the type of interventions that are available. It is important to point out, as well, that in each case the rivals more or less mirrored the interventions of the other side; indirect intervention by India matched by indirect intervention from Pakistan; indirect support for the Christian/Rightists by Israel matched by indirect support for the PLO-Muslim/Leftists by Syria; direct Syrian intervention in the north matched by direct Israeli intervention in the south; etc. The one break from this pattern was the Israeli invasion of 1982, which was not matched by Syria, which instead took pains to avoid direct conflict and instead began undermining the Israeli presence by proxy. Yet the intensity of this Syrian effort was commensurate with the Israeli move; indeed, Syrian efforts in this regard were in the end successful in pushing Israel out of Lebanon. Without specifying a specific causal link or direction with respect to rivals matching one another’s interventions in terms of scope and intensity, the pattern observed does suggest that some relationship might be present. Logically, this possibility is consistent with the rational rivalry explanation; if interventions are primarily motivated by defensive concerns, it would make sense that

states calibrate their own intervention in relation to what their rival is doing. If the point is not to help one side of a civil conflict ‘win’ as much as it is to mitigate the presence and influence of one’s rival, there is no need to go significantly beyond what one’s rival is doing. Even the Israeli invasion of 1982 can be considered in this light – the introduction of Israeli forces into Lebanon meant to counteract the placement of Syrian SAMs and the presence of Syrian forces on Lebanese soil, a move only temporarily delayed by the red line arrangement.

Overall, the Syrian and Israeli interventions into Lebanon are consistent with the theory of Rational Rivalry developed in this dissertation. Following a series of wars, disputes, and crises, the two states perceived one another as aggressive and hostile. They further believed that future conflict was likely, and that such a conflict had potentially existential ramifications. A civil war in a proximate country broke out, and both sides recognized that the instability in that country presented potential vulnerabilities vis-à-vis their rival. Neither was willing to cede influence to the other, lest that influence and presence offer their rival an advantage in a future conflict, and both intervened to prevent this outcome. In other words, the *anticipated process* leading to intervention was the belief that unchecked intervention would result in increased vulnerability or strategic disadvantage in a future conflict. These rivalry concerns overrode other considerations, including immediate security interests, or any identification with the interests of a particular domestic faction. There is less evidence to support an emotional and/or psychological explanation based on hatred or ‘negative affect’; neither state pursued policies that were gratuitously aggressive against the other, designed to bleed, punish, or seek revenge. Nor were their basic policy positions inexplicable from a rational point of view; instead, behaviour was remarkably consistent with a calculus oriented toward long-term security concerns.

This basic description aligns with the observations about, and expectations derived from, the Indian and Pakistani interventions in Afghanistan. While it is not possible to generalize definitively on the basis of this small number of cases (particularly given the similarities and differences noted above which indicate the possibility of confounding variables) the similarities between the cases is encouraging with respect to the possibility of a common process operating across space and time.

## CHAPTER 9: US-SOVIET RIVALRY AND INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA (1975)

In this Chapter, I investigate American and Soviet intervention in Angola in 1975. The most prominent international rivalry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was undoubtedly that between the United States and the Soviet Union. In some respects, the emergence of the broader rivalry literature was predicated on the study and analysis of this particular relationship; it is, therefore, the archetypal case, and any treatment of rivalry dynamics (particularly one that employs a historical lens) should engage American and Soviet behaviour. This is especially true with respect to theories about rivalry intervention. The Cold War is well known for the myriad ‘proxy wars’ which occurred at seemingly all ends of the globe – from China in the late 1940s to Afghanistan during the late stages of the Cold War itself, the Soviets and Americans repeatedly intervened on opposing sides of ongoing conflicts. This phenomenon has elicited extensive study from a range of historical and social scientific perspectives. Aubone (2013) provides a useful summary of the political science related to, specifically, US interventions during the Cold War. A series of studies – including Rosenau (1968), Yarmolinsky (1968), Lagon (1992), Yoon (1997), Regan (2002), Mullenbach and Matthews (2008), Fordham (2008), and Gent (2010) – emphasize the US relationship with the USSR in their explanations. “The common assumption,” writes Aubone (2013: 287), “is that US intervention in civil conflicts during the Cold War was driven largely by the security concerns of containment and the motivation to be more powerful than its rival, the USSR.” There is good reason to believe, in other words, that rivalry considerations drove US intervention during this time period. The present chapter adds to this existing research while also connecting it to a more generalized discussion of rivalry dynamics. It posits that US behaviour is not unique, and that the Cold War in general is not *sui generis*. While perhaps exceptional with respect to its scope and scale, the US-Soviet relationship can nonetheless be compared to, and tied in with, other instances of international rivalry. This includes interventions into civil conflicts. While the broader rivalry literature *has* treated the US-Soviet relationship as an example of the general concept, examinations of Cold War interventions have tended to consider such behaviour as more or less unique to that

historical milieu. I argue, by contrast, that these interventions are part and parcel of general rivalry behaviour.

A key contention of this dissertation is that rivalry intervention is motivated by a common process/mechanism which is consistent across cases. I began by exploring this process in the India-Pakistan context, unpacking the details of each country's intervention in Afghanistan to establish the mechanism triggering the decision to intervene. I then moved to the Israel-Syria case, bolstering my confidence in the existence of this mechanism by uncovering a similar decision-making rationale with respect to interventions in Lebanon. As noted in the previous chapter, there were several broad similarities between the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalries which made their comparison useful in terms of establishing a 'pathway' linking rivalry to intervention (if the causal mechanism was present in the former case, failure to find it in the latter would have been extremely damaging to the theory). These similarities also meant, of course, that any attempts to generalize to a broader population of cases would be suspect – it may be that the rationale of future-oriented, strategic concern is dominant (which is to say, overrides other considerations and drives interventionary behaviour) only in the limited context of a regional, ethnic/religious rivalry which has experienced multiple direct wars. The present chapter is a step toward extending the theory beyond such limitations. The US-Soviet rivalry differs from both the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalry in important respects; most notably, it was a global, superpower rivalry undergirded by ideological differences. Even further – and this point is picked up in greater detail below – unlike the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalries, it did not experience direct war. If, despite these differences, we nonetheless find that US and Soviet intervention into a civil conflict was triggered by the same rationale described in previous chapters, our confidence is increased that there is in fact a common process linking rivalry to intervention across time and space. While, again, the nature of small-N qualitative studies precludes definitive claims of generalizability, our confidence is significantly improved by finding evidence consistent with rational rivalry expectations. Were Soviet and American decision-makers driven by emotional, personal hatred of the other side? Were they focused on 'bleeding', damaging, or punishing their opponents? Was decision-making predicated on economic or straightforward security considerations? Were local

factors – for example, the success or failure of specific domestic factions – decisive? Or, as rational rivalry would predict, were decision-makers driven by long-term considerations, and the consequences of the conflict in the context of an ongoing security competition? And were the past experiences in the rivalry part of the calculus with respect to such expectations about the future?

The 1975 Angolan civil war provides an excellent opportunity to explore these questions. The Angolan case is useful insofar as it is generally recognized to be an instance of Cold War-driven proxy conflict. This means that if the theory of rivalry intervention developed in this dissertation is *not* supported by the logic and evidence of the case, it would significantly undermine our confidence that the theory describes something useful about rivalry dynamics. There are nonetheless drawbacks. The case does not, for example, satisfy the ‘least-likely’ or ‘most-difficult’ criteria for case selection; these methodological principles are designed to maximize theoretical leverage by indicating that if a theory is operative in a case whose parameters are not conducive to theoretical expectations, then it is likely to apply in other, unexamined cases which are more straightforward. The leverage in the present instance, however, is not provided by the confirmation of the Angolan case alone, but rather by its cumulative effect alongside the other cases examined in the dissertation. Which is to say, each case in isolation is useful for establishing the causal pathway – the mechanism – linking rivalry to intervention (a task predicated on the observed correlation between the two described in Chapter 2). Taken together, they suggest that this pathway is common to different types of rivalries at different historical moments. While future research can extend to still additional cases, the foundation of a theory of rivalry intervention is established by the careful assessment and comparison of the India-Pakistan, Israel-Syria, and US-Soviet interventions in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Angola, respectively.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I describe the nature of the US-Soviet rivalry. I then give a brief overview of the development of the rivalry in the decades leading up to 1975. I summarize the perceptions of each state at this point in time, establishing the context in which they considered the Angolan theatre as the civil conflict in that country erupted. Next, I offer an overview of the Angolan civil conflict itself, highlighting the opportunities for intervention. I subsequently describe first the Soviet

and then the American intervention, recounting both their form as well as the rationale by which each state justified its activities. I conclude by assessing what the Angolan case means for the theory of rivalry intervention developed in this dissertation; how it accords with the expectations of Rational Rivalry and what it adds by way of comparison to the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria interventions discussed in previous chapters.

### **The US-Soviet Rivalry<sup>215</sup>**

The US-Soviet rivalry emerged following the end of World War II, though its seeds had been germinating even as the countries fought on the same side against the German and Japanese empires. Particularly after 1943, as it became increasingly clear that the allies would, even if badly bloodied, emerge victorious, maneuvering began with an eye to the post-war international order. A series of conferences brought together the Americans, the Soviets, and the British to discuss, *inter alia*, the post-war division of Europe. The Soviets were keen to maintain the territorial gains they had achieved by pushing back German forces. The Americans and the British, by contrast, wished to avoid a massive Soviet military presence on continental Europe. At the centre of these debates was Germany itself; which of the allies would control the country, and how could it be ensured that a resurgent Germany would not again threaten international peace. These initial disagreements were undergirded by deep ideological differences regarding the nature of political and economic order and the trajectory of human history. Though no direct large-scale conflicts were to occur between the superpowers' respective military forces, the subsequent decades were defined by repeated crises, confrontations, and

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<sup>215</sup> The historiography of the Cold War is obviously voluminous, and it would be well beyond the scope of the present chapter to offer a comprehensive overview of the US-Soviet rivalry. In this section I focus on those aspects of the Cold War relevant to an understanding of the *perceptions* of either side; it is, after all, these perceptions which are fundamental to the theoretical claim regarding the motivation for intervention into Angola. In general terms, my reading of the Cold War is informed primarily by the 'post-revisionist' approach; led by historians like John Lewis Gaddis and Melvyn P. Leffler, the post-revisionists challenge arguments as to either Soviet or American culpability (the 'orthodox' and 'revisionist' positions, respectively) and instead emphasize the conditions which rendered superpower confrontation more or less inevitable (though there is hardly consensus even within this camp, as the high-profile disagreements between Gaddis and Leffler demonstrate). In addition to the works directly cited, the contributions to the three volumes of the *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, edited by Leffler and Westad (2010), were particularly helpful.

stand-offs. As will be discussed below, both American and Soviet decision-makers believed war was possible – at some junctures, even likely or inevitable – and considered the relationship in these terms. The ideological competition between capitalism and communism was viewed as essentially global and effectively zero-sum for the balance of the Cold War. It is in this context that superpower involvement in the so-called Third World occurred; as states (particularly newly independent post-colonial nations) attempted to define and establish their political and economic systems, revolution and instability proliferated. For Washington and Moscow, the outcome of these disarticulations weighed heavy in the global struggle. The civil war in Angola, discussed in this chapter, is a case in point.

### *Nature of the Rivalry*

As mentioned, the ideological battle between capitalism and communism was central to the geopolitical struggle between the US and USSR. For the Soviets, US foreign policy was invariably a function of monopolistic capitalism (the implications of which were most famously articulated by Lenin in 1917); as Soviet Ambassador to the US Nikolai Novikov expressed in a telegram to Moscow in 1946: “The foreign policy of the United States, which reflects the imperialist tendencies of American monopolistic capital, is characterized in the postwar period by a striving for world supremacy.”<sup>216</sup> This analysis is indicative of the conventional wisdom amongst the Soviet leadership at the time.<sup>217</sup> Indeed, Garthoff (2015: 10-11) observes that “by the fall of 1947, the Soviet evaluation of the main adversary [the US] had hardened to a point at which even Novikov’s analysis was regarded as too soft” and that “Soviet diplomatic and other analyses consistently stressed that America was preparing for military confrontation.”

The Novikov telegram found its counterpart in the analysis of American diplomat George F. Kennan, who similarly linked Soviet intentions to the “original Communist

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<sup>216</sup> “Telegram from Nikolai Novikov, Soviet Ambassador to the US, to the Soviet Leadership,” (1946).

<sup>217</sup> Soviet official Maxim Litvinov relayed to an American reporter in 1946 that “the ideological conception prevailing [in Moscow was] that conflict between the Communist and capitalist worlds is inevitable” (quoted in Garthoff 2015: 4).

thesis of a basic antagonism between the capitalist and Socialist worlds” (Kennan 2012 [1947]: 119). According to Kennan, this thesis had

profound implications for Russia’s conduct as a member of international society. It means that there can never be on Moscow’s side any sincere assumption of a community of aims between the Soviet Union and powers which are regarded as capitalism [sic]...If the Soviet Government occasionally sets its signature to documents which would indicate the contrary, this is to be regarded as a tactical maneuver permissible in dealing with the enemy...Basically, the antagonism remains. It is postulated. And from it flow many of the phenomena which we find disturbing in the Kremlin’s conduct of foreign policy: war suspiciousness, and the basic unfriendliness of purpose. These phenomena are there to stay, for the foreseeable future (ibid.: 121).

Like Novikov’s analysis, Kennan’s writings on the “Sources of Soviet Conduct” – as his famous ‘X’ article in *Foreign Affairs* was titled, as well as his ‘Long Telegram’ from Moscow which circulated in Washington – are generally reflective of post-war American beliefs regarding the nature, and intentions, of the Soviet regime.<sup>218</sup> On both sides, therefore, the perceived incompatibility of the two ideological systems – and the assumed ideological motivations of the other state – generated assumptions about future behaviour. There could be no *modus vivendi* between the two camps; “antagonism” was “postulated” by the nature of the relationship itself (of course, just which side was responsible for such antagonism was a matter of disagreement).

Competing ideologies alone, however, were not sufficient to lock-in the condition of rivalry. They were supplemented by tangible conflicts of interest manifest in the post-war distribution of power. Unlike Great Britain, which had been decimated by the war, the US emerged post-1945 as an economic and military juggernaut. The Soviet Union

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<sup>218</sup> For example Leffler (2010: 72) writes that “Kennan’s telegram was widely circulated throughout US policymaking circles because his analysis accorded with Truman’s instincts and the thinking of many of his advisers.” See also the discussion in Gaddis (2005).

had, for its part, experienced significant hardship as a consequence of the war<sup>219</sup>, but it too found its global position enhanced at war's end. With most of Europe in ruin, the world had effectively become bipolar – overwhelming economic and military power concentrated in the hands of two states. The implications of this structural distribution (and its consequences for stability) was (and is) the subject of much debate in the IR literature. In a general sense, however, this post-war distribution rendered it inevitable that Soviet and American decision-makers would be concerned about the activities of the other side. This would have been true irrespective of the ideological incompatibilities noted above, even if in reality such incompatibilities compounded concerns about the future intentions of the other dominant power.

One final dimension of the rivalry is worth pointing out. Unlike the India-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir, or the Israel-Syria conflicts first over Palestine and subsequently the Golan Heights, the US-Soviet rivalry is not typically considered to have had a 'territorial' dimension *per se*. There were no directly analogous disputes regarding pieces of land over which either side claimed sovereignty; the two states were not contiguous (the Bering strait notwithstanding). Yet in practical terms, disagreements as to the dispensation of post-war Germany, and the borders of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe more generally, fulfilled much the same function – the Berlin blockade crisis of 1948, for example, involved confrontation over Western (i.e. American) access to the German capital. While the division of Germany into Western and Eastern political units constituted the creation of two ostensibly sovereign countries, in reality the demarcation was between the American and Soviet blocs, respectively. Each side, moreover, wished to see German reunification eventually occur on their own terms. The German question therefore became the 'front-line' of the Cold War, and the proximity of US and Soviet forces the subject of consistent concern and repeated crises over subsequent decades.

More broadly, the consequences of WWII were crucial in shaping the early parameters within which the rivalry subsequently emerged. Soviet penetration into

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<sup>219</sup> In the words of Pechatnov (2010: 90): "The war losses of the USSR were staggering: the country lost at least 27 million people and about a quarter of its reproducible wealth; over 1,700 cities and towns were destroyed and more than 31,000 industrial enterprises demolished." He goes on to argue that given such losses "no wonder security concerns remained paramount in the Kremlin's thinking about the postwar world" (ibid.: 91).

Eastern Europe occurred in the context of the war against Germany, yet the ensuing Soviet decision to *remain* in the territories it had captured transformed this thrust – in the eyes of the West – into hostile expansionism once the war ended. Potential Soviet control over the resources of continental Europe was alarming to the Americans precisely because of their experience of World War II, in which Germany had marshalled such resources to threaten American security. As a result, the lodestar of American strategic priorities post-1945 became the prevention of any such accumulation on the part of another state (a similar and related interest was operative with respect to Asia).<sup>220</sup> Germany was central to these fears; given its latent economic and military potential, a reconstituted and unified Germany within the Soviet bloc would be unacceptable. On the Soviet side, the Communist ideology described above specified the ineluctable hostility of the *capitalist* world. In this way, Leffler (2007) argues that the ‘Great War’ (as WWII is known in Russia) against capitalist-Germany was ultimately considered to be part and parcel of a broader fight against capitalism which, post-1945, took the form of the struggle against the United States, now the leader of the capitalist powers.<sup>221</sup> Moscow too, therefore, was preoccupied with the possibility of German resurgence within the Western camp, and the consequent dangers posed by German military might, particularly in light of past German behaviour.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> See the discussion of American strategic priorities offered by Mearsheimer (2012). Leffler (2010: 77), for his part, argues that in Washington the “overriding priority was to keep the power centers of Europe and Asia outside the Soviet orbit and linked to the United States” and elsewhere that “their overriding priority was to prevent a totalitarian adversary from conquering or assimilating the resources of Europe and Asia and using them to wage war against the United States, *as the Axis powers had done during World War II*” (ibid.: 87, emphasis added).

<sup>221</sup> Pechatnov (2010: 93) claims that “the wartime experience of cooperation did not change [Moscow’s] basic Bolshevik view of the bourgeois allies as selfish and cunning hypocrites, anti-Soviet at heart” which led to “a belief in the need for the Soviet Union to gather strength for an inevitable new showdown.”

<sup>222</sup> In 1962 Soviet leader Nikita Krushchev offered a window into this preoccupation, telling American journalist Norman Cousins: “I can understand how Americans look at Germany somewhat differently than we do, even though you had to fight Germany twice within a short time. We have a much longer history with Germany... We have a saying here: ‘Give a German a gun, sooner or later he will point it at Russians...’ Of course we could crush Germany. We could crush Germany in a few minutes. But what we fear is the ability of an armed Germany to commit the United States by its own actions. We fear the ability of Germany to start a world atomic war. What puzzles me more than anything else is that the Americans don’t realize that there’s a large group in Germany that is eager to destroy the Soviet Union. How many times do you have to be burned before you respect fire?” (quoted in Leffler 2007: 163-64). In his evaluation of Stalin’s strategic priorities in the post-war period, Mastny (1996: 43) suggests that “instead of preparing to fight a German threat in the future, Moscow tried to preventively fend it off by advancing its scheme for a dependent Germany.” Leng (2000: 43) notes that “Stalin had made it clear at Yalta that his first concern regarding Germany was that it remain too weak to challenge Soviet security.”

In this way, the US-Soviet rivalry is much more complex than simply some combination of the ideological and structural dimensions typically foregrounded (for a discussion of the ideology vs. power debate about the Cold War within IR see Kramer 1999 and the response from Wohlforth 2000). There are also the dynamic consequences of the experiences of WWII and the initial disputes regarding the dispensation of post-war Germany. Again, much like the ethnic/religious dimension at the root of the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalries, the ideological dimension was an enabling condition for the US-Soviet rivalry; structural conditions were filtered through divergent and hostile ideological lenses, *as were the events of WWII and the initial phases of the post-war era*. This combination of factors created the condition of rivalry, locking in the perception on both sides that a long-term confrontation – one with existential security implications – was taking shape. Unpacking the precise *mélange* or formula with respect to the relative weight of each particular component – while a fascinating exercise in its own right – is unnecessary for present purposes. The point is to indicate the extent to which the US-Soviet rivalry shares core similarities with the other rivalries examined in this dissertation, despite apparently significant differences at a more superficial level. The US-Soviet rivalry was global, not regional; ideological, not ethnic/religious; lacked an explicit territorial dispute; and was not initiated by a major direct war. And yet the internal dynamics of the rivalry looked remarkably similar; the prevailing assumption became an expectation of future conflict, with attendant consequences for how each rival assessed its interests and the associated policies it pursued.

#### *Crises and Confrontations, 1947-1975*

In this section I offer a brief narrative of the development of the rivalry up until 1975, the point at which intervention into Angola occurred. Unlike the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalries, the US-Soviet relationship was not punctuated by a series of direct wars; this does not mean, however, that the cumulative effect of the crises and confrontations that did occur were not important for shaping the perceptions of the two states. Given the breadth of the Cold War, it is not possible to provide detailed descriptions of each and every point of contact between the rivals during this period, nor

is it necessary for the purposes of this case study, which ultimately focuses on the perceptions and attitudes which shaped the respective Soviet and American decisions to intervene in Angola. I concentrate, therefore, on the initial postwar period (e.g. the first Berlin crisis, crucial, as alluded to above, for establishing and locking in the dynamics of rivalry) while also highlighting and discussing some of the more high-profile and formative confrontations (the Korean war, the second Berlin crisis, the Cuban Missile crisis etc.) before finishing with a description of ‘détente’ (the ambitious policy coordination intended to ease Cold War tensions). This narrative is important for establishing the link between experiences/behaviour in the rivalry and the perceptions that were formed and ultimately translated into policy action. This is an important precursor to the argument that intervention into Angola was predicated on, and explicable by reference to, the dynamics of the rivalry itself. The key consideration is the extent to which both US and Soviet decision-makers came to believe that their relationship was ongoing and interconnected – that each specific dispute or crisis occurred in the broader context of an overarching conflictual relationship that would extend into the future.

As mentioned, the immediate point of contention in the post-war moment was the dispensation of Germany and, in particular, the division of its capital, Berlin. Following the defeat of the Nazi regime, the city had been divided into four zones: British, French, American and Soviet. In 1947 the British, French and American zones were amalgamated into a single administrative and economic bloc, a move which precipitated significant anxiety on the part of the Soviets, who feared it might be the prelude to the creation of a separate and sovereign West German state (Pechatnov 2010). Coupled with the recently announced Marshall Plan, which committed the US to a massive program of investment and reconstruction in Europe, the Soviets considered the move to be part of a “large-scale attempt by the United States to gain lasting and preeminent influence in Europe” potentially tied to “a far-reaching design to revive German military-industrial potential and to direct it, as in the 1930s, against the Soviet Union” (Zubok and Pleshakov 1996: 50). The Americans, by contrast, considered both the Marshall Plan and the accompanying Truman Doctrine – its geopolitical analogue which committed the US to resisting Soviet expansion in Europe and Asia – as necessary for preserving its vital security interests in the post-war international order. Turning away from Europe (or Asia)

could result, according to Truman, “in handing to the Russians vast areas of the globe” (quoted in Leffler 2010: 76); the precise scenario the US considered unacceptable in the shadow of the war just completed.

The Soviet-supported coup in Czechoslovakia in 1947, and communist political victories in Greece and Turkey, reinforced the perception that global communism was on the advance. The Americans thus believed that their position in Germany was crucial, and the integration of the British, French and American zones of Berlin a natural consolidation of Western interests. In response, and in the context of the above-adumbrated fears, the Soviets initiated a blockade of West Berlin, cutting off supply and travel routes with the rest of Western-controlled Germany (Berlin itself being located approximately 160 kilometres inside Soviet-controlled territory). The US and its allies responded by mounting a massive airlift, thereby maintaining control of the Western sector of the city. This situation persisted for approximately one year, from June 1948 to May 1949, at which point the blockade was lifted, owing to Soviet resignation as to the reality of a separate West German state, and the success of the airlift in obviating the practical effectiveness of Soviet action (Engerman 2010).

The crisis did not rise to overt military confrontation, yet the practical effect was to militarize the East-West conflict. As Mastny (1996: 58) writes, “the risk of an armed clash created by Soviet action made the West more inclined to conceive of the Soviet threat as potentially a military one” with both sides coming “to see their relationship more in military terms.” Various related and contemporaneous events – including the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a Western military alliance in 1949 and the successful test of a Soviet atomic bomb that same year – reinforced this dynamic. “The key events affecting Soviet-American relations during the...three years” from 1947 to 1950, writes Garthoff (2015: 11), “militarized the confrontation between the two main adversaries.” The hardening of the two camps behind either side of the so-called “Iron Curtain” (a phrase coined by former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in a speech in 1946) established the basic posture of the Cold War – primarily, at that time, a standoff in the heart of Europe. This condition – enabled by ideological presuppositions and bipolar structural realities – emerged as a consequence of the interactions that occurred in Berlin (and elsewhere).

Both Washington and Moscow increasingly believed that future confrontation was likely (recall the “hardening” of the Soviet line during this period beyond even the pessimistic analysis contained in the 1946 Novikov telegram). In 1948, Stalin communicated to newly-installed Czech communist leader Klement Gottwald his “somber view that war was inevitable”, contravening a more optimistic message to the Czech communists sent just a year earlier (Mastny 1996: 60). On the American side, the evolving attitude is best captured in the infamous National Security Council policy paper known as ‘NSC-68’. Published in 1950, the document is widely credited with establishing the basic parameters of US Cold War policy, particularly the strategy of ‘containment’ vis-à-vis the Soviet Union.<sup>223</sup> The document certainly reflects a hardening of the American position from just a few years prior. The policy of containment it outlines is interesting for what it says about American priorities<sup>224</sup>, but so too are the assessments of Soviet intentions which are used to justify the shift towards a more militarized stance. “The Soviet Union” the documents states

unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world. Conflict has, therefore, become endemic and is waged, on the part of the Soviet Union, by violent and non-violent methods in accordance with the dictates of expediency (“A report to the National Security Council – NSC 68,” 1950).

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<sup>223</sup> While George Kennan had articulated a version of containment in his ‘X’ article, its parameters were much more fluid and, ultimately, less confrontational than the model described in NSC-68. For example, Kennan (2012 [1947]: 126) writes: “the Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy, but which cannot be charmed or talked out of existence.” NSC-68, however, was developed under Paul Nitze, Kennan’s successor as Director of Policy Planning at the State Department, and was intended to be “a single, comprehensive statement of interests, threats, and feasible responses, capable of being communicated throughout the bureaucracy” (Gaddis 1982: 88).

<sup>224</sup> The policy is rather blunt in its aims: “As for the policy of ‘containment,’ it is one which seeks by all means short of war to (1) block further expansion of Soviet power, (2) expose the falsities of Soviet pretensions, (3) induce a retraction of the Kremlin’s control and influence, and (4) in general, so foster the seeds of destruction within the Soviet system that the Kremlin is brought at least to the point of modifying its behavior to conform to generally accepted international standards.” For the full text of NSC-68 see “A report to the National Security Council – NSC 68,” (1950).

Elsewhere, it is argued that “the Kremlin is inescapably militant” and that “persistent crisis, conflict, and expansion are the essence of the Kremlin’s militancy” (ibid.). The threat to American security, in light of these expectations, is rendered in drastic terms:

The risks we face are of a new order of magnitude, commensurate with the total struggle in which we are engaged...[D]efeat at the hands of the totalitarian is total defeat. These risks crowd in on us, in a shrinking world of polarized power, so as to give us no choice, ultimately, between meeting them effectively or being overcome by them (ibid.).

Though the document was published shortly after the outbreak of the Korean war, it had been in development prior to that event, and the basic logic guiding NSC-68 shaped the Truman administration’s response to events on the Korean peninsula. Accordingly, the US opted to intervene militarily to prevent communist North Korea from overrunning South Korea (the North’s attack was seen as Soviet-directed, and available evidence suggests that the invasion was indeed authorized by the Kremlin [see for example Mastny 1996; Zubok and Pleshakov 1996]).

While the assumptions embodied in NSC-68 have been criticized as fundamental (even deliberate, politically and/or economically-motivated) misperceptions on the part of American policy-makers (see the discussions in Wells 1979; Gaddis 1982; and Young 2013), Beatrice Heuser (1991) argues by contrast that the document reflects a reasonable assessment of Soviet intentions given Soviet behaviour in the immediate postwar period. Events in Greece, Turkey and the Balkans suggested to American policy-makers that Soviet aggression was taking the form of indirect confrontation and the support of proxy-communist forces. Heuser (1991: 23) cites a plethora of American archival documents to suggest that “with these estimates and considerations, concerning first the situations in Greece and Turkey, and later Yugoslavia, the conceptual groundwork for interpretations of and responses to the Korean War was laid in the minds of US decision-makers.” This ‘conceptual groundwork’, made explicit in NSC-68, dictated American intervention in Korea. As Heuser (1991: 18) concludes: “the American and British governments had information which led them to fear Soviet aggression in Europe and elsewhere” and that

in light of this information “Western threat-perceptions [in] 1950 no longer seem altogether unreasonable. It was thought then that the Soviet Union might launch an attack against any one of a number of areas of the world.” This interpretation is consistent with the argument that perceptions in rivalry are driven, at least in part, by past behaviour and experiences within the rivalry itself, and that such perceptions have consequences for how rivals behave.

The American intervention in Korea brought the US and Soviets into conflict on opposing sides of what was essentially a civil war (for an overview of the Korean war in the context of the Cold War see Stueck 2010).<sup>225</sup> Coupled with the emerging nuclear arms race, the practical effect was to confirm the broader suspicions of NSC-68 and thereby generate the political capital for the Truman administration to justify the ambitious military expansion (with the attendant budget increase) required to fully implement its recommendations.<sup>226</sup> As for the Soviets, the American action in Korea and related military expansion simply reinforced the Kremlin’s own suspicions as to long-term US intentions. Defensive positions were reinforced in Europe, under fears that the US might expand the conflict to a second front (Mastny 1996). “In March 1951,” writes, Garthoff (2015: 15). “the [Soviet] KI [Committee of Information] confirmed the United States as its main adversary, emphasizing that intelligence on US capabilities, intentions, and actions would be the fundamental task of foreign intelligence work over a long period of time.” By the end of the Korean war in 1953, the scope of the Cold War had been definitively expanded beyond Europe to include Asia (formal military agreements institutionalized the American security relationship with Japan, South Korea and Taiwan)

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<sup>225</sup> The basic structure of the situation would therefore make it possible to assess the theory of rivalry intervention developed in this dissertation in the Korean case. As noted earlier, however, for the purposes of theory development it is preferable to examine more straightforward, ‘pathway’ cases; the Korean conflict – replete with overlapping and complicating dynamics including the recent communist victory in China and associated Chinese involvement – is therefore too ‘messy’ to be useful at this stage. This does not, of course, preclude the future application of the theory to the Korean case.

<sup>226</sup> As Leffler (2010: 85) describes: “The North Korean attack confirmed the suspicions of Truman, Acheson, and Nitze that the Soviets were becoming bolder as they gained strategic might. The United States, therefore, not only had to thwart the attack, but also needed to reestablish the aura of military superiority that was deemed critical for the success of their diplomacy and their strategic vision. Truman asked Congress for funds not simply to wage the war in Korea but to support the concepts enumerated in NSC 68.” Gaddis (2010: 8), for his part, concludes that “the war convinced Truman and his advisers that the authors of NSC-68 were right: any part of the world threatened or even apparently threatened by international Communism... would have to be protected.”

and other parts of the globe (for example the Middle East, where the Soviets and Americans similarly found themselves supporting opposing sides of the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict).<sup>227</sup>

Despite genuine fears on both sides regarding the potential for direct – even nuclear – confrontation, the late-1950s saw the relationship settle into a period of (tense) stability. On the Soviet side, concerns about rapacious monopoly capitalism were tempered by a belief that ‘peaceful co-existence’ was possible; not because of any transformation of the essentially aggressive character of the United States, but rather as a product of sufficient Soviet military strength which could deter an American attack.<sup>228</sup> American behaviour up to and including Korea reinforced the logic of this perception; US military aims there and elsewhere had remained limited. A similar dynamic obtained in the American camp, where the belief persisted that constant vigilance was required (which is to say, the basic logic of NSC-68 continued to apply) and that containment efforts were proving successful only by virtue of sufficient US military and nuclear strength.<sup>229</sup> The effect of these assumptions, on both sides, was to fuel the nuclear arms race (given that nuclear capabilities were seen as the ultimate arbiter of security) and to increase the perceived importance of peripheral conflicts (given that core disputes in, for example, Europe might trigger a direct war that neither side actually wanted).

This tenuous stability was upset by two significant, related crises, first in 1961 (though precipitating events had begun in 1958) in Berlin and then a year later over Cuba. With respect to the former crisis, the centrality of the German question to Cold War

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<sup>227</sup> Painter (1999: 31) argues, for example, that the “impact” of the Korean War “was to solidify the division of the world into political, military, and economic spheres. Europe remained tense and divided, and the arms race and competition in the Third World emerged as active and fluid aspects of the Cold War.”

<sup>228</sup> As Garthoff (2015: 20) summarizes: “Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders continued to believe that Western leaders were hostile to the USSR and endorsed as a corollary of peaceful coexistence the maintenance of a strong Soviet nuclear and overall military deterrent in order to prevent Western resort to force. Although Soviet leaders embraced the idea that war was not inevitable and that military conflict with America should if possible be averted, war remained a deadly possibility if not prevented by diplomacy and military strength.”

<sup>229</sup> McMahon (2010: 288) describes the similarities in overall perceptions between the Eisenhower and subsequent Kennedy administrations, noting also the continuity with the earlier Truman era: “US grand strategy during the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy derived, in the broadest sense, from the same, deep-seated fear: that the Soviet Union’s combination of implacable hostility, mounting military strength, and positive ideological appeal posed a fundamental – even existential – threat to US national security.”

calculations is again evident. Having initially opposed German partition and the creation of two German states, by 1958 Moscow had come to believe that a consolidation of the new status quo – and therefore a viable and secure East Germany – was necessary for the security of the Soviet bloc.<sup>230</sup> This meant forcing Western recognition of the East German state – the German Democratic Republic (GDR) – through an ultimatum to the US and its Western European allies: either accept and recognize the GDR or the Soviets would unilaterally transfer Soviet rights over Berlin to the East Germans, creating the possibility of another blockade should East Germany cut off Western access to the city. The West, for its part, called the initial bluff; unlike the Soviets, the American (and British and West German) position was against the permanent division of Germany, and Washington was therefore reluctant to acquiesce to the formalization of the status quo through recognition of the GDR (Schake 2002). The Soviet threat passed without incident, as Khrushchev allowed his six-month deadline to pass without instituting the transfer. A few years later, however, in 1961, Moscow repeated its demand. (The basic motivating factors that had driven the first ultimatum – which Painter (1999: 53) characterizes as “mainly defensive” – remained in place.) This time tensions amplified as the Kennedy administration responded by mobilizing military forces in Europe, including sending tanks armed with bulldozers to an allied access corridor between the sectors – the famous Checkpoint Charlie – “to demonstrate US determination to maintain its access rights” (Painter 1999: 54). Moscow, for its part, similarly mobilized forces, and the prospect of direct confrontation ensued.

According to McMahon (2010: 309), the American responses in 1958 and 1961 were predicated on a consistent rationale:

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<sup>230</sup> Largely by precluding the reunification of Germany on Western terms, which would create the possibility – in fact, likely ensure it – of a remilitarized, resurgent and potentially nuclear-armed German state within NATO (Trachtenberg 1991; Newman 2007). Harrison (2002) points to the role of the East Germans themselves in precipitating the crisis, noting that archival evidence made available after the end of the Cold War suggests that the Kremlin was as much concerned with managing their GDR allies as with provoking or challenging the US and the UK. She argues that the available documents “reveal...that Khrushchev’s concern about the GDR and pressure from the GDR were the most consistent influences on him during the crisis. Khrushchev’s goals regarding the stabilisation and strengthening of the GDR, combined with the actions of the East German leaders, were essential parts of the crisis” (Harrison 2002: 97). This argument is consistent with the interpretation that the status of the GDR was the key Soviet concern; it undermines what Harrison calls ‘traditional explanations’ which suggested more aggressive Soviet designs.

Recognizing that vulnerable West Berlin simply could not be defended by conventional means, and yet could not be abandoned without severely diminishing US credibility, Eisenhower held firm. He accepted, and so signaled, that nuclear weapons would be used to defend West Berlin if needed. In light of the city's weighty symbolic value, Eisenhower was willing to run the risk of general war to retain its current status. Kennedy quickly, if reluctantly, reached the same conclusion. Concerned that backing down in West Berlin would deal a severe blow to American credibility and simply invite aggression elsewhere, he adopted an equally tough policy.

As in 1958, Moscow ultimately capitulated; the infamous Berlin Wall dividing East and West Berlin was constructed (largely in deference to East German demands to stem the flow of emigration), but the broader status quo of Western access to the city went unchanged.

The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 was in many ways linked to these events in Berlin.<sup>231</sup> In October of that year, Moscow secretly introduced strategic and tactical nuclear weapons to Cuba; American surveillance promptly discovered the presence of the missiles, and a stand-off ensued that brought the rivals to the brink of a nuclear conflagration. The impasse was eventually resolved when the Soviets agreed to remove the missiles in exchange for an American pledge not to invade Cuba and the secret removal of US nuclear-armed missiles from installations in Turkey. Both the rationale behind the initial Soviet decision and the impetus for the tough American response are only explicable in the context of the broader relationship.<sup>232</sup> Archival evidence suggests that the Soviet decision was predicated, in part, on an attempt to create greater leverage vis-à-vis Berlin. This was, in any event, the main American interpretation at the time.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Trachtenberg (2010: 483), for example, characterizes the Cuban Missile Crisis as “the climax of the great Berlin crisis of 1958-62.

<sup>232</sup> Even Kennedy's ultimate preference for a blockade rather than air strikes was predicated on the assumption that an attack on Cuba would automatically trigger the Soviet seizure of West Berlin (Hershberg 2010).

<sup>233</sup> Secretary of State Dean Rusk stated for example: “I think also that, uh, Berlin is, uh, very much involved in this...they may be thinking that they can either bargain Berlin and Cuba against each other, or

Perceiving the Soviet move in this light, the US decision to demand the removal of the missiles was predicated on both immediate security concerns (which the presence of hostile nuclear assets just a few miles off the shore of the continental US invariably created) but also on the *long-term* implications of allowing the Soviet move to go unchallenged. To acquiesce in Cuba might invite further Soviet provocations elsewhere.<sup>234</sup> In addition to the Berlin dimension, it is worth noting that more recent archival work has validated what had hitherto been largely dismissed as Soviet obfuscation: that one of the main reasons behind installing the missiles had been to forestall an American invasion of Cuba, a possibility considered likely given the failed, US-supported, invasion at the Bay of Pigs just a year earlier.<sup>235</sup> This interest was also connected to considerations about the future; the Soviet's wanted to establish their credibility in protecting clients, lest future allies worry about the reliability of a Soviet security commitment and side with the US instead.

The key import of the Berlin and Cuban crises (in addition to various smaller crises in the Middle East and elsewhere) is the extent to which the Cold War had become geographically extended far beyond Central Europe and Eastern Asia (the traditional focal points of the conflict given its origins in the settlement of World War II). Not only were various nodes of the rivalry popping up in different parts of the globe, but each subsequent crisis was considered connected to the other, both in terms of the lessons that each rival drew from previous encounters (as the record makes clear with respect to Berlin and Cuba) and in the *implications* each encounter was believed to have for

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that they could provoke us into a kind of action in Cuba which would give an umbrella for them to take action with respect to Berlin" (quoted in Ball 1998: 103).

<sup>234</sup> In a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (ExComm) early in the crisis this logic was explicitly articulated: "the Soviet Union has now deliberately initiated a public test of our intentions that can determine the future course of world events for many years to come. If we allow the offensive capabilities presently in Cuba to remain there, I am convinced that sooner or later and probably sooner we will lose all of Latin America to Communism because all credibility of our willingness to effectively resist Soviet military power will have been removed" (quoted in Ball 1998: 103).

<sup>235</sup> As Hershberg (2010: 68-69) summarizes: "For instance, Americans generally derided as a patent propaganda ploy Khrushchev's claim that he acted to defend Havana from aggression. But information emerging from US and then Russian sources has gradually led historians to take his assertions more seriously." Mastny (2010: 331-32) concurs: "Enough evidence has filtered out of Russian archives to conclude that the main motive behind the Soviet decision to install offensive nuclear missiles in Cuba secretly was the desire to save the Cuban revolution from an American attack genuinely believed to be looming." See also Garthoff (2015).

anticipated future interactions. For example, the US Department of Defense summarized the implications of the Cuban crisis by stating that

the Soviet setback in Cuba was more than a local one. And not because of the importance of the base in Cuba...The lesson for us should be clear. No matter how valueless an overseas base the time to give it up is before or well after a crisis – not during it – if we want to have allies believing that association with us is in their interests (quoted in Ball 1999: 107).

More generally, McMahon notes the “striking...fundamental continuities” in the basic strategic worldview of both the Eisenhower (1953-61) and Kennedy (1961-63) administrations in that they both “saw the Cold War as a long-term struggle” requiring constant vigilance; each successive Cold War crisis was as much about future Soviet behaviour as it was the immediate stakes at play. The same basic dynamic dominated Soviet decision-making as well (where similar continuity obtained between the Stalin and post-Stalin eras); as mentioned, the ploy in Cuba was partly initiated in an attempt to regain some of the credibility Moscow perceived it had lost over failed ultimatums in Berlin and partly to protect future Soviet credibility in its defence of a communist ally.<sup>236</sup> Likewise, Soviet heavy-handedness in Eastern Europe – for example its moves to maintain control over countries like Hungary in 1956 and later Czechoslovakia in 1968 – and bluffs and threats in the Middle East,<sup>237</sup> were linked to the overarching Soviet belief that it was engaged in a long-term struggle with the “main adversary”.

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<sup>236</sup> As Zubok and Pleshakov (1996: 261) explain: “what mattered for Khrushchev was to preserve the impression of communism on the march, which, in his opinion, was critical to dismantling the Cold War on Soviet terms. The loss of Cuba would have irreparably damaged this image. It would also have meant the triumph of those in Washington who insisted on the roll-back of communism and denied any legitimacy to the USSR.”

<sup>237</sup> Garthoff (2015: 22-23) describes the various Soviet activities in this region at the time: “In October 1957 Khrushchev spun a tale of a Turkish and NATO threat to intervene in Syria and announced military maneuvers, then claimed credit for forestalling a NATO attack on Syria that was never contemplated. In July 1958 the pro-Western king and prime minister of Iraq were killed and succeeded by a military dictatorship who was considered a threat by its neighbors. In response to their appeals for assistance, the United States landed troops in Lebanon and the United Kingdom in Jordan. The Soviet Union with fanfare announced military maneuvers in the Transcaucasus and Bulgaria and issued vague warnings against a Western intervention in Iraq that was never contemplated. Soon thereafter, in September 1958, Khrushchev again issued verbal threats as a supportive gesture to the Chinese communists, who were bombarding the

The nuclear scare generated by the standoff in Cuba encouraged greater circumspection in superpower activity, but did not fundamentally alter these basic perceptions. There was a shared recognition that caution was important as the full strategic implications of nuclear deterrence and the principle of mutually-assured destruction (MAD) were internalized, but this simply shifted the locus of competition even more to peripheral theatres, for example in the Third World.<sup>238</sup> “We cannot permit all those who call themselves neutral to join the Communist bloc,” Kennedy told his National Security Council in 1963, because “losing” such countries would allow “the balance of power to swing against us” (quoted in McMahon 2010: 306). The Soviets, for their part, saw significant opportunity in the various Third World revolutions and nationalist movements, where the socialist model was likely to prove attractive to indigenous leaders searching for new modes of economic and political organization.

One prominent point of contact in this period became the war in Vietnam, where the communist North threatened to overrun the anti-communist, US-supported South. As Painter (1999: 67) avers, “US policymakers argued that what was at stake was not merely Vietnam but the credibility of US commitments all over the world.” (p. 67) This belief embodied the so-called ‘domino theory’ of Soviet expansion, which argued that the loss of any particular country would trigger a cascading effect, leading to the Sovietization of an entire region. Though much criticized as a policy prescription (see for example Hopf 1994), the basic logic of the domino theory is consistent with the theory of rivalry developed in this dissertation. The strategic value of any specific country (such as Vietnam) was not calculated according to the intrinsic value of the country itself, but rather the broader, long-term implications of that country shifting to the opposing camp in the context of anticipated future confrontation at the ‘centre’ of the dispute, including in Central Europe. However misguided in hindsight, the point is that US decision-makers were not capricious in their logic, but rather clear as to how they weighed the imperatives they believed were in play. The inability to oust communist rule in Cuba, for example,

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Nationalist-held island of Quemoy, and claimed to have prevented an American intervention (nor did the Chinese leaders welcome this unsought ‘support’). But then his run of successful bluffs ran out.”

<sup>238</sup> The other key feature of the post-1962 Cold War was the arms race itself; both sides significantly expanded their strategic and conventional forces (Painter 1999).

created concern regarding the inability to oppose Soviet influence more generally, as outlined by State Department Director of Policy Planning Walt Rostow as early as 1961:

There is building up a sense of frustration and a perception we are up against a game we can't handle. This frustration and simple anger could lead us to do unwise things or exert scarce national effort and resources in directions which would yield no significant results, while diverting us from our real problems. There is one area where success against Communist techniques is conceivable and where success is desperately required in the Free World interest. That area is Vietnam. A maximum effort...military, economic, political and diplomatic...is required there...a clean cut success in Vietnam would do much to hold the line in Asia while permitting us...to learn how to deal with indirect aggression (quoted in Ball 1998: 115, 118).

Note that Rostow is wary of expending “scarce national effort and resources” in places unconnected to “our real problems” but that “success” in Vietnam is “desperately required”; the implication being that “holding the line in Asia” *was* connected to core US interests given the broader competition with the Soviet Union. Nor had this competition morphed into some vague ideological or cultural struggle detached from security concerns.<sup>239</sup> Particularly in the context of the proliferating arms race (which included a major surge in conventional Soviet forces in Europe) perceptions as to the importance of places like Vietnam remained connected to what Kennedy described as the “maximum danger” of “hostile forces” (quoted in Hemmer 2015: 73).<sup>240</sup> First Kennedy, then Lyndon Johnson, put these perceptions into action by committing significant American forces to defend South Vietnam against the communist North.

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<sup>239</sup> To the extent that it *was* ideological, it was because of assumptions about what the other side’s ideology *meant* for its future intentions. In other words, neither the US nor the Soviets were necessarily concerned (or *primarily* concerned) that a particular country organize itself as either capitalist or communist (as evidenced by those instances in which the US actually cooperated with socialist or anti-democratic regimes) but rather what the advance of one or the other ideology meant for long-term security, under the assumption that that ideology remained fundamentally antagonistic and hostile, and tied to the political and military power base of the opposing state.

<sup>240</sup> This statement came in the context of a general discussion of the dangers facing the US in places like Asia, Africa and Latin America during a State of the Union Address in January 1961.

Of course, the American experience in Vietnam ultimately turned sour, as public opposition grew and the prospects for military success waned. (Though the American decision to persist for as long as it did, given increasingly dire on-the-ground realities, does underscore the extent to which the US remained committed<sup>241</sup> to the broader goal of Soviet containment.<sup>242</sup>) Rather than undermine the American appetite for involvement in the Third World, however, the failure in Vietnam reinforced US concerns about Soviet gains in other areas of the globe.<sup>243</sup> In Africa and Latin America, in particular, Washington was active in opposing communist regimes, often through clandestine activity. The Soviet Union, for its part, saw “new opportunities to expand Soviet power and influence in the Third World” and, buoyed on by “American’s retreat from Vietnam”, moved to seize them in Latin America, Africa, and South Asia (Savranskaya and Taubman 2010: 135; Westad 2006). Partly this was as a consequence of a Marxist-Leninist ideology which suggested that “The Soviet Union’s role was to help make the world safe for revolution and thereby to assist in the progress of humankind” (Westad 2006: 72). Also important, however, was then-Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev’s goal of “strategic parity” with the US. One component of this policy was the significant arms

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<sup>241</sup> Though a complete discussion of the dynamics of the Vietnam war is beyond the present scope, it is worth noting how the rivalry lens might cast certain controversial decisions and aspects of the conflict in a new light. History has not been kind to the Johnson administration with respect to their commitment to a war that, archival evidence now indicates, even senior officials no longer believed winnable as early as 1967. Given the loss of life that ensued, it is understandable why posterity has judged the decision to persist in the war, while holding this perception, so harshly. Yet if the theory of rivalry developed in this dissertation is correct, it is likely that US decision-makers at the time *genuinely believed* that the broader imperatives of not losing ground or showing a lack of resolve vis-à-vis the Soviet Union were not just important politically, but rather tied to the long-term core – even existential – security interests of the United States. Of course, this does not render the loss of lives in Vietnam any less tragic (particularly given that the assessment of an existential threat being related to or implicated by any events in South Asia was almost certainly inaccurate), but it does, perhaps, temper the personal, specific, blame allotted to particular members of the Johnson administration (particularly the criticism that they made decisions for callous, shallow reasons rather than for genuine national security ones, however misguided in hindsight).

<sup>242</sup> While Soviet involvement never reached the scope of America’s direct intervention, Moscow did offer significant aid, support, and guidance to the North Vietnamese – indeed, they were the regime’s “largest supplier” (Kimball 2011: 222).

<sup>243</sup> Here a distinction must be made between the political executive in charge of foreign policy and the legislative branch (as well as the broader public). The experience in Vietnam induced Congress – in the face of public pressure – to enact several pieces of legislation designed to curb what it perceived as American adventurism abroad, including the War Powers Act of 1973 which mandated that the executive secure Congressional approval before entering into an armed conflict. Not surprisingly, the executive branch bristled at this perceived intrusion on the president’s ability to conduct foreign policy, and found various ways to circumvent it.

build-up mentioned above<sup>244</sup>; another, however, was an expansion of Soviet influence that Moscow believed would help offset American economic advantages.

It was in this context – a proliferating arms race that had closed the nuclear and conventional military gap between the two superpowers and growing Soviet influence in the Third World<sup>245</sup> – that the US and Soviets embarked on the policy of détente. The purpose of the policy was to stabilize the Cold War relationship by entrenching the status quo in Europe and curbing the excesses of the arms race. The Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) signed in 1972 froze the number of nuclear weapons at existing levels; it also included a Basic Principles Agreement in which “both sides pledged to ‘do their utmost to avoid military confrontations and to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war,’ to exercise ‘restraint’ in their mutual relations, and to ‘recognize that efforts to obtain unilateral advantage at the expense of the other, directly or indirectly, are inconsistent with these objectives.’” (Painter 1999: 76). Ostensibly, détente was designed to alleviate tension in the rivalry. In practice, however, the basic antagonism persisted, and competition continued apace.

On the Soviet side, Brezhnev saw the agreement as a way of consolidating the gains that had been achieved owing to his expansion of Soviet military power and political influence. According to Garthoff (2015: 38), “there was no change in the traditional view” of the US as the enemy; rather, “détente with America became the path to gaining respect and acknowledgement by the main adversary that the USSR had in fact ‘arrived’ as an equal superpower.” The US, likewise, primarily considered détente through the lens of continued competition. Trachtenberg (2010: 499), for example, summarizes US Secretary of State Kissinger’s attitudes at the time:

The United States, Kissinger said, had to engage in a lot of “shadow-boxing,” but it was important, he insisted, to “distinguish between appearances and reality.”

The US government had “no illusions about the world today.” The West, in his

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<sup>244</sup> According to Savranskaya and Taubman (2010: 142) “Soviet defense spending rose 40 percent between 1965 and 1970, and the US–Soviet ratio of strategic nuclear missiles fell from a seventeen to one US advantage during the Cuban missile crisis to rough parity in 1972.”

<sup>245</sup> The Sino-Soviet split and the US opening to China were also key contextual factors at the time.

view, had to be on its “guard against détente.” Indeed, it had to be prepared to use détente “quite cold-bloodedly to justify as hard a policy line” as it could.

Fundamentally, writes Gaddis (2010: 14), “détente was never meant to end the Cold War: instead its designers sought to set rules for what they all understood would continue to be a contest.” Thus, the supposed relaxation in tensions was accompanied by renewed crises.

The Arab-Israeli war of 1973, for example, threatened to escalate into superpower confrontation when, after the US rejected a proposal for a joint-peacekeeping venture, the Soviets threatened to intervene unilaterally. Washington responded by mobilizing two aircraft carriers to the area and placing their forces on world-wide alert. The Soviets backed down, allowing the Americans to craft a settlement to the conflict on their own terms. In his memoirs, Kissinger is clear regarding the lessons drawn from the incident: “once Brezhnev’s big bluff had failed, Soviet threats had lost much of their credibility” (Kissinger 1982: 612). The Soviets, indeed, emerged concerned about potential long-term implications.<sup>246</sup> According to Leng (2000: 110), the outcome of the crisis “confirmed the views of those [in the Kremlin] who distrusted American intentions and reinforced the notion that Soviet-American relations were a zero-sum game.” In order to offset perceived losses, the Soviet’s “intensified their own efforts to gain influence in the Third World, particularly Africa” (ibid.: 110). The parameters of détente, far from easing fundamental tensions, had instead “sharpen[ed] the conflict” (Gaddis 2010: 14). By the mid-1970s, even as the two sides continued negotiating towards a second SALT agreement, and the status quo of a formally divided Berlin became institutionalized, the lessons and implications of the decades-long conflict were applied with mounting intensity to the Third World. Once such venue was Angola; the duelling interventions into that country are examined below.

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<sup>246</sup> Indeed, Leng (2000: 108) suggests the genesis of the crisis itself had been the result of Soviet calculations vis-à-vis the long-term confrontation with the US: “As the Middle East crisis developed, the Soviet leadership feared the strategic consequences of losing an ally in its competition with the United States; the United States welcomed the opportunity to turn the fear into reality. The Soviet Union armed Egypt for a war that the USSR viewed as ill conceived – and that would almost certainly endanger the Soviet-US relationship – to avoid a strategic loss that would weaken the USSR’s competitive position vis-à-vis the United States.” (p. 108)

### *Assessing the Development of the Rivalry*

Before turning to the Angola case, however, it is worthwhile summarizing the implications of the above overview. What can the crises and confrontations which drove the development of the US-Soviet rivalry from 1947 to 1975 tell us about the dynamics of the relationship prior to intervention in Angola?

As mentioned, a key difference between the US-Soviet rivalry and the other rivalries discussed in this dissertation is the lack of direct war. Unlike India and Pakistan, or Israel and Syria, the US and USSR did not engage in major conventional conflict at any point prior to the civil conflict interventions of interest (this distinction has potential theoretical implications given the emphasis on past interactions as formative regarding expectations about the future; an absence of war in the past might soften or even preclude expectations about future direct conflict). That said, the above narrative suggests that many of the same concerns that were present in the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalries were operative in the US-Soviet context as well. The initial point of conflict in the rivalry involved disagreement as to the dispensation of a particular piece of territory; in the US-Soviet case, control over a defeated Germany – and the Soviet presence in Eastern Europe more broadly – placed the two sides at odds. Structurally, the two states were the dominant powers within a common sphere of competition (initially Central Europe and East Asia, this scope eventually became global; in the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria<sup>247</sup> cases, by comparison, the rivalries were regional). Divergent ideological perspectives – according to which each side imputed implacably hostile motives to the other – formed an enabling condition analogous to the ethnic and religious foundations of the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria relationships. The 1948 Berlin crisis involved military mobilization, and there was a general perception that war was likely in the short term, perhaps inevitable in the long. (It is worth noting also that the *experience* of all-out war was strikingly fresh for each side, a lens through which both considered the German question; to acquiesce might mean a revanchist Germany, with all its latent industrial and

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<sup>247</sup> This characterization includes Egypt and the other Arab states, which fought collectively in the 1948 war. Syria alone would have likely been too weak to challenge Israel at that point in time.

military power, aligned with the other side.) From this initial impasse subsequent crises arose, confirming perceptions that the other side was both aggressive and expansionist. The Soviets quickly acquired nuclear weapons to match the American capability, meaning the effects of nuclear deterrence (even if the logic was not immediately appreciable to the participants<sup>248</sup>) were established early in the rivalry. This dynamic likely mitigated escalation in several crises, keeping them tense stand-offs underscored by nuclear brinkmanship (for example in Berlin 1958-61 and Cuba 1962<sup>249</sup>). Yet the possibility of direct confrontation (the existential implications of which were now amplified by the nuclear dimension) remained acute in the minds of decision-makers. Additional crises took the form of indirect conflict (as in Korea and the Middle East). These proxy conflicts steadily extended the scope of the rivalry to global proportions, commensurate with the status of both states in the international distribution of power (a bipolar system in which the US and USSR were overwhelmingly dominant).

What is particularly striking about this period is the extent to which ‘credibility’ became the currency of confrontation; assessing the other side’s and protecting one’s own was a core concern as crises and confrontations accumulated. As Ball (1998: 115) points out: “The nebulous concept of credibility came to be at the centre of American Cold War policies in the 1960s” – though the historical record suggests that leaders were concerned about it even earlier. The concept has indeed been criticized by a plethora of post-Cold War studies (for example Hopf 1994; Mercer 1997; Press 2005; Tang 2005) in part because of the perceived ‘nebulosity’ of its application during the US-Soviet rivalry; putatively peripheral, marginal interests (such as the political ideology of the government in Vietnam or the sovereignty of South Korea) were accorded supreme importance by injecting an imperative to preserve American ‘credibility’ vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. The

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<sup>248</sup> Both the Eisenhower administration and the Stalin regime believed the use of such weapons was acceptable, even advisable, in a potential conflict.

<sup>249</sup> One could argue that the Cuban crisis was *created* by nuclear weapons (specifically Soviet attempts to install them on the island), making it non-sensical to attribute its peaceful *resolution* to nuclear deterrence (the absence of which would have precluded the initiation of the crisis in the first place, by this formulation). Yet the Soviets not only installed strategic nuclear weapons but tactical ones as well; its conceivable that, in the absence of nuclear weapons, the decision to install, say, conventional ballistic missiles – capable of threatening American cities, given Cuba’s proximity – would have prompted an American response. Given the brinkmanship that occurred, and the documented role the specter of nuclear annihilation played in keeping Kennedy and Khrushchev ‘cool’, such a situation, absent the sobering nuclear possibility, could have very easily resulted in conventional conflict and war.

work of Thomas Schelling was particularly influential in developing the logic of credibility in a theoretical framework; his book *Arms and Influence* (1966) was quite explicitly a discussion of how credibility was implicated in, and important for, the US-Soviet relationship (see the discussion in Mitton 2015). The above summary of the development of the rivalry suggests that credibility was important both for *how* states responded from one crisis to the next (meaning the *reputation* that a state developed through its behaviour in particular crises was relevant for how its opponent responded in subsequent confrontations<sup>250</sup>) but also, even more importantly in the present context, *why* credibility (and reputation) was considered to be so important. We see for example that both the Americans and the Soviets made assessments about present credibility partly on the basis of past behaviour (as when Soviet threats after Berlin were deemed less credible because of its unenforced ultimatums in those crises). We see additionally the extent to which both sides understood their relationship as one in which future crises and confrontations were certain; *the present crisis was always considered in the context of the next one*. This made it inevitable that concerns about credibility would be significant. Particularly – and this is crucial – because the perceived threat from the other side remained significant, even existential (this perception persisted even as the relationship stabilized in Central Europe, and during the period of ostensible warming of relations characterized by *détente*). Indeed, this perception remained in place in 1975, as the competition for influence in the Third World (including Africa) became the active front of the rivalry.

### **US and Soviet Perceptions in 1975**

US and Soviet perceptions in 1975 had shifted from where they stood in 1947-48. By the time intervention into Angola was being contemplated, neither the US nor the USSR were as concerned about the *imminent* possibility of direct conflict as compared to the tense situation in Berlin in 1948 (or, for that matter, during the Korean War from

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<sup>250</sup> Recall that, as discussed in Chapter 2, reputation is a component of how credibility is calculated, informing as it does assessments of *resolve*, which is itself one of four prerequisites of successful (i.e. credible) deterrence, the others being *communication*, *commitment*, and *capability*. See Harvey and Mitton (2017).

1950-53). While the various crisis between 1947 and 1975 had prevented the rivalry's senescence – tense moments and military mobilizations reminded respective leaders that conflict remained a possibility – the fact that none had spilled over into overt, large-scale engagement ultimately signalled that some measure of caution obtained in each capital. The perceived *source* of this caution, it is crucial to point out, was largely the deterrent effect each side believed their own military capabilities and manoeuvres exerted against the other; which is to say, the basic assumption of antagonism remained in place, albeit coupled with the impression, built over the decades, that such antagonism was not implacable or irrational, but rather could be tempered through the maintenance of credible resolve and counteraction.

As discussed above, this remained true in the period of détente, which was still in effect in 1975, even as the Arab-Israeli war of 1973, the American involvement in Vietnam (as well as in Laos and Cambodia), and other Third World crises called into question superpower commitment to its principles. As Garthoff (2015: 39, emphasis added) writes of the period:

Détente meant, of course, a relaxation of tensions but between two sides that remained counterposed in a systemic confrontation. Thus geopolitical competition continued, *and a return to greater tensions and even war remained possibilities* despite improved US-Soviet relations and formal agreements.

Indeed, the Soviet decision to pursue détente in the first place was predicated in part on continued apprehension about security tied to the possibility of an American attack.<sup>251</sup> These dynamics continued to drive Soviet perceptions in the early and mid-1970s. One need only consider the tough negotiating position the Soviets adopted in the SALT I talks in 1969-1972 to recognize that Moscow remained hyper-sensitive to shifts in the strategic

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<sup>251</sup> As Savranskaya and Taubman (2010: 142) point out, the Soviet military buildup that made détente possible was predicated on “the fear of a sudden attack brought on by ‘inferiority’ in armaments.” The origins of détente more broadly, it is widely noted, lay in the perceived relative decline in US power vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. For Brezhnev, this meant he felt able to engage the US as a strategic equal; for President Nixon and Henry Kissinger, it meant accommodating new geopolitical realities. In this way, détente was about structural adjustments within an adversarial relationship, not any genuine political rapprochement or softening images of the other side. See Litwak (1984); Garthoff (1994); Shulzinger (2010); Hemmer (2015).

balance which might endanger Soviet security in the future (see the discussions in Garthoff 1977; Payne 1980; Vigor 1986; Kearns Jr. 2015). Leffler's (2007: 254, emphasis added) explanation of expanding Soviet defense expenditures in 1975-76 serves as a useful summation of the relevant prevailing attitudes: "Soviet officials believed the USSR was still the weaker nation...Experience mandated vigilance against imperialist and fascist aggressors. History could recur. The Soviet Union could be attacked again."

On the American side, assessments of the Soviet Union remained similarly cautious and pessimistic. A National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) from April 1972 projected that "for the foreseeable future" Soviet policy "will remain antagonistic to the West, especially to the US" (NIE 11-72, p. 95). "Developments of recent years," the document states,

have given the USSR increased confidence in its security and strategic posture, in its capacity to engage its adversaries on favorable terms, and in the prospects for the long-term growth of its international influence. The Soviets have thus begun to pursue a more vigorous foreign policy and to accept deeper involvement in many world areas. (ibid.: 88)

The estimate specifically mentions potential Soviet involvement in the Third World, stating that "by virtue of [the Soviet Union's] acquisition in recent years of a greater capability to use its military forces in distant areas – a capability which is likely to continue to grow – Moscow may now believe its options in the Third World are expanding" (ibid.: 94).

There is evidence that such assessments were internalized by, and reflected the views of, the American leadership. Kissinger (1982), for example, wrote in his memoirs that his basic understanding of *détente* was the "managing of an adversarial relationship." This meant pursuing it in a way that advanced US interests vis-à-vis a presumed competitor. In a meeting with the Chinese in October 1975, for example, Kissinger explained that US policy with respect to the Arab-Israeli conflict had been designed precisely to "avoid...settling it cooperatively with the Soviet Union." The policy of *détente* in general, he averred, was being "conduct[ed]...as the best method for resisting

Soviet expansionism” (Foreign Relations of the United States, 2007). Following meetings with Brezhnev in October 1974, Kissinger (1999) recounted his generally positive impressions of the Soviet leader, but nonetheless insisted that the realities of the relationship mandated circumspection (he worried, for example, what present developments would portend “ten years hence”).

This, then, was the context in which the two superpowers contemplated the civil war in Angola in 1975. Perceptions on both sides were that a) the relationship remained competitive and antagonistic, with the attendant threats to national security still acute; b) as the situation in Central Europe stabilized, the Third World had become the critical venue for the rivalry; and finally, c) each crisis in the rivalry was *connected* – as had been the case with respect to Korea, Vietnam, or the Middle East, the so-called ‘peripheral’ confrontations had important implications for the ‘core’ considerations of Germany, Central Europe, and the nuclear arms race.

### **Angolan Civil War (1975)**

The precipitating cause of the civil war was the military coup in Portugal in 1974; the new regime in Lisbon announced a formal end to Portuguese colonialism in Africa. With official independence set for November 1975, the various factions which had been fighting Portuguese authority in Angola for over a decade turned against each other, each jockeying for the right to claim authority upon Portugal’s departure (Lockyer 2011). The three main domestic factions (each of which had previously played a role in the liberation movement) were: the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA); the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA); and the União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (UNITA). The MPLA, led by the Marxist doctor and poet Agostinho Neto, received support from the Soviet Union, as well as direct aid and support from Cuba. The FNLA and UNITA, by contrast, were supported by the United States, as well as South Africa (who, like Cuba, became directly involved in the conflict) and, briefly, China (Dunér 1985).

The particulars of the Angolan civil war are complex; conflict ebbed and flowed over the course of more than two decades of fighting (for overviews of the conflict see

Marcum 1978; Ebinger 1984; Porter 1984; Westad 2006). Superpower involvement, similarly, waxed and waned, with the US at one point being legislatively barred from even covert involvement (the resumption of aid under the Reagan administration in the 1980s marking a distinct second phase in American action toward Angola) by the Clark Amendment (which itself was largely a reaction to the debacle in Vietnam, see Scott 1996). Yet the initial machinations related to Soviet and American involvement are nonetheless revealing, particularly with respect to rivalry dynamics. We therefore concentrate on the decisions made by Washington and Moscow in the period from early 1975 until February 1976, at which point the MPLA gained effective control of the country (Guimaraes 2001). While, as mentioned, fighting would continue with varying intensity over subsequent decades, this period is recognizable as a distinct phase of the conflict.

The US-Soviet dimension to the conflict is widely acknowledged. “Angola became the ante in the superpower sweepstakes” writes Klingshoffer (1980: 2), and despite some discernible important stakes<sup>252</sup>, American and Soviet involvement is recognized to have been less about tangible strategic interests than about the international relationship. The “broader issue”, according to Garthoff (1994: 556-57)

was not even clear at the outset, although the seeds of trouble were there: would one of the global powers see its interests damaged by the victory of a local contender supported by the other power? What would it portend for the nature of the competition of the superpowers in the future? The stakes were not Angola itself, or even the influence the other side would gain from a victory of the faction it favoured. Rather the issue *became* the rules of competition under détente.

Which is to say, the issue was the “rules” of US-Soviet interaction in the overall relationship, and what the ceding of influence in the Angolan conflict might portend for the future of the rivalry. An examination of the rationale and thought processes of each

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<sup>252</sup> As Klingshoffer (1980: 73) describes: “Angola had tremendous economic potential as it is richly endowed with oil, diamonds, iron ore, phosphates, gold, copper, manganese, uranium and coffee. It can also be of great importance strategically as it possesses several excellent harbors and lies adjacent to the major Cape oil route from the Persian Gulf to Western Europe and the United States.”

side is therefore apposite for the theory of rivalry intervention developed in this dissertation; elucidating the process linking rivalry to the decision to intervene – and comparing that process to the other two instances of rivalry intervention explored in previous chapters – will offer further evidence as to the plausibility of the explanation for rivalry intervention being offered.

### *Soviet Intervention in Angola*

The Soviet decision to support the MPLA and intervene in Angola was part of a broader foreign policy emphasis on Africa emerging at the time. As discussed above, the realities of détente – and the US-Soviet relationship more broadly – in addition to rising competition with China, induced Moscow to pursue influence in the region. Africa was to Moscow as a “blank sheet of paper” according to Guimaraes (2001: 161), having “little or no historical ties...and yet by the mid-1970s [the Soviet Union] had developed a major presence in Africa.” Despite putative affinity with the black African nations emerging from the oppressive colonial experience, Albright (1987: 3) suggests that “Moscow...[dealt] with Africa as fundamentally an arena in which to further broad international objectives.” The presence of a domestic Marxist force such as the MPLA accorded a natural avenue through which the Soviets could seek to influence political realities in Angola and the region more generally (similar efforts were ongoing in other African nations, including Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and South Africa).

Moscow agreed as early as 1970 to offer military hardware, logistical support and political training to Neto and his followers (Westad 2006). Interestingly, this support was suspended in early 1974 (owing partly to infighting within the MPLA) but swiftly reinstated following the news of Chinese support for the FNLA (Garthoff 1994). Indeed, the influence of China’s involvement on Soviet decision-making was significant – according to Garthoff (1994: 582), it was the “main element...in the initial phase in 1974” owing to general Sino-Soviet competition for influence in the region occurring at

the time.<sup>253</sup> Leffler (2007: 255) suggests that for Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko “Chinese assistance to an opposing group” was a key motivating factor in the Soviet calculus at that stage (see also Legum 1976). Of course, the “main adversary” remained the United States, and concerns about potential US involvement played a role as well; the US pledged \$300,000 to the FNLA over the summer of 1974 (US involvement is engaged directly below) which reaffirmed the Soviet commitment to the MPLA (Garthoff 1994). Guimaraes (2001: 176) cites a Soviet academic, Alexei Vassiliev, who maintained that “the West has always been Moscow’s principal adversary in the Third World and...this was also the case in Angola.” Certainly as the conflict progressed, and as China’s role receded given Beijing’s decision to suspend aid to the FNLA and UNITA over concerns about South Africa’s involvement on the same side, the US dynamic became more pronounced (Klingshoffer 1980).<sup>254</sup>

Soviet aid in the summer and fall of 1974 consisted largely of small arms transfers, which helped to significantly increase the fighting capacity of the MPLA. In December of that year, approximately 250 MPLA members were flown to Moscow for military training (Guimaraes 2001). In 1975, major arms transfers began, and continued over the subsequent year:

Between March and November 1975, Moscow delivered an estimated 30 to 40 cargo planes and 27 shiploads of weapons to the MPLA. By January 1976, it is estimated that Soviet military aid to the MPLA had already reached \$200 million, which included conventional assets such as T-34 and T-55 tanks, armoured personnel carriers, 122-mm Katyusha rockets and MiG-17 and MiG-21 aircraft (Lockyer 2011: 2355).

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<sup>253</sup> Gonzalez (1980: 152) writes that “a desire to stem rising Chinese influence among guerilla groups and regimes in Southern Africa had been a prime factor behind the step-up in Soviet material assistance to liberation movements beginning in the early 1970s.”

<sup>254</sup> Though even if the Chinese dynamic was dominant in the early stages, this simply underscores the interplay between overlapping international rivalries in the international system – intervention into a civil war being triggered by one rival’s involvement, which subsequently induces another rival to become involved.

According to Westad (2006), an uptick in financial aid and arms transfers in September and October of 1975 came in reaction to the US's "extensive" resupply of the FNLA in August of that year. Also at this time, the Cuban involvement began in earnest, with contingents of Cuban soldiers arriving to supplement MPLA forces (eventually over 30,000 Cuban troops would be deployed) (George 2005). Though the Americans believed the Cubans to be a direct proxy of the Soviets, the archival evidence suggests that Havana initiated the move largely on its own, as a way of bolstering their international revolutionary credentials (Guimaraes 2001). Nonetheless, once the Cubans were committed, Moscow became a facilitator, transporting Cuban troops via airlift and ultimately urging Havana to increase its efforts (Westad 2006).<sup>255</sup>

In terms of the dynamics on the ground, the fall of 1975 was a key period, as the date of official independence – 11 November – loomed; whichever faction was in the ascendancy at that point in time could claim official authority over the country. The FNLA and UNITA factions had secured significant outside support in their own right, largely matching the Soviet and Cuban contributions to the MPLA. South Africa had intervened with its own troops, offsetting the Cuban contingent and facilitating significant territorial gains for UNITA in the south<sup>256</sup> – as Lockyer (2011) points out, by this period the war had metastasized from a small-arms guerilla-style conflict to large scale conventional warfare, almost entirely as a consequence of outside intervention.

When the day of independence arrived, the MPLA controlled the capital, and immediately declared itself the sovereign authority in Angola (the government was recognized by various communist states around the world). Nonetheless, fighting against the FNLA in the north and UNITA in the south continued, with the latter, as mentioned, buoyed by South African involvement. Crucially, American aid to the FNLA was suspended in December 1975 owing to the Clark Amendment which prohibited continued American involvement. This crippled FNLA forces, who were pushed out of Angola and

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<sup>255</sup> Westad (2006: 236) recounts that "the Politburo authorized the Soviet General Staff to take direct control of the transatlantic deployment of additional Cuban troops, as well as the supplying of these troops with advanced military hardware. The massive operation – the first Soviet effort of its kind – transported more than twelve thousand soldiers by sea and air from Cuba to Africa between November 1975 and mid-January 1976."

<sup>256</sup> The geography of the conflict was relatively straightforward: the FNLA controlled territory mainly in the north; UNITA in the south; and the MPLA a band in the middle, including the capital Luanda.

into Zaire by the MPLA. The MPLA was then able to concentrate its efforts in the south, turning the tide there as well. By February 1976, owing largely to the Cuban presence and continued Soviet support – which as “a response to American and Zairian aid to the FNLA” (Klingshoffer 1980: 26) had steadily increased throughout the conflict<sup>257</sup> -- the MPLA had effectively won the civil war; the Organization for African Unity (OAU) recognized Neto’s government as the legitimate authority in Angola, inducing other nations around the world to follow suit.

The important question for our purposes is why had Moscow considered this victory worthwhile? What, in other words, had been the motivating rationale behind the approximately \$300 million in total aid that had been offered in the 1975-76 period? As mentioned, Angola seemed to be part of a new regional emphasis on Africa tied to Sino-Soviet and US-Soviet rivalry. As intervention was being contemplated, Westad (2006: 215) recounts, “KGB Deputy Chairman Viktor Chebrikov explained [to his superiors] that Angola and Guinea-Bissau had potential strategic importance for the Soviet Union, and that both the United States and China were trying to increase their influence with the liberation movements in these countries.” He continues:

The main military intelligence bureau – GRU – reported that China was targeting countries and movements that already received aid from the Soviet Union. China, the GRU stressed, would use its resources to the maximum in order to attract African supporters, and could, within a few years, build its position to control large parts of Africa in a sort of loose coalition with the United States (Westad 2006: 215).

The mention of this last possibility is important; even the emphasis on Chinese involvement was apparently couched in relation to the US which remained, of course, the “main adversary.” Once the intervention had begun, moreover, it was largely reactive to the American presence.

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<sup>257</sup> According to Klingshoffer (1980: 27-8): “About \$30 million [in Soviet military aid] was sent from March through July [1975]; \$80 million from August until mid-November; \$90 million from mid-November until mid-January; and \$100 million from mid-January until the termination of most fighting in mid-February.”

There were also, Guimaraes (2001: 173) points out, tangible advantages offered by a potential presence in the country: “Access to good port facilities which faced the Atlantic sea lanes used by Western shipping must have seemed attractive to Soviet military strategists.” Likewise, Soviet control over Angola would allow it to “make it more difficult for Western states to maintain their access to Angolan minerals and raw materials, particularly crude oil” (Klingshoffer 1980: 147). Naturally, this would also mean that the Soviets themselves would gain access to Angola’s considerable resources. As discussed below, these possibilities were invoked by American officials as ostensible justifications for countering Soviet efforts, though in reality the American rationale was not predicated on the immediate or specific stakes in play, or the direct consequences of Soviet control of resources or sea ports. As for the Soviets, most analysts similarly recognize that such considerations were ancillary. “The fact that the military returns in the relationship with Angola were minimal,” writes MacFarlane (1992: 2-3),

while the costs continued to grow suggests the force projection was a secondary objective. Similarly, the fact that Angola constituted a net economic burden to the USSR suggests that economic objectives were not a major determinant in Soviet policy there.

The apparent confluence of political, ideological, force-projection, and economic motivations render it difficult to unpack the precise formula that pushed Soviet policy toward intervention. An “array of objectives” is said to have been in play (MacFarlane 1992: 2). And yet the broader context of rivalry not only helped to shape these underlying objectives (each of which found salience primarily in the context of superpower competition) but ultimately provided a galvanizing motivation which proved sufficient for triggering an intervention not explicable by reference to any specific domain of interests.

The interest in Africa, for example, was predicated on the development of the superpower rivalry described above. As Klingshoffer (1980: 149) explains, “on a world scale, the Soviet Union had experienced foreign policy setbacks in Chile and the Middle East and wanted to counter any Western moves in Angola.” In the aftermath of the

MPLA victory, moreover, one of the primary takeaway's was the salutary effects successful Soviet intervention would produce elsewhere:

What did the Soviets believe they had learnt from the Angolan conflict? From reports coming into the CPSU International Department the most important lesson at the time seems to have been that the United States could be defeated in local conflicts under certain circumstances (Westad 2006: 238).

Recent memoirs and Moscow's own declassified documents show that the MPLA victory in Angola, together with Hanoi's victory in Vietnam, gave rise to unprecedented optimism in Soviet Third World policy – 'the world,' according to one of their high officials, 'was turning in our direction' (ibid.: 241).

These assessments are consistent with the observation that each superpower crisis was ultimately gauged as to its implications for *future* encounters; the assumption of continued hostility fundamentally altered assessments of present interests and priorities. Moscow knew, based on its experiences in the rivalry, that the US would challenge it in the future; given the underlying security threat tied to potential nuclear conflict, this mandated a concern over the global balance of power such that developments at the periphery – i.e. a struggle for influence in Angola – was promoted to a vital strategic interest. This interest, moreover, had as much to do with the *perceptions* of resolve and credibility that could be won or lost in Angola as with the actual, tangible stakes in play there (for example the access to naval ports or other modes of force projection).

Further evidence as to the pre-eminence of rivalry considerations is found in the *development* of the Soviet intervention over time: the steady escalation and the embrace and ultimate promotion/facilitation of Cuban involvement. This trajectory was clearly influenced by the American counter-presence:

The actions of the Soviet Union in Angola seemed to have in mind what the United States was doing. Aware that the FNLA was being supported by the US through the CIA, Moscow acted and responded directly to changes on the ground,

particularly during the escalation of violence in early 1975 (Guimaraes 2001: 175).

Noer (1993: 774), similarly, notes that Soviet aid increased dramatically as soon as Moscow became “convinced that America [was] now backing [Holden] Roberto [leader of the FNLA]” in early 1975. Having committed to Angola, in other words (largely as a consequence of China’s involvement and the prospect of potential US-China cooperation in Africa), the initiation of a US counter-intervention amplified Soviet motivation to ensure that the FNLA (the US’s preferred proxy) did not overrun the MPLA and thereby deliver Angola to the Americans. While the consequences of this outcome would not be particularly damaging in immediate terms (the US had, after all, enjoyed influence in Angola prior to 1975 through its relationship with Portugal, a NATO member), the perception that the USSR could be dissuaded and defeated by American counter-action would undermine perceptions of Soviet resolve with respect to other, future confrontations in the Third World. The long-term implications of such a loss would disadvantage the Soviets vis-à-vis the US, whom they still considered to be grave security threat. In this way, the intervention into Angola can be linked to the fundamental security concerns which drive international rivalry by appreciating the ongoing, interconnected, continuous nature of rivalry confrontations.

### *US Intervention in Angola*

The US intervention in Angola began in July 1974, when the CIA began making secret payments to the FNLA (Guimaraes 2001). Prior to this activity, the American position had been to support the Portuguese regime, largely as a consequence of the access to naval bases on the Azore islands that accompanied positive US-Portugal relations. Following the coup in Lisbon, however, and as it became clear that Portugal would relinquish control in Angola and that the Soviets were cultivating a relationship with the MPLA, the US identified Roberto’s FNLA as a potential proxy for their interests.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> There is evidence of a CIA connection to the FNLA earlier, in the 1960s, but whatever support was given was likely minimal, and tailed off in the early 1970s owing to the US’s explicit support for the

Nonetheless, aside from the CIA payments noted above, American involvement remained limited in the early phases of the war. This changed in January 1975, when a proposal for a payment of USD\$300,000 to the FNLA was approved by Secretary of State Kissinger (Davis 1978). “The US decision was a strong signal,” writes Westad (2006: 222), “that Washington was more interested in keeping the MPLA out than in preserving the peace.” The effect of the payment was to exacerbate violence by augmenting FNLA capabilities vis-à-vis the MPLA.<sup>259</sup> This involvement was ramped up again in the summer of 1975. “Intelligence on the growing Soviet involvement” led to the decision on 18 July to “help FNLA and UNITA win the Angolan civil war” (ibid.: 222).<sup>260</sup> From this point on, “the...operation became sizeable” (ibid.: 222). The plan authorized

the disbursement of \$6 million on July 18, another \$8 million on July 27, \$11 million in August, and \$7 million in November. In addition arms nominally valued at \$16 million were provided pursuant to the July 18 decision. By July 29 weapons were being flown from the United States to Zaire for the FNLA (Garthoff 1994: 564).

“The CIA effort in Angola was a logistical success,” writes Noer (1993: 776),

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Portuguese position; National Security Study Memorandum 39, published in 1970, described the US belief that the ‘whites were here to stay’ in Southern Africa, referring to the regimes in Angola, South Africa, and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) (Guimaraes 2001). See Lockwood (1974).

<sup>259</sup> As Noer (1993: 774) explains, “in impoverished Angola...\$300,000 was a major alteration of the balance of power.”

<sup>260</sup> Nathaniel Davis, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs at the time, wrote to Kissinger on 16 July that “...the situation in Angola has importantly changed: We have evidence the Soviets are introducing more, heavier and more sophisticated weapons” (quoted in Davis 1978: 116). Interestingly, the thrust of Davis’s memo was that given the scope of Soviet involvement, American counteraction was likely to fail, and recommended the US desist from further efforts to affect the situation in Angola. Kissinger reached the complete opposite conclusion, and used the intelligence on Soviet escalation to justify increased US involvement. Noer (1993: 775) describes Davis’s rationale: “Despite his involvement in U.S. covert activities in Chile, Davis saw intervention in Angola as wrong. He argued that the MPLA was militarily far superior to either of the other two groups and the United States could not bring the FNLA up to parity without massive aid and perhaps the direct use of American troops. Davis also warned that intervention might provoke South Africa to enter the struggle and Washington would be linked with the racist government in Pretoria. Finally, Davis contended that the Soviets and the Cubans would more than match any U.S. effort giving Angola the potential to escalate to a major power conflict. He urged Washington to work for a diplomatic solution in Angola based on a coalition government.” When the administration went the other way, Davis resigned in protest.

the agency rapidly mobilized a massive air and sea supply system to rush weapons to Zaire and Zambia for later transport to Angola. Within six months the CIA delivered 12 armored personnel carriers, 50 surface-to-air anti-aircraft missiles, 1000 mortars, over 50,000 rifles and machine guns, nearly 100,000 hand grenades, 60 trucks, 20 trailers, 27 boats, 1000 radios, 25 million rounds of ammunition, and assorted uniforms, spare parts, medical supplies, and foodstuffs. The agency recruited retired U.S. military officers as unofficial weapons instructors to the FNLA and made repeated attempts to hire Portuguese, French, and Brazilian mercenaries for the conflict.

Nearly USD\$50 million would eventually be dispersed in the effort to “train, equip, and transport anti-MPLA troops” (Westad 2006: 222). The purpose, Westad (2006: 222) suggests, was “to show that even after the Vietnam debacle, the United States could change events in the Third World according to its will.”

Nonetheless, the steady Soviet escalation combined with the Cuban intervention kept the MPLA largely on the front foot (Noer 1993). By November 1975, available CIA funds had been exhausted, and the Ford administration approached Congress with a request for an additional USD\$28 million (Garthoff 1994). News of the request was leaked to the *New York Times*, and subsequent articles revealed the extent of hitherto secret CIA involvement in the conflict. A public backlash ensued (support for overseas US involvement was at a low ebb given Vietnam) and a group in Congress – led by Democratic Senator Dick Clark – proposed an amendment that would block further government funding for the effort. The issue was fiercely debated in congressional hearings but, despite strident opposition from Kissinger and the administration, passed the Senate in December and was ratified by the House in January 1976. The so-called ‘Clark Amendment’ effectively ended large-scale US involvement in Angola. With American hands tied, the FNLA and UNITA were overwhelmed by the Soviet and Cuban-backed MPLA (South Africa, for its part, had pulled its intervention in January, unwilling to continue absent US involvement), and fighting was over by February.

The motivation for US intervention is generally recognized as being the US-Soviet rivalry. Historians and analysts almost universally ascribe Washington’s decision-

making (guided, primarily, by Henry Kissinger) to the desire to block and counter-act the Soviet intervention. Angola's intrinsic value – its raw materials and proximity to supply routes around the coast of Africa – were noted by the administration<sup>261</sup>, but the expressed purpose of US policy was defended by its architects, in congressional hearings and elsewhere, in terms related to American credibility and resolve vis-à-vis the Cold War (this theme is picked up in greater detail below). “Angola was not strategically essential to the United States in an objective sense,” writes Klingshoffer (1980: 78), “and acquired importance only within an adversary context.” Senator Clark, in explaining his objections to American involvement, “pointed out that American strategic and economic interests in Angola were minimal and that ideological concern was not a major factor since the United States and China were on the same side” (Klingshoffer 1980: 78).<sup>262</sup> He similarly derided what he saw as the mistaken US tendency to “counter the Soviets even if they have made a mistake or the area is not relevant to American interests” (ibid.: 79).

This perception that the US was blindly committed to opposing Soviet influence – as if by rote – was shared by other critics of the Angola intervention; it was even the source of frustration amongst certain policy officials charged with implementing the

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<sup>261</sup> For example Klingshoffer (1980: 76) notes that “a strong Soviet military position in Angola could seriously jeopardize the security of the United States and other Western powers as the flow of oil around the Cape could be obstructed by Soviet ships stationed in Angolan ports. Daniel Moynihan, US Ambassador to the United Nations, and Drew Middleton, military affairs specialist for the New York Times, both cited this potential danger.” Similarly, Robert Ellsworth, then Deputy Secretary of Defense, explained to Congress that “Angola occupies a key position on the large South African peninsula astride the major South Atlantic shipping lanes, has good ports and airfields, and a relatively advanced inland transportation system” (Committee on Foreign Relations 1976: 60). Finally, in a National Security Council meeting on Angola in June 1975, it was noted that: “The United States has important but not vital interests in Angola. American investment there is presently estimated at \$400 million, of which \$300 million is in the Gulf Oil investment in important petrol reserves in Cabinda, an exclave of Angola. Angola is rich in other minerals and agricultural potential. It has a strategic importance because of its location along the sea and air lines of communication between the United States East Coast and the Indian Ocean. Lack of U.S. access to port and airfield facilities in most of the other nearby countries heightens this strategic importance. Instability in Angola could endanger stability in neighboring states in which we have important interests, such as Zaire. Instability in Angola would also increase the resistance to change by the white southern African states of Rhodesia and South Africa. A Soviet dominated Angola could be a definite threat to its neighbors” (NSC Meeting, 6/27/1975).

<sup>262</sup> Senator Clark's opening statement to the hearings before the Subcommittee on African Affairs in which the Angola question was debated includes the argument: “There are no significant strategic interests of either the United States or the Soviet Union at stake in Angola. Administration representatives have repeatedly – and I believe accurately – assured us that the United States is not in Angola to protect either strategic, military, or economic interests. Nor has any case been made for this being an ideological conflict since Communist China and Communist Russia again find themselves on opposing sides” (Committee on Foreign Relations 1976: 2).

policy. John Stockwell, a CIA official involved in the agency's African activities at the time, would later write a scathing account of what he considered blind American adventurism in the Third World, entitled *In Search of Enemies* (1978). Stockwell specifically criticized American involvement in Angola, noting that the MPLA had not been overtly hostile toward the United States, and that CIA action had frustrated rather than facilitated peace in the country. William Colby, then-CIA director, when asked in a congressional hearing why the US was supporting the FNLA over other domestic factions (given that all were admittedly 'leftists'<sup>263</sup>), could only muster: "Because the Soviets are backing the MPLA is the simplest answer" (quoted in Garthoff 1994: 576). Senator Clark, for his part, challenged the logic of the Angola policy during hearings before the senate subcommittee on African affairs:

We must certainly ask whether it is wise policy to react to Soviet actions anywhere in the world, whether it involves our strategic or economic interests or not. If we follow this policy, it means that...we are, indeed, the policeman of the world and that our policy is not an independent one, but rather a reactive one, determined by our adversary. In my judgement, the United States would be a more credible ally if we defined our own interests and did not become bogged down in conflicts of little real importance to us.

As part of the same hearings, the young Democratic Senator Joe Biden pointedly questioned Kissinger, wondering "if South Africa had been the one to take the role which Cuba and the Soviets have taken, we would not feel as compelled to be there, would we? Or any other country but the Soviet Union?" (Committee on Foreign Relations 1976: 33). The implication being that if no tangible American interests were at stake (such that intervention would have been pursued *regardless* of who the other intervener might have been), why should the US expend resources and commit itself to Angola? Pressing the Secretary as to "what difference does it make" that the "Soviets exert influence on any

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<sup>263</sup> As the Pike Commission Report on CIA activities would later state: "The US's expressed opposition to the MPLA is puzzling in view of [CIA] Director Colby's statement to the Committee that there are scant ideological differences among the three factions [in Angola], all of whom are nationalists above all else" (quoted in Rothchild 1993: 226).

part of the world other than Europe or Japan”, Biden, clearly unpersuaded by the answers on offer (in which Kissinger refused to identify anywhere specific for fear of signalling a lack of resolve to the Soviets), quipped in parting that “in private sometime I would like to find out whether there is any place in the whole wide world where it would not make any difference” (ibid.: 47).

What is interesting about this exchange and the points of view offered by Davis, Stockwell, and others (to say nothing of the lacklustre explanation offered by Colby) is the extent to which they mirror, in many ways, the observations that produce explanations of rivalry which foreground decision-making pathologies (psychological, emotional, or otherwise). The clear implication is that US policy was beholden to some misguided principle of automatic and un-thinking opposition to any and all Soviet activity. (Posterity reinforces this observation, given that we now know, for example, that the loss of Angola did not fundamentally threaten US security; indeed, the Cold War would be won within two decades.) This is the basic criticism of the ‘domino theory’ as applied to Southeast Asia, as well. Clark et al. concentrated in particular on the mismatch between American policy and the goal of ‘solving’ the Angolan dispute. “Mr. Secretary,” he wondered during senate hearings, “is it credible for you to contend outside interference in Angola and Africa, while chastising the Congress for not allowing you to interfere as an outsider?” This was, recall, also the basic thrust of Stockwell’s objections; their misunderstanding<sup>264</sup> was focusing on the ‘local’ conflict at the expense of the global one – US policy simply was not (despite genuflections in this direction for international public consumption) about maintaining peace in Africa or helping Angolans craft an ‘African solution’ to the conflict. US policy may have therefore appeared to be callous and ill-conceived, but in reality was operating according to a logic dictated by concerns far removed from the local context (from 10,000 feet, it can be hard to see the ground).

It is unpacking this logic which is of interest here. Given that the record is quite clear regarding American’s purpose in Angola – the intervention was motivated, by most accounts, by a desire to counter-balance Soviet influence – it would be less useful to

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<sup>264</sup> With respect to divining US motivations, not necessarily as a normative matter (indeed, a primary concern with the people fighting and dying on the ground hardly reflects ‘misunderstood’ or mistaken priorities).

analyze the various alternative possibilities, be they immediate security imperatives, economic interests, or ideological affinities with a particular domestic faction.<sup>265</sup> Instead, we can better interrogate the causal mechanism – the anticipated process related to decision-making – if we examine the explanations offered by relevant decision-makers as to *why* the need to counter the Soviet Union in Angola was so acute. In congressional hearings, public statements, and in meetings and communications behind closed doors, the Ford administration expressed the rationale behind the American counter-intervention<sup>266</sup>; in other words, an explanation considerably more complex than the ‘simple’ one offered by William Colby is available. The point is not to lionize Ford, Kissinger, or any other decision-maker in the administration, or to argue that they were ‘right’ with respect to the Angolan intervention being in the national interest. Rather, by excavating the rationale on offer, we can assess whether the American decision is consistent with the explanation of Rational Rivalry; in so doing, we can demonstrate that the imperatives pushing the administration toward intervention are consistent across time and space, and that an explanation for the case is available through an understanding of these imperatives as opposed to the idiosyncrasies of specific decision-makers, the uniqueness of US grand strategy, or other factors which in some way insulate the case from the broader, systematic processes associated with international rivalry.

The underlying rationale articulated by the Ford administration for intervention in Angola was that unchecked Soviet intervention would undermine the future position of the US in its ongoing and continuous struggle with the USSR; this competition continued

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<sup>265</sup> Each of these can, in fact, be dispatched rather quickly. The potential disruption of sea lanes around the African coast (which some suggested might be a threat to oil supply chains) did not, by all accounts, endanger vital US security interests – particularly given that passage via the Suez canal was assured at the time. Nor were the natural resources of Angola considered lucrative enough to justify a significant intervention. Finally, as noted earlier, the FNLA – though ostensibly anti-Communist – was not a natural ideological ally, and in fact Kissinger and others quite clearly stated that “We do not favor any particular faction. We are not opposed to the MPLA per se, only to Cuban and Russian support and intervention.” MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION January 3, 1976, Secretary’s Meeting with Jamaican Prime Minister and Other Officials (US Department of State, Document No. C17827946.).

<sup>266</sup> Given that widespread knowledge of the involvement only came out well after the intervention had begun – and many of the public statements occurred in the context of the political debate associated with the Clark Amendment and the Congressional challenge to the policy – the available statements are often post-hoc justifications. Nonetheless, they were offered in the hope of restarting the American involvement, and there is little reason to believe that the rationale in, for example, late 1975 and early 1976 fundamentally differed from that operating in late 1974 and throughout the spring, summer and fall of 1975.

to be thought of in existential terms, meaning that preventing any such disadvantage rose to the level of an acute national security interest. In a National Security Council Meeting on 22 December 1975, for example, Secretary of State Kissinger, with respect to US-Soviet relations (the main focus of the meeting was assessing the prospects of a SALT II agreement) observed that American strategic superiority was slowly disappearing, owing to recent crises and setbacks:

Looking back at the seven years I have been here, we have never had to manage a crisis under the current difficult conditions...The situation is changed, and this will present a real strategic problem, not only in a crisis, but in the way the Soviets throw their weight around. *This is one reason why Angola is so important; we don't want to whet the Soviet appetite* (“NSC Meeting, 12/22/1975”: 12, emphasis added).

The concern here is quite clearly with future Soviet behaviour. Failure in Angola meant trouble in the offing. In a conversation in early February with journalist Robert Kleiman of the *New York Times*, Kissinger similarly stressed that losing Angola to the Soviets had set a dangerous precedent and that “if it happens again, then we are going to see massive erosion internationally.”<sup>267</sup> Around the same time, in a telephone exchange with Senator Jacob Javits, Kissinger dismissed Javits’ concern as to whether a particular Soviet action had made a change in the ‘local’ situation (i.e. on the ground in Angola); the question was beside the point, as indicated by Kissinger’s reply: “I have no sense that it has. And even if it should make a local change *my concern is that will happen in the future.*”<sup>268</sup> The sense, ultimately, was that Soviet influence in Angola had marked an important episode in the enduring conflict (indeed, that its importance was *exclusive* to its position in this continuum) and that this conflict was implicated in, and would be influenced by, developments there. In a meeting with the Guyanese Foreign Secretary on February 12,

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<sup>267</sup> TELCON, Sec. Kissinger/Robert Kleiman, 2/6/76; 11:50am (US Department of State, Document No. 0000BE34).

<sup>268</sup> TELCON, Senator Javits/Secretary Kissinger, January 31, 1976; Time: 9:44am (US Department of State, Document No. 0000D712).

Kissinger stated that “what is happening in Africa now means that we must become more active in Africa. It will become an area of great power rivalry.”

Kissinger’s appearance before the senate subcommittee discussing the Angolan issue is particularly illuminative (the full text of his opening statement is available in Appendix 6). In it, Kissinger welcomed the “opportunity to explain the global significance of what is now happening in Angola, the events that have brought us to this point, the US objectives *and the major consequences which can result*” (Committee on Foreign Relations 1976: 6). He emphasized the US imperative to “remain...both strong and determined to use its strength when required” (ibid.: 6). “Any other course,” he admonished, “will encourage the trends it seeks to accommodate; *a challenge not met today will tempt far more dangerous crises tomorrow*” (ibid: 7). Specific reference was made to US experiences and the “history of the postwar period” in which “military aggression, direct or indirect, has frequently been successfully dealt with, but never in the absence of a local balance of forces” (ibid.: 7). In this way, Kissinger tied his preferred US policy in Angola to the crises of the preceding decades, and the lessons derived from American resistance to perceived Soviet expansionism (e.g. in Berlin, where a strong West Germany was crucial to containment, or in Korea, where the communist advance south was repulsed). “And what conclusion will an unopposed superpower draw when the next opportunity for intervention beckons?” Kissinger asked, again invoking concern over future developments in the global rivalry. “The consequences” of backing down, he averred, “may well be far-reaching *and substantially more painful* than the course we have recommended” (ibid.: 8). Partly these consequences related to American credibility (both with respect to allies and those other nations who relied on US security guarantees and also vis-à-vis the Soviet Union directly and its assessment of American resolve):

The questions, then, come down to this: Do we really want the world to conclude that if the Soviet Union chooses to intervene in a massive way...the United States will not be able to muster the unity or resolve to provide even financial assistance? Can those faced with such a threat without hope of assistance from us be expected to resist? Do we want our potential adversaries to conclude that in the

event of future challenges America's internal divisions are likely to deprive us of even minimal leverage over developments of global significance? (ibid.: 12).

The importance of American credibility, however, as discussed above, was in the context of the security threat emanating from the Soviet Union – which is to say, it was not merely crucial for its own sake, but even more so given assumptions about future confrontations with the same adversary.<sup>269</sup> This is evident when Kissinger states that “what the United States does when confronted with a blatant challenge like Angola can be of great significance in shaping our future relations with the Soviet Union” (Committee on Foreign Relations 1976: 14). “A demonstration of a lack of resolve,” he concludes, “could lead the Soviets to a great miscalculation, *thereby plunging us in a major confrontation which neither of us wants*” (ibid.: 14). We see here the evolution noted earlier whereby the US no longer considered the Soviets to be rapaciously aggressive and intent on conflict (as was the case at the birth of the rivalry during the early crises in Berlin), but still posited a fundamental security concern regarding major, and possibly devastating, confrontation. This remained a powerfully-motivating possibility.

Kissinger's exchanges with the various questioners during the hearings offer additional insight. Senator Clark questioned the logic of the Angola intervention given that “no strategic interest of the United States is affected” and expressed the associated concern that such a logic might commit the US to action in each and every instance of Soviet activity worldwide. In response, Kissinger stressed that the policy did not represent a blanket commitment from the United States, pointing to other instances in Africa alone (e.g. Mozambique) in which Soviet influence was tacitly accepted. The difference was in the scope of Soviet involvement (which included the transport of thousands of Cuban combat troops) and the projection of significant military power so far from Soviet territory.<sup>270</sup> Moreover, once committed (as the US had become by the time of

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<sup>269</sup> This is, in fact, the basic point Schelling makes in *Arms and Influence*, one that many of his current critics fundamentally misunderstand (see Mitton 2015).

<sup>270</sup> Here Kissinger explains: “I would say that when Soviet military equipment appears on this massive scale and is backed by substantial military forces, that are, in effect, Soviet-controlled, then we have a problem in which any President, I would think of either party, would have to ask himself what American security interests are.” ibid., p. 26

the hearings) the implications of backing down were tied to future developments in the rivalry. Backing down, Kissinger explained,

would do two things: it would tell all countries outside of a traditional orbit that if that sort of pressure appears, they have no choice except to accommodate to the Soviets, and, second, it might tell the Soviet Union that even in areas of traditional concern of American security, our ability or willingness to react might be minimal (ibid.: 26).

The latter point is worth emphasizing. Here we see Kissinger connecting developments in Angola to “areas of traditional concern of American security” – a clear reference to ‘core’ issues within the US-Soviet rivalry (e.g. Central Europe, East Asia etc.). Now, it may be that he is merely playing on fears which he hopes will persuade reluctant senators; that is, consciously distorting and exaggerating Angola’s importance to core US security as a way of manipulating support for a preferred policy (even amongst his admirers, Kissinger’s probity is never cast as a strength<sup>271</sup>). Nonetheless, this contention is consistent with the expectation of Rational Rivalry.

These sentiments are reflected again in the above referenced exchange with Senator Biden. Pushing back against concerns that his preferred policy in Angola constitutes some kind of ‘Global Monroe Doctrine’ (in the words of Biden), Kissinger clarifies:

...the dilemma is that if we say that anything else out of Europe or Japan is open to Soviet military action, then we will be inviting that very military action. That will sooner or later create an international situation in which the overall balance is so shifted against us that it will either require the most massive exertions and turn us into a military garrison, *or lead us into some sort of confrontation*. That is not a doctrine in my view. That is a reality (Committee on Foreign Relations 1976: 45).

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<sup>271</sup> Indeed, even his testimony in the hearings in question was not entirely accurate, such as his insistence that the initial \$300,000 spent by the CIA was not used for arms (but supposedly for a TV station and other non-lethal purposes) or that no US funds were being used to recruit foreign mercenaries. As later evidence revealed, these statements were not true (see in particular the account of CIA activity in Stockwell 1978).

And later, with respect to the “perception of reality” by which “anybody conducting foreign policy will have to be judged”, Kissinger suggests that the key imperative:

...is if you take action at an early phase in the changes of equilibrium, you face a more ambiguous decision but a lesser investment. *You always have the choice of waiting while the threat becomes overwhelming.* In that case you will have gained inward assurance and *you will have to pay a much higher price* (ibid.: 47).

Here again we see the logic of Rational Rivalry at play – the prospect of future conflict is powerful enough to dictate and shape perceptions of a present crisis.

Finally, Kissinger supplied written responses to still additional questions formulated by the subcommittee. One question wondered why, given the past successes by African nationalist movements in pushing out Soviet influence on their own (Mozambique is cited as an example), the US could not simply rely on a similar outcome in Angola? Kissinger acknowledged the ‘possibility’ that such a scenario could recur, but countered that “this is no more than a hypothesis, which it is imprudent to count on to base our policy” (ibid.: 51). In other words, the *consequences* of being wrong were too severe, given that Soviet “success in this instance cannot but increase their own willingness to engage in such adventures in the future” (ibid.: 51).

One final exchange from these hearings is worth highlighting here, this time between Senator Biden and Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Ellsworth. Biden again expresses frustration that administration officials seem to be applying what he calls a ‘worst case scenario’ lens to the Angolan issue, connecting it to a broader, long-term security threat from the Soviet Union:

I assume in your job that it is your responsibility to plan for the worst case scenario. That is what you are doing for us here, is it not? You are not at all certain that it is going to happen, but you must assume for your projections that that is a possibility of happening?

In other words, since I have been a member of this committee, we, with regard to everything from Vietnam, the arms race, and everything in between in international relations, are presented with the worst case scenario all the time. We in this committee are told that we have to build based on that scenario, but seldom have we been confronted with specific information which would indicate that the probability [sic] that the worst case scenario will come to pass (ibid.: 69).

One can certainly understand his frustration; from an outside perspective, the sensible thing would likely be to formulate policy by balancing objective “probabilities” – and yet his question contains, in part, its own answer; it is indeed the “responsibility” of the administration to plan for the worst case scenario. Further, given the weight of experience over the preceding decades, and the scope of the threat associated with confrontation with the USSR, the worst case scenario is considered probable *enough* to dictate policy. Ellsworth replies that though it is difficult, the crafting of foreign and defense policy requires “looking into the future, *trying to be futurists and historians at the same time.*” Which is to say, using history (past experience – past crises, confrontations, and associated reputations) to form expectations about future behaviour and future scenarios. As the continuity with respect to American foreign policy over the period 1947-1975 demonstrates, moreover, this “responsibility” was one felt, and acted upon, by both Democratic and Republican administrations.

This tension between outsiders and top decision-making officials is captured by Nathaniel Davis’ (1978) account of the Angolan episode. As mentioned, Davis resigned as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs when the administration pursued a policy he did not believe was calibrated to realities on the ground. Davis (1978: 123-4, emphasis added) reflects on his disagreement with Kissinger over the matter:

I hope I understand the depth of his conviction that it was dangerous to permit the Soviet Union to conclude that détente placed restraints only on America, and that the Third World was fair game, unlinked to the totality of our relationship. Both during the final weeks of the Vietnam War and during the Angolan crisis of 1975, *the Secretary and the President seem to have believed that it was better to roll the*

*dice against the longest of odds than to abandon the competition against our greatest adversary.* The Secretary would freely acknowledge, I believe, that he saw Angola as part of the US-Soviet relationship, and not as an African problem.

Indeed, Davis' assessment of Kissinger's and Ford's motivations is precisely accurate; his displeasure with those motivations was the product of his own responsibilities vis-à-vis African affairs. Davis (1978: 124) himself recognizes as much when writes: "The strategic world overview of US policy is the responsibility of the President and the Secretary of State. Necessarily, my focus and argument had to be on a different level. The question I was principally addressing in my memos to the Secretary was whether covert intervention in Angola could work." Davis' remit was the local, regional issue – the specifics and outcomes of the civil war itself and its ramifications for regional politics in Southern Africa; the administration, on the other hand, was concerned with the totality of US foreign and defense policy. This disconnect resulted in strikingly different policy preferences which help clarify, in the final analysis, the logic according to which the latter is formulated.

The passing of the Clark Amendment therefore represents a significant episode in the history of US foreign policy, insofar as the discretion of the executive was challenged and curtailed by congressional action. The reaction from the administration was predictably hostile, and their statements to this effect are helpful in that they offer further insight into the rationale according to which they had justified counter-intervention into Angola in the first place. To be forced to abandon Angola to the Soviets was, according to President Ford, "an abdication of responsibility" that would portend "the gravest consequences for the long term position of the United States" (quoted in Gaddis 2005: 179). Elsewhere, he was more concise, stating simply that Congress lacked "guts" (quoted in Noer 1993: 780). Kissinger himself was irate, calling it a "national disgrace" and opining that

Congress is now inflicting a defeat on the United States against the executive branch's better judgment. There must be something wrong with all the

Congressmen who spend 10 minutes a day of these problems [sic]. It isn't a partisan matter either, this affects the whole posture of the United States.<sup>272</sup>

He expressed the belief that US credibility had been severely damaged, and that it might have consequences at the core of the US-Soviet rivalry:

We are going to lose big. The President says to the Chinese that we're going to stand firm in Angola and two weeks later we get out...The Department leaks that we're worried about a [Soviet] naval base and says it [Angola] is an exaggeration or aberration of Kissinger's. *I don't care about the oil or the base but I do care about the African reaction when they see the Soviets pull it off and we don't do anything. If the Europeans then say to themselves if they can't hold Luanda, how can they defend Europe?* The Chinese will say we're a country that was run out of Indochina for 50,000 men and is now being run out of Angola for less than \$50 million (quoted in Westad 2006: 245, emphasis added).

In a speech in March 1976, he reiterated these themes, arguing that “if adventurism is allowed to succeed in local crises, an ominous precedent of wider consequences is set” (quoted in Garthoff 1994: 581). These statements reflect the general tenor of the executive's objection to the Clark Amendment – that it had grievously endangered the long-term security of the United States not only by forcing the US out of Angola but also by circumscribing the freedom of action necessary to respond fluidly and decisively to Soviet action (we can recall here the parameters of Kennan's original formulation of containment, with US responses at “constantly shifting geographical and political points”). Even more, this limit on American action was broadcast publicly to the Soviets and the rest of the world. It was a blow, in this regard, to US credibility – something that, as discussed above, was considered in the vital US interest to protect.

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<sup>272</sup> TELCON, Congressman Mahon/Secretary Kissinger, January 14, 1976; Time: 4:49pm (US Department of State, Document No. 0000D705).

Subsequent assessments of Soviet intentions reflected these anxieties. As the October 1976 National Intelligence Estimate on “Soviet Policy in the Third World” concluded:

The Soviets continue to regard insurgencies as instruments to advance their position, and will support such groups as the PLO and guerilla movements in southern Africa. We believe that Moscow will probably continue to act more boldly than in years past in support of liberation movements. Moscow’s confidence has been bolstered by its current perception of Western disinclination to counter Soviet activities in the Third World, its tested experience in supporting Cuban forces in Africa, and its improved military capabilities...Soviet-Cuban cooperation in supporting a national liberation movement [in Angola] may be repeated [elsewhere] if suitable opportunities arise (“NIE 11-10-76,” p. 3).

Even with its hands effectively tied, the Ford administration did attempt to limit further Soviet gains in Africa as much as possible.<sup>273</sup> Interestingly, the subsequent Carter administration also became involved in Africa, countering Soviet influence in the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. Later, the Reagan administration re-started American involvement in Angola. While it is obviously beyond the present scope to address the decision-making processes at work in these other cases, it is again instructive that a basic continuity appears to obtain across still additional Democratic and Republican administrations.

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<sup>273</sup> Kissinger for example told the NSC in April 1976 that “We must keep our eye on the strategic concepts, our Africa policy is one thing but the surrogate Soviet action could come through North Viet Nam as well as Cuba. If this principle is accepted, it will be very dangerous for us. In time, there will be a real problem if the Cuban presence remains in Africa. In the period 1970-73 we successfully frustrated the Soviets in the Middle East so the Arabs finally had to turn towards us. We will try to identify with the aspirations of the black nations in Africa, but not in response to Cuban pressure.” (“NSC Meeting, 4/7/1976”).

## **Evaluating the Rational Rivalry Explanation**

I conclude the chapter by offering a general evaluation of Soviet and American intervention into Angola in the context of Rational Rivalry. Once again, this effort is facilitated through juxtaposition with the preceding cases examined in the dissertation – India and Pakistan in Afghanistan, and Israel and Syria in Lebanon. How do the findings of the US-Soviet case compare with those of the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria cases? What do the similarities and differences say about the effects of rivalry on the decision to intervene in a civil conflict? What dynamics are potentially relevant with respect to the development of the Rational Rivalry explanation for civil war intervention? How compelling is this explanation, ultimately, for Soviet and American intervention into Angola in 1975?

As mentioned at the outset of the chapter, the US-Soviet rivalry possessed several features which make it distinct from the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalries. First and most fundamentally, it was a global rivalry between two superpowers, rather than a regional rivalry between two middle power states. Second, it was a rivalry between two states with nuclear capabilities (save a very limited timeframe at its outset), distinguishing it from the asymmetric nuclear rivalry between Israel and Syria, but matching the (rough) nuclear balance between India and Pakistan (at least at the time that the interventions of interest occurred). The enabling, or animating, condition between the US and Soviets was ideological (the perceived incompatibility between opposing modes of political and economic organization) rather than ethnic/religious. Unlike the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria rivalries, no direct large-scale conflict occurred between the US and USSR; instead, the crises and confrontations that occurred prior to the civil conflict intervention of interest were limited, often proxy conflicts, in which the states jockeyed for influence and position in various places around the globe (though tense direct stand-offs did occur, primarily in Central Europe). Finally, unlike the other two cases in which the civil conflict in question was proximate, the intervention being examined in the US-Soviet case occurred at far remove from the territory of either rival.

These differences present both challenges and opportunities for theory development. With respect to the former, the discrepancies represent potential confounding circumstances such that the outcome of interest – the decision to intervene

in a civil conflict – in the US-Soviet case is driven by factors which are present in that relationship but absent in the other rivalries. Which is to say, the circumstances influencing the specific decision(s) to intervene in Angola might not be comparable to the circumstances in the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria cases (one could argue, for example, that equating the decisions regarding Angola to those taken vis-à-vis Afghanistan and/or Lebanon is mistaken; these decisions are only superficially similar, grouped together according to a somewhat arbitrary concept of ‘civil conflict intervention’, and not reflective of any underlying reality, given the differences described above: relative geographic proximity of the conflict to the interveners, ideological vs. ethnic/religious motivations, etc.). Ultimately, this possibility cannot be definitively overcome, but our *confidence* that these differences are not operating in this way can be increased through logic and evidence. If the decision-making process, and accompanying rationale, can be shown to be consistent and similar across the cases *despite* these differences, it bolsters our confidence that the differences in characteristics noted above are not driving the outcome of interest.

Indeed, if it can be shown that the process leading to intervention is fundamentally consistent across cases which are dissimilar in significant respects, this is solid evidence in support of the preferred explanation. It also increases the significance of that explanation by suggesting that it scales to a much larger set of potential cases (perhaps even to *all* instances of rivalry intervention as opposed to just a bounded subset). Whereas the theoretical leverage afforded by the move from the India-Pakistan case to the Israel-Syria case was minimal (while nonetheless important, representing a step beyond a single case), the move to the US-Soviet case is much larger precisely because of the differences described above. It increases our confidence that the observations common to the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria cases were not confounded by the shared characteristics that laid outside the parameters of the proposed theoretical explanation. Ultimately, it suggests that a common dynamic of ‘rivalry’ links all three relationships, and that the influence of this dynamic results in behaviour which is consistent across them. Examining US and Soviet intervention into Angola is therefore useful as a pathway case – again, not as a ‘most-difficult’ or ‘least-likely’ case (most observers linked the US and Soviet decisions to intervene to the broader international relationship) but to help

establish the actual process – the path – that *leads* from rivalry to intervention. Combined with the other cases examined in previous chapters, moreover, it demonstrates the extent to which this pathway looks similar even as it traverses – metaphorically speaking – vastly different landscapes. Global as opposed to regional rivals; distant as opposed to proximate civil conflict; ideological as opposed to ethnic/religious; no direct as opposed to repeated direct conflict – despite all of these differences, similar dynamics (rivalry) led to similar outcomes (off-setting civil war intervention).

Based on the observations in this chapter, what does this dynamic look like? We saw, once again, a political shock precede the birth of the rivalry – this time World War II and the dramatic reshaping of the international order into a bipolar distribution with power concentrated in the hands of the US and the USSR. Similarly, we saw a dispute over the dispensation of a particular piece of territory – Berlin – and the ensuing “militarization” of the relationship. Early perceptions were animated by the belief that the other side was inherently hostile though, importantly, such beliefs only became entrenched (as expressed in the Novikov and Kennan telegrams) following the initial disputes. The scope of the threat was considered, by both states, to be existential – this perception was amplified by the presence of nuclear weapons, even as the logic of nuclear deterrence appeared to militate against direct conflict itself. Gradually, the geographical scope of the rivalry extended outward, from Central Europe to East Asia (and Germany to Korea) to the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and then the rest of the Third World. Crucially, each subsequent crisis was linked in the minds of leaders to the broader relationship. There was a clear belief on both sides that the Cold War conflict was ongoing, continuous, and certain to extend into the future. Leaders in Washington and Moscow remained concerned with long-term security, and considered particular crises in this context. Even as the specifics of each rivalry differs, therefore, we see a consistency in the birth, development, and perceptions within all three relationships.

With respect to the decision to intervene in an ongoing civil war, moreover, we see the common influence of these rivalry dynamics. For the US and Soviets, the conflict in Angola carried minimal direct and immediate security, economic, or ideological interest. The Soviets had been developing a more proactive African policy – partly as a result of competition for influence with China – and did profess a desire to support

Marxist revolutionary movements in the Third World; yet the cultivation of such groups was itself motivated by the larger ideological struggle with the US (and therefore implicated in the security competition of rivalry); concern over Chinese gains, moreover, was also tied to the possibility of Sino-US collaboration against the USSR. Thus, the initial support for the MPLA was apparently influenced by rivalry concerns, though this argument is even stronger with respect to subsequent Soviet escalation, which came as a clear counter-reaction to the US intervention. The American move, even more so, can be clearly linked to rivalry considerations. The logic expressed by the Ford administration – and in particular Secretary of State Henry Kissinger – is entirely consistent with the expectations of Rational Rivalry: concern for the future, predicated on the past, driving present behaviour. The rational calculus for intervention was therefore reordered by rivalry dynamics; a decision that was roundly criticized – involvement in a distant African nation in which no vital US interests were immediately at stake – is made explicable absent reference to emotional, psychological, or other first-image variables.

A final aspect of the US-Soviet case warranting discussion – one that does seem to distinguish it in some ways from the India-Pakistan and Israel-Syria cases – is the centrality of the concept of ‘credibility’ in Cold War calculations. While the credibility of coercive (deterrent and compellent) threats was obviously still relevant in the interactions between Islamabad and New Delhi, and Jerusalem and Damascus, the *protection of credibility as an end onto itself* (that is, as a core vital interest) was not as pronounced in those relationships as it appeared to be between Washington and Moscow. As we’ve seen across all three cases, reputations for behaviour play a role in shaping rivalry perceptions – in terms of the specific tactics that are employed (for example Pakistan’s repeated use of militant Islamist proxies), the comparative resolve and credibility between crises (as seen between Berlin and Cuba in the US-Soviet rivalry), and the general dispositions that are displayed (like the Syrian perception that Israel is prone to seize and occupy territory).<sup>274</sup> All of these factors constitute important information in an environment in which complete information (and therefore perfectly ‘accurate’ knowledge) is impossible to obtain. In the US-Soviet rivalry, however, credibility (of which reputation forms a

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<sup>274</sup> These dimensions are basically reflective of the specific vs. general reputation distinction discussed in Chapter 2.

crucial component) became one of, if not the, fundamental stakes; the Angola crisis itself was considered primarily in terms of its potential reputational consequences. One possible explanation for this dynamic is the combination of nuclear deterrence with global rivalry. In such a context, the prospect of direct conflict is circumscribed, while the competition plays out across an extended domain – that is, in various corners of the globe – *in which the common link is the identity of the two competitors*. Given that the dynamics of rivalry connect all of these disputes together, each state becomes concerned that what happens in one crisis will have consequences elsewhere; knowing that the adversary will be the same, reputation and credibility become important tools for success in future encounters. This might explain why protecting credibility became such a vital concern during the Cold War.

## CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

This dissertation argues that international rivalry causes states to intervene in civil conflicts. The decision is basically defensive; given a history of conflict, states form perceptions about their rivals (assign specific and dispositional reputations) which generate the expectation that future conflict is likely. Rivalry reputation essentially ‘solves’ the security dilemma, affording high certainty as to malign intentions. When confronted with the decision about civil conflict intervention (action or non-action) these perceptions translate into concern about long-term security. The condition of international anarchy, the requirement of self-help, and the (fundamental and logically primary) goal of security/survival mean these concerns are powerfully motivating. States worry that unchecked intervention by a rival may offer an advantage to that rival, by altering the status quo or in some other way shifting the general balance of power in the relationship. Intervention is seen as necessary to forestall these consequences.

In Chapters 2-4, I situated this argument in a range of academic literature (on interventions, rivalry, perceptions, and reputations), stated my theoretical argument, derived a causal mechanism linking rivalry to intervention, and outlined my research methodology. Over the subsequent five chapters (5-9), I presented and analyzed empirical evidence pertaining to three cases of rivalry intervention: India-Pakistan (Afghanistan), Israel-Syria (Lebanon), and US-Soviet (Angola). In this concluding chapter, I summarize my findings, assess their implications for the academic literature, address limitations of the research, offer suggestions for future work, and conclude with a discussion of policy implications.

### **Summary of Findings**

The focus of the three cases studies at the heart of this dissertation was the decision-making process of state leaders and policy-makers with respect to civil conflict intervention. It was in this process that the proposed causal mechanism was said to operate – the argument being that decision-makers would be propelled by their long-term security concerns vis-à-vis an international rival in the context of anticipated future

conflict. In order to assess this argument I gathered a range of evidence, including classified memoranda, meeting transcripts, telephone transcripts, government reports, diplomatic cables, official government releases, private statements, public statements, contemporary reporting, published interviews, memoirs of political leaders, and other direct evidence of the thought-process, rationale, and justifications (both contemporary and post-hoc) of decision-makers regarding intervention. I additionally examined a significant body of secondary historical work on each of the cases, both to inform the discussion of the history and development of each rivalry in the decades preceding intervention, and to offer additional insight into the interventions themselves. Finally, I considered indirect evidence pertaining to the timing, sequence, development, and scope of each intervention in order to logically assess what they revealed about the decision-making process, and the priorities and justifications for intervention that were implied.

In lieu of summarizing the specific conclusions relating to each individual case, I focus here on the broader, comparative takeaways available through an assessment of the totality of the evidence. In general terms, the cases indicate that rivalry concerns were dominant in the minds of decision-makers. Interventions were not the product of specific desires of leaders regarding particular outcomes related to the civil conflicts into which they occurred, or some easily identifiable balance of power and interests that produced a tipping point that caused specific interventions. The ‘victory’ of the domestic faction (whether government or rebel) that a state supported was ancillary to the broader goal of off-setting their rivals interests and influence. While the choice of who to support was sometimes consistent with explanations based on affective linkage – as when the explicitly Muslim government of Pakistan supported the Islamist Taliban, or the USSR supported the avowedly Marxist MPLA – at other times they were not – as when Syria intervened directly on behalf of the Christian-dominated Lebanese government or the US supported the broadly leftist FNLA. All choices, however, were logically consistent with the proposition that intervention was predicated on rivalry considerations. Which is to say, the choice of which domestic faction to support was determined by that faction’s ability to service the intervener’s broader aims regarding influence vis-à-vis their rival. India supported the post-2001 Afghan government because it represented an anti-Taliban, anti-Pakistan coalition (formed as it was by many former Northern Alliance members);

Pakistan supported the Taliban precisely because it took aim at this Indian-influenced regime. Likewise in Lebanon, Syria oscillated between supporting Christian and Muslim forces depending on which, at any given time, they believed provided a means to forestall Israeli influence and control in the country. The Israelis, for their part, made it clear that while sympathetic to the Christian cause, they would not risk entanglement solely to support them in the fight; support was offered instrumentally for the purposes of pushing back against the Syria-controlled Muslim/PLO forces. In Angola, the US selected the FNLA because, as was bluntly stated at the time, “the Soviets are backing the MPLA.” We see across the cases, therefore, that international considerations trumped intrinsic interests in the outcome of the civil conflicts themselves.

The key question, of course, is what was the nature of these international considerations? Which is to say, what was the underlying strategic rationale which informed the decision to intervene? Here again the cases offer general support for the theory of rivalry intervention that is advanced. Decision-makers on both sides justified their interventions primarily in *defensive* terms. India, having experienced an extended period of Pakistani control in Afghanistan via the Taliban government in the 1990s, saw an opportunity to forestall Pakistan’s exploitation of Islamic militancy. Islamabad had long employed this tactic to attack and bleed India, primarily in Kashmir, and Pakistani influence (if not control) of Afghan territory had been helpful in these efforts. Pakistan saw potential Indian influence in Afghanistan as extremely threatening; the possibility of a two-front attack endangered Pakistan’s very survival. More generally, the dispensation of Afghanistan was viewed primarily in military terms vis-à-vis potential future war with India (as in the concept of ‘strategic depth’). For both Israel and Syria, Lebanese territory was directly implicated in military planning; the possibility of an Israeli swing through the Beka Valley was at the forefront of Damascus’ concerns, while the possibility of an additional front in a future Arab-Israeli war (which could also include Iraq and Jordan) focused Israeli concerns on Southern Lebanon. Even the US and Soviet interventions into distant Angola were coloured by security anxieties. Moscow saw rising Chinese influence in Southern Africa as a threat, both in its own right and in the context of potential US-China cooperation. Washington, for its part, considered its credibility to be at stake in Angola, the loss of which would have ramifications for future Soviet adventurism in the

Third World, and could ultimately invite crisis at the heart of the rivalry in Central Europe. In each instance, therefore, states invoked defensive justifications for intervention, wary of the consequences of non-action for their long-term security.

In so doing, states were not operating according to a strict, conventional cost-benefit analysis of their immediate security and material interests. (What might be considered the generic base-line for foreign policy analysis). Pakistan, for example, has severely undermined its immediate security by creating conditions for domestic Islamist groups to challenge the Pakistani state; and yet, rather than fundamentally adjust course with respect to Afghanistan, and re-orient its military forces away from conventional conflict with India to a counter-insurgent posture in the tribal areas along the Afghan border, Islamabad maintained its support for the Taliban insurgency, and kept its military geared toward India. Similarly, the clear and obvious economic benefits of a stable Afghanistan have been insufficient to generate adjustment. In Lebanon, Israel refused to allow Syrian forces to move into the South in order to quell the PLO; the immediate and ongoing danger of terrorist attacks was acceptable as compared to the mere presence – and potential long-term threat – of Syrian forces along the Israeli border (in effect, Israel created a security umbrella for a militant group bent on its destruction). Syria, likewise, maintained a defensive position in the Bekaa Valley, at great cost, when Israel forces moved into Lebanon in 1982, rather than retreat to Syrian territory. The basic logic appeared to be that defending Lebanese territory was akin to defending Syrian territory, because losing the former would allow Israel to threaten the latter; an advantage, Damascus believed, the Israelis would inevitably seize. Angola carried no significant material or immediate strategic (e.g. force projection) interest for either the US or the USSR, yet both invested significant resources there. That conventional cost-benefit calculations appear violated is important to recognize because several of the interventions – in particular Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan and US involvement in Angola – have been explicitly discussed in terms of their purported ‘irrationality’. They are ‘counterproductive’, or ‘against’ the state’s ‘own interests’, products of distorted, rather than deliberative, decision-making.

Such assessments reveal central elements of psychological and cognitive explanations that are found in the approach I call Pathological Rivalry. In this view, states

in rivalry operate according to a ‘negative-affect’ calculus; rather than operate according to the above articulated ‘baseline’ (in which a cost-benefit calculus is employed to maximize gain) states take as their primary interest inflicting damage, or cost, on their opponent. Harm toward a rival is pursued even if it brings heavy costs; Pakistan, for example, attacks Indian interests in Afghanistan, and sacrifices its security and material interests to do so, due to its negative-affect (essentially, hatred) toward India. The expectations of the Pathological Rivalry approach suggest that rivalry interventions might be the product of these psychological and emotional distortions. Although this explanation is not subjected to rigorous testing (for the reasons articulated in Chapter 4), the case studies do not lend it much support even in passing. The available evidence indicates that leaders and policymakers typically offered justifications for their decisions and proceeded deliberately rather than capriciously. Of course, that reasoned justifications were offered does not preclude the possibility that underlying psychological biases associated with negative-affect were operative; decision-makers might be expected to couch their policies in national-interest terms (it is unlikely, for example, that a leader would explicitly say that a policy was pursued simply to harm another state irrespective of the costs). Without direct access to the thought-processes of the relevant individuals, we can only assess the plausibility of competing explanations based on what they communicated to others and the availability of compelling evidence that there are other, more rationalist causal mechanisms and motivations at play.

This leads to a second, more serious challenge to the proposed Rational Rivalry explanation; not that decision-making was predicated on blanket and naked hostility, but rather that the deliberative assessment of national interest was itself skewed by psychological/emotional biases fostered by decades of conflict and confrontation. In this formulation, leaders and policymakers over-weighted the prospect of future conflict with a rival, and conducted interventions to off-set a rivals’ interests, because of individual-level manifestations of bias. From an objective perspective, individual decision-makers are ‘paranoid’ about their rival, seeing evidence of hostile intentions where they don’t actually exist, interpreting all moves by the other side – even outwardly salutary ones – as duplicitous and deceitful, and generally discounting any information that cuts against the perception that the other side is a committed enemy. In many ways, this picture looks

very much like that offered by the Rational Rivalry explanation. And indeed, much of the evidence in the case studies could plausibly be interpreted in this direction. The key in distinguishing the two, however, is assessing the *origin* of the relevant perceptions. Answering this question is vitally important because depending on which level is emphasized – the individual (first-image) or structural (third-image) – the appropriate policy prescriptions will vary (as mentioned in Chapter 3, an explanation predicated on the individual-level can only end there with respect to its solutions). It is also a fundamental question with respect to theorizing about state behaviour in IR.

The Rational Rivalry explanation situates the origins of rival perceptions (and the behaviours, such as intervention, which result from them) at the level of the international relationship itself. Specifically, the history of the interactions between the two states, which generates reasonable expectations about future conflict and mandates defensive behaviour for security seekers. In each of the case studies, I offer overviews of these conflict histories, noting the cumulative effect of confrontations over time not in *psychological* terms but rather in *informational* terms vis-à-vis a broadly rational actor. We see the informational effects of past experiences in both specific and general (dispositional) references to past behaviour between rivals – whether it be specific tactics that were employed in the past, or specific actions that were taken (e.g. India’s role in the separation of Bangladesh or Israel’s seizure of the Golan Heights). As rivals assessed their security environment moving forward, these reputations were crucial for shaping expectations. Far from *discounting* relevant information (as the Pathological Rivalry approach would suggest) rivals appeared to credit their own experiences and the past behaviour of their opponent in their calculations, a move that the broader literature on reputations has established takes place in other situations (for example in coercive diplomatic encounters). As in Schelling’s ‘continuous negotiations’, reputations become important. Particularly in the context of incomplete information (and the well-known logical reasons to discount so-called ‘cheap talk’) these rivalry reputations are crucial for figuring out what a state is likely to do in the future.

For India, Pakistan was likely to continue to use Islamist militants to target the Indian state. For Pakistan, India was likely to exploit influence in Afghanistan to encircle and undermine Pakistani security, and perhaps even dismember the Pakistani state (even

if this latter scenario was/is *unlikely* given ‘actual’ Indian intentions and the effects of nuclear deterrence, the *consequences of being wrong* were and are too significant for Islamabad to simply acquiesce to India’s presence). For Syria in 1975, Israel was likely to attack again in the not too-distant future, perhaps across the Beka Valley. Israel had similar perceptions about Syrian intentions, believing they were at minimum keen to regain the Golan, more broadly wanted the destruction of Israel, and might open up a multiple front war in order to achieve these goals. The Soviets continued to believe that the US was the ‘main adversary’ in 1975, and that American hostility was forestalled largely through deterrence and strategic parity. Likewise for the US, which similarly believed that Soviet advances in the Third World were tied to a continued expansionist Soviet agenda and potential confrontation down the road. We see across all three case studies, therefore, that expectations regarding future conflict were high, and largely predicated on perceptions about one’s rival derived from past behaviour within the relationship. Particularly when combined with the overriding concern for security and survival – existential considerations were invoked by multiple decision-makers – the push for defensively-oriented balancing interventions was strong.

It is possible, as stated in Chapter 3, that certain psychological biases constitute the micro-foundations of a structural theory – that ‘paranoia’ at the level of individual decision-makers is prudence at the level of the state – but, if so, it is nonetheless important to recognize that the broader international explanation is logically prior to (and formative of) first-image explanations. There are important implications for how one might address the perceptions that drive destabilizing – and potentially unnecessary – policies (recall that dual-sided or balancing interventions have been demonstrated to prolong and exacerbate civil conflicts). *As argued, a psychological explanation risks situating solutions solely at the psychological level.* In the instance of rivalry, for example, one might stress the need to *overcome* psychological biases through the provision of *more* information; decision-makers might be shown that their thought-processes are in error and that a more ‘objective’ assessment of the situation shows no reason to fear or plan for future confrontation with a rival. I am skeptical that such attempts would be successful (in the same way I am skeptical that if a statistician had explained to Dick Cheney that basing policy on a 1% chance of a nuclear al-Qaeda attack

was a waste of limited resources given relevant probabilities, America's response to the 9/11 attacks would have fundamentally changed). Conversely, if one begins with the recognition that rivals' fears are predicated on largely inescapable consequences of the international environment and the dynamics of their relationship with one another, one might be able to mitigate those fears by addressing their source. I return to this point in the discussion of the policy implications of this dissertation below. The salient point, for now, is that it matters whether one situates the explanation for rivalry behaviour at one level of analysis over another. The evidence presented in the case studies suggests that the best way to understand why rivals intervened when and where they did is by thinking about the pressures and imperatives states faced, and by thinking of them as broadly rational actors reacting to this situation, not by focusing on the biases that are produced between the ears of individual leaders and decision-makers. Rivalry is tragic, not ironic.

### **Implications for the Literature**

In Chapter 2, I surveyed a range of literatures relevant to the puzzle, argument and theoretical implications of this dissertation. I now briefly revisit each of these bodies of work to assess how the research findings inform, advance and contribute to their development.

With respect to the study of the nexus between inter- and intrastate conflict, the findings of this dissertation contribute to our understanding of the way in which international factors alter the dynamics of civil conflict. The literature has established that outside interventions often contribute to the length and intensity of violence in civil conflicts and civil wars. Understanding how and why outside interventions occur is therefore necessary for addressing these damaging situations. Much extant work has focused on the characteristics of civil conflicts which invite or trigger intervention; yet it has also been noted that such interventions might occur for reasons "wholly unrelated to the civil war itself" (Balch-Lindsay and Enterline 2000: 620). This dissertation demonstrates that certain third-party interveners conduct interventions as an extension of international conflict and confrontation; the circumstances of civil conflicts present challenges and opportunities for international relationships external to the country

experiencing civil violence. These countries essentially become theatres for international conflict and, as the old Kikuyu proverb avers, “when elephants fight it is the grass that suffers.” The goals and priorities of rival interveners tend toward stalemate as opposed to resolution, as each state is preoccupied with forestalling the interests of the other intervener, rather than advancing the interests of their preferred proxy.

By unpacking and explaining these motivations, the dissertation similarly advances the academic study of intervention by offering a causal explanation of an established correlation. Balancing interventions are known to be more likely if one side was supported by a state engaged in rivalry (Findley and Teo 2006). The findings of this study demonstrate how and why this is the case, by offering an explanation which links state perceptions in rivalry to a perceived need to off-set, or balance, against a rival’s influence.

In this way, the dissertation offers an important contribution to the study of rivalry itself. Based on the recognition that conflicts between states are linked over time, rivalry scholars have demonstrated that certain international relationships operate differently than others – repeated conflict alters how states perceive and behave toward one another. From a quantitative point of view, these dyads account for a disproportionate amount of international conflict. Yet theoretical understandings of internal rivalry dynamics – how states engaged in rivalry behave, and what conditions/constraints the relationship places on the states involved – have suffered from imprecision and/or over-determination. Psychological and emotional factors have blended with the consequences of strategic interaction. In general, rivalries have been characterized as deviations from conventional, rational decision-making. The literature has emphasized enmity, hatred and hostility – often by invoking parallels or analogies with fraught interpersonal relationships between individuals. I have argued that rivalry is best understood as a distinctly international phenomenon between states (as in the Schmittian friend/enemy distinction vis-à-vis his ‘concept of the political’). This focus shifts the understanding of rivalry dynamics to the strategic interaction of states as broadly rational actors. Decision-making does indeed deviate from a conventionally rational baseline, but for reasons that are explicable by reference to the ongoing nature of such relationships under conditions of incomplete information and international anarchy. Rivalry approximates what Schelling termed a

‘continuous negotiation’, in which the same two actors expect to confront one another again moving forward. Behaviour in the present is the product of past interactions and these expectations regarding the future. In the summary of research findings above, I detail how the evidence of this dissertation supports this conceptualization, and how it contrasts with the psychological/emotional alternative I call Pathological Rivalry.

The arguments and findings I present are far from the final word on such considerations; as I note earlier, the potential interrelation of the strategic/structural factors I highlight with the micro-foundational observations of cognitive psychology deserve further exploration (albeit in a more theoretically precise way than the lumping together that has hitherto occurred). Nonetheless, the dissertation offers a novel and unique conceptualization of rivalry. It also expands the empirical focus of rivalry research by focussing on behaviour other than direct war and conflict. Intuitively, if rivalry is recognized as a condition that obtains over time, it should have implications for state behaviour in the interregnum between direct crises. I establish that behaviour such as civil conflict intervention is explicable through an application of the rivalry lens. This is important because it folds rivalry into the theoretical explanation itself, rather than treating it merely as an exogenously-defined variable or as a case selection mechanism.

The thrust of my explanation for rivalry intervention involves the perceptions that rivals have of one another. This means that the argument abuts debates regarding the perception of intentions between states more generally. Though I avoid making definitive claims by maintaining a focus within a proscribed domain, the findings do suggest a practical approach to unpacking the larger debate. I argue that just as states have been categorized according to material power, regime type, etc., so too can they be classified according to their *relationships* vis-à-vis one another. As Arnold Wolfers posited decades ago, dyads exist along a continuum between extreme enmity and extreme amity. When thinking about how states perceive one another’s intentions, therefore, it may be useful to incorporate, at a theoretical level, what type of relationship the two states have with one another. Much of the literature on intentions specifies that assessing ‘adversaries’ is particularly important, but do not fold the implications of *being* adversaries into the analysis in an explicit way. As I have demonstrated, the *condition* of rivalry appears to have independent effects on how states perceive one another’s intentions. Instead of

making general claims about how all states perceive intentions, scholars could truncate their arguments to apply to specific types of relationships (such a move would be consistent with the overall trend toward mid-level theorizing and away from grand, paradigmatic theory). Intuitively, this would also make sense with regards to relationships which are *not* antagonistic (i.e. closer to extreme amity on Wolfers' continuum). It is clear, for example, that the assessment of intentions operates differently between Canada and the US than it does between India and Pakistan. There is some potential affinity to dyadic explanations of the democratic peace in this regard, in which expectations and perceptions between democracies operate differently as compared to other types of international relationships.

Finally, the argument and findings of this dissertation contribute to the debate regarding the relevance of reputations in international relations. The categories of specific and general reputation are supplemented by the concept of rivalry reputation, which emphasizes the import of past behaviour and experience within ongoing hostile relationships. Rivals use past actions as information regarding the likelihood of both specific tactics as well as general dispositions and intentions. Even more, states come to see their own reputations as an important interest vis-à-vis their rival, knowing that present behaviour may impact future crises and confrontations. If rivalry is akin to continuous negotiation, this helps to explain Schelling's emphasis on reputation in *Arms and Influence* (2008 [1966]), a book very specifically about US-Soviet relations; many of his critics (Hopf 1994; Mercer 1997; Press 2005) have incorrectly argued that Schelling's treatment of reputations is too broad and uncorroborated by empirical evidence (Mitton 2015). Yet as a conceptualization of reputation's relevance under certain conditions, his logic is consistent with the argument and evidence presented in this dissertation. These findings therefore underscore an argument the author has made elsewhere (Harvey and Mitton 2017): that the treatment of reputations in IR must move beyond a simplistic either/or (either they matter entirely or not at all) toward more nuanced questions of when, how, and why they matter in certain contexts and under certain conditions.

## Limitations

While the evidence presented constitutes a solid basis for positing a common process linking rivalry to intervention, there are nonetheless limitations to the research that require acknowledgment. The first and most fundamental has to do with research methodology. As discussed in Chapter 4, the use of qualitative historical case studies is appropriate for the exploration of causal mechanisms. Multiple case studies augment confidence in the proposed causal explanation. Yet a small-n research design, in which only a few cases are examined, does not provide an adequate basis for robust generalizable claims. Instead, they can provide a necessary foundation for moving forward with additional research on the presumption that a real process – or causal pathway – has been clearly although tentatively identified. This must be the limit to the claims deriving from the present study.

Similarly, case selection at the preliminary – theory development – stage of a broader research agenda concentrates on types of cases in which the proposed causal mechanism is present. This means selecting so-called pathway cases where  $X=1$  and  $Y=1$ , as is done in this dissertation. Yet, as Goertz (2017) convincingly explains, there are other types of cases, or configurations of  $X$  and  $Y$ , which are important if causal mechanism explanations are to be convincing in the long-term. In particular, cases where  $X=1$  and  $Y=0$  are crucial for establishing appropriate scope conditions to the theory. These are cases where the causal mechanism might be assumed to operate (given the presence of  $X$ ) but where the missing outcome of interest ( $Y$ ) indicates that it does not. In terms of the present argument, this would mean cases in which rivalry ( $X$ ) is present but dual-sided intervention ( $Y$ ) is absent (assuming the presence of an ongoing civil conflict, and therefore a minimal opportunity for intervention; a condition which applies to all  $X/Y$  configurations of interest). No such cases were examined in the present dissertation, meaning the explanation offered lacks clearly specified scope conditions as to when and how the causal mechanism linking rivalry to intervention should be expected to operate. Each successive case examined in this dissertation *implicitly* extends the likely scope conditions, demonstrating first that the mechanism identified in the India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) case appeared also in the similar circumstances of the Israel-Syria (Lebanon) case, and subsequently in the quite different circumstances of the US-Soviet

(Angola) case. Additional work, however, including the examination of X=1 Y=0 cases, would help to more precisely establish these conditions, and thoroughly explore the causal claims regarding the operation of the proposed causal mechanism (see the section on future research below).

Goertz (2017) also discusses the relevance of X=0 Y=1 cases.<sup>275</sup> This configuration points to potential equifinality, or multiple causal paths to the outcome of interest. The argument made in this dissertation is explicitly compatible with equifinality, meaning the lack of X=0 Y=1 cases is not a problem for the proposed explanation and therefore not a consideration for case selection purposes. Yet such cases are important to keep in mind in terms of specifying the contribution the research makes; I have focused on only a sub-set of interventions, and do not claim or purport to offer a general theory of such behaviour. As empirical observation makes clear, states engage in off-setting or dual-sided interventions outside of a rivalry context. Explanations for these decisions will require the articulation of alternative causal mechanisms. In some instances, there may be over-determination of intervention, which is to say cases in which both the rivalry causal mechanism and one or more alternative/additional mechanisms are operative (this is, as discussed in Chapter 4, part of the logic of choosing clear pathway cases so as to isolate as much as possible the rivalry mechanism). Again, future research might explore these possibilities; the present dissertation constitutes a necessary building block toward such efforts.

With respect to the execution of the case studies, I employed process-tracing in order to make within-case inferences about the operation of the proposed causal mechanism. I postulated that because this mechanism resided at the level of the decision-making process, the use of Rohlfing's (2012) *anticipated* process-tracing – which concentrates on the perceptions of decision-makers regarding prospective outcomes of alternative choices – was appropriate. Process-tracing is a sophisticated methodology, requiring the collection of disparate observations and evidence for the purpose of crafting a plausible causal story. There are few pieces of evidence that constitute dispositive 'smoking guns' (for a discussion of the different types of evidence available in the

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<sup>275</sup> The final of the four possible configurations – X=0, Y=0 – offers limited utility, for obvious reasons.

context of process tracing see Mahoney 2015); instead cases are built through the accumulation of less conclusive observations, with the strength of the proposed explanation relying on an assessment of the balance of such evidence. Not all of the case studies in this dissertation offered the same level of available or accessible material; a contemporary case like India-Pakistan (Afghanistan) presented certain challenges given the lack of secondary historical analysis (such as was available in the other cases) and memoirs or writings of relevant leaders (Pervez Musharraf notwithstanding). Obviously, access to relevant national archives was not possible, and the documents available through WikiLeaks are American, not Indian or Pakistani. Similar challenges existed with respect to archival material vis-a-vis Israeli, Syrian and Soviet decision-making. In all cases, inferences about the thought-processes of relevant decision-makers had to be triangulated through a variety of sources and material. The realistic scope of multiple historical case studies within a single study means that trade-offs are inevitable with respect to depth and coverage. In order to be feasible, the cases must remain manageable; as such, legitimate criticisms are possible in terms of omitted detail and evidence. It would be difficult, for example, to comprehensively evaluate and examine multiple alternative explanations in sufficient depth; instead, I chose to focus on offering as much evidence as possible with respect to the proposed explanation, particularly because a novel explanation requires a sufficient basis for plausibility before it can be meaningfully tested alongside more established alternatives. This is an admittedly limited but nonetheless vital contribution – the elevation of a new and original explanation to the ‘menu’ of theoretical possibilities.

### **Future Research**

The contributions of this dissertation constitute the groundwork for several avenues of inquiry which can be pursued moving forward. Most immediately, as mentioned above, a small-n research project demands to be supplemented by additional case studies, particularly those focused on the alternative  $X=1$   $Y=0$  configuration. Examining these cases can help identify appropriate scope conditions tied to the causal mechanism linking rivalry to intervention. This is important, as without such conditions it

is difficult to know precisely when and where the rivalry explanation for intervention can be applied. We can anticipate that for apparent cases of rivalry intervention the motivations and rationale for intervention on the part of the interveners follows the logic outlined in this dissertation (which is to say, that the correlation is caused by the proposed mechanism), but a more refined theory would be able to specify within the theoretical framework itself precise reasons as to why or why not the explanation should apply in a particular situation. Certainly there are Cold War cases in which balancing intervention like that observed in Angola did not occur, despite a first-mover intervention by one side (e.g. Hungary 1956 or Mozambique 1977). What made these cases different as compared to the Angolan situation? Do different rivalry types (regional vs. global; religious/ethnic vs. ideological; major-major vs. minor-minor, nuclear vs. non-nuclear, nuclear symmetry vs. nuclear asymmetry etc.) in combination with different civil conflict configurations (regional proximity; balance between domestic factions, other conflict characteristics, etc.) determine whether a particular civil conflict is sufficient to trigger rivalry intervention? Is the scale or intensity of the first-mover intervention relevant? Must it reach, or remain below, a certain threshold? (Perhaps smaller interventions would be insufficiently threatening, or larger ones enough to deter counter-intervention.) These and other questions await the further examination of additional cases which might define appropriate theoretical parameters. Such examinations require in-depth and comprehensive case study work in their own right, meaning it is beyond the scope of the present study to offer sufficiently detailed analysis as to X=1 Y=0 cases. Rather, the stand-alone contributions of this dissertation can serve as the basis for supplemental research moving forward.

Scope-condition possibilities also point to the need to develop theoretical expectations regarding the first-mover/balancer distinction. As mentioned in Chapters 3 & 4, while I speculated that balancing interventions might be expected to be driven more significantly by rivalry considerations, I committed to examining the decision-making processes of both first-movers and balancers; at the theory development stage, in which the link between rivalry and *dual*-sided intervention was the focus, it seemed pertinent to cast a wider net and remain open to the possibility that first-movers were similarly motivated. This decision was also informed by preliminary familiarity with the India-

Pakistan case, in which the distinction between first-mover and balancer was blurred in practice. Ultimately, the cases are not definitive with respect to clear differences between first-movers and balancers; the initial proposition that the latter may be more strongly driven by the proposed mechanism (the perceptions and decision-making processes associated with rivalry) had some support (particularly in the American case as compared to the Soviet first-move into Angola) but, as anticipated, the differences were not clear cut. Moving forward, however, it may be useful to offer separate theoretical expectations. It is possible, for example, that rivalry motivations for first-movers may be more circumscribed than for balancers (which is to say, that conditions triggering first-mover rivalry interventions are narrower, while balancing interventions more automatic once a first-mover intervention has been initiated).

Further refinement is also possible with respect to the level or intensity of intervention. For example, my argument was predicated on an expansive definition of 'intervention' (to include an array of behaviour/policy, ranging from economic aid and investment to direct military involvement). The outcome of interest – Y – was simply posited as 'present' if any of a number of activities were pursued. If Y were treated as a continuous variable, by contrast, scoring lower for less invasive intervention and higher for more significant involvement such as the direct deployment of troops (juxtapose for example Indian intervention in Afghanistan with Syrian intervention in Lebanon), it might be possible to specify theoretical expectations associated with varying levels of intensity. Perhaps the level of involvement depends on the severity of the perceived threat (i.e. how 'existential' is the threat considered to be if non-intervention is chosen [what is the anticipated process of non-intervention?]; again the comparison between Indian and Syrian or Israeli intervention is suggestive in this regard). Perhaps it is responsive to the level of involvement by the other side (i.e. rivals might 'match' the involvement of the other side). Or perhaps it is connected to the characteristics and dynamics of the civil conflict itself (meaning that while the *decision* to intervene remains couched at the international level, its *form* or *intensity* is determined by the domestic situation). Given that the intensity of involvement has clear implications for the intensity of violence that might occur or be perpetuated as a result (for example the Angolan war was transformed from a guerilla-combat situation to a full on conventional conflict almost entirely by

outside intervention) understanding how, why, and in what direction the scale of intervention varies would be useful.

Similarly, the level of Y could change over time. This is clear from the case studies, in which interventions escalated and deescalated, moving from indirect to direct intervention and back again in certain instances. Are such sequences tied to one another (in the sense that there is a discernible action/response pattern between rivals, similar to escalatory patterns in direct conflict or iterated deterrence encounters in protracted coercive diplomatic crises)? Tracking the dynamic interplay between interventions *once begun* would further clarify the synergies between international and civil conflict. Such analysis might also offer insight into how such dual-sided rivalry interventions end; the theory and evidence in this dissertation did not address conflict termination, which is of obvious policy relevance moving forward. One of the cases studied is still ongoing (Afghanistan), one was effectively terminated by domestic political action (the Clark Amendment vis-à-vis Angola), and one ended with the ‘victory’ of a particular intervener in terms of effective control over the country (Syria in Lebanon). These different outcomes made it difficult to extract any observations regarding potential common processes of termination, but additional cases, and a focus on the sequences of intervention over time, might provide insight, drawing on and contributing to the broader literature on how civil conflicts end.

Finally, the dissertation suggests new possibilities for rivalry research. While the concept of rivalry has been applied to various international phenomenon – including deterrence, arms races, state-building, and of course direct conflict/war – it has often remained in the background of explicit theorizing, as an exogenously-defined independent variable or as a case selection mechanism. The tentative explanation for rivalry dynamics presented here – the theory of rivalry that undergirds the theory of rivalry intervention – can be extended to other forms of state behaviour. After all, the essential argument is that intervention is the product of underlying incentives, priorities and perceptions that are intrinsic to rivalry itself; it therefore makes sense that the same incentives, priorities and perceptions might be responsible for other decisions and actions that occur between rivals. Again, this harkens back to the observation made earlier that thinking about international relations in terms of international *relationships* might

provide fertile ground for the type of mid-level theorizing that is increasingly recognized as IR's best bet for meaningful knowledge cumulation.

### **Policy Implications**

The policy implications of the research findings of this dissertation are grim but important. As the US and its NATO allies (including Canada) discovered over the course of their experience in Afghanistan, dissuading Pakistan from its support for the Taliban insurgency against the (Indian-supported) Afghan government proved extremely difficult. Massive diplomatic pressure and economic/military aid (and, later, the prospect that such aid could be suspended or discontinued) failed to convince Islamabad to abandon its policy. This despite the fact that Pakistan's support for the Taliban seemed to undermine Pakistani security and preclude significant opportunities for much-needed economic growth. Indeed, these latter facts seemed to underscore to the US/NATO that if only Islamabad would recognize its own national interests and pursue policy accordingly, Pakistan would discontinue an intervention that played a major role in exacerbating violence and instability in Afghanistan and the broader region. Implicit in such a belief was the assessment that Pakistan's policy was beholden to interests and priorities (whether of the military-intelligence apparatus, or Islamist elements within the government more generally) that skewed straightforward and broadly rational decision-making. The role of India was recognized in this regard, insofar as the Pakistani leadership (and particularly the military generals) were believed to be unduly 'obsessed' with, and 'paranoid' about, Indian involvement in Afghanistan (though, as pointed out in Chapter 7, civilian officials displayed similar levels of concern). Again, such a priority was and is considered pathological, the product of deep-seated religious/ethnic hatreds, emotional/psychological antagonism stemming from previous military conflicts, and/or the bureaucratic and political interests of the military elite. American diplomats, following meetings and communications with their Pakistani counterparts, repeatedly expressed frustration and astonishment as to the extent of Islamabad's focus on India.

As a consequence of such assessments, US/NATO policy persisted under the assumption that Islamabad must be *convinced* to abandon its skewed priorities and

recognize that its ‘true’ (i.e. objective) interests lay in a stable Afghanistan; if only its calculus could be adjusted and the interfering interests reigned in (the decision-making process un-‘captured’, as it were). The carrots and sticks (mostly the former) employed by the US and its allies were designed to accomplish this goal. As for the ‘obsession’ with India, some Western policymakers (for example the late Richard Holbrooke) suggested that a resolution of the Kashmir dispute (the core issue in the India-Pakistan rivalry) might placate Pakistani concerns about Indian involvement in Afghanistan by warming the wider bilateral relationship.

As demonstrated by this dissertation, however – in which the Afghanistan case is examined along with additional instances of balancing rivalry interventions – Pakistan’s decision-making calculus (its perception of its national interest and the means, the policy, by which it might be pursued) was less pathological (i.e. a deviation from the normal or regular) than simply oriented toward a set of concerns derived from the context of international rivalry with India. The decision to intervene in Afghanistan through support for the Taliban was and is the consequence of these priorities. This logic was consistent and predictable, not capricious. Rather than needing to be reminded of its own interests, therefore, Pakistan is in fact pursuing them, as far as Islamabad is concerned; Western exhortations to the contrary were always going to fall on deaf ears. As for a potential solution to Kashmir, the theory of rivalry developed in this dissertation suggests that whatever the import of a core conflict like Kashmir for establishing the condition of rivalry, once established, the rivalry itself is perpetuated by concern about *future* confrontations – thus there is no guarantee that even if a solution might be crafted (an unlikely prospect anyway) that the rivalry-related perceptions driving policy in Afghanistan would be dispelled. Rivalry is composed of, but not reducible to, any particular issue or point of contention within it.

The takeaway for US/NATO policy is that the *strength* of the Pakistani commitment to undermining Indian interests in Afghanistan has been underestimated by virtue of misunderstanding the origin and source of that priority. The reality is that Indian involvement in Afghanistan was always likely to draw a response from Islamabad, and the extent to which Pakistan would commit itself to countering that influence was always going to be larger than what outside observers (i.e. those states not involved in a rivalry

with India) would consider proportional. Likewise, India's significant contributions to reconstruction in Afghanistan were predictable, as is the persistence with which they have maintained their interests there despite Pakistani pressure to withdraw.

The prospects of mitigating Indian-Pakistani competition in Afghanistan are consequently quite low. The findings of this dissertation suggest that committed international rivals link the stakes of a civil conflict in which their enemy is engaged to the broader security competition – the *threat* – that exists at the international level. Commensurate with this perception, they accord high priority to protecting their interests in such conflicts. The policy implications are therefore retrospective (what might have been done differently to mitigate Indian-Pakistani competition before it became in many ways the underlying engine of the Afghanistan war) as well as prospective vis-à-vis future civil conflicts in which the international community wishes to mitigate outside interventions in the interest of minimizing or resolving violence. With respect to the Afghanistan war specifically, suggestions as to what might have been done in 2001 and shortly thereafter to prevent Indian-Pakistani competition from destabilizing the country are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7. Suffice to say that early US decisions – in terms of the local allies they selected, their attentiveness to Pakistani concerns and requests, and the composition of the post-Taliban transitional Afghan government – could have reflected a greater appreciation for the depth and scope of Islamabad's interests and likely response to the war. Indeed, the portents of the post-2001 rivalry competition were present in the pre-2001 history between India and Pakistan in Afghanistan – particularly during the 1990s – a period examined in the opening portions of Chapters 6 and 7.

More generally, the findings of this dissertation underscore the extent to which the international community must be aware of, and appreciate the dynamics associated with, potential rivalry interventions into civil conflicts. Particularly if rivalry exists at the regional level between two states in proximity to a civil war – contemporary examples are Syria and Yemen with respect to Iranian-Saudi rivalry in the Middle East – there is a strong possibility that rivalry competition could be exported to such conflicts and, once operative, significantly exacerbate and prolong the violence that is occurring. Even if such behaviour might undermine a states' security or economic interests by fostering regional instability, it should not be assumed that state leaders will prioritize such

traditional interests and act accordingly. At the same time, interventions should not be attributed to ethnic/religious hatred or psychological/emotional hostility. Instead, by recognizing the strength of the rivalry-related calculus, predicated on long-term security concerns at the international level, it might be possible to craft policies that help to mitigate each rivals' perceived threat.

For example, in the early years of the Lebanon crisis (1975-1985) the US was able to function as an intermediary between Israel and Syria, leading to the establishment of a 'red-line' – essentially a division of the country into separate spheres of influence above and below the Litani River – which tempered violence for a period of several years. Eventually, the agreement unraveled, owing largely to the roiling domestic situation in Lebanon (one of the inescapable difficulties in dealing with rivalry competition in such settings is that it occurs against the backdrop of an ongoing conflict with its own dynamics; the Afghanistan case further underscores this reality). Yet the tentative lesson is that the violence associated with rivalry interventions might be mitigated by policies which acknowledge and reflect the (rivalry-related) security concerns of the interveners.

Of course, the red-line arrangement took into consideration the specific circumstances of the Lebanese theatre and attendant Syrian and Israeli priorities (specifically that the territory of Lebanon not become a staging ground for future military attack by the other side); the 'division' or articulation of spheres of influence will not necessarily work in other circumstances (though the post-war East-West division of Germany is a somewhat analogous example). Crafting appropriate and effective policy with respect to any future civil conflict will require a deep appreciation for the specific histories and dynamics of the international rivalries in question; the 'generic knowledge' that this dissertation provides is that these rivals will vigorously pursue intervention rather than concede influence to an opponent they anticipate facing in the future. The key is understanding how powerful this motivation is for states engaged in an ongoing rivalry; perhaps if American policy makers had thought about Indian and Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan by recalling their own experiences from the Cold War – how might the US have responded to the Soviets in similar circumstances? – they would have better recognized the weight of the imperatives involved.

**APPENDIX 1:**  
**Extracts from US Diplomatic Cables 2005-2010:**  
**Pakistan as the Primary Concern in Afghanistan**

*“The GOI [Government of India] views the persistence of the Taliban as clear evidence of Pakistani designs on Afghanistan.”<sup>276</sup>*

*“[DSNA] Nambiar launched the October 4 meeting with a twenty-minute presentation aided by a fancy colored graphic that underlined his basic point: Pakistan is at the epicenter of regional and global jihad [sic].”<sup>277</sup>*

*“Nambiar sketched an inner circle of Jihad [sic] emanating from Pakistan to encompass Kashmir, north India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal.”<sup>278</sup>*

*“Nambiar asserted that the LeT now rivals Al Qaeda, and India had evidence that the Director General of the ISI had met with LeT commanders. LeT was exerting its influence beyond Kashmir to encompass Bangladesh and Afghanistan...”<sup>279</sup>*

*“[Joint Secretary for Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran Dilip Sinha] argued that a ‘symbiotic relationship’ between the [Pakistani] Army and fundamentalist clergy threatens to cause continued instability in Pakistan’s relations with its neighbors. Sinha asserted that Musharraf is not serious about clamping down on Islamist groups active near the border with India, even if the Pakistani government is taking action in the tribal areas near the Afghan border.”<sup>280</sup>*

*“[Indian Foreign Secretary] Saran said that while India was eager for relations with Pakistan to improve, terrorism hung over the relationship ‘like the sword of Damocles.’”<sup>281</sup>*

*“Sinha said India wanted action, not words, from Islamabad. Pakistan had indeed taken some actions to curb terror in 2004 and 2005, but trouble always revived, lamented Sinha. The spike in terror in 2006, especially high profile attacks like Mumbai, had greatly complicated relations. Even though police continued their investigations, the discovery of military explosive residue such as RDX ‘reflects the usual foreign hand’ and a measure of training and sophistication not available domestically. Infiltration also continued from Bangladesh and Kashmir, and Lashkar-e-Tayiba [sic] leader Hafez*

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<sup>276</sup> WikiLeaks. PM’s Kabul Visit: Terrific opportunity to work with India on Afghanistan. (2005, September 2). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI6797\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI6797_a.html)

<sup>277</sup> WikiLeaks. DSNA Nambiar to Amb Crocker: Pakistani glass half full. (2005, October 6). Retrieved from [http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI7795\\_a.html](http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI7795_a.html)

<sup>278</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>279</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>280</sup> WikiLeaks. MEA provides A/S Boucher with tour d’horizon of India’s regional relationships. (2006, April 13). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI2496\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI2496_a.html)

<sup>281</sup> WikiLeaks. AS Boucher and Foreign Secretary Saran talk civ-nuke, Nepal, China, Pakistan, and terrorism. (2006, August 11). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI5609\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI5609_a.html)

*Saaed continued to thrive despite occasional house arrest. In any case, India had to re-engage with Pakistan... 'The mind set remains the same,' insisted Sinha, with Pakistani agents continuing to help plan attacks against Indians in Afghanistan.*"<sup>282</sup>

*"As for Pakistan, Sinha reveals the depth of skepticism in the [Ministry of External Affairs] establishment; he and many other Indians remain from Missouri, the Show-Me State."*<sup>283</sup>

*"Stability in Afghanistan is directly affected by Pakistan, particularly because of cross border violence in Baluchistan province, said [Indian Foreign Secretary Shivshankar] Menon. 'The problem,' he said, 'has to do with where the threat in Afghanistan is coming from.'"*<sup>284</sup>

*"In a separate meeting, counterterrorism expert Dr. Ajai Sahni of the Institute of Conflict Management [based in Delhi] asserted his familiar line that, 'the Pakistan establishment is the greatest threat to security in the region.' He described the Taliban as inextricably linked to the 'strategic terrorism' of Pakistan."*<sup>285</sup>

*"If Pakistan wants to stop all this (terrorism), they can do it," exclaimed [AS] Dulat [former head of India's external intelligence agency (RAW)], adding "Musharraf can turn off the tap anytime."*<sup>286</sup>

*"Turning to the Pakistan intelligence agency (ISI), Sahni insisted that the organization is a disciplined part of the military structure of Pakistan, expounding that it answers faithfully to President Musharraf and whomever he designates. 'ISI is completely integrated within the command structure of the Pakistani military,' indicated Sahni, scoffing at the notion that the ISI has any plausible deniability."*<sup>287</sup>

*"The primary source of insecurity [in Afghanistan], Sinha said, was outside help given to the Taliban and terrorist groups."*<sup>288</sup>

*"...Sharad Kumar, Joint Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat, provided India's assessment of Afghanistan. Kumar noted he had a rather grim view of the near- and mid-term prospects for stability in the country....From the debriefings of Dr. Mohammed Hanif, a key Taliban spokesman arrested on January 15, Kumar stated that 'we now*

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<sup>282</sup> WikiLeaks. MEA Engaged on Afghansitan, doubtful on Pakistan, and peeved at Iran. (2006, September 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI6584\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI6584_a.html)

<sup>283</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>284</sup> WikiLeaks. Boucher and Menon tour d'horizon: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and North Korea. (2006, November 14). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7767\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI7767_a.html)

<sup>285</sup> WikiLeaks. Indian Counterterrorism experts urge greater Indo-US cooperation, criticize Pakistan. (2006, December 18). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI8387\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI8387_a.html)

<sup>286</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>287</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>288</sup> WikiLeaks. Indian NSA Narayanan upbeat on Pakistan, cautious on Afghanistan, Iraq. (2007, January 22). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI343\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI343_a.html)

*know that Mullah Omar is under Pakistani protection. ' India had also learned that the former chief of Pakistan's ISI was directly involved in assistance to the Taliban. ''<sup>289</sup>*

*"In a very measured assessment of Pakistan, Ambassador [KC] Singh [head of the Indian delegation to the US-India Counter Terrorism Joint Working Group] acknowledged US reasons for pursuing [counter-terrorism] cooperation with Pakistan, but stated that India, itself, maintained a certain skepticism about whether Islamabad had truly made a sea-change in its approach to this issue. New Delhi had seen evidence of at least tactical decisions to dismantle camps and terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan, but the Indians still receive a great deal of intelligence that shows that Islamabad may not intend to uproot this capability permanently. Pakistani authorities appear to have a desire to keep at least some assets intact in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. India's 'nightmare scenario' is that this ad hoc set of actions results in a long-term trend in which terrorist groups are able to find permanent sanctuary in Afghanistan. 'We do not want another century of instability,' Singh stated. ''<sup>290</sup>*

*"India's former spymaster Vikram Sood wrote in a January 29 op-ed that it would be naive to accept Musharraf's olive branch of peace to India as sincere when he 'spent his entire adult life plotting, planning and executing schemes to undo India, and referred to India as an enemy country in 2006. ''<sup>291</sup>*

*"The reports that the [Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan] will go ahead as scheduled come in the wake of National Security Advisor MK Narayanan's harsh words on July 11 regarding the ISI's alleged involvement in the attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul. He told television reporters that the Indian government had a 'fair amount of intelligence' pointing to Pakistan, and continued that 'The ISI needs to be destroyed.' 'Talk-talk is better than fight-fight,' Narayanan concluded, 'but it hasn't worked so far.' This could be vintage Narayanan, but his comment 'We need to pay back in the same coin,' is strong even for him. ''<sup>292</sup>*

*"During a press conference...on July 21, [Indian Foreign Secretary] Menon said that both sides [India and Pakistan] had a 'frank discussion' on security, and admitted the Indo-Pak dialogue is 'under stress.' Menon raised alleged Pakistani violations of the ceasefire agreement along the [Line of Control], cross-border terrorism and alleged incitement of violence. This follows a recent rise in terrorist attacks in the Kashmir valley, including a landmine attack on July 19 killing ten Indian soldiers and a tourist resort explosion on July 20 killing one tourist and one security guard. Perpetrators of the attacks are believed to have links with the Pro-Pakistan militant group Hizbul Mujahadeen. Menon told reporters that talks were coming at a 'difficult time' in India's*

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<sup>289</sup> WikiLeaks. Indians offer bleak assessment of Afghanistan and South Asian region during CTJWG. (2007, March 2). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI1051\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI1051_a.html)

<sup>290</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>291</sup> WikiLeaks. India cautiously optimistic after Pakistan general election. (2008, February 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI542\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI542_a.html)

<sup>292</sup> WikiLeaks. India-Pakistan confidence building measures talks still on track. (2008, July 15). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI1957\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI1957_a.html)

*relationship with Pakistan and that recent public statements by Pakistani politicians reverted to 'old polemics.'*''<sup>293</sup>

*"Menon added that strains in the Indo-Pak relationship culminated in the July 17 suicide bombing targeting the Indian mission in Kabul. He echoed earlier Indian officials' allegations that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency was involved in the attack, which resulted in over 40 reported deaths including four Indians. He noted that on-going Indian-led investigations point towards 'a few elements in Pakistan behind the blast.'*''<sup>294</sup>

*"[MEA Under Secretary for Afghan Affairs Ghotu Ram] Meena indicated that Karzai's visit comes at a 'difficult time' for India, following a string of terrorist attacks. The regional terrorist threat, and defusing Islamic extremist networks, would be the prevailing topic for discussion, he said, pointing to the July 7 suicide attack on the Indian Embassy as a 'turning point' in the Afghan-Indian relationship that underscored the 'critical importance' of bilateral counter-terrorism agendas. He echoed critical press statements by Indian officials and President Karzai, alleging Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency's involvement in the attack...and stressed continued 'strain' on the India-Pakistan relationship.*''<sup>295</sup>

*"Executive Director of the South Asia Terrorism Portal Ajai Sahni noted that 'escalating rhetoric' alleging Pakistan complicity in regional terrorist activity is not surprising. He observed that Indian and Afghan intelligence consistently point to ISI involvement in regional terrorist attacks, stating, 'terrorism is the product of the ISI.'*''<sup>296</sup>

*"In a meeting with the Charge, External Affairs Minister of State Anand Sharma characterized President Karzai's visit as a 'huge success' ...He described the wide array of assistance India has already provided – which included hospitals, IT centers, roads, scholarships and infrastructure – as significantly improving the lives of Afghans. Sharma indicated that from the GOI's perspective, the areas most in need of funding are military training and the 'physical protection of the government in Kabul.' Both the [Government of India] and Karzai view Afghanistan's border with Pakistan as the most vulnerable region, Sharma reported.*''<sup>297</sup>

*"With nervousness already looming over infiltrations over the Line of Control, interference in events in Kashmir, and rising terrorism including the bombing of the Indian Embassy in Kabul, India's worst fear is of a rogue Pakistani Army/ISI refocusing on India... There is also a feeling among many Indians, articulated by strategic affairs*

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<sup>293</sup> WikiLeaks. FS Menon's comments point to rising tension in Indo-Pak relations. (2008, July 22). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2011\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2011_a.html)

<sup>294</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>295</sup> WikiLeaks. Karzai to visit India, be greeted with open arms. (2008, August 1). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2111\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2111_a.html)

<sup>296</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>297</sup> WikiLeaks. Counter-terror, new aid money, reaffirmation of friendship highlight Karzai's visit to India. (2008, August 7). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2163\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2163_a.html)

*analyst K Subrahmanyam on August 18, that the more things change in Pakistan, the more they stay the same; Subrahmanyam argued that the Army Chief has often dictated Pakistan foreign and defense policy, 'therefore there will be no change for India [following Pakistan's elections].'*<sup>298</sup>

*"Former Indian Ambassador to Pakistan, G Parthasarthy, minimized the significance of the civilian [Asif Ali] Zardari taking over Pakistan's presidency, asserting that real power in Pakistan rests with the military and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), between which [he said] there is no distinction. Parthasarthy went on to explain that the army does not yield to politicians on 1) the relationship with India, 2) the relationship with Afghanistan, and 3) its nuclear weapons program. Parthasarthy characterized Pakistan's policy toward India as unchanged under Zardari, a policy that is aimed to inconvenience India without infuriating it. He alleged Pakistan has been outsourcing retired ISI to Taliban for plausible deniability."*<sup>299</sup>

*"[Prime Minister] Singh said India supported Pakistan's democratic development, but the civilian government could not enforce its writ, and the focus must be on what the [Government of Pakistan] military and the ISI in particular were doing. If there was no 'control at the source,' then India would be fighting a losing battle...PM Singh blamed the security problems in Afghanistan on the ability of the Taliban and other extremists to shelter in the border regions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, noting that the Pakistani military had been responsible in the first place for creating and supporting the Taliban and other Islamist armed groups."*<sup>300</sup>

*"Afghan experts squarely blame Pakistan for limiting the scope of Indian reconstruction assistance. According to Radha Kumar, Director of the Mandela Centre for Peace, Pakistan views India's influence in Afghanistan as a threat to its own interests in the region, and the security concerns of Afghanistan are multiplied by the Indo-Pakistani rivalry. Kumar explained that over the past two years, as India-Afghanistan ties have grown in strength, so have Pakistani fears of being squeezed by its two neighbors."*<sup>301</sup>

*"Indian leaders view the Taliban as Pakistani proxies and are suspicious of negotiations with moderate insurgents, fearing that negotiations will permit their return through the back door. They are scornful of the concept of 'good' Taliban, saying the notion is as incoherent as suggesting there are 'good' terrorists."*<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> WikiLeaks. Mushrraf resigns: Indian reaciotn purposefully muted, but fear growns of weakened civilian control. (2008, August 19). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2246\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2246_a.html)

<sup>299</sup> WikiLeaks. Mixed sentiment among Indians over Zardari government, welcoming possible along LOC. (2008, October 16). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2722\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI2722_a.html)

<sup>300</sup> WikiLeaks. PM Singh tells codel Kerry re Pakistan: Enough is enough. (2008, December 16). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3165\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3165_a.html)

<sup>301</sup> WikiLeaks. Indians seek modification of Afghan reconstruction. (2009, February 13). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI283\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI283_a.html)

<sup>302</sup> WikiLeaks. Scen setter for Special Representative Holbrooke and CJCS Admiral Mullen. (2009, April 2). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI647\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI647_a.html)

*“The [Indian] Prime Minister added that India wants a strong, stable, peaceful, democratic Pakistan and makes no claim on ‘even an inch’ of Pakistani territory. Pakistan, on the other hand, supports infiltrators, hoping ‘by a thousand cuts’ to weaken Indian solidarity, according to the Prime Minister.”*<sup>303</sup>

*“[Indian Foreign Secretary] Menon lauded the new US strategy on Afghanistan and Pakistan (‘AfPak’), emphasizing that India had a ‘huge stake in your success.’ Menon was grateful for the opportunity for India to provide input into the strategy, and said India wants to work with the US in Afghanistan reconstruction. However, from the Indian perspective, it was ‘more of a PakAf problem than an AfPak one,’ he stated.”*<sup>304</sup>

*“PM Singh delivered an impassioned plea to encourage Pakistan to keep its commitments not to allow its territory to be used for terror. He stressed the strong efforts he had made over the past five years to engage Pakistan in sustained dialogue on all bilateral issues despite the suffering he said Pakistan’s low-cost proxy war – its ‘strategy of one thousand cuts’ – had inflicted on the Indian people over the decades. He referred in particular to Lashkar-e-Taiba’s (LeT) attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001 that ‘could have taken out the whole Indian political establishment, which possibly would have been even worse than Mumbai.’ He stressed the enormous burden these incidents placed on Indian leadership that would have liked to support dialogue. Despite his belief that ‘dialogue is the only way’ and that ‘our destinies are closely linked,’ Singh shared that it was difficult as a leader to take the high road while a constant stream of intelligence reports indicated terrorist attacks continued to be planned. He lamented that you ‘can choose your friends, but not your neighbors,’ and under present circumstances ‘a neighborly dialogue could not take place.’”*<sup>305</sup>

*“Narayanan explained that most threats to India emanated from outside its borders. ‘Terrorism sponsored by Pakistani based groups is the number one concern for us.’”*<sup>306</sup>

*“[Prime Minister] Singh’s annual address to the ‘Combined Commanders Conference’ began by thanking the Indian armed forces for its ‘stellar role in assisting the civil authority in meeting the challenges in Jammu and Kashmir and tackling insurgencies in the North-East.’ He went on to state that the November 2008 Mumbai terror attacks ‘confirmed our worst fears’ about terrorism and reminded India that ‘there are both State and non-State actors involved in the business of terrorism’ (Note: at the risk of stating the obvious, we point out that Singh was referring to Pakistan). While Singh warned that India must ‘avoid kneejerk reactions’ to such attacks (a clear defense of Singh’s decision not to retaliate openly against Pakistan after the Mumbai attacks), he urged military leaders to ‘be prepared to face onslaughts’ in light of ‘regular intelligence*

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<sup>303</sup> WikiLeaks. Prime Minister discusses Iran, Afghanistan with codel Berman. (2009, April 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI782\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI782_a.html)

<sup>304</sup> WikiLeaks. Codel Berman discusses bilateral, regional issues with Indian foreign secretary. (2009, April 22). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI804\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI804_a.html)

<sup>305</sup> WikiLeaks. Prime Minister Singh discusses regional security with NSA Jones. (2009, June 29). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1338\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1338_a.html)

<sup>306</sup> WikiLeaks. NSA Narayana pulls out all the stops to welcome NSA Jones. (2009, June 29). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1339\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1339_a.html)

*reports of imminent attacks’ in India and because the ‘overall situation in our immediate neighborhood has worsened’ over the past year. The recent attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul was ‘yet another grim reminder of the forces we are pitted against.’”<sup>307</sup>*

*“While Sinha’s remarks about Afghanistan were largely upbeat, the tone and substance of his comments regarding Pakistan were relentlessly negative. He called on the [US government] to see through and resist Pakistan’s ‘game’ of promising cooperation in Afghanistan in return for ‘US pressure on India to sort out Pakistan’s problems with India’...He also claimed that an essential element of Pakistani policy is to ‘try to internationalize every bilateral issue between us.’”<sup>308</sup>*

*“Sinha stated he is ‘convinced that LeT is a creature of the ISI and armed by the ISI’... ‘Call me a cynic,’ Sinha sighed, ‘but even if India were to lop off Kashmir and hand it on a platter to Pakistan, they would still find a reason to make trouble for us.’”<sup>309</sup>*

*“Sinha – a functional equivalent of an assistant secretary and the [Government of India’s] top policy point man on Af-Pak issues – expressed concern that the mention of a July 2011 starting date for transition of forces could lead the Taliban to undertake a strategic pause and wait out international force, only to reappear on the scene in force once the transition is underway. He also questioned whether the strategy adequately addresses ‘the fact that the source of the problem is on the other side of the Afghanistan border,’ and opined that eliminating terrorist safe havens in Pakistan will take far beyond 2011 or even 2014.”<sup>310</sup>*

*“The Indians tolerate our [the US] message about the importance of resuming a robust dialogue with Pakistan. However, to the Indian mind, India has been the target of numerous conventional and un-conventional attacks since Pakistan’s inception.”<sup>311</sup>*

*“[Indian Foreign Secretary] Rao said she was alarmed at this continued Pakistan support for terrorist groups, noting that the LeT was ‘ideologically fused’ with both the Quetta Shura and the Haqqani network. As evidence, she pointed to the Haqqani group’s 2008 bombing of the Indian Embassy in Kabul.”<sup>312</sup>*

*“Sinha contended that ‘it is quite clear to India’ that Pakistan views Afghanistan ‘as a zero sum game and they want India out of Afghanistan.’ He stated that ‘we will not leave*

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<sup>307</sup> WikiLeaks. PM Singh to military chiefs: Be ready because ‘our neighborhood situation has worsened’. (2009, October 29). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2196\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2196_a.html)

<sup>308</sup> WikiLeaks. Current Indian government thinking on Afghanistan and Pakistan. (2009, November 27). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2396\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2396_a.html)

<sup>309</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>310</sup> WikiLeaks. GOI applauds President’s Af-Pak speech (especially the Pak part). (2009, December 4). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2447\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2447_a.html)

<sup>311</sup> WikiLeaks. Scen setter for Under Secretary McHale visit to India. (2010, January 27). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI151\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI151_a.html)

<sup>312</sup> WikiLeaks. SRAP Holbrooke discusses Afghansitan and Pakistan with Indian Foreign Secretary Rao. (2010, January 28). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI163\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI163_a.html)

*Afghanistan because we have strategic interests there.' Acknowledging that the [US government] 'needs Pakistan for many thing right now,' Sinha counseled that the [US] beware of Pakistan's 'game' of enlisting American support to 'drive India out of Afghanistan.'''<sup>313</sup>*

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<sup>313</sup> WikiLeaks. Indian views on Afghanistan: Eager for increased USG coordination, wary of Pakistan scheming, skeptical on R/R. (2010, February 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI334\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI334_a.html)

**APPENDIX 2:**  
**Extracts from US Diplomatic Cables 2005-2010:**  
**Constant Concern About Possible US Withdrawal & Negotiating with the Taliban**

*“Sinha then asked if the [US] withdrawal of 3,000 troops ‘would be all’ or if further withdrawals were planned. A/DCM reassured Sinha that the [US] would ‘see things through,’ adding that it was in everyone’s interest to share the burden among allies beyond the original Coalition partners...Sinha welcomed these assurances, reflecting Indian support for a sustained US military presence in Afghanistan.”<sup>314</sup>*

*“Also telling was [Sinha’s] obvious anxiety about recent press suggestions that planned US redeployments in Afghanistan are a precursor to a broader withdrawal of US forces.”<sup>315</sup>*

*“Pressed to expound upon his view of Pakistan’s current strategy, Sahni suggested that Pakistan is waiting for the US to fail... ‘If they are successful in exhausting you,’ he continued, ‘they will seek to dominate the region themselves.’”<sup>316</sup>*

*“Anxiety over the US commitment to the fight in Afghanistan is also a resounding theme we’ve been hearing for months. Indians seem unwilling to take the US (and NATO) at their word on their commitment to stay in the conflict zone and stabilize the country.”<sup>317</sup>*

*“External support for the Taliban and terrorist groups is putting [India’s development] projects [in Afghanistan] and the entire country at risk...Afghanistan cannot withstand the Taliban without foreign troops and India wants them in Afghanistan until the Taliban is eliminated. India has strong views on this matter, according to Sinha, and is of the opinion that any attempt to compromise with either the Taliban or terrorist groups will backfire.”<sup>318</sup>*

*“The Prime Minister noted that India is heavily engaged in Afghanistan and will stay the course despite its losses there; ‘we only ask the world to stay the course against terrorism.’”<sup>319</sup>*

*“In response to Senator Kerry’s request for an assessment of the situation in Afghanistan, [PM] Singh said the US and its partners must recognize that they are in*

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<sup>314</sup> WikiLeaks. MEA looks ahead to Pakistan talks, seeks reassurance on US presence in Afghanistan. (2005, December 28). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI9771\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NEWDELHI9771_a.html)

<sup>315</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>316</sup> WikiLeaks. Indian counterterrorism experts urge greater Indo-US cooperation, criticize Pakistan. (2006, December 18). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI8387\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06NEWDELHI8387_a.html)

<sup>317</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>318</sup> WikiLeaks. Staffdel Farkas discusses Afghanistan, Iran, Bangladesh and Pakistan with India’s MEA. (2007, February 26). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI945\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07NEWDELHI945_a.html)

<sup>319</sup> WikiLeaks. PM Singh urges McCain codel to deliver tough message to Pakistan. (2008, December 3). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3054\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3054_a.html)

*Afghanistan for the long haul and that if the US did not persevere, Islamist groups would be even further emboldened.*”<sup>320</sup>

*“Privately, the [Government of India] has been critical of efforts to bring Taliban elements to the negotiating table, arguing that such attempts have confused Afghan public opinion and fueled popular fears that the Taliban will return through the back door.”*<sup>321</sup>

*“[MEA Joint Secretary for Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran Division TCA] Raghavan argued that more focus should be given to the tribal areas and criticized efforts to bring Taliban elements to the negotiating table, advising the focus should be on addressing insecurity and helplessness that has resulted from the Taliban’s control. ‘Bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table had greatly muddied the waters and confused public opinion,’ he explained, ‘creating a corrosive sentiment where people now view the system as letting the Taliban get in through the back door.’”*<sup>322</sup>

*“Indian leaders view the Taliban as Pakistani proxies and are suspicious of negotiations with moderate insurgents, fearing that negotiations will permit their return through the back door. They are scornful of the concept of ‘good’ Taliban, saying the notion is as incoherent as suggesting there are ‘good’ terrorists.”*<sup>323</sup>

*“PM Singh spelled out India’s goals for Afghanistan: India wanted a peaceful, prosperous, stable and moderate Islamic state in Afghanistan...Singh hoped the international community understood that this would be a long-term process and that all those working in Afghanistan ‘would stay the course.’”*<sup>324</sup>

*“Narayanan replied that India would like to maintain and increase its assistance to Afghanistan, but US talk of an ‘exit strategy’ raised concerns that its people would be left vulnerable. India continued to receive threats regarding its personnel and projects in Afghanistan, so the spectre of the coalition’s withdrawal raised fears. Talk of an exit strategy also encouraged those who believe they could just ‘wait out’ the Americans, added Narayanan. ‘We must win,’ in Afghanistan, ‘to stop the forces of extreme religious ideology from gaining ground. If Afghanistan is lost, Pakistan will definitely go.’”*<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> WikiLeaks. PM Singh tells codel Kerry re Pakistan: Enough is enough. (2008, December 16). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3165\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI3165_a.html)

<sup>321</sup> WikiLeaks. India scener setter for special representative Holbrooke. (2009, February 11). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI268\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI268_a.html)

<sup>322</sup> WikiLeaks. Indians seek modification of Afghan reconstruction. (2009, February 13). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI283\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI283_a.html)

<sup>323</sup> WikiLeaks. Scener setter for Special Representative Holbrooke and CJCS Admiral Mullen. (2009, April 2). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI647\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI647_a.html)

<sup>324</sup> WikiLeaks. Under Secretary Burns meets Indian Prime Minister Singh. (2009, June 11). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1209\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1209_a.html)

<sup>325</sup> WikiLeaks. NSA Narayanan meets with U/S Burns. (2009, June 12). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1228\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1228_a.html)

*“[Prime Minister] Singh stressed that Afghanistan’s rehabilitation was a ‘long-term enterprise requiring long-term commitment.’”<sup>326</sup>*

*“[Foreign Secretary] Rao welcomed [Under Secretary] Burns’s update on the President’s ongoing strategic review on Afghanistan, particularly his emphasis that the US was not seeking an exit strategy and was proceeding carefully and methodically to sharpen our approach.”<sup>327</sup>*

*“Sinha – a functional equivalent of an assistant secretary and the [Government of India’s] top policy point man on Af-Pak issues – expressed concern that the mention of a July 2011 starting date for transition of forces could lead the Taliban to undertake a strategic pause and wait out international force, only to reappear on the scene in force once the transition is underway. He also questioned whether the strategy adequately addresses ‘the fact that the source of the problem is on the other side of the Afghanistan border,’ and opined that eliminating terrorist safe havens in Pakistan will take far beyond 2011 or even 2014.”<sup>328</sup>*

*“Indian reaction to the President’s December 1 speech on the way forward in Afghanistan was that the US is headed for the exit sooner rather than later, and that this had significant consequences for India’s own security.”<sup>329</sup>*

*“While the President’s emphasis on development and agriculture assistance and a re-affirmation of [US government] commitment to the region drew approval [in India], many were apprehensive about the setting of July 2011 as a beginning date for the transfer of US troops out of Afghanistan.”<sup>330</sup>*

*“Sinha closed the discussion on Afghanistan by asserting that a precipitate US exit would embolden ‘fanatics’ to feel they had defeated both the USSR and the US, ‘and the result will be very bad for the region.’”<sup>331</sup>*

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<sup>326</sup> WikiLeaks. Prime Minister Singh discusses regional security with NSA Jones. (2009, June 29). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1338\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1338_a.html)

<sup>327</sup> WikiLeaks. U/S Burns reviews regional issues with India FS Rao: Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Russia, and beyond. (2009, October 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2142\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2142_a.html)

<sup>328</sup> WikiLeaks. GOI applauds President’s Af-Pak speech (especially the Pak part). (2009, December 4). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2447\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI2447_a.html)

<sup>329</sup> WikiLeaks. Scen setter for Under Secretary McHale visit to India. (2010, January 27). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI151\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI151_a.html)

<sup>330</sup> WikiLeaks. Scen setter for codel Kerry’s visit to India. (2010, February 11). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI287\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI287_a.html)

<sup>331</sup> WikiLeaks. Indian views on Afghanistan: Eager for increased USG coordination, wary of Pakistan scheming, skeptical on R/R. (2010, February 21). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI334\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI334_a.html)

*“Turning to Pakistan’s role in Afghanistan, Menon cautioned that if the Pakistani establishment felt US commitment was flagging in Afghanistan it would ‘sit it out and use the Indian threat as an excuse for not doing what was needed’ in the West.”*<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> WikiLeaks. NSA Menon discusses regional security and trade issues with codename McCaskill. (2010, February 25). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI355\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10NEWDELHI355_a.html)

**APPENDIX 3:**  
**Musharraf's Address to the Nation, September 19, 2001**

My dear countrymen, Asslam-o-Alaikum:

The situation confronting the nation today and the international crisis have impelled me to take the nation into confidence. First of all, I would like to express heartfelt sympathies to the United States for the thousands of valuable lives lost in the United States due to horrendous acts of terrorism.

We are all the more grieved because in this incident people from about 45 countries from all over the world lost their lives. People of all ages old, children, women and people from all and every religion lost their lives. Many Pakistanis also lost their lives. These people were capable Pakistanis who had gone to improve their lives. On this loss of lives I express my sympathies with those families. I pray to Allah to rest their souls in peace.

This act of terrorism has raised a wave of deep grief, anger and retaliation in the United States. Their first target from day one is Osama bin Laden's movement Al-Qaida about which they say that it is their first target. The second target are Taliban and that is because Taliban have given refuge to Osama and his network. This has been their demand for many years. They have been demanding their extradition and presentation before the international court of justice. Taliban have been rejecting this.

The third target is a long war against terrorism at the international level. The thing to ponder is that in these three targets nobody is talking about war against Islam or the people of Afghanistan. Pakistan is being, asked to support this campaign. What is this support? Generally speaking, these are three important things in which America is asking for our help. First is intelligence and information exchange, second support is the use of our airspace and the third is that they are asking for logistic support from us.

I would like to tell you now that they do not have any operational plan right now. Therefore we do not have any details on this count but we know that whatever are the United States' intentions they have the support of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly in the form of a resolution. This is a resolution for war against terrorism and this is a resolution for punishing those people who support terrorism. Islamic countries have supported this resolution. This is the situation as it prevailed in the outside world.

Now I would like to inform you about the internal situation. Pakistan is facing a very critical situation and I believe that after 1971, this is the most critical period. The decision we take today can have far-reaching and wide-ranging consequences. The crisis is formidable and unprecedented. If we take wrong decisions in this crisis, it can lead to worst consequences. On the other hand, if we take right decisions, its results will be good. The negative consequences can endanger Pakistan's integrity and solidarity. Our critical concerns, our important concerns can come under threat. When I say critical

concerns, I mean our strategic assets and the cause of Kashmir. If these come under threat it would be a worse situation for us.

On the other hand, we can re-emerge politically as a responsible and dignified nation and all our difficulties can be minimized. I have considered all these factors and held consultations with those who hold different opinions. I met the corps commanders, National Security Council and the Federal Cabinet. I interacted with the media. I invited the religious scholars and held discussions with them. I met politicians. I also invited intellectuals. I will be meeting with the tribal chiefs and Kashmiri leaders tomorrow. This is the same process of consultation that I held earlier. I noted that there was difference of opinion but an overwhelming majority favors patience, prudence and wisdom. Some of them, I think about ten percent favored sentimental approach.

Let us now take a look at the designs of our neighboring country. They offered all their military facilities to the United States. They have offered without hesitation, all their facilities, all their bases and full logistic support. They want to enter into any alliance with the United States and get Pakistan declared a terrorist state. They want to harm our strategic assets and the Kashmir cause. Not only this, recently certain countries met in Dushanbe. India was one of them. Indian representative was there. What do the Indians want? they do not have common borders with Afghanistan anywhere. It is totally isolated from Afghanistan. In my view, it would not be surprising, that the Indians want to ensure that if and when the government in Afghanistan changes, it shall be an anti-Pakistan government. It is very important that while the entire world is talking about this horrible terrorist attack, our neighboring country instead of talking peace and cooperation, was trying hard to harm Pakistan and defame Islam. If you watch their television, you will find them dishing out propaganda against Pakistan, day in and day out. I would like to tell India "Lay Off".

Pakistan's armed forces and every Pakistani citizen is ready to offer any sacrifice in order to defend Pakistan and secure its strategic assets. Make no mistake and entertain no misunderstanding. At this very moment our Air Force is at high alert; and they are ready for "Do or die" Missions My countrymen! In such a situation, a wrong decision can lead to unbearable losses. What are our critical concerns and priorities? These are four:

1. First of all is the security of the country and external threat.
2. Second is our economy and its revival.
3. Third are our strategic and nuclear assets.
4. And Kashmir cause.

The four are our critical concerns. Any wrong judgement on our part can damage all our interests. While taking a decision, we have to keep in mind all these factors. The decision should reflect supremacy of righteousness and it should be in conformity with Islam. Whatever we are doing, it is according to Islam and it upholds the principle of

righteousness. I would like to say that decisions about the national interests should be made with wisdom and rational judgement.

At this moment, it is not the question of bravery or cowardice. We are all very brave. My own response in such situations is usually of daring. But bravery without rational judgement tantamount to stupidity. There is no clash between bravery and sound judgement. Allah Almighty says in the holy Quran, "The one bestowed with sagacity is the one who get a big favor from Allah". We have to take recourse to sanity. We have to save our nation from damage. We have to build up; our national respect. "Pakistan comes first, everything else comes later".

Some scholars and religious leaders are inclined towards taking emotional decisions. I would like to remind them the events of the first six years of the history of Islam. The Islamic calendar started from migration. The significance of migration is manifested from the fact that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) went from Makkah to Madina. He (PBUH) migrated to safeguard Islam. What was migration? God forbid, was it an act of cowardice? The Holy Prophet (PBUH) signed the charter of Madinah (Meesaq-e-Madinah) with the Jewish tribes. It was an act of sagacity. This treaty remained effective for six years. Three battles were fought with non-believers of Makkiah during this period - the battle of Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. The Muslims emerged victorious in these battles with the non-believers of Makkah because the Jews had signed a treaty with the Muslims.

After six years, the Jews were visibly disturbed with the progress of Islam, which was getting stronger and stronger. They conspired to forge covert relations with the non-believers of Makkah. Realizing the danger, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) signed the treaty of Hudaibiya with the Makkhans who had been imposing wars on Islam. This was a no war pact. I would like to draw your attention to one significant point of this pact. The last portion of the pact was required to be signed by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as Muhammad Rasool Allah. The non-believers contested that they did not recognize Muhammad (PBUH) as the Prophet of Allah. They demanded to erase these words from the text of the treaty. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) agreed but Hazrat Umar (R.A) protested against it. He got emotional and asked the Holy Prophet (PBUH) if he was not the messenger of God (God forbid) and whether the Muslims were not on the right path while signing the treaty.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) advised Hazrat Umar (R.A) not to be led by emotions as the dictates of national thinking demanded signing of the treaty at that time. He (PBUH) said, this was advantageous to Islam and as years would pass by you would come to know of its benefits. "This is exactly what happened. Six months later in the battle of Khyber, Muslims, by the grace of Allah, again became victorious. It should be remembered that this became possible because Makkhans could not attack because of the treaty. On 8 Hijra by the grace of Allah glory of Islam spread to Makkah.

What is the lesson for us in this? The lesson is that when there is a crisis situation, the path of wisdom is better than the path of emotions. Therefore, we have to take a strategic decision. There is no question of weakness of faith or cowardice. For Pakistan, life can

be sacrificed and I am sure every Pakistani will give his life for Pakistan. I have fought two wars. I have seen dangers. I faced them and by the grace of Allah never committed a cowardly act. But at this time one should not bring harm to the country. We cannot make the future of a hundred and forty million people bleak. Even otherwise it is said in Shariah that if there are two difficulties at a time and a selection has to be made it is better to opt for the lesser one. Some of our friends seem to be much worried about Afghanistan.

I must tell them that I and my government are much more worried about Afghanistan and Taliban. I have done everything for Afghanistan and Taliban when the entire world is against them. I have met about twenty to twenty five world leaders and talked to each of them in favor of the Taliban. I have told them that sanctions should not be imposed on Afghanistan and that we should engage them. I have been repeating this stance before all leaders but I am sorry to say that none of our friends accepted this.

Even in this situation, we are trying our best to cooperate with them. I sent Director General ISI with my personal letter to Mullah Umar. He returned after spending two days there. I have informed Mullah Umar about the gravity of the situation. We are trying our best to come out of this critical situation without any damage to Afghanistan and Taliban. This is my earnest endeavor and with the blessings of Allah I will continue to seek such a way out.

We are telling the Americans too that they should be patient. Whatever their plans, they should be cautious and balanced: We are asking them to come up with whatever evidence they have against Osama bin Laden; What I would like to know is how do we save Afghanistan and Taliban. And how do we ensure that they suffer minimum losses: I am sure that you will favor that we do so and bring some improvement by working with the nations of the world. At this juncture, I am worried about Pakistan only.

I am the Supreme Commander of Pakistan and I give top priority to the defense of Pakistan, Defense of any other country comes later. We want to take decisions in the interest of Pakistan. I know that the majority of the people favor our decisions. I also know that some elements are trying to take unfair advantage of the situation and promote their personal agenda and advance the interests of their parties. They are poised to create dissensions and damage the country. There is no reason why this minority should be allowed to hold the sane majority as a hostage. I appeal to all Pakistanis to display unity and solidarity and foil the nefarious designs of such elements who intend to harm the interests of the country.

At this critical juncture, we have to frustrate the evil designs of our enemies and safeguard national interests. Pakistan is considered a fortress of Islam. God forbid, if this fortress is harmed in any way it would cause damage to the cause of Islam. My dear countrymen, Have trust in me the way you reposed trust in me before going to Agra. I did not disappoint the nation there. We have not compromised on national honor and integrity and I shall not disappoint you on this occasion either. This is firm pledge to you. In the end before I take your leave, I would like to end with the prayer of Hazrat Musa

[Prophet Moses] as given in Sura-e-Taha: "May Allah open my chest, make my task easier, untie my tongue so that they may comprehend my intent".

May Allah be with us in our endeavors.

Source:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20080511213354/http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/pakistanpresident.htm>

**APPENDIX 4:**  
**Excerpts from WikiLeaks ‘Afghanistan War Logs’ documents, indicating Pakistani/ISI involvement in Afghan Insurgency<sup>333</sup>**

WL1. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2005/02/20)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/778AB3F3-2219-0B3F-9FA414A536B5F201/>

**An ISI sponsored car bomb terror attack is planned for police department #9.** The car previously reported stolen from PD-9 was not a police car, nor did it belong to the Kabul police. The car was a privately owned vehicle located in PD-9 when it was stolen. The attackers plan to booby-trap the car with explosives and then abandon it in PD-9. The attackers assume the PD-9 police will recognize it as a stolen vehicle and may inadvertently trigger the booby trap.

WL2. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2005/02/22)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77960E72-2219-0B3F-9FAF5E2147F735B5/>

The NDS [Afghan intelligence] expressed the view that PAKISTAN continues to harbour Opposition Military Forces/Taliban/Al Qaeda elements and that **the ISI is still bent on destabilizing the security situation in AFGHANISTAN.**

WL3. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2005/03/02)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7782059A-2219-0B3F-9F018D49515F9BA8/>

Afghan intelligence [national directorate of security] have information that an individual named QUARI ABDUL RAHMAN from Jalabad [sic] Province, who is currently living in PAGHMAN District of Kabul has been ordered by an individual named MATIN who is a senior member of INTER SERVICES INTELLIGENCE (ISI), to carry out a car bomb attack at KABUL HOTEL (located in PD 2 near the Presidential Palace).

WL4. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2005/03/27)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77842A5E-2219-0B3F-9FFA643A98BC23E1/>

MAULAWI ABDUL KABIR is planning an attack along KABUL – JALALABAD Road by means of Time Controlled Improvised Explosive Device (TCIED) and Remote Controlled Improvised Explosive Device (RCIED). **He has support from ISI and AL**

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<sup>333</sup> The excerpts are extracted from longer reports, the full texts of which are available via the links provided. Text in bold is emphasis added by the present author to highlight relevant passages concerning ISI and Pakistan. Documents are numbered (‘WLX’) for ease of reference in text.

**QAEDA.** The plan is to attack International Security Assistance Force and Coalition Forces.

WL5. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2005/03/30)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77815843-2219-0B3F-9FF40C21ABC2CC3E/>

Hannan, an Afghan male possesses seven to eight BM-12 rockets. The rockets are located in the quarry that he owns and operates in the Binihesar area of Kabul, No Further Information (NFI). There are no guards at that location. The rockets are currently buried in a hastily constructed cache and can be uncovered by hand for quick access. The rockets were visually confirmed at 1000 hours on 30 March 2005. The rockets have been modified so they can be launched from a lean-to type position without a launcher and can be ignited by using an automobile battery as the power source. Hannan is currently in Lahore, Pakistan.

Mamoor Zarjan, a former member of the Hezb-I Islami Gulbiddin (HIG) supplied the detonators for the rockets. Zarjan, a former major of Chakari district in Kabul, currently lives in Surobi and represents himself as an employee of the Ministry of Justice. Zarjan also held an administrative post during the Taliban rule of Afghanistan. **Zarjan obtained the detonators from Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate contacts in Lahor, Pakistan.**

WL6. (THREAT REPORT) Small Arms fire/Surface-to-Air Fire Threat Report Unknown (2005/10/02)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77B9440E-2219-0B3F-9F22D68336905585/>

Between 18 and 20 Sep 05 representatives from Al Qaeda, Taliban, HIG, Jalaluddin Haqqani, and Unidentified PK [Pakistani] religious party, and the Pakistani ISI attended a meeting at the Idak Madrassa in Mir Ali (N325924 E0701200, 42S XB 12115 50818), PK. The purpose of the meeting was to reinvigorate the current effort against the U.S. forces in AF [Afghanistan] by increasing the number of attacks.

WL7. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Sorobi (2006/01/07)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77A3AE8B-2219-0B3F-9F672429C8C653F6/>

A group of TALIBAN and HIG fighters, **supported by the PAK secret service ISI**, plans an attack on the dam NAGHLU (42SWD65723354), District SORUBI [sic].

WL8. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2006/01/07)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77A9055D-2219-0B3F-9FA22262A369BA98/>

Afghan Intelligence (National Directorate of Security) stated that they have information to suggest **that ISI (PAKISTANI Intelligence) have offered monetary rewards in**

varying currencies to HIG/Taliban members in Afghanistan if they successfully carry out attacks on Government of Afghanistan/ISAF/Coalition Forces.

WL9. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2006/02/26)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77A4F275-2219-0B3F-9F26DB34C1A4D0B5/>

An indication was given on 01 Mar 06 regarding planned **suicide attacks to be carried out on the Indian embassy in KABUL and the consulate general in KANDAHAR (41RQR5700001000) as well as on the Indian road construction company named Border Road Organization (BRO) in ZARANJ (41RLQ9300026000)**. According to this indication, these activities especially focus on the Indian Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) employed in AFGHANISTAN and employees of the BRO road construction company. **The ITBP has been put on permanent alert. According to this indication, members of the Pakistani intelligence service (ISI) are behind these planned suicide attacks.**

Originators note: On 27 Feb 06, Taliban attacked an Indian road construction company in the area of KHUSH ROD (41RMQ8700097000)/NIMROZ Province and destroyed several of its construction vehicles. Against this background, open sources reported that this attack was directed against BRO road construction company.

WL10. (THREAT REPORT) Small Arms fire/Surface-to-Air Fire Threat Report Unknown (2006/03/13)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77A45D1B-2219-0B3F-9F91544E631A915F/>

American and NATO forces are following up reports that **the Taliban have received vital components for shoulder-fired Stinger missiles from Pakistani officials** enabling them to be used against helicopters in Afghanistan. It is claimed that the missiles have been fitted with new battery packs **allegedly provided by the Pakistani intelligence service, ISI**, in the past four months. Western sources say they are not sure whether the supplies, needed to make the US-made missiles operational, were provided by rogue elements within the Pakistani secret service, or approved at a high level. However, the effect of re-arming the Stingers could be to make NATO aircraft vulnerable while Britain is deploying almost 6,000 soldiers in Southern Afghanistan. It is believed that the battery packs had been fitted inbetween [sic] 18 and 20 heat-seeking Stingers which can hit targets at around 12,000 feet. They are reported to have been handed over in the Quetta region in Pakistan known to be used by the Taliban to launch attacks in Southern Afghanistan.

WL11. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2006/04/10)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/779D8D35-2219-0B3F-9FC99E6A039CD38F/>

A possible suicide attacks in Kabul, **three attacks to carried out against the Indian embassy and Coalition Forces. Attacks will be commanded by ISI and executed by Al Qaeda.**

WL12. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2006/04/11)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77AC4650-2219-0B3F-9F582DF8E6CF9E1E/>

Single source reporting (Report rating: C-3) suggests that elements linked to an ISI internal faction are supposedly planning a terrorist attack against an unspecified military compound in KABUL area. The attack should take place on 13 April 06, in order to create a big media effect. A tanker truck, arriving from JALALABAD, will carry a hidden explosive device and is supposed to explode as soon as it enters the selected military compound (No Further Details Known).

WL13. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Hirat (2006/04/18)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/779C6F03-2219-0B3F-9F029710F746396B/>

Furthermore, on the 20<sup>th</sup> the same Liaison Officer reported that the Central Government in Kabul informed the local Ministry of Information office that a so called Golad Shah, **connected to the ISI (Pakistan service)**, has been ordered by Col. Abdullah to carry out attacks vs International Security Assistance Force, Provincial Reconstruction Team and Government of Afghanistan authorities and facilities.

WL14. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Unknown (2006/04/24)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/76F84050-2219-0B3F-9F6BA2D5E841808F/>

Maulawi MUFTI MONEER SHAKER, important Al Qaeda member, **has prepared together with the ISI General HAMED GUL ammunition transports from PAKISTAN to AFGHANISTAN for helping Taliban who fight against Coalition Forces in AFGHANISTAN.**

Gen. HAMED GUL ordered Gen. MOHAMMED ALI JAN to transport a large amount of ammunition and weapons to BARA village located near PESHAWAR area/PAKISTAN. **On 18 APR 06, Pakistani military members transported 65 trucks with ammunition and weapons to the TIRAH area and GHONDI village, being helped by Hajji MALEK DOWRON (or DOWRAN). They placed the ammunitions and weapons in the local people houses** (No Further Information).

These ammunitions and weapons are designated for the future Taliban attacks and operations against Coalition Forces and governmental authorities. Responsible for these ammunitions and weapons is Maulawi HABIBZAI from GARGARI village/DIH BALA district/NANGARHAR province. He was a chief of district in NANGARHAR province.

WL15. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2006/05/28)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7727CE53-2219-0B3F-9F0A82A4BB3C2DE5/>

Al Qaeda and Taliban network have a plan for burning the schools in different provinces from Afghanistan, **under the command of ISI Pakistan Col. ('Carnal') KHORSHID ALAM KHAN**. He is a member of 'SULAIMAN KHEL' tribe from Pakistan and he lives in AKORA KHATAK, located IVO NOW SHAHRA village/PESHAWAR city/Pakistan Col. KHORSHID ALAM KHAN is the religious ideologist of ISI Pakistan in SHOBA SARHAD province.

WL16. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2006/06/14)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7778F7CA-2219-0B3F-9FD8E2C81E03733A/>

It is reported that **Opposing Militant Forces groups (Taliban and Al Qaeda together with ISI of PAKISTAN) have recruited a special team, which is assigned to conduct attacks against Afghan Policy Academy (PD-5) and Afghan Land Forces Academy (PD-9).**

The team consists of 3 pedestrian suicide bombers who have intruded KABUL within last week. They have explosive in their belts [sic]. One of the bombers, Abdulwasi (phonetic, No Further Information) was an ex-student of Afghan Air Force Academy during the Taliban era. The names of the other two bombers currently unknown.

Their primary targets are the higher Afghan officials and the foreign instructors of the above-mentioned academies.

WL17. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report BAGRAM (2006/10/24)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/76FC21F7-2219-0B3F-9F94424A97B04D4A/>

On about 25 Oct 06, in CHATRAL city (42S YE 52474 70669), PAKISTAN, **Gulbuddin HEKMATYAR and Gen SUAEB, who is from ISI**, met with WAIS and ZIKRYA (the cousin of Cdr SALYM – No Further Information) from SOROBİ district, KABUL province.

Gulbuddin HEKMATYAR gave each of them, WAIS and ZIKRYA, \$2500, in order to execute attacks against BAGRAM airbase. WAIS and ZIKRYA have 12 rockets (SAKAR 20 – Egyptian-made 122mm rockets), hidden in a weapons cache in an old tunnel in SAHI Mountain (No Further Information). Gen SUAEB ordered them to launch the rockets less than 20 kilometers from BAGRAM airbase, in order to be effective, and from a place with humid soil to avoid stirring up dust and being spotted by Coalition Forces/ISAF. WAIS and ZIKRYA found an appropriate place to launch the attack around the MOGHOL KHEYL area (42S WD 60732 43728), SOROBİ valley, that offers good

conditions and concealment of the launch. They are ready to execute the attack but they are awaiting the order [from] Gulbuddin HEKMATYAR.

WL18. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2006/10/31)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7726A7E4-2219-0B3F-9FB16F9E2B683EFE/>

At the beginning of Nov 06, Mullah DADULLAH, located in MIRAM SHAH/WAZIRISTAN/PAKISTAN, gave orders to an insurgent group (No Further Information) to kidnap important persons from foreign diplomatic offices and NATO members in KANDAHAR province. **The insurgents' targets are military members of Romanian nationality and representatives from the Indian consulate.**

WL19. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Qala Zal (2006/11/21)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7736D7EF-2219-0B3F-9F3A8F54FAC386EA/>

HUMINT reports the following: A Pashto named Kdt. RUSTAM, resident of TORBA KAS (42 SVF 7677), district KONDOZ (42 SVF 8864), is planning a nightly attack on a border post at the AFG/TDJ border in the area of CAMUS KOL (42 SVG 5408), district QALAY-ZAL (42 SVF 5296). At his disposal are 5 to 8 INSURGENTS.

**RUSTAM, who returned about 4 weeks ago from CHARSADDA/PAKISTAN is said to be supported by a PAK Secret Service agent (ISI) (No Further Details Known) who is helping him in planning and conducting the assault.** Subsidies and supplies are coming from Maulawie Amir KHAN, an INSURGENTS leader who is in close contact to Gulbuddin HEKMATYAR.

WL20. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2006/12/15)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/772BA4DE-2219-0B3F-9F6201B25182F964/>

Haji NESQAY, a Pashtun and HIG commander from PAGHMAN has left PAKISTAN on 11 Dec 06 with five specialists in explosives trained by the ISI. They have gone to LALANDAR valley, which crosses CHAHAR ASIAB and PAGHMAN districts, KABUL province. They intend trapping the roads going to KABUL from this area (No Further Information). They possess C4 type explosive and "time pencil" detonators, which can delay the explosion from five to twenty minutes (No Further Information).

WL21. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2006/12/16)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/770C9DE0-2219-0B3F-9F3CC9F9C432BAA0/>

On approximately 17 Dec 06, a meeting took place between senior members of the Taliban leadership in NOWSHAHRA, Pakistan, **which included General Hamid GUL, the former Chief of the Pakistani ISI.** During this meeting GUL claimed he dispatched three unidentified individuals to Kabul city to carry out IED attacks during EID celebration. GUL instructed two of the individuals to plant IEDs along the roads frequently utilized by Government of Afghanistan and ISAF vehicles. The third individual is to carry out a suicide attack utilizing a suicide vest against Government of Afghanistan or ISAF personnel. Reportedly GUL's final comment to the three individuals was 'make the snow warm in Kabul', basically telling them to set KABUL aflame.

WL22. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2006/12/17)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77416559-2219-0B3F-9F7E4882DB6FBB4E/>

A network of both Afghani and Pakistani terrorists has been planning and executing suicide attacks in KABUL City starting with unknown date. They are carrying out these sorts of operations in present. The entire process runs cyclically.

The process includes: training of suicide attackers, reconnaissance of operation area, operation planning, transport and hosting of suicide attackers and the execution of the attacks.

Generally responsible (but in an unknown manner) for suicide operations in KABUL City is Sher ABBAS son of Afzal ABBAS, from SARGUDH PUNJAB/PAKISTAN. **He is an ISI member in charge of PISFA (Intelligence Service Planning) office in SUBA-SARHAD and part of his job is keeping agents' documents.** (OPR Comment: Source was unable to further specify this job function. ENDS.) He graduated DAR AL ULOM-E HAQQANIA (religious school) having MAULANA HAZAR MIR as one of his teachers.

WL23. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Mosahi (2007/01/01)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77505AD1-2219-0B3F-9F3B8DC856617A25/>

**Individuals belonging to deviated branches of Pakistani ISI provided five explosive devices with remote controls (Remote Control Improvised Explosive Device) and around 10,000 USD funding for terrorist activities.** Also, Mullah Shah MOHAMMAD has the intention of moving to the district in order to carry out insurgent activities.

WL24. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2007/01/09)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7756CC2C-2219-0B3F-9F30261D926A5E08/>

TALIBAN Commander FAROUQ, a former HIG Commander during the Jihad against the Soviets, was paid 600,000 Pakistani Rupees (equivalent to 10,000 USD) in order to organize and conduct attacks in the MOSAHI area of KABUL province, AFG. FAROUQ

was tasked in PESHAWAR, PAK to travel to MOSAHI and conduct attacks against ongoing and future ISAF projects in the area. FAROUQ was tasked to kidnap or kill anyone involved with ISAF/CF projects in order to stop progress.

FAROUQ, originally from the SORUBI area, commands a group of 12 fighters. Four of the fighters are from MOSAHI area. Two personnel from FAROUQ'S group are known to act as spotters and collect information of interest in the area. FAROUQ and his deputy arrived to the MOSAHI area on approximately 08 Jan 07 from PESHAWAR, PAK. The remainder of this group arrived from SORUBI on the same day. Some of the personnel in FAROUQ's group travelled from the ARKHANU tribal area, (No Further Information). The group is armed with six RPKs, two AK rifles with the folding stocks, and two RPGs. FAROUQ and his deputy are known to travel together at all times and are always armed. FAROUQ and his deputy are known to travel together at all times and are always armed. FAROUQ has several places in the MOSAHI area where he randomly stays the night.

FAROUQ received his tasking in PESHAWAR, PAK from a TALIBAN operations group responsible for planning and dispatching personnel into AFG. The group consists of several former intelligence officers under the HIG during the Jihad against the Soviets, and later became TALIBAN commanders. The following are some of the members:

- Maulawi QAYUM: A former Mujaheddin commander, and currently is in charge of recruiting for the TALIBAN in PESHAWAR.
- Engineer NAIM: Former Provincial Chief of HIG in KONAR Province during the Jihad, and currently in charge of logistics for the TALIBAN.
- Mamoor NAZARGUL: Former intelligence officer of HIG, and an administration officer in the KONAR area.
- Mullah TURYALAI: Former intelligence officer un the HIG
- The TALIBAN operations group enjoys support from the Pakistani ISI through connections with the following TALIBAN Commanders:
  - Maulawi KABIR: Former Governor of JALALABAD during the TALIBAN, and a close friend of Mullah OMAR. KABIR has close ties with the ISI and is currently in PAK.
  - TOURABI: Former Justice Minister of the TALIBAN, and is currently in PAK.
  - Maulawi Abdullah JAN: Former TALIBAN Commander and currently in PAK.

WL25. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Sayghan (2007/01/19)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BB09F74-2219-0B3F-9F5E9B4060425843/>

According to reporting from 20 Jan 2008, **the Pakistani intelligence service ISI is supposed to have instructed a Taliban group in SAYGHAN District to blow up (No Further Information) the ring road which was repaired by Indian road construction teams.** As a consequence, security headquarters in SAYGHAN and KAHMARD Districts were called upon to take appropriate security precautions.

WL26. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Char Asiab (2007/01/30)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77118483-2219-0B3F-9FACC892EFB08863/>

Mullah Toor JAN (farmer from CHAHAR ASIAB, former deputy of KANDAHAR army corps during Taliban regime) and Haji LALA (former HERAT governor under Taliban regime) are reported to be organizing Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device attacks in the KABUL area.

The Two men mentioned above are linked with FNU ASHNAGHAR, son of CHAMAN, from LALPOR district in NANGARHAR Province. He owns an automobile shop in TORHAM village (phonetic, somewhere on the border between NANGARHAR Province and PAK). **ASHNAGHAR is a sub-commander of HAJI AYUB and is believed to be working for ISI Pakistan (he is paid approximately 15,000 Pakistani rupees per month (approx. \$250)).**

ASHNAGHAR recently brought from Pakistan two natives and one Arab by the name of Abu LAIS who is trained as a suicide attacker. All three were handed over to Toor JAN and Haji LALA. Also, ASHNAGHAR helped them build a garage in CHAHAR ASIAB, which will be used as a Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device construction site.

WL27. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Char Asiab (2007/02/19)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77323F6B-2219-0B3F-9F2749B884C107C1/>

At the beginning of JAN 2007, five suicide bombers moved from PAK to AFG in order to carry out attacks along the route INDIGO. Two of them are responsible for the Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices attacks on 12 Jan 07 in MOHAMMAD AGHA District and on the 21 Jan 2007 in CHAR ASYAB (CJ2X Comment: CHAHAR ASIAB) District. The third possible suicide bomber was arrested in the bazaar of WAKH JAN (CJ2X Comment: WAGHJAN 42S WC 07017 78021), MOHAMMAD AGHA District, LOGAR Province while he was riding a motorcycle prepared with explosives while probably searching for a target. The two others are probably still in MOHAMMAD AGHA District, LOGAR Province hid in an unknown place.

Six suicide attackers are located in LOGAR province (20070118 NIC KAIA CI 009). On 05 JAN 07 (15-10-1385) a group of six suicide bombers entered Afghanistan. They had been trained in "AL NOOR" MADRASSA in KALABAT colony, ADEPOR, PAKISTAN. The chief of the MADRASSA is MAWLAWAI ABDUL MALIK. He lives in DADUKHIL village, LOGAR province. He is a member of Lashkari Taiba group (part of HIG).

When a group of six suicide bombers are prepared for attacks (from 300 people) in the MADRASSA, a special ceremony is performed. All the people congratulate them and put flowers around their necks. **The ceremony is attended by SP (COMMENT: an officer**

**rank in PAKISTANI army) NIAZ ALI. After that, ISI cars take the six suicide bombers to MIRAM SHAH and then they enter AFGHANISTAN through KHOST province.**

WL28. Meeting With Janat Khan Patan District Commissioner (2007/02/24)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/0AC82CC0-7244-4F30-B7F3-B1D19A7CC50F/>

The District Commissioner said enemy elements were entering from Pakistan facilitated by Pakistan's ISID. He said their staging point was in Mata Sangar (42SWC 913389), a Pakistan village approximately two kilometers west of the international border. He said they were crossing the border in the vicinity of 42SWC8938. He said that this area enabled the enemy to use the mountains to launch rocket attacks against his district center. The District Commissioner said the enemy was becoming very active in the Muqbal area, along a 5km stretch that began at the Naray Pass (42SWC902 337) and ran toward Matwarkh Village (42SWC826395). He stated that he though enemy activity would rise in Jani Khel District and along where Patan District bordered Khowst Province. He said that the enemy did not interrupt traffic between Chamkani and Patan because the Operational Detachment (Alpha) – special forces at the Chamkani Forward Base were stemming activity along that road.

When asked about ISID the District Commissioner demonstrated a noticeable change in his manner, as if he were seeking to hide information. He explained that Akhtaro, son of Nirbashai was the lead ISI agent staging attacks from Mata Sangar. He said that Akhtaro's operation gathered weapons in Mata Sangar prior to entering Afghanistan. He stated that he an agent who would willingly gather information to support the Americans.

WL29. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Hirat (2007/02/25)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/770E2C21-2219-0B3F-9F9BDDFC4998DB7/>

A local Authority reported that **ISI and insurgents** are going to buy alcoholic drinks from markets in Miranshah, Asmail Khan Area (Pakistan, 42S XB 00169 51688) and Peshawar in order to mix them with poison and use them for poisoning ANSF and ISAF troops. According to the source, the transfer into Afghanistan could be made both via air and ground.

WL30. Key Leader Engagement with Kapisa GOV Murrad and GEN Ewaz (Chief of Police) (2007/03/01)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/FBF9BAB6-F2D0-42BF-953B-9A55991D7A41/>

Bomb material being transported into the Bagram Security Zone (BSZ). GOV Murrad and GEN Ewaz were asked about the possibility of bomb material being shipped through the Tagab Valley from Pakistan into the BSZ. GOV Murrad said there is a possibility that there is bomb making material coming from Tagab but that it is more likely that they are

being shipped into the BSZ from either Baghlan or Kabul. He was then asked if there was a possibility that the suicide bomb used on 27 FEB 07 at Bagram Air Field came from the Tagab Valley. **GOV Murrad replied saying he believed that the material come from Pakistan through Logar and that it was facilitated by the Pakistani ISI.**

WL31. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kandahar (2007/03/14)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7749275F-2219-0B3F-9F243F3107F7615E/>

A. (S-GCTF) The first suspect named Mullah Jan MOHAMMAD son of GHULAM SARWER, is described as being medium height, 35 years old, light brown complexion wearing a black turban.

B. (S-GCTF) The second suspect named MULLAH NOORULLAH son of ABDUL MAJIA, is described as 18 years old wearing a white turban.

C. (S-GCTF) **Both suspects arrived from PAKISTAN 5 days ago. It is believed that they were trained in PAKISTAN by the ISI.**

WL32. 022359Z IROA NPCC Daily Report (2007/04/01)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/E04DEA22-F9F5-43BC-82D5-742BD76E1415/>

The Anti-Terrorism Department stated 2 Taliban Leaders, Mullah Obaidullah and Mullah Amir Khan Haqani were arrested by the Pakistani ISI and held for several days. **The two leaders were released so they could continue their terrorist attacks against Afghanistan with the assistance of the Pakistani ISI.**

WL33. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Charkh (2007/05/20)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BD4673E-2219-0B3F-9FB971084CE4BF3B/>

(25 APR 07) **ISI sent 1000 motorcycles** to MAWLAWI JALALUDIN HAQQANI for suicide attacks in KHOWST and LOWGAR Province.

WL34. 211600Z Khost Provincial Reconstruction Team Report (2007/05/21)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/799FCFF3-2AE5-41E2-A72B-324B7A41893C/>

NDS source reported that on 17 May a meeting was held between Siraj ((HAQQANI)) and several of the area ACM leaders at the Dondi Madrassa in Miram Shah. **Apparently the meeting was attended by ISI** and the following key leaders:

Bakta ((JAN))

Malawi ((NAIB))  
Sagin ((ZADRAN))  
Malawi ((QUYAN UDIN))  
Abbas ((KHAN))  
Faiz ((MOHOMMED))  
Malawi Bakht ((JAMAL))

The commanders were advised by S HQN [Haqqani network] to conduct massive terror attacks throughout the province, each commander responsible for a specific district or section of the province. HQN also requested that they also try to recruit reliable sources to provide intelligence on CF and NASF movements, specifically outlined was the need to report on movements from both Forward Operating Base Salerno and Chapman. They also wanted information on area checkpoint operations.

WL35. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Khaki Jabar (2007/05/30)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7C4CB23A-2219-0B3F-9FC25F5DCAF111FF/>

Liaison Officer has reported that some Taliban leaders with the help of ISI (intelligence Service of PAKISTAN) have sent some people in AFGHANISTAN, especially in KABUL CITY, to kidnap foreigners.

WL36. 052030Z IROA NPCC Daily Report (2007/06/05)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/42AB48EE-66FA-4043-AD73-CBFFA549A49F/>

Intelligence Department is reporting that the ISI Department of Pakistan has ordered Taliban and other Islamic party members to kidnap foreign citizens from within Afghanistan. They are especially to kidnap India nationals. Once they have been kidnapped, the Taliban or Islamic group is to take pictures or video and then kill the hostages.

WL37. 071800 Khost Provincial Reconstruction Team Report (2007/06/07)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/6046932B-4532-486E-9441-064177743C71/>

**Afghan Border Police also reported that ISI is apparently trying to reignite tensions between the Pakistan military and Afghan security forces. ISI convened or has invited 6 individuals to a meeting to discuss these matters.** Afghan Border Police source reported the names as:

Abdul ((WAHID)) aka ((OSCAR))  
Ehir ((KHAN))  
Zakir ((HUSSAIN)) (Shia)  
Said ((KARMAL))  
Taj ((MOHOMMED)), former Anti-Coalition Militia commander

These individuals **will be led by an ISI officer**, utilizing a cover name (No Further Information). This group will operate in Patan and Jani Khil Districts (Paktia). **Pakistan military will assist this group**, assigning sub groups of 3-5 individuals to plant IEDs and plan suicide bombings in the area of the Kabul/Gardez road.

WL38. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Sorobi (2007/06/10)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7C25E221-2219-0B3F-9FCD14396E349875/>

Dr. TALEB, Chief of Operations of SUROWBI Police, SUROWBI City (GRID 42S WD 712 275), SUROWBI District, KABUL Province, is connected with PAKISTANI intelligence service DIRECTORATE OF INTER SERVICES INTELLIGENCE (ISI) via SATCOM. The father of Dr. TALEB is FNU OBAIDULLAH.

The policemen of the checkpoint located east of SUROWBI, KHUSHAL SNU and SAMIULLAH SNU, meet with Mullah QADER twice a week in GALUCH Village (42S WD 845 396), SUROWBI District, KABUL Province. The commander of the checkpoint in SUROWBI is Mohammad NAIM. (No Further Information)

(NATO/ISAF Confidential) Regarding the mentioned persons, the AFGHAN Intelligence Service Afghan intelligence [national directorate of security] assumes they are planning an attack against the power station in SUROWBI (42S WD 712 278). (No Further Information)

(NATO/ISAF Confidential) FHT Assessment: Due to the fact that our source has direct access to the senior leadership of the Afghan intelligence [national directorate of security] we assessed this sparse information as worthy to be reported.

(NATO/ISAF Confidential) DEU FHT reported about a member of the police called Dr. TALEB several times. Dr. TALEB has been supposedly involved in criminal affairs and preparations for attacks against Coalition Forces repeatedly. Dr. TALEB is supposed to be a former JAMIAT-E ISLAMI commander and later on a TALIBAN commander (see HR51 051105-001GER "Illegal road fees collected by Police in SUROBI (C3)"...

(NATO/ISAF Confidential) We don't have any information available concerning a possible connection between Dr. TALEB and the PAKISTANI intelligence service ISI, however it cannot be fully excluded.

WL39. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2007/07/22)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7C21E8BC-2219-0B3F-9FD50FC7DE83C7C2/>

On 23 JUL 07, Qari BARYAL arrived from CHITRAL Area, Pakistan to TAG AB District, KAPISA Province (No Further Information). In order to increase Taliban activities in this province and in KABUL City.

Qair BARYAL arrived **with ISAR (ISI Pakistan member)** and with a suicide bomber by the name of Abu MUSHTABA.

(NATO/ISAF Confidential) Qari BARYAL and ISAR are recruiting and gathering Insurgents from TAG AB and ALA SAI Districts, KAPISA Province and they are buying weapons for them in order to start new Taliban activities in the area (No Further Information). ISAR is 30 years old, tall, thin, dark complexion, uses pakul, he speaks Urdu, Pashtu and he is responsible with the payment for the weapons (No Further Information).

(NATO/ISAF Confidential) On 26 JUL 07, Abu MUSHTABA arrived in POL-E CHARKI Area (No Further Information), KABUL City with a Toyota Corola taxi with VRN 78824. Abu MUSHTABA was helped to come in KABUL City by Mira JHAN, a police officer from ALA SAI District, KAPISA Province.

Abu MUSHTABA is Arab and he is 35 years old, fat, medium size, has long black beard, uses pakul and he speaks Dari and Pashtu. Qari BARYAL brought him in order to conduct a suicide attack (with a vest full of explosives) against Coalition Forces in KABUL City.

WL40. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Bagrami (2007/08/23)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BD74168-2219-0B3F-9FB15067D4FDB418/>

We can't make of sure an [sic] assertion about Jaghlan HALIL's identity, but this one could be the same as HALIL GUL, a Taliban Leader from PAT KHAWAB area, LOWGAR province. Reportedly, he provided rockets propelled [sic] Grenade-7, more than 150,000 Afghani and a digital camera to CAVID, son of Abdul RAHMAN, and DAOUD (No Further Information), son of Ali Shah KHAN, in order to assist them in mounting attacks in KABUL Province. According to the same contact, **CAVID has known links to Pakistan ISI** (G2X INTELLIGENCE REPORT NO 20/20070813).

CAVID could be Ahmad CAVID, born SHAKAR DARREH 942S WD 00-38), reported as an insurgent seen in PD-4 on March 2007 (TUR FHT HR 106/20070327, photo annexed).

WL41. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Khas Konar (2007/08/31)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BCF9FDB-2219-0B3F-9FAD86910ED87F6C/>

1. Under the overall leadership of HIG Commander Haji Kashmir KHAN, a group of HIF fighters will conduct a massive attack involving at least 150 insurgents on an unspecified forward operating base in MANAGY District, KUNAR Province. The attack will take place between 1 September 2007 and 6 September 2007. Insurgents are currently in position and are awaiting commands from KHAN attack.

2. It will be a five pronged attack consisting of 82mm artillery, rockets, foot soldiers, and multiple suicide bombers. Insurgents may attempt to capture members of the forward operating base.

3. Prior to the bombardment, approximately four suicide bombers will attack the Forward Operating Base. They will target storage areas and the gates. SAMEOLA, a Pakistani from CHANGI BAJOR Madrassa, is one of the suicide bombers. One other is Arab and the two others are Afghans.

...

**Captain YOUNIS, Pakistani ISI, will be present during the attack and is an advisor for the attack.** The attack will include 30 Arabs, 41 Pakistanis, and 17 Uzbeks. Most of the fighters were trained in the BALISAR PESHAWAR military facility. Other training occurred in an unspecified Madrassa. The commander of many of the soldiers is Hahi Abdul.

**The Chinese-manufactured ammunition provided to insurgents for this attack was supplied by Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).**

WL42. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Pahgman (2007/09/01)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7C0C6ECF-2219-0B3F-9F6100A73A1DC744/>

By the order of Maulawi KEFAYETULLAH (phonetic, commander of Taliban in JALREYZ/WARDAK, No Further Information), Gulam SERVER intruded into PISTABADAM Village/PAGHMAN/KABUL (not found on map), with 5 Insurgents on 02 September 2007. This group has 2 remote controlled explosives. Followings below to Gulam SERVER has been given order to [sic]:

- a. To conduct Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device or BBIED attacks primarily foreigners and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan,
- b. To set fire on schools of region primarily the Girl School,
- c. If it is possible, to conduct assassination attacks against the chief personnel of Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

They are planning to conduct these attacks in PAGHMAN on Route RED (NFDK).

**The leader of terrorist organization LESHKERY TAYYIBE / Pakistan Mawlana Idris CHATRALI has supported the Taliban and Al Qaida for the last 2 years. Also,**

Mawlana HAQSAR is loyal to this organization, lives in KABUL and conducts attacks against US Forces in north of KABUL.

Mawlana HAQSAR took delivery of 2 Insurgents who came from Pakistan in DEH SABZ on 01 September 2007. One of them will conduct BBIED and the other one will conduct Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device attack against US Forces in road BAGRAM (BOTTLE) (No Further Information Known).

This information MUST NOT be disseminated to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

G2X Comment: Maulawi KEFAYETULLAH was reported as a Taliban supporter and suicide attacker facilitator active NERKH and MAYDAN SHAHR Districts of WARDAK Province (OHR TU FHT 012/09 NOV 2006).

Gulam SERVER is almost certainly the same as Gulam SERWER reported as member of the twelve-headed Hizb-e Islami council in the SAROWBI District (KABUL MULTI-NATIONAL BRIGADE Threat Assessment 18 May 04).

LESHKERY TAYYIBE (also met as LASHKAR-I TAYYEBA) is a fundamentalist movement from PAKISTAN. Before 2001 it was well organized and armed, and it had some training centers for mujahedins from all world. It was the most serious challenge to the Indian armed forces, being responsible for several attacks in KASHMIR, killing a large number of Indian soldiers, as well as civilians, both Hindu as well as Muslim. In the past it trained mujahedins for all Islamic movements: AFGHANISTAN, BOSNIA, CHECHNYA, KOSOVO, PHILIPPINES and KASHMIR but after 2001, US pressed PAKISTAN to take measures against terrorist organizations, including LASHKAR-I TAYYEBA. **It is presumed that the funds are provided by ISI** (Regional Command Capital G2X HUMINT SUMMARY 20070327).

WL43. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2007/09/20)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7C455F88-2219-0B3F-9F01DB6A21E75B76/>

A grey color Toyota Corolla (VRN: 4651, NANGARHAR) was loaded with explosives between Afghanistan-Pakistan's frontier in NANGARHAR and LANDIK Hotel in Pakistan. This vehicle will intrude into the KABUL via JALALABAD-CRIMSON by Al Qaida. They are planning to conduct a Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device attack in the vicinity of HOTEL ARIANA (No Further Details Known).

Counterterrorist Center Comment: Only Pakistan Army units are in the area between Pakistan boundary and Hotel LANDIK. **Probably, the vehicle was loaded by ISI.**

**It is likely that ISI may be involved as supporter of this attack. We have received in the past some reports about possible involvement of ISI in logistical chains of Opposing Militant Forces.**

WL44. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Device Threat Report Kabul (2007/10/29)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BBB32BA-2219-0B3F-9F5F57709B702B35/>

**According to a source (C6) Al Qaida and ISI formed an attack group that was called “GENERAL”.** There are six suicide bombers in the group, two of them are Chinese, two of them are Uzbek and the others are Arab. The suicide bombers intruded into KHOST with guides who are loyal to Serajuddin HAQQANI on 21<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2007. They will go to PAGHMAN/KABUL via PAKTIA-LOWGAR-MOSAHI/KABUL in order to conduct attacks when they have suitable conditions (No Further Details Known).

WL45. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2007/10/30)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BE2D49A-2219-0B3F-9F7389894BC89200/>

During a routine meeting with a high-ranking Afghan intelligence (national directorate of security) officer we got to know a still ongoing investigation concerning the use of children as a carrier of suicide west in Kabul [sic]. About 3 weeks ago 2 children were arrested by Afghan intelligence (national directorate of security) in PD2 area (near the green mosque). They reported about a possible recruitment of them by suspects to wear a suicide west and to go in close contact to foreigners, Coalition Forces and ISAF gates. They did not get any explanation how to detonate the west, the explosion should be triggered remote controlled [sic]. Only children of poor families had been chosen for that type of recruitment because the families should get some money for that. **Reportedly close links to HIG and ISI had been uncovered during the still ongoing investigations.**

WL46. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2007/11/17)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BC2F378-2219-0B3F-9F595237BDDB2B74/>

**ISI gave order to SARKATEEP (phonetic, loyal to HIG, a member of ISI, No Further Information) to establish relations with some Afghans and to conduct attacks against India Consulships in JALALABAD, KABUL, HERAT, KANDAHAR and MEZAR-E-SHARIF.** Currently SARKATEEP is in JALALABAD. He established relations with a driver whose name is Sardar SHAH (phonetic, an employee of India Consulship in JALALABAD, No Further Information) and he is going on to establish relations with another Afghan employee. After that he will go to KABUL (G2X HUMINT SUMMARY, 16 November 2007).

WL47. (THREAT REPORT) Improvised Explosive Devices Threat Report Daulatshahi (2007/11/20)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BDB1832-2219-0B3F-9FE03C0C378D1F28/>

Chapow Brings Remote-Controlled Improvised Explosive Devices to Laghman; **Meeting With ISI About Suicide Attacks Shah Noor Chapow**, a Taliban commander in Dowlat Shah District, Laghman Province held a meeting on 15NOV07 in the village of Kacha Chaka (CAN). On 21NOV07, Chapow brought Remote-Controlled Improvised Explosive Devices from Nuristan Province. **Additionally, one member of Pakistan's ISI Agency came to Dowlat Shah District on an unknown date to discuss working with Chapow on suicide attacks against Coalition Forces/Afghan National Army.**

WL48. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Char Asiab (2007/11/27)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BF6AF2F-2219-0B3F-9F97901562564550/>

Towards the 28 NOV 2007, MAMOUR RACHID arrived in the district of CHAR ASIAB (WD 0603) with one of his collaborators called ADJI WAIS. The two men arrived from PAKISTAN with a score of Remote-Controlled Improvised Explosive Device. **They are both active members of the Hizb-e Islami-H and important contacts of the Pakistani ISI.** It would seem that they envisaged committing attacks in the police districts 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8 of KABUL like in the district of BAGRAMI (WD 3016). The objectives and the dates on which they decided to perpetrate their attacks are currently not known.

WL49. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2007/12/06)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BACAB00-2219-0B3F-9FEA2877C3B36048/>

The Ministry of Communication charged an Indian Company with establishing the communication system for telephone and Internet in PD9 and PD12, KABUL. Taliban and ISI are planning to kidnap or assassinate employees and engineers of the Indian Company. On 08 Dec 2007, Mullah SHAFEK and Mullah NAKIB (phonetic, NFI) intruded into GOLBAGH (42S WD 1208), KABUL with three Insurgents having 2 RCIEDS. They are planning to conduct Remote Control Improvised Explosive Device attacks in CHAHAR ASIAB/KABUL against International Security Assistance Force and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. On 07 DEC 2007, Mullah Aktar GUL, Zahet HUSEYN and Khan SHALEE (phonetics, NFI) came to JALALABAD from Pakistan. All of them are suicide bombers. They are planning to intrude into BAGRAMI/KABUL, PD9 and PD12/KABUL separately and to conduct Suicide IED attacks against foreigners.

WL50. 080430Z PRT Nangarhar Meeting with Governor Sherzai (2007/12/08)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/B323B8C2-9597-447E-A939-1AAC90D69EFE/>

**Attacks on Indian Consulate: DOS Rep expressed concern that attacks on Indian Consulate may be a deterrent to private sector investment. Gov Sherzai responded that after the first attack additional Afghan National Police forces were assigned to guard the Consulate. This move proved ineffective. Sherzai believes that Pakistani ISI backed individuals may be conducting the attacks from a hotel/wedding hall across the street from the Consulate. HE also stated that he thinks the Consulate should be relocated because the current location is too difficult to secure. DOS Rep replied that this should be discussed with the Indian Consul General. Sherzai said that we will discuss again after Eid. Until then he will order increased security at the Consulate. At the end of the meeting, Dep Gov Alizai, Afghan National Police Chief Gafar and PCC Chairman Talawar joined the group. More detailed discussion of the Indian Consulate attacks ensued. The Afghan National Police is investigating and is pursuing two theories: 1) that former security guards, who happen to be Pashaii, are initiating the attacks in retaliation for being fired, or 2) that the hotel owner from across the street is trying to force the Consulate to move so he can occupy the land and use it as a parking area for his establishment.**

WL51. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2007/12/18)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BE4D28D-2219-0B3F-9FABAB3009D93A85/>

(NS REL International Security Assistance Force) **Extremists reportedly collaborate with Pakistani Intelligence Agent to plan suicide attacks in KABUL, KHOST, Afghanistan, mid-December 2007 Extremist leaders in Pakistan, in coordination with a Pakistani intelligence agent, allegedly planned to send three children to conduct suicide attacks in the Afghan cities of KABUL and KHOST on or shortly after the Eid ul-Adha holiday on 20 December 2007.**

WL52. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2008/01/04)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7C1DAFDD-2219-0B3F-9F05750ACE4F8F8A/>

Planned Kidnappings of high-ranking Afghan government employees.

The following information was received on 01 Jan 08: **HAMID GUL, the former chief of the Pakistani intelligence service ISI, is planning to abduct high-ranking Afghan government employees. To this end, he wants to bring Arabs, Chechens, and Kashmiris into position along the roads KABUL-NANGARHAR and TOWR KHAM-NANGARHAR. He intends to make use of the hostages in order to obtain the release of members of the LASHKAR-E TAYYIBA party imprisoned in KABUL.**

WL53. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Behsood (2008/01/13)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BE2B829-2219-0B3F-9FC9793AACB91D71/>

(Secret, release only to: TO USA, International Security Assistance Force, NATO)  
Taliban To Conduct Kidnappings A group of 15 to 20 Taliban members led by Qari ((Naqibullah)) plan to kidnap members of the UN traveling between Kabul (42SWD1682719461), Kabul District, through Jalalabad (42SQA5694572638), Jalalabad District to the Torkam Gate Pass (42SXC9304477715) of Nangarhar Province. **The group led by Naqibullah is working with the coordination of retired Pakistani General Hamid ((Gul)).** This group is targeting un vehicles marked with black lettering, which Naqibullah believes is an indicator that the vehicle is carrying high level UN officials or members of the UN intelligence service. The Taliban led by Naqibullah will only target UN vehicles with black lettering. The Taliban group led by Naqibullah will travel on the Kabul to Torkam Gate stretch of Highway One in at least two vehicles. One of the vehicles is described as being a black land cruiser with tinted windows, the Taliban members are armed with Russian or Chinese made pistols and Assault rifle assault rifles. The 15 to 20 Taliban members are comprised of Afghan, Pakistani, Kashmiri, and Arab males.

The Taliban members led by Naqibullah will travel on the Kabul Jalalabad stretch of Highway One in at least two vehicles, to include the black land cruiser. One vehicle will conduct surveillance along the road while the second will be used to conduct the kidnapping. Once the Taliban have spotted a UN vehicle with black lettering, the Taliban will stop the UN vehicle by either using a barricade constructed from rocks and lumber or one vehicle will pull in front of the UN vehicle and force the UN vehicle to stop while the second vehicle follows the UN vehicle. The Taliban members will use the pistols to threaten the UN vehicle occupants. Should the Taliban members meet resistance in the effort to conduct the kidnapping, the Taliban members will use the Assault rifle rifles to combat the resistance or kill the hostages.

After the Taliban conduct the kidnapping, Naqibullah plans to trade the hostages for 10 prisoners currently detained in the Pol-e-Charki prison located in Pol-e-Charki (42SWD3437924478), Deh Sabz District, Kabul Province Afghanistan. **The prisoners Naqibullah hopes to trade the hostages for include three Pakistani soldiers, ((Rahihullah)), and six other detainees. Naqibullah has been instructed by Gul to place a higher priority in securing the release of the Pakistani soldiers. The Pakistani soldiers are currently presenting themselves as Pakistani doctors in an effort to conceal the fact that the Pakistani soldiers are members of the Pakistani army.** At least one of the detainees was found to have a cell phone inside Pol-e-Charki prison. In addition, the three detainees also have connections to Noor ((Adin)), the director of the International Red Cross near Camp Phoenix (42SWD2394722782), Kabul District, Kabul Province. Gul has been instructed by Adin to inform Adin personally when the kidnapping is conducted and to not advertise the capture to anyone else. Adin will then secure the release of the detainees, to include the three Pakistani soldiers and Rahihullah in exchange for Gul releasing the UN hostages.

**Naqibullah is a Taliban commander responsible for 15 to 20 Taliban members and is directly subordinate to Gul.** Naqibullah is from the village of Ashpan (42SXE4673815181), Sherzad District, Nangarhar Province and is currently living at the Hadah farm in the Khalis residential area of Jalalabad City. **Gul is a retired Pakistani**

**ISI general currently serving with the Lashkar Taiba faction of the Pakistan military.** The Lashkar Taiba faction conducts operations in eastern Afghanistan and the Kashmir region of northern Pakistan.

WL54. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Unknown (2008/01/17)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BC7990B-2219-0B3F-9F4F9F5E010CBC95/>

(Nato/ISAF Confidential) ESPIONAGE - SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITY:

There was not any (0) report related to possible surveillance activity this week, but one information reports possible future espionage activity.

Possible Future Espionage towards International Security Assistance Force  
(RC-C G2X HUMINTSUM 2008/01/30) Information reported as F6.

(1)(Nato/ISAF Confidential) **On 18 Jan 2008, a meeting took place between Al Qaida, Taliban, HIG and ISI members in NORTH WAZIRISTAN / PAKISTAN.** There were three main subjects in the meeting mentioned below.

(2)(Nato/ISAF Confidential) 45 INSs are going to take foreign language courses especially German, English and French in PIR BAGAR (phonetic, No Further Information) / NORTH WAZIRISTAN (PK). The courses will continue between 4-6 months. They are planning to come to KABUL City In order to be interpreter in International Security Assistance Force (NFDK).

(3)(Nato/ISAF Confidential) 70 INSs started to take driving course in PESHAWAR District/ PAKISTAN. At the end of the course, they will take fake driver licenses of LOWGAR, KABUL, KAPISA, PARWAN and JALALABAD Provinces. The course will continue approximately 1.5 months. **All the trainers are the officers of ISI and they drive Toyota pick-ups for the course.** They are planning to be drivers in Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police, and Afghan intelligence [national directorate of security] in aforementioned provinces (NFDK).

(4)(Nato/ISAF Confidential) All the participants to the meeting were ordered to find new INSs, especially the young people, by spreading propaganda in Madaris and Mosques. It is assessed that they will try to find the INSs in the south regions of AFGHANISTAN and northwest regions of PAKISTAN, especially in PUNJAB District of PAKISTAN (NFDK).

WL55. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Pech (2008/03/07)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BB182FE-2219-0B3F-9FF4CC47CA66E7E2/>

(Secret, release only to: TO USA, International Security Assistance Force, NATO)  
**Pakistan's ISI Increased Intelligence Capability Against Government of the Islamic**

**Republic of Afghanistan, Training Afghan, Arab And Pakistani Youth To Support Insurgent Attacks.** Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) directorate has opened new offices in border areas of Miram Shah, Waziristan, Islamabad, Parachenar and Kurrum Agency to monitor the movements of international Coalition Forces in Konar, Nuristan and Nangarhar Provinces. The purpose is to intensify intelligence activities and terrorist operation against the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan), particularly in Konar and Nangarhar Provinces.

**ISI also trains an unknown number of Afghan, Arab and Pakistani youths in the training centers in Pakistan and sends the trained terrorists into Konar and Nangarhar Provinces. With the help of veteran Taliban and Al Qaeda members, former Jihadi commanders, Wahabis and members of Hezbe Islami Gulbuddin (HIG), they carry out terrorist operations against Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.** Intelligence information indicates that Al Qaeda and Taliban networks, Wahabis, and HIG members plan to start a series of joint terrorist activities, armed attacks, Improvised Explosive Device (Improvised Explosive Device) attacks, assassinations, and suicide attacks against Provincial Reconstruction Teams (Provincial Reconstruction Team), Coalition Forces (Coalition Forces) and Afghan Armed Forces bases in Konar and Nangarhar Provinces. Resumption of terrorist attacks has already been noted in Sarkanu, Manugai, Karangal, Ganj Gar areas, Sandari Barugai, Murawarah, Narang and other vulnerable areas in these provinces.

80 insurgents commanded by Taliban Commanders Qari ((Ruhullah)), Sahib ((Zamin)) and Qari ((Farouq)), armed with one DShK (Russian 12.7MM, Heavy Machinegun), a 82MM gun, Rocket Launcher, and unknown amount of light weapons have taken position in Amriyungi, Dewgal Valley (Dara-E Dewgal), and Chaoki District, Konar Province. They plan to attack Coalition Forces in Dewgal Valley and carry out guerilla and Improvised Explosive Device attacks against Afghan Police posts, and abduct employees of the road building company in the area.

WL56. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat (2008/03/21)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BE93069-2219-0B3F-9FC8ADDCFCCA9F38/>

#### ISI ORDER MURDER AND KIDNAPPINGS

Organization(s) Involved: HAQQANI NETWORK, INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE, TALIBAN SOUTH

Attacks Against Road Construction Workers: (NSI) Credible reporting dated 22 Mar 08, indicated attacks against civil engineers and workers building roads in NIMRUZ Province are being planned. In one particular case, **it was reported that the ISI ordered Serajuddin HAQQANI to eliminate Indian nationals working in AFGHANISTAN, in exchange for amounts between 15,000 and 30,000 USD.** According to the same report, Taliban are also planning to kidnap doctors, officers (No Further Information),

engineers and labourers who work on the roads between ZARANI and DELARAM.  
(BICP PIR 1.2, 1.3)

WL57. (THREAT REPORT) SAFIRE Threat Report (2008/04/25)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BF44255-2219-0B3F-9FB4A508094E1F1A/>

**1. Recently a request was made by the QUETTA Shura to Maj ASHRAF of the PAKISTANI Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to provide personnel to train Taliban (TB) fighters in the use of Surface to Air Missile systems.** On Thu 24 Apr 08, in response to this request ASHRAF deployed up to 12 ISI officers who specialise in SAM systems and deployed them in 4 man teams to the provinces of ZABUL, KANDAHAR and HELMAND. The 3 teams each carried a number of SAMs provided by the ISI.

**2. The ISI officers intend to instruct TB Fighters in the use of SAMs against ISAF aircraft that provide air support during the fighting with the TB.** Each team will provide training to TB fighters who serve under the following TB commanders:

- a. Senior TB Commander in ZABUL Province, Mullah Amir KHAN.
- b. Senior TB Commander in KANDAHAR Province, Mullah Abdul HAKIM (NIPPY)
- c. A senior TB (NED) in MUSA ALE'S (41S PR 668 806)

WL58. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Kabul (2008/06/22)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BF1E8F4-2219-0B3F-9FA30C981AFAD55A/>

**A group of four suicide bombers, with direct contact to the Pakistani ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate), which is reportedly providing the group with logistical and operational support.** The four suicide bombers have a VBIED in their possession, as well as a suicide vest.

The group is planning to target the Ministry of Communication (Grid: 42SWD1604419844); secondary targets include the Serena Hotel (Grid: 42S WD 16483 19895), or the National Bank of Afghanistan (Grid: 42SWD1684820984), or the Ministry of Finance (Grid: 42S WD 16616 19806). The group is planning to conduct an attack via bicycle, followed by an attack with a SVBIED.

WL59. (THREAT REPORT) Other Report Kabul (2008/07/16)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7B2AB49E-2219-0B3F-9F03F492CCEB596E/>

HIG AND ISI TO CONDUCT ATTACKS IN SUROBI

Organization(s) Involved: HEZB E ISLAMI GULBUDDIN,INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE

17 JUL 2008, ARSI Intelligence summary, NSI

**Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the HiG, along with the Pakistani Inter Service-Intelligence Agency (ISI), have reportedly funded Nadji Nasrat, for an upcoming offensive in Surobi district.** The plans call for several attacks - 70% of which should occur within the next two weeks - of approximately three to four hours in length, to be conducted; the attacks will be used to serve the Taliban propaganda agenda, as the attacks will demonstrate the government's inability to provide adequate security, and the strength of the Taliban.

WL60. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Tag Ab (2008/07/17)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/78748A70-2219-0B3F-9F22F77EC8B1F46B/>

18 JUL 2008, Afghan Regional Security Integrated Command KABUL Intelligence summary, NSI

There is an attack threat to the Naghlu Dam (Grid: 42SWD657335), the Surobi Dam (Grid: 42S WD 710 280), and the Manj Ghar Dam (Grid: 42SWD560390) - one hundred and twenty insurgents, under the command of HiG Commander Gulham Nebi Hashimi, **and by the order of the Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence Agency (Pakistan ISI), are planning to attack either all or one of the aforementioned dams.** The insurgents are also planning on destroying bridges and schools in Surobi district. As of the 09JUL08, the group of insurgents have reportedly infiltrated into the Wochakanay village (Grid: 42S WD 77 41), in the Uzbin valley of Surobi.

WL61. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Chaparhar (2008/08/02)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7814644E-2219-0B3F-9FD2822D362B6B9C/>

(S//REL TO USA, ISAF, NATO) SVBIED To Target CF/Government Officials In Chaparhar. **From June to July 2008, Sayed ((Manan)), a resident of Sholana Village (42SXC24509150), Chaprahar District, Nangahar Province, received training at a training camp ran by Pakistani ISI at an undisclosed location in Pakistan.** On an unknown date in late June 2008, Manan was provided an unknown amount of an advance payment and operational expenses. Manan paid 260,000 Pakistani rupees in operational expenses to purchase a red Toyota Corolla with license plate: 2482-SH, Nangahar Province, from an unknown car dealer in Chaprahar District. Manan planned to plant an unknown amount and type of explosives to assemble a VBIED to conduct a suicide attack against either CF convoys or Gul Agha ((Sherzai)), Nangahar Provincial Governor.

WL62. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Nahr Surkh (2008/08/02)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7AAAB2A8-2219-0B3F-9F935712CC202992/>

**On 3 Aug 08, reporting indicated the presence of PAKISTANI instructors (rumours have switched between ISI personnel and weapons experts) in the UPPER GERESHK VALLEY.** These personnel are reportedly being protected by 8-9 bodyguards provided by EF commander Mullah JABAR. Further reporting indicated that there is currently a build-up of fighters in SHURAKAY, and also a number of fighters in the QALEH-YE-GAZ area. These fighters move south during daylight hours, but return north at night. EF in the area reportedly are planning to attack PB ATTAL with the intent to overrun it in and also are looking to ambush an ISAF patrol near FOB ARMADILLO, with approximately 30-50 fighters. It is reported that EF intent for the coming months will be very aggressive, due to cessation of operations during the following winter months and limited operational success this year.

WL63. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Sorobi (2008/08/05)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7B40E5E4-2219-0B3F-9F8EF95ED3DF89F5/>

#### SUICIDE THREAT AGAINST RUSSIAN ENGINEERS

Organization(s) Involved: INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE  
DIRECTORATE, TALIBAN CENTER

06 AUG 2008, RC CAPITAL INTEL REPORT FROM NPCC, NSI

KABUL PROVINCE: based on Counter Terrorism Department report dated 05/08/08, **Pakistan ISI tasked TB Commanders Gholam Nabi, Qari Nejat, and Shaghli in Uozbin Village of Sorobi to prepare a suicide attacker with ANP uniform to conduct suicide against Russian Engineers.**

WL64. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Kabul (2008/09/21)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7AEB6259-2219-0B3F-9F9FC06E423F58A0/>

(NS) Pakistani intelligence officer targets Afghan President KARZAI for assassination  
(NS) **A Pakistan Inter-services Intelligence (ISI) officer has targeted Afghan President HAMED KARZAI for assassination**, according to information from August 21, 2008. **Colonel MOHAMMAD YUSEF from the ISI had directed Taliban official Maulawi IZZATULLAH to see that KARZAI was assassinated.** IZZATULLAH assigned ABDULBARI from the SAROWBI District to assassinate KARZAI in a suicide mission at the Presidential Palace. There was no information as to how or when this was to be carried out.

WL65. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Kabul (2008/09/22)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7A84F1BD-2219-0B3F-9F5E221240303FA0/>

(C//REL TO USA, International Security Assistance Force, NATO) Suicide Attack Targeting Ministry of Defence in Kabul. **Taliban commander Maulawi Kabir met ISI representatives in Peshawar, PK in early September.** Reportedly, he received an order to organize a suicide attack against the MoD building in Kabul city. To execute the order he has to prepare a small truck Nissan as a Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device by loading it with gas cylinders filled with explosives. The probable target of the truck will be the MoD entrance.

WL66. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Kabul (2008/10/21)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7BA190F6-2219-0B3F-9F2BB670A06C388A/>

Afghan Regional Security Integrated Command KABUL Intelligence summary, NSI Hazrat Nur, a resident of Nangarhar province, **was reportedly tasked by Jan Mohammad, a Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agent, to conduct a Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device attack against an unidentified embassy in Kabul.** Nur will be assisted in his preparations for the attack by Qarnill Amjad. The Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device vehicle is a grey Toyota Surf (Platoon# 13357); the vehicle was last seen in Khost province.

WL67. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Kabul (2008/11/16)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7B34AA9A-2219-0B3F-9FF86AD1222D04E1/>

A group of eleven Taliban insurgents from Pakistan came to the Uzbin Valley, Surobi District. **Under the direction of Pakistani ISI,** they plan to conduct suicide attacks as well as ambushes to checkpoints and foreigners along Route Violet.

WL68. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Kabul (2009/01/03)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7802440B-2219-0B3F-9F8C96E4A3C753E9/>

(NS) Afghan security officials on 31 December also reported that three foreigners under the command of one KARIM BIK had entered KABUL Province from LOWGAR Province using one blue and one grey Toyota Ace vehicle and one white Toyota Corolla, all loaded with explosives. These officials believed that these foreigners were planning to conduct Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device attacks on Coalition Forces (CFs) or Afghan National Army convoys in KABUL City. **KARIM BIK, according to Afghan officials, reportedly was an active member of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).**

WL69. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Sorobi (2009/01/05)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/78523FD0-2219-0B3F-9FF02E00B6A2578A/>

Anti-Afghan forces move blue jingle truck VBIED to Sarobi district.

On 5 January 2009, from 2100 to 2300 hours local time, Anti-Afghan forces commanders ((NAZIR)), ((HALLIMULLAH)), ((MALANG)), based in Wana, South Wzairistan Agency (SWA), Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Pakistan, held a meeting to discuss their plans to avenge the death of Zamarai. The meeting was conducted at the residence of HAJI ((YACOUB)) in Wana. Also in attendance were three unidentified older Arab males, who were considered important. (Source comment: the Arabs were believed to be important because they had a large security contingent with them.) At least one of the three unidentified Arabs in attendance was proficient in the Pashtun language and the Arabs were accompanied by approximately 20 Arab bodyguards. ((HAMID GUL)), a former member of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), was in attendance at the meeting also. HAMID GUL was described as being an older man and a very important person ISI. (Comment: HAMID GUL was Director General of ISI from 1987-1989 and, according to ISI, has not been an official with ISI since that time. It was not known whether HAMID GUL was acting with the knowledge or consent of ISI, or whether any portions of ISI were aware of his activities.)

...

HAMID GUL encouraged the Anti-Afghan forces leaders to focus their operation inside of Afghanistan in exchange for the government of Pakistan's security forces turning a blind eye to the presence of Anti-Afghan forces commanders and fighters in Pakistan (NFI). Additionally, the Anti-Afghan forces leaders approved a plan to send 50 Arab and 50 Waziri fighters to Ghazni province, Afghanistan in early February 2009. According to HAMID GUL, the aerial threats in the area were controlled from the Airport in Wana.

[WL70. \(THREAT REPORT\) IED Threat Report Kabul \(2009/02/14\)](https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7AA491A0-2219-0B3F-9F11B4917319C6F7/)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7AA491A0-2219-0B3F-9F11B4917319C6F7/>

Three suicide bombers, named Jaree Nawrouz, Mohammed Souleman, and Jaree Amraddeen, are reportedly planning to conduct a small arms attack followed by a Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device attack against the civilian gate of Kabul international airport. The three EoA are armed with Assault rifle's and a white Toyota Hilux Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device. In mid-February 2009, the group arrived at the residence of former HiG member, Zeyaa-Ui-Thak, located in Mohammad Agha district, Logar province; the EoA were possibly wearing Afghan National Police Border Police uniforms. **The attack plan was purportedly conceived in an early February 2009 meeting between Taliban and Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) representatives; the meeting was chaired by Major Mejar Enam, who is an ISI officer.**

[WL71. \(THREAT REPORT\) IED Threat Report Wama \(2009/03/13\)](https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7B0D11B4-2219-0B3F-9FEF51FC118F6AB9/)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7B0D11B4-2219-0B3F-9FEF51FC118F6AB9/>

**The Pakistan intelligence service (ISI) made a Remote Control Improvised Explosive Device in a golden painted box which looks like the QURAN published in Saudi Arabia.** The Remote Control Improvised Explosive Device will be initiated with a satellite phone. (No Further Information)

(Nato/ISAF Confidential Rel Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan)  
**Unspecified ISI personnel passed the Remote Control Improvised Explosive Device to Mullah NAJIBULLAH,** son of Abdul JABAR, from NURISTAN Province. Reportedly, this kind of Remote Control Improvised Explosive Device will be used against Coalition Forces or Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan officials inside the buildings. (No Further Information)

WL72. (EXPLOSIVE HAZARD) IED Explosion Report (RCIED) CIV Jungle Truck: 0 INJ/DAM (2009/04/28)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/43823918-A871-6FFD-14C994AECAB5B1AE/>

On 02MAY09, Weapons Removal and Abatement Program, provided CEXC JAF with evidence from an IED detonation in Deh Bala, Nangarhar. Ward advised that the detonation occurred at 1000L on 28APR09 IVO 42SXC3389078950. The targeted vehicle was a jinga truck carrying rocks for ongoing road paving in the area. The LN driver of the truck had his clothes blown off from the blast, but walked away from the IED attack with minimal injuries. The truck sustained significant damage. The explosion caused a 18" diameter x 6" depth crater in the dirt road. ANP recovered oil can remnants, a PG7 fuze or igniter, a 12V battery, as well as the provided RCIED (MOD) trigger. The trigger was located approximately 20' North of the blast seat. ANP later turned the RCIED trigger to Ward for exploitation. Ward advised that the truck was likely targeted in an effort to disrupt Afghan Government activities and projects. **Ward advised that his LN workers have heard rumors that Pakistani ISI are offering \$3000 for the placement of devices that disrupt ANSF/ISAF operations. LNs also advised that ISI is providing IED training in Pakistan.**

WL73. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Pahgman (2009/05/19)  
<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/78035D6B-2219-0B3F-9F2E121945CDEAD7/>

**5 people sent by ISI and AL QAEDA network in PAKISTAN would be back in a few days in AFGHANISTAN through PAKTIKA province.** Among 5, 2 would be Pakistanis and 1 Chechen. Once in AFGHANISTAN they should go at certain NAJIB, in KHWAJA-LAKAN village (42S VD 96-23) PAGHMAN district. **They would intend to carry out SB attacks in KABUL.** It is not told if they are to bring explosive from PAKISTAN or if NAJIB will provide necessary equipment.

WL74. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Bagrami (2009/07/04)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/78574B9F-2219-0B3F-9FAFD5C6B7CD5002/>

(N/I C REL TO GIROA) 2 PBIEDs came on 26JUN09 from AKHORA KHATEK Madrassa, PK, IOT execute suicide attacks in KABUL City, KABUL Province. The suicide vests for the attacks are already in KABUL City, AZRAT QEMAT Area, PD 12.

(N/I C REL TO GIROA) The PBIEDs are 18 years old. **They came together with 3 Arab INS, 2 LN and 3 Pakistani ISI officers who coordinate PBIED activity.** They arrived in KABUL City on 05JUL09.

WL75. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Kabul (2009/07/07)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/77F766CB-2219-0B3F-9F3A07C4C6577670/>

10 days ago, 20 SB, **trained and sent by the ISI**, would have left PAKISTAN. They would already have passed through the province of KHOST. 2 SB could have already used their devices in the KHOST area. 8 SB could be designated for KABOUL in order to disturb the election process. **These TBs would be managed by SIRAJUDIN HAQQANI, son of JALAUDIN HAQQANI.**

Moreover, General HAMID GUL could be the former ISI leader and could actually be a TB commander in AFGHANISTAN.

WL76. (THREAT REPORT) Attack Threat Report Sorobi (2009/08/13)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7884473F-2219-0B3F-9F2EF266BEFB3014/>

(NS REL ISAF) Threats of ISI-directed attacks during presidential election in SAROWBI District 12 AUG 09

(NS REL ISAF) According to 12 August 2009 reporting, **approximately 50 armed members of HAQQANI Network arrived on 07 August, at the order of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of PAKISTAN**, in SAROWBI District through KONAR and LAGHMAN Provinces, Afghanistan. They planned to carry out attacks in the district during the presidential elections.

WL77. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Kabul (2009/10/01)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/7AC5AE11-2219-0B3F-9F986B8CBA7D58F6/>

**KARI NURULLAH, from ISI, would be arrived in PD8 in order to organize suicide attacks in KABUL.** He should be just the planner, while the people to do it would be taken from the TBs already present in the city.

WL78. (THREAT REPORT) IED Threat Report Taliban: 0 INJ/DAM (2009/10/31)

<https://wardiary.wikileaks.org/id/AF9B6DFC-1517-911C-C5C2EA69AD4BFD31/>

Mullah Rabbani, a member of Pakistan's ISI Directorate, directed a Taliban group to plan and organize terrorist attacks in Baghlan and Konduz provinces. Both attacks use suicide vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED). The VBIED in Baghlan uses a mini-bus and the one in Konduz uses a motor rickshaw.

...

The attack in Konduz province involves a tri-wheel rickshaw motorcycle. The targets are CF [Coalition Forces], ANA [Afghan National Army], and ANP [Afghan National Police] convoys on the road between Qala-e-Zal and Khanabad District.

**APPENDIX 5:**  
**Extracts from US Diplomatic Cables 2005-2010:**  
**Pakistan's Concerns about India's Role in Afghanistan**

*“Musharraf reported that while the Al Qa'ida presence in the Tribal Areas was declining, "Talibanization" was increasing and spreading into neighboring districts of Pakistan. He reviewed a four-part strategy of military, political, administrative and development measures to counter the trend. Musharraf stressed that success would depend on complementary efforts on the Afghan side of the border and complained that **India was sowing distrust by spreading misinformation in Afghanistan.***

*Musharraf said he hoped there would be equal efforts on the Afghan side of the border and complained that a perception had been created that Pakistan's government and its intelligence services were pursuing separate agendas. **It was a perception he found "most annoying" and one that the Indian intelligence service was spreading in Afghanistan. Musharraf said he had documentary evidence that India was working through Afghanistan's Ministry of Defense and its intelligence service to undermine Afghan perceptions of Pakistan; he had shown the evidence to President Bush during the President's visit to Pakistan. India was also providing support and cash to "feudal tribals" who were making trouble in Balochistan.***<sup>334</sup>

*“Aziz said the **GOP had evidence that "a proxy force" (i.e. India) was putting significant amounts of money into Balochistan and FATA to keep the Pakistan Army engaged in the area. He noted the involvement of the Indian consulates on the Pakistani borders with Afghanistan (Jalalabad, Kandahar) and Iran (Zahedan), and stated that Indians often convened in and channeled money through Dubai.***<sup>335</sup>

*“Afghan Ambassador Tarzi offered poloff a read-out of foreign Minister Spanta's June 23 visit to Pakistan, his first bilateral foreign travel since assuming office. While in Islamabad, Spanta was received by President Musharraf, Prime Minister Aziz and Foreign Minister Kasuri...*

*According to Tarzi, the themes of economic and security cooperation dominated all official meetings. Although the meetings were cordial, neither side appeared satisfied with the other's response on two core issues: for Afghanistan, cross-border terrorism; **for Pakistan, the fear of India using Afghanistan as a base for nefarious operations in Balochistan and the Tribal Areas.***

***Tarzi became visibly excited when recounting a briefing by the Pakistan side objecting to the proliferation of Indian consulates and other official establishments in***

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<sup>334</sup> WikiLeaks. President Musharraf expresses concern to Senator Hagel on his relationship with the US. (2006, April 14). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD6420\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD6420_a.html)

<sup>335</sup> WikiLeaks. Prime Minister Aziz discusses challenges on the Afghan border and reviews request. (2006, June 19). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD11504\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD11504_a.html)

***Afghanistan, an issue that figured prominently in all three of FM Spanta's official meetings.*** According to Tarzi, the Pakistani side insisted that there are twelve (12) official Indian posts in Afghanistan, refusing to accept the Afghan's reassurance that India has been allowed to open only four (4) lightly-staffed consulates, two of which -- Kandahar and Jalalabad -- have served nearby Sikh and Hindu communities since Partition. (Note: Tarzi said that the two other Indian consulates -- Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif -- were opened in the early 1990s during the mujahideen government. End note.) Responding to Pakistani angst that Indian agents are using these diplomatic missions to launch mischief in Balochistan, the Afghan officials assured their hosts that Kabul will not allow India or other foreign elements to conduct anti-Pakistan operations from Afghan territory. That said, Spanta told the Pakistanis not to drag Afghanistan into its decade-long conflict with India-- a message that he repeated publically upon his return to Kabul. (Note: **Tarzi confessed his personal frustration at his inability to disabuse the GOP of its misimpression regarding the nature and extent of the official Indian presence in Afghanistan, saying that Pakistani diplomats in Kabul are fully aware of the size and location of India's diplomatic missions. Post is not surprised that the "Indian consulate" conspiracy took up much of Spanta's visit, as Pakistani interlocutors at every level subscribe to the theory. End note.**)

Tarzi was as quick to ascribe responsibility to (and insinuate direct support by) the GOP for Taliban and anti-Coalition militants crossing into Afghanistan as he was to distance the Karzai government from any responsibility for cross-border activity (whether sponsored by al Qaeda, the Taliban or India) in the other direction. Overcoming these mutual suspicions and mistrust to energize this most recent rapprochement between Kabul and Islamabad will continue to require active USG engagement and counsel.”<sup>336</sup>

“Musharraf then shifted the discussion to what he described as a particular irritant in his relations with President Karzai. Musharraf said that, some weeks ago, he has sent an Inter-Services Intelligence brigadier to Kabul with specific information on the location of Baloch militant Brahamdagh Bugti, who has absconded to Kandahar and is now in Kabul; similar information had simultaneously been conveyed through diplomatic channels. (Note: Brahamdagh is the grandson of Balochi sardar Nawab Akbar Bugtu, who was killed by the Pakistani military in August. End note.) In a telephone call two weeks later, President Karzai professed ignorance of the Pakistani request to repatriate Bugtu. Musharraf said that he told Karzai that either the Afghan intelligence chief was withholding information from the President or Karzai simply did not have the will to act on the Pakistani information. As Musharraf warmed to his topic, he alluded to Indian support to the rebellious Bugti tribe, blaming both the Bugtis and Indian intelligence agencies for a recent series of fatal bombings in Quetta and telling Boucher that he has sigint [signals intelligence] to prove Indian complicity. Musharraf accused India of deploying intelligence resources from its Afghan consulates and reconstruction

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<sup>336</sup> WikiLeaks. Afghan ambassador on FM Spanta's June 23 visit to Islamabad. (2006, June 27). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD12211\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD12211_a.html)

**projects. India needs to be told to stop these activities immediately, Musharraf said, or else Pakistan will be forced to take counter-measures.**"<sup>337</sup>

*"In a March 4 meeting with CJCS Admiral Mullen, Musharraf commented on perceptions of India's growing role in Afghanistan and cautioned his visitors with regard to overly optimistic assessments of the peace jirga process. He also gave his view of the post-election political situation in Pakistan and discussed implementation challenges associated with developing the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.*

**Musharraf began by discussing reports of Afghan-Indian intelligence operations against Pakistan. He cited the growing number of Indian consulates in Afghanistan and continued Indian involvement in adverse activities in Pakistan. Musharaff wondered whether increased Taliban action in Afghanistan and extremist acts in Pakistan were not "acts of desperation" on the part of militants. Musharraf offered a sober view of the "peace jirga" process, noting that even if able to reach an agreement the jirga's ability to implement signed agreements were uncertain. The President expressed concern that premature reports of "deals" could lead to dashed expectations and ultimately to cynicism over efforts to achieve stability in the border regions.**"<sup>338</sup>

*"Zardari said he was also working on building "regional ownership" of the extremism problem. He was building good will with India and wanted to increase trade. He wanted to convince Indian leaders they needed ownership of problems in Afghanistan **because Pakistan and India cannot solve the Kashmir issue if Indian intelligence can take advantage in Afghanistan.** Zardari plans to visit Kabul on an official tour in the coming months; he said he recently met with the Indian Prime Minister, **who he thought was not particularly well-informed on Indian intelligence activities in Afghanistan.** Zardari thought that perhaps the UK could help with this initiative."*<sup>339</sup>

*"Zardari is convinced the Mumbai attacks were designed to both undermine his proposals to extend rapprochement with India and convince Pakistan to weaken its commitment to fighting militants in FATA by reinforcing the Pakistan military's focus on the Indian threat. While the transfer of 5,000-7,000 Pakistani Army troops from FATA to the Indian border was largely token, it demonstrated the Army's need to respond to its existential enemy.*

*The GOP is struggling to come to grips with the consequences of an attack that exposed ISI's decades-old policy of creating and supporting Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) as a proxy*

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<sup>337</sup> WikiLeaks. President Musharraf determined to deal with border areas. (2006, November 8). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD21879\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ISLAMABAD21879_a.html)

<sup>338</sup> WikiLeaks. Admiral Mullen's meeting with President Musharraf. (2008, November 15). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ISLAMABAD1273\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ISLAMABAD1273_a.html)

<sup>339</sup> WikiLeaks. Zardari to Petraeus: 'Defeat is not an option'. (2008, November 15). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ISLAMABAD3593\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ISLAMABAD3593_a.html)

force in Kashmir. The GOP has arrested or held 124 LeT and Jamaat-ud-Dawa leaders, closed some camps, and cooperated in listing LeT members in the UN's 1267 Committee. Interior Minister Malik has agreed to quiet FBI participation in the investigation task force, and post continues to seek CIA/FBI access to Pakistani LeT/JUD detainees. Zardari and Interior Minister Malik are clear that they intend to bring to justice those responsible in Pakistan, but they stress these were non-state actors. However, GOP leaders have expressed concern that, to date, they do not have sufficient evidence to prosecute and that India's continued high-profile rhetoric is reducing the political space for the GOP to cooperate."<sup>340</sup>

*“Senators Biden and Graham met with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Kayani and Director General of ISI LT Gen Pasha on January 9 to underscore bipartisan support for the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. Senator Biden emphasized the need for the American people to see results soon in Afghanistan, and he wanted to be sure the U.S. and Pakistan had the same enemy as we moved forward. Senator Biden sought Kayani's views about what kind of Afghanistan would represent success for Pakistan.”<sup>341</sup>*

***“Kayani replied that Pakistan and the US had a convergence of interests. Kayani's goal was a peaceful, friendly and stable Afghanistan. Kayani said he had no desire to control Afghanistan. In fact, he said, anyone who wanted to control Afghanistan was ignorant of history, since no one has ever controlled it. Kayani noted there had been confusion about the policy of "strategic depth" but for him "strategic depth" meant a peaceful Afghanistan "on his back." But the Pashtuns have to be accommodated, Kayani added. Biden asked if Kayani made a distinction between the Pashtuns and the Taliban. Kayani replied that the Taliban were a reality, but the Afghan government dominated by the Taliban had had a negative effect on Pakistan.***

*Senator Biden asked Kayani if he had the capacity and could obtain sufficient resources, would he then move against Taliban leaders like Baitullah Mehsud, Commander Nazir, and the Haqqanis? Senator Biden asked Kayani if he were prepared to move into the Waziristans. 10. (S) Kayani replied that Bajaur had been the "hardest nut to crack" militarily: the Pakistani military had undertaken an operation in South Waziristan last October, but the army had moved out because of the elections. The Pakistani military had also had a fort in the middle of Waziristan which had been cut off by militants. Kayani said he was painfully aware that the army had to retake South Waziristan since ninety percent of the suicide bombers came from Baitullah Mehsud. "He has to be cut down to size," said Kayani.*

*But, Kayani said, the Pakistani military could not fight everyone at once. They would have to go after Mehsud and Nazir sequentially (a point Pasha confirmed). Biden said it*

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<sup>340</sup> WikiLeaks. Scen setter for CENTCOM General Petraeus. (2009, January 17). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD106\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD106_a.html)

<sup>341</sup> WikiLeaks. Codel Biden's meeting with COAS Kayani and ISI Pasha. (2009, February 6). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD270\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD270_a.html)

was important to be in agreement on this issue. Pasha said the United States and Pakistan needed to have confidence in each other. Pasha said he was hurt about the inference that he did not have a relationship of trust with CIA. He had gone to Washington for a frank talk with CIA Director Hayden and he often briefed, and sought the advice of, the RAO Chief in Islamabad. Senator Biden repeated he was not going to revisit the past. Pasha replied that there was no reason for ISI to be protecting "these people" and he had no interest in saving them.

Senator Biden said he needed to know that the situation had changed. Senator Biden said he understood that the Pakistani military lacked capacity, but would the situation change if they had additional resources? It was important to know if we had the same enemy: the U.S. needed to be able to make an objective assessment of Pakistan's part of the bargain. Graham added that "General Musharraf had cut deals, but those deals didn't work out."<sup>342</sup>

*"Zardari and Gilani agree that Pakistan's biggest threat comes from a growing militant insurgency on the Pak-Afghan border. **The military and ISI have not yet made that leap; they still view India as their principle threat and Afghanistan as strategic depth in a possible conflict with India.** They continue to provide overt or tacit support for proxy forces (including the Haqqani group, Commander Nazir, Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, and Lashkar-e-Taiba) as a foreign policy tool.*

*The single biggest message Kayani should hear in Washington is that this support must end. **It is now counterproductive to Pakistan's own interests and directly conflicts with USG objectives in Afghanistan--where Haqqani is killing American soldiers and Afghan civilians--and the region--where Mumbai exposed the fruits of previous ISI policy to create Lashkar-e-Taiba and still threatens potential conflict between nuclear powers.**"<sup>343</sup>*

*"Qureshi said Pakistan was willing to engage with India, but it would be difficult of the Indians hinged everything on "its obsession with Mumbai." This was not to imply that the GOP would not pursue the Mumbai matter, but the GOI had set an ill-defined standard of compliance. The new government in India was stronger than the last; Qureshi took this as a positive signal. Bashir asked about USG attendance at a meeting in Moscow and hinted that both President Zardari and Indian PM Singh would be there."<sup>344</sup>*

*"Gilani stated that Pakistan does not want to see another cross-border influx into Pakistan. The GOP fears that an increase in U.S. troops in Helmand leading to such an influx could destabilize Balochistan province, which is already one of the most sensitive*

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<sup>342</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>343</sup> WikiLeaks. Scen setter for General Kayani's visit to Washington. (2009, February 19). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD365\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD365_a.html)

<sup>344</sup> WikiLeaks. SRAP Holbrook's June 5 meeting with FM Qureshi. (2009, June 13). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD1299\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD1299_a.html)

security issues Pakistan faces. The solution, Gilani suggested, is for the U.S. to convince Afghanistan to agree to recognize the current border. Such recognition would mean that each side would no longer be claiming each others' territory and would help prevent cross-border movements, he argued. "An international border would solve 50% of the problem," he claimed.

Gilani said he intends to meet with Indian Prime Minister Singh at Sharm el-Sheikh on the sidelines of the NAM Summit. There are some fundamental problems with India that need to be addressed, he suggested. The armies of both countries are trained specifically for missions involving the other. These capabilities do not go away, even if the intentions of one of the parties changes, he argued. But Pakistan wants to improve relations and takes the cross-border terrorism problem seriously, he said. "Pakistan will not allow its soil to be used for an attack against others," he stated. To address India's concerns about terrorism, Pakistan needs to strengthen its laws on terrorism, he said. As it is, terrorists too easily escape the courts, and Pakistan needs stronger institutions. "The Sharifs and the Army are on board" with enhancing the power of the courts vis-a-vis terrorists, he claimed."<sup>345</sup>

"Minister of State Khan stated that Pakistan desired peace in South Asia and that both sides had suffered from the Indo-Pak conflict. He asserted that over the last year Pakistan had made a concerted effort to combat regional terrorism but that the media and the Indian government unfairly continued to place the blame for all regional terrorist incidents on Pakistan. He was disappointed that the Composite Dialogue with India had been stalled since last November and termed it "unfortunate" that a small number of radicals had been allowed to derail this critical regional peace process and tarnish the name of Islam. **The Foreign Secretary concurred, stating that "we were not the only ones to play intelligence games in the region," and adding that it was not in Pakistan's interests to destabilize the region.**"<sup>346</sup>

**"The Foreign Secretary stated that Pakistan was prepared to redouble its efforts to support stability in Afghanistan, as it was not in Pakistan's interest to see the country slip backwards into the chaos of the 1990s. Bashir claimed that Pakistan had a good relationship with Afghan President Karzai, but that his government would work with whoever ultimately won the Afghan elections. Bashir stressed that his government had not/not intervened in the Afghan elections and had even offered to enable Afghan refugees living in Pakistan to vote, although this had turned out not to be a priority for the Afghan government or the international community. The Foreign Secretary stated that Pakistan's interests were (1) to see a peaceful, united,**

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<sup>345</sup> WikiLeaks. Prime Minister Gilani discusses military operations, Afghanistan, India, and nuclear issues with NSA Jones (2009, June 30). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD1440\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD1440_a.html)

<sup>346</sup> WikiLeaks. Codel Casey's August 25 meeting with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. (2009, September 11). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2208\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2208_a.html)

***stable Afghanistan with its territorial integrity intact and (2) to see an Afghanistan in which the people, the tribes along the border, and the government were favorably disposed towards Pakistan. Bashir underscored that it was in Pakistan's interest to control the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, but that this effort required joint cooperation both on border management and border stabilization. Bashir claimed that Pakistan had successfully cleared its border region of militants but that they continued to come across from Afghanistan. He also stressed the need to deal with weapons and financial flows to terrorist groups in the border areas that came from "across the region and not from Afghanistan."***<sup>347</sup>

*"In response to queries posed by the National Security Council, Embassy Islamabad believes that it is not/not possible to counter al-Qaeda in Pakistan absent a comprehensive strategy that 1) addresses the interlinked Taliban threat in Afghanistan and Pakistan, 2) brings about stable, civilian government in Afghanistan, and 3) re-examines the broader role of India in the region. As the queries presuppose, the ending of Pakistani establishment support to terrorist and extremist groups, some Afghan-focused and some India-focused, is a key element for success. **There is no chance that Pakistan will view enhanced assistance levels in any field as sufficient compensation for abandoning support to these groups, which it sees as an important part of its national security apparatus against India. The only way to achieve a cessation of such support is to change the Pakistan government's own perception of its security requirements.***

***Fear that the ISAF mission in Afghanistan will end without the establishment of a non-Taliban, Paktoon-led government friendly to Pakistan adds to the Pakistani establishment's determination not to cut its ties irrevocably to the Afghan Taliban. They fear that withdrawals of NATO countries on a date certain from Afghanistan is only the thin edge of a wedge that will be followed by other coalition partners, including the United States. Discussions of deadlines, downsizing of the American military presence, or even a denial of the additional troops reportedly to be requested by Gen. McChrystal are taken as evidence that reinforces this perception. General Kayani has been utterly frank about Pakistan's position on this. In such a scenario, the Pakistan establishment will dramatically increase support for Taliban groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan, which they see either as ultimately likely to take over the Afghan government or at least an important counter-weight to an Indian-controlled Northern Alliance.***

***Most importantly, it is the perception of India as the primary threat to the Pakistani state that colors its perceptions of the conflict in Afghanistan and Pakistan's security needs. The Pakistani establishment fears a pro-India government in Afghanistan would allow India to operate a proxy war against Pakistan from its territory. Justified or not, increased Indian investment in, trade with, and development support to the Afghan government, which the USG has encouraged, causes Pakistan to embrace Taliban groups all the more closely as anti-India allies. We need to reassess Indian involvement in Afghanistan and our own policies towards India, including the growing***

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<sup>347</sup> *ibid.*

*military relationship through sizable conventional arms sales, as all of this feeds Pakistani establishment paranoia and pushes them closer to both Afghan and Kashmir-focused terrorist groups while reinforcing doubts about U.S. intentions. Resolving the Kashmir dispute, which lies at the core of Pakistan's support for terrorist groups, would dramatically improve the situation. Enhanced USG efforts in this regard should be considered.*

*Money alone will not/not solve the problem of al-Qaeda or the Taliban operating in Pakistan. A grand bargain that promises development or military assistance in exchange for severing ties will be insufficient to wean Pakistan from policies that reflect accurately its most deep-seated fears. The Pakistani establishment, as we saw in 1998 with the nuclear test, does not view assistance – even sizable assistance to their own entities -- as a trade-off for national security vis-a-vis India. The lack of faith in USG intentions in Pakistan and in relation to India makes such a bargain untenable in the eyes of the Pakistani establishment.*

*In the final analysis there is no short-cut to dealing with the al-Qaeda problem in Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is inextricably linked to and cannot be divorced from the Taliban problem in both countries. Nor can we hope to develop a strategy for minimizing Taliban influence and thereby al-Qaeda operational space in Pakistan's FATA absent a strategy that brings about stability in Afghanistan; the notion that precision or long-range counter-terrorism efforts can suffice are equally illusory. Afghan instability by definition leads the Pakistani establishment to increase support for the Taliban and thereby, unintentionally, create space for al-Qaeda. No amount of money will sever that link. Rather, we must reassess our regional approach and find ways to reassure the Pakistanis that they can address their long-standing national security objectives most effectively -- both to the east and to the west -- by working closely with the U.S. ”<sup>348</sup>*

*“Representative Kind asked for Gilani's thoughts on raising U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan. Gilani said that Pakistan had thought it unwise to add troops in the run-up to the Afghan elections, as it might have sent the wrong political signal. He said the United States should also consider its eventual exit strategy as it commits new troops. Gilani was concerned that a greater U.S. presence in Helmand could force militants to spillover into Balochistan. Defense Secretary Ali said that Pakistan did not have sufficient troops to patrol the Balochistan border, but that military coordination and U.S. military operations moving from north to south, rather than east to west, could reduce the spillover of militants. Ali added that "we all know" that India has "activities" in the region.*

*Gilani said he understood the importance of maintaining high-level communication with India. He had planned to meet with Indian PM Manmohan Singh in Trinidad, but cancelled the visit to remain in Pakistan and deal with the controversy surrounding the proposed extension of the national reconciliation order (NRO). He concluded by*

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<sup>348</sup> WikiLeaks. Reviewing our Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy. (2009, September 23). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2295\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2295_a.html)

*observing that the dispute over Kashmir remained the "speed brake" on improving bilateral relations with India.*"<sup>349</sup>

*"During a February 16 meeting with Senator John Kerry, Prime Minister Gilani spoke at length about the state of the Indo-Pakistani relationship. Gilani indicated that the GOP was willing to resume talks with the Indian government, and pointed to the upcoming meetings between India and Pakistan's Foreign Secretaries as evidence of such. He added that the GOP and India had also resumed back channel discussions. Gilani said that improving bilateral relations with India was in Pakistan's best interest as it would enable the GOP to focus all of its attention on securing its western border. Gilani, however, noted that in order to gain public support for this process, the U.S. had to "treat India and Pakistan equally." **He added that India would need to gain Pakistan's trust and indicated that reducing the Indian footprint in Afghanistan and halting Indian support of militants in Balochistan would be steps in the right direction.**"*<sup>350</sup>

*"Gilani agreed to present Kerry's proposal to the GOP leadership. He was amenable to the idea of a rapprochement in the India-Pakistan relation, but expressed concern that the public would not support the idea. Kerry said that in order to gain public support for this initiative, the GOP needed to clearly outline the long-term economic benefits of improved bilateral relations, such as improvements in social development and increased investments and trade, to the Pakistani people."*<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> WikiLeaks. Codel Tierney meets with Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani. (2009, November 17). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2769\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ISLAMABAD2769_a.html)

<sup>350</sup> WikiLeaks. Codel Kerry's meeting with PM Gilani. (2010, February 19). Retrieved from [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10ISLAMABAD399\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/10ISLAMABAD399_a.html)

<sup>351</sup> *ibid.*

**APPENDIX 6:**  
**Prepared Statement of Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State**

Source: Committee on Foreign Relations. (1976), pp. 14-21.

**Mr. Chairman:**

I appear before you not to score debating points in an abstract contest over Executive-Legislative prerogative. What faces us is a Congressional decision of potentially grave magnitude taken after the Executive Branch had complied with all legal requirements for the kind of operation involved in Angola and after eight Congressional committees had been briefed over twenty times without foreshadowing any opposition in principle. The issue is not “victory” of one branch over another. The issue is what constitutes a victory for the national interest.

I welcome this opportunity to explain the global significance of what is now happening in Angola, the events that have brought us to this point, the United States’ objectives and the major consequences which can result.

The Soviet Union’s massive and unprecedented intervention in the internal affairs of Africa—with nearly two hundred million dollars of arms, and its military technicians and advisers, with 11,000 Cuban combat troops, and with substantial sea and airlift and naval cover in adjacent waters—is a matter of urgent concern. Not only are the interests of the countries directly affected at stake, but also -the interests of all nations in preserving global stability—which is the precondition for all else mankind aspires to accomplish.

In recent years the United States has sought to help build a new international order less tied to the traditional patterns of power balances. It was the United States which took the initiative in seeking to resolve the most dangerous problems of our time by negotiation and cooperation rather than by force of arms. It was we who saw that the historical necessity of this period required a more stable relationship between the two nations that possess the capacity to destroy civilization. We have sought—and with some successes—to build more constructive relations with the USSR across a broad range: to contain strategic arms, to institutionalize cooperation in economic, scientific and cultural fields, to reduce tensions in areas where our vital interests impinge on one another, and to avoid destabilizing confrontations in peripheral areas of the globe—such as Angola. The classical pattern of accumulating marginal advantages must be overcome and mankind must build more constructive patterns if catastrophe is to be avoided. No one has been more dedicated than the President and I to working for these principles.

But our efforts have been founded upon one fundamental reality: peace requires a sense of security and security depends upon some form of equilibrium between the great powers. And that equilibrium is impossible unless the United States remains both strong and determined to use its strength when required. This is our historic responsibility, for no other nation has the capacity to act in this way. While constantly seeking opportunities for conciliation, we need to demonstrate to potential adversaries that cooperation is the only rational alternative. Any other course will encourage the trends it seeks to

accommodate; a challenge not met today will tempt far more dangerous crises tomorrow.

If a continent such as Africa, only recently freed from external oppression, can be made the arena for great power ambitions, if immense quantities of arms can affect far off events, if large expeditionary forces can be transported at will to dominate virtually helpless peoples—then all we have hoped for in building a more stable and rational international order is in jeopardy.

The effort of the Soviet Union and Cuba to take unilateral advantage of a turbulent local situation where they have never had any historic interests is a willful, direct assault upon the recent constructive trends in U.S.-Soviet relations and our efforts to improve relations with Cuba. It is an attempt to take advantage of our continuing domestic division and self-torment. Those who have acted so recklessly must be made to see that their conduct is unacceptable.

The history of the postwar period should, give us pause. Military aggression, direct or indirect, has frequently been successfully dealt with, but never in the absence of a local balance of forces. U.S. policy in Angola has sought to help friends achieve this balance. Angola represents the first time since the aftermath of World War II that the Soviets have moved militarily at long distances to impose a regime of their choice. It is the first time that the U.S. has failed to respond to Soviet military moves outside their immediate orbit. And it is the first time that Congress has halted the Executive's action while it was in the process of meeting this kind of threat.

Thus to claim that Angola is not an important country or that the United States has no important interests there begs the principal question. The objectives which the United States has sought in Angola have not been aimed at defending, or acquiring intrinsic interests in that country. We are not opposing any particular faction. We could develop constructive relations with any Angolan government. We have never been involved militarily in Angola. We are not so involved now. We do not seek to be so involved in the future.

Our objective is clear and simple: to help those African countries and those groups within Angola that would resist external aggression by providing them with needed financial support. Those who we seek to assist are our friends; they share our hopes for negotiated solutions and for African self-determination. They played a larger role than the MPLA in striving toward Angolan independence.

But our deeper concern is for global stability. If the United States is seen to emasculate itself in the face of massive, unprecedented Soviet and Cuban intervention, what will be the perception of leaders around the world as they make decisions concerning their future security?

Will they feel they can proceed to develop their nations in an international climate which fosters cooperation and self-determination? How will they adjust their conduct in the context of such events? And what conclusion will an unopposed superpower draw when

the next opportunity for intervention beckons?

America's modest direct strategic and economic interests in Angola are not the central issue. The question is whether America still maintains the resolve to act responsibly as a great power—prepared to face a challenge when it arises, knowing that preventive action now may make unnecessary a more costly response later.

Let there be no mistake about it—the culprits in the tragedy that is now unfolding in Angola are the Soviet Union and its client state, Cuba.

But I must note with some sadness that by its actions, the Congress has deprived the President of indispensable flexibility in formulating a foreign policy which we believe to be in our national interest. And Congress has ignored the crucial truth is that a stable relationship with the Soviet Union based on mutual restraint will be achieved only if Soviet lack of restraint carries the risk of counteraction. The consequences may well be far-reaching and substantially more painful than the course we have recommended. When one great power attempts to obtain special positions of influence based on military interventions, the other power is sooner or later bound to act to offset this advantage in some other place or manner. This will inevitably lead to a chain of action and reaction typical of other historic eras in which great powers maneuvered for advantage, only to find themselves sooner or later embroiled in a major crisis, and often in open conflict.

It is precisely this pattern that must be broken—and that we wanted to break until stopped—if a lasting easing of tensions is to be achieved. And if it is not broken now we will face harder choices and higher costs in the future.

It is in this context that we have framed our goals in Angola. Simply put we wish to see:

A ceasefire, ending the tragic bloodshed in that country;  
Withdrawal of outside forces; Soviet, Cuban, and South African;  
Cessation of foreign military involvement; and  
Negotiations among the Angolan factions.

We are prepared to accept any solution that Emerges from African efforts. And we are ready to offer economic assistance to the people of Angola when a legitimate government is established there.

We have consistently advocated such a government representing all three factions in Angola. We have never opposed participation by the Soviet-backed Popular Movement for the Liberation .of Angola, the MPLA. What we do oppose is the massive Soviet and Cuban intervention and their expressed aim of denying the other two groups any part in governing the country. Our overriding goal has been to assure that Africans shape their own destiny and that traditional colonialism not be replaced by a more modern version.

For the US. to be found wanting as a credible friend, precisely at a time when moderate African states have clearly 'and repeatedly expressed their hope that America provide the

necessary balance to the Soviet Union and Cuba, will have a major impact on those countries on the continent of Africa which resisted all pressures and stuck by their position even after the Senate cut off aid; on our allies in other parts of the world who look to us for security; on other countries that seek ties with us primarily because they see us as the guardian of international equilibrium.

### The Record of Events in Angola

Let me briefly recount the course of events that has led us to this point. In 1961, the United States declared its support for self-determination in Portugal's African territories. At the time, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola, FNLA, was a leading force in the struggle for Angolan independence. Looking to the future, we sought to develop a relationship with the FNLA through providing it some financial, non-military assistance. The USSR had already established links with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA, through the Portuguese Communist Party. The MPLA began military action against the Portuguese in the mid-60's. The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, UNITA, an offshoot of the FNLA, also began to fight on a small scale in the late 1960's. Although these various uncoordinated insurgency efforts caused considerable difficulties for Portugal, they posed no serious military threat to the (dominance of Portuguese military forces in Angola.

However, the overthrow of the Portuguese government in April 1974 and the growing strength of the Portuguese Communist party apparently convinced Moscow that a "Revolutionary situation" was developing in Angola. The Soviet Union began to exploit this Situation in the fall of 1974 through shipments of some arms and equipment to the MPLA. The United States received requests for support from other Angolan elements at that same time, but turned them down.

The prospect of an independent Angola was clouded by the intense rivalry of the FNLA, MPLA and UNITA, which had developed over the years. Concerned about the three factions' failure to 'end, their bitter quarrel, leaders of other African countries prevailed upon them to come together with Portugal and seek agreement. This effort led to the Alvor Accord of January 1975. Under its terms a transitional coalition government was to be established and charged with preparing for a peaceful turnover of power by integrating the military forces of the three movements, writing a constitution and organizing an election to take place before independence, scheduled for November 11, 1975.

This was the moment, when Portugal was trying to organize a peaceful transition to independence, for the exercise of restraint by all outside parties. But the USSR and Portuguese Communists decided to put the MPLA in power in Angola through stepped-up shipments of arms. With this kind of encouragement, the MPLA had little incentive to fulfill the terms of the Alvor Accord which would have prevented it from dominating any future coalition government.

It is no coincidence that major violence broke out in March 1975 when large shipments of Soviet arms began to arrive—thousands of infantry weapons, machine guns, bazookas

and rockets. On March 23 the first of repeated military clashes between the MPLA and FNLA occurred. They increased in frequency in April, May and June, when deliveries of Communist arms and equipment, including mortars and armored vehicles, escalated by air and sea. In May, the MPLA forced the FNLA out of the areas north and east of Luanda and, in June, took effective control of Cabinda. On July 8 all-out civil war began when the MPLA attacked the FNLA and UNITA, driving both organizations out of Luanda, thereby ending the short-lived coalition-government. By mid-July the military situation radically favored the MPLA.

As the military position of the FNLA and UNITA deteriorated, the Governments of Zaire and Zambia grew more and more concerned about the implications for their own security. Those two countries turned to the US for assistance in preventing the Soviet Union and Cuba from imposing a solution in Angola, becoming a dominant influence in South-central Africa, and threatening the stability of the area.

It was at this point that President Ford decided to respond to requests for help and to provide military assistance to the FNLA and UNITA forces through neighboring Black African countries.

In August, intelligence reports indicated the presence of Soviet and Cuban military advisers, trainers and troops, including the first Cuban combat troops. If statements by Cuban leaders are to be believed, a large Cuban military training program began in Angola in June, and Cuban advisors were probably there before then. By September the MPLA offensive had forced UNITA out of several major central and southern Angolan cities. It controlled most of the coastline except for a strip in the far north, much of the south, and a wide belt running from Luanda to the Zaire border in the east.

In early September the poorly equipped UNITA forces turned in desperation to South Africa for assistance against the MPLA, which was overrunning UNITA's ethnic areas in the South. South Africa responded by sending in military equipment, and some military personnel—without consultation with the United States.

The UNITA forces launched a successful counteroffensive which swept the MPLA out of the southern and most of the central part of Angola. In the north the FNLA also made significant advances. By Independence Day—November 11—the MPLA controlled only the former colonial capital of Luanda and a narrow belt across north-central Angola.

In October massive increases in Soviet and Cuban military assistance began to arrive. More Cuban troops were ferried to Angola. Cuba inaugurated its own airlift of troops in late October. And the MPLA declared itself the Government of Angola in violation of the Alvor Accord.

In the hope of halting a dangerously escalating situation, the United States—using the leverage provided by our financial support—undertook a wide range of diplomatic activity pointing toward a summit of the Organization for African Unity scheduled for January 1976. Starting in October we made several overtures to the Soviet Union,

expressing our concern over the scale and purpose of their intervention. We offered to use our influence to bring about the cessation of foreign military assistance and to encourage an African solution if they would do the same. Their responses were evasive but not totally negative.

We began to voice our concerns and our limited objectives publicly. Beginning with a speech in Detroit on November 24 we pointed out that continuation of an interventionist policy must inevitably threaten our other relationships, and that our sole objective was an African resolution of an African problem. The Administration undertook a new series of Congressional consultations on the extent of our help to the Angolan factions resisting Soviet and Cuban aggression. I briefed the NATO foreign ministers and obtained significant understanding and support. Our diplomatic efforts with foreign governments, especially African governments, culminated with a mission by Assistant Secretary Schaufele to five African countries and the dispatch of letters from President Ford to 32 African heads of state, as well as the Secretary General of the OAU, stating America's policy.

Throughout this period the U.S. principles for a solution to the Angolan tragedy were unambiguous and straightforward :

Angola is an African problem and should be left to Africans to solve;  
Foreign military involvement only escalates and prolongs the warfare there and should be ended;  
OAU efforts to promote a ceasefire should be supported;  
The United States pursues no unilateral interests in Angola and is exclusively concerned with seeing the people of that country live in peace, independence and well-being; and  
Angola should be insulated from great power conflict.

Our diplomacy was effective so long as we maintained the leverage of a possible military balance. African determination to oppose Soviet and Cuban intervention was becoming more and more evident. On December 9, President Ford made a formal proposal to the Soviet Government through their Ambassador. Indeed, it appeared as if the Soviet Union had begun to take stock. They halted their airlift from December 9 until December 24.

By mid-December we were hopeful that the OAU would provide a framework for eliminating the interference of outside powers by calling for an end to their intervention. At that point, the impact of our domestic debate overwhelmed the possibilities of diplomacy. After the Senate vote to block any further aid to Angola, the Cubans more than doubled their forces and Soviet military aid was resumed on an even larger scale. The scope of Soviet-Cuban intervention increased drastically; the cooperativeness of Soviet diplomacy declined.

The weight of Soviet aid and advisors and the massive Cuban expeditionary force began to tip the scales of battle in December. By this point most of the effective fighting for the MPLA was being done by Cubans. It was clear that the USSR, Cuba and the MPLA hoped to achieve a decisive military victory on the eve of the Organization of African

Unity's extraordinary Summit Conference in Addis Ababa a few weeks ago. Yet notwithstanding their reverses the FNLA-UNITA forces still controlled about 70 percent of the territory and 70 percent of the population of Angola at the time of the Conference. An OAU reconciliation commission, which had met earlier in 1975, took the position that none of the movements should be recognized as the Government of Angola. The commission called for a ceasefire and the formation of a government of national unity. Thus, those governments who recognized the MPLA were in violation of a decision of the OAU.

At the January OAU Summit, 22 members of the OAU advocated recognition of the MPLA and condemnation of South Africa. But they were opposed in an unusual demonstration of solidarity, by 22 other members who held out for a more balanced resolution, one that would include the following points :

1. an immediate cease fire;
2. condemnation of South Africa and immediate withdrawal of all South African forces;
3. withdrawal of all foreign forces;
4. an end to the supply of arms to all factions ; and
5. reconciliation of all factions with the aim of establishing a government of national unity.

The United States regarded this program as reasonable and responsive to the facts of the situation. But the Soviet Union and Cuba urged MPLA supporters to refuse to accept this solution. The Summit ended in impasse.

#### The United States Position

This then is the significance of Angola and the record to date. In elaborating further the U.S. position, I want to respond directly to some of the issues raised in the current debate.

Our principal objective has been to respond to an unprecedented application of Soviet power achieved in part through the expeditionary force of a client state.

During 1975 the Soviet Union is estimated to have contributed nearly \$200 million worth of military assistance to Angola. This equals the entire amount of all military aid from all sources to sub-Saharan Africa in 1974.

Soviet arms have included infantry weapons, machine guns, bazookas, mortars and recoilless rifles, armored personnel carriers, heavy artillery, light and medium tanks, truck-mounted multitube rocket launchers, helicopters and light aircraft. There are unconfirmed reports that the Soviet Union will provide the MPLA with MIG—21 aircraft to be piloted by Cubans.

A total of at least 46 flights of Soviet heavy and medium military transports have ferried Soviet military equipment from the USSR to Luanda and Congo-Brazzaville, while a steady stream of Soviet and Cuban aircraft has continued to bring Cuban troops across

the Atlantic. Soviet naval involvements, clearly related to the Angolan event, have continued in West African waters for several weeks.

The implications of Cuba's unprecedented and massive intervention cannot be ignored. It is a geopolitical event of considerable significance. For the first time, Cuba has sent an expeditionary force to another nation on another continent. About 11,000 Cuban military personnel have been sent to Angola. If allowed to proceed unchecked, this blatant power play cannot but carry with it far reaching implications—including the impact it will have on the attitudes and future conduct of the nations of this hemisphere. Indeed, friend and foe alike cannot fail to contrast the sending of a large Cuban expeditionary force with our apparent inability to provide even indirect financial assistance. The failure of the United States to respond effectively will be regarded in many parts of the world as an indication of our future determination to counter similar Communist interventions.

We have been asked why we do not respond with other pressures on the Soviet Union.

The first answer is that many of the links the Administration has tried to forge, such as trade and credit, which would have provided incentives for restraint and levers for penalties have been precluded by earlier Congressional actions. But two other instruments have been suggested: Wheat sales and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. A moratorium was placed on wheat sales for four months in 1975. To use this device every three months is too blunt it permanently. Above all, economic measures take too much time to affect a fast-moving situation like Angola; any longer term impact would be of little use to those immediately threatened. We should also ponder whether we want to return to the situation, now prevented by the grain agreement, in which the USSR can capriciously enter and leave the U.S. grain trade.

As for the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, we have never considered these to be a favor which we grant to the Soviet Union, to be turned on and off according to the ebb and flow of our relations. The fact is that limiting the growth of nuclear arsenals is an overriding global problem that must be dealt with urgently for our own sake and for the sake of world peace.

Still, we have made clear that a continuation of actions like those in Angola must threaten the entire web of Soviet-U.S. relations. In this sense both negotiations and the overall relationship are in long-term jeopardy unless restraint is exercised. But there is so substitute for a local balance; indirect pressures can succeed only if rapid local victories are foreclosed.

Have we really thought through the implications of our decisions? Do we really want the world to conclude that if the Soviet Union chooses to intervene in a massive way, and if Cuban or other troops are used as an expeditionary force, the United States will not be able to muster the unity or resolve to provide even financial assistance to those who are threatened? Can those faced with such a threat without hope of assistance from us be expected to resist? Do we want our potential adversaries to conclude that, in the event of

future challenges America's internal divisions are likely to deprive us of even minimal leverage over developments of global significance?

Our second objective is to help our friends in Black Africa who oppose Soviet and Cuban intervention.

Only in recent years has Africa become free of great power rivalry; it must not once again become an arena in which the ambitions of outside forces are pursued. We have sought with our African friends to maintain a local balance of power so there can be no imposed solution that would deprive the Angolan people of the right to determine their own destiny.

We are told that we need not concern ourselves because in the final analysis and at some indefinite date in the future, African nationalism will reassert itself and drive out foreign influence. Even were this to prove true, it still ignores the fact that governments under pressures will be forced to yield whenever a threat develops. Those who are threatened cannot afford to wait—they must decide whether to resist or to adjust. Advice which counsels patience and confidence in the verdict of history is a mockery to those who are concerned for the fate of their country today. History rarely helps those who do not help themselves.

Some charge that we have acted in collusion with South Africa. This is untrue. We had no foreknowledge of South Africa's intentions, and in no way cooperated with it militarily. Nor do we view South African intervention more benevolently than we do the intervention of other outside powers. Indeed, we have formally proposed that the removal of outside forces begin with those of South Africa and have asked—in vain—for an indication of how soon thereafter Soviet and Cuban forces would be withdrawn.

It is also claimed that because of our support for the side which later felt itself compelled to seek the aid of South Africa, we have lost influence in Black Africa. One cannot generalize so easily about the perceptions of the African people as the firm stand at Addis Ababa of 22 OAU members against OAU recognition of the MPLA should demonstrate. Behind this stand, which coincided with the U.S. position, was awareness that the MPLA represented only a minority of Angolans, and also a genuine apprehension over Soviet and Cuban, as well as South African, intervention. Indeed it is our inability to support our African friends that will cost us influence in Africa.

We are firmly convinced that, had there been no outside interference initiated by the Soviet Union, the Africans would have found their own solution. No single movement would have been strong enough to take over. The resulting solution would have been more representative of the people of Angola than a government imposed by an outside power and representing only a minority faction.

The outcome in Angola will have repercussions throughout Africa. The confidence of countries neighboring Angola—Zambia and Zaire—as well as other African countries, in the will and power of the U.S. will be severely shaken if they see that the Soviet Union

and Cuba are unopposed in their attempt to impose a regime of their choice on Angola. They and others elsewhere may well adjust their policies to what they consider to be the forces of the future.

The means we have chosen have been limited and explained to Congress.

Our immediate objective was to provide leverage for diplomatic efforts to bring about a just and peaceful solution. They were not conceived unilaterally by the United States; they represented support to friends who requested our financial assistance.

We chose covert means because we wanted to keep our visibility to a minimum: we wanted the greatest possible opportunity for an African solution. We felt that overt assistance would elaborate a formal doctrine justifying great power intervention—aside from the technical issues such as in what budgetary category this aid should be given and how it could be reconciled with legislative restrictions against the transfer of U.S. arms by recipients. The Angola situation is of a type in which diplomacy without leverage is important, yet direct military confrontation would involve unnecessary risks. Thus it is precisely one of those grey areas where covert methods are crucial if we are to have any prospect of influencing certain events of potentially global importance.

We chose a covert form of response with the greatest reluctance. But in doing so, we were determined to adhere to the highest standard of Executive-Legislative consultation. Eight Congressional Committees were briefed on 24 separate occasions. We sought in these briefings to determine the wishes of Congress. While we do not claim that every member approved our actions, we had no indication of basic opposition.

Between July and December 1975, we discussed the Angolan situation on numerous occasions with members of the foreign relations committees and the appropriations committees of both Houses, and the committees of both Houses that have CIA oversight responsibilities. The two committees investigating CIA activities—the Church Committee and the Pike Committee—were also briefed. Altogether more than two dozen Senators, about 150 Congressmen and over 100 staff members of both Houses were informed. I am attaching to my statement a list of all the briefings carried out.

Mr. Chairman: Where are we now? We are told that by providing money and arms for Angola we are duplicating the mistakes we made in Vietnam. Such an argument confuses the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars with the commitment of U.S. troops. If we accept such a gross distortion of history—if we accept the claim that we can no longer do anything to aid our friends abroad because we will inevitably do too much--then the tragedy of Vietnam will indeed be monumental.

We will have lost all ability to respond to anything less than direct and substantial challenge. And having lost that ability we will eventually discover that by failing to respond at an early stage, our ultimate response will have to be greater and the stakes will be higher. If we do not exercise our responsibilities to maintain the international balance, if Congress and the Executive are unable to act in concert when vital national interests are

affected, then world security may well be seriously undermined.

Many of the members of this committee have expressed their general support for our policy of easing tensions with the Soviet Union. We in the Executive Branch, are grateful for that support. But this process cannot be divided into those segments which the Soviets will honor, and those which we allow them to ignore. What the United States does when confronted with a challenge like Angola can be of great significance in shaping our future relationship with the Soviet Union. A demonstration of a lack of resolve could lead the Soviets to a great miscalculation, thereby plunging us into a major confrontation which neither of us wants. Credibility determines, to a great degree, what a nation can accomplish without a resort to force. And as credibility is reduced, the eventual need to resort to force increases. And in the end, we are all the losers.

The United States must make it clear that Angola sets no precedent: this type of action will not be tolerated elsewhere. This must be demonstrated by both the Executive and the Congress—in our national interest and in the interest of world peace.

To the Soviet Union and to Cuba, the Administration says: we will continue to make our case to the American public. We will not tolerate wanton disregard for the interests of others and for the cause of world peace.

To the American people, the Administration says: the time has come to put aside self-accusation, division, and guilt. Our own country's safety and the progress of mankind depend crucially upon a united and determined America. Today, as throughout our 200 years, the world looks to us to stand up for what is right. By virtue of our strength and values we are leaders in the defense of freedom: without us there can be neither security nor progress.

To the Congress, the Administration says: whatever our past disagreements, let the Congress and the Executive now resolve to shape a cooperative relationship that will enable the United States to play a responsible international role. Both branches will have to do their share in restoring the kind of non-partisan support that has served our foreign policy so well in the past. On the issue of Angola, the Administration is now seriously considering overt financial aid and we will soon be consulting with the Congress on this possibility. But whatever that decision, let us work together, with an appreciation of the larger interests involved, and with a sense of national responsibility. A United America cannot be ignored by our adversaries: together we will preserve the independence of those who face the prospect of oppression. Together we will hearten the friends of liberty and peace everywhere.

**APPENDIX 7:  
Maps**

**Map of Afghanistan**



source: [https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle\\_east\\_and\\_asia/afghanistan\\_pol\\_2002.jpg](https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/afghanistan_pol_2002.jpg)

## Map of Lebanon



source: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle\\_east\\_and\\_asia/lebanon\\_pol\\_2002.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/lebanon_pol_2002.jpg)

## Map of Angola



source: [https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cia16/angola\\_sm\\_2016.gif](https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cia16/angola_sm_2016.gif)

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