Negative Brief: Pakistan Military Aid – not needed

By "Coach Vance" Trefethen

***Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reform its foreign aid.***

Summary: AFF plan restores or unfreezes the suspension of US military aid announced by Pres. Trump in early 2018. NEG brief argues that Pakistan doesn't need military aid. Far from helping the US in the war on terrorism and the conflict in Afghanistan, Pakistan is actually helping the bad guys. If the US really wants to fight terrorism, reducing aid to Pakistan will surely help and we should keep reducing it.

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Negative: Pakistan Military Aid – not needed

INHERENCY

1. Relations are warming

Trump administration is easing pressure and improving relations with Pakistan

Voice of America News 2018 (journalist Ayaz Gul) 7 June 2018 "US-Pakistan Tensions Appear to Be Easing" https://www.voanews.com/a/us-pakistantensions-appear-to-be-easing/4428473.html

The United States appears to be easing public pressure on Pakistan in a bid to encourage the country to help promote peace and reconciliation with the Taliban to bring an end to the war in Afghanistan. The optimism, analysts say, stemmed from Wednesday's rare telephone conversation U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo held with Pakistani army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa. The two leaders discussed ways to advance bilateral relations, said State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert. She said "the need for political reconciliation in Afghanistan, and the importance of targeting all militant and terrorist groups in South Asia without distinction," was also discussed. Pakistani officials describe Bajwa's first direct conversation with Pompeo as "positive and productive." On Thursday, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence called Pakistani caretaker Prime Minister Nasir ul-Mulk to congratulate him on assuming office and conveyed "good wishes" from President Donald Trump.

MINOR REPAIR / COUNTERPLAN

Withdraw US forces from Afghanistan – then we don't need Pakistan's help. US involvement is unnecessary and counterproductive

Eric Goepner 2018 (visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department; retired colonel from the U.S. Air Force, his military assignments included unit commands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Pacific region; doctoral candidate at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government) " War State, Trauma State: Why Afghanistan Remains Stuck in Conflict" 19 June 2018 https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa-844.pdf

Little or no correlation appears to exist between American efforts in Afghanistan and the ability or willingness of Afghans to fundamentally change the situation on the ground. Each year U.S. leaders say that gains are being made and that next year will be different, yet it never is. American blood and treasure should not be spent on a mission that only makes sense if the years of evidence are ignored. Additionally, America’s reputation abroad will continue to suffer as long as the country supports an Afghan government that ranks at the bottom on freedom and at the top on corruption. Moreover, the use of military force in Afghanistan and other Muslim-majority states has hardened anti-American sentiments. Survey data indicate that more citizens in a number of Muslim-majority states agree than disagree with the statement, “The US presence in the region justifies attacks against the US everywhere.” Those countries include the likes of Jordan, Kuwait, and Iraq. And finally, the Taliban threat does not necessitate a continued American military presence in Afghanistan.

US efforts in Afghanistan have failed, and will continue to fail. Only Afghans themselves can fix their problems

Eric Goepner 2018 (visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department; retired colonel from the U.S. Air Force, his military assignments included unit commands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Pacific region; doctoral candidate at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government) " War State, Trauma State: Why Afghanistan Remains Stuck in Conflict" 19 June 2018 https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa-844.pdf

The United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001 to destroy al Qaeda, remove the Taliban from power, and ensure that the country would not become a sanctuary for transnational terrorists again. Sixteen years later, those objectives are largely unmet. Al Qaeda has not been defeated, and the number of other Islamist-inspired terrorist groups has proliferated. The Taliban no longer constitute the national government, but they do control, influence, or contest almost half of Afghan districts, while the nominally democratic government ranks at or near the bottom of all states in capacity, transparency, and freedom. Additionally, terror groups like ISIS appear to be increasingly active within the country. U.S. efforts have largely failed and will continue to fail because of the dysfunctional features of a society that only Afghans can fix.

SIGNIFICANCE / HARMS

1. Past cuts did no harm

US cuts in aid to Pakistan began under Obama after 2012, not with Trump

Abheet Sethi 2018 (journalist) 5 Jan 2018 "Donald Trump cuts Pakistan's security aid: US has already slashed funds by 62% in 5 years as US sees red over 'safe terror havens' https://www.firstpost.com/world/donald-trump-cuts-pakistans-security-aid-us-has-already-slashed-funds-by-62-in-5-years-as-us-sees-red-over-safe-terror-havens-4288585.html

Bilateral relations became increasingly fraught since the US special-forces raid in Abbottabad, Pakistan, that led to the killing of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin-Laden in May 2011. This led the US to become critical of Pakistan's role in fighting terror, particularly on the matter of safe havens to terrorists. US security aid to Pakistan fell 62 percent — from $849 million in financial year 2012 to $322 million in financial year 2016. Overall, Pakistan received nearly $8 billion security aid in the form of arms transfers from the US, including F-16 fighter jets, AH-1F Cobra attack helicopters and P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft, according to this CRS report on 4 May, 2015. Nikki Haley, US Ambassador to the United Nations, has confirmed that the Trump administration is withholding $255 million in security aid for Pakistan. US security aid to Pakistan fell 62 percent — from $849 million in financial year 2012 to $322 million in financial year 2016. Economic and humanitarian aid to Pakistan declined 77 percent from $1.1 billion in financial year 2012 to $246 million in financial year 2016.

2. Nothing to lose – Pakistan is not our ally

Pakistan provides sanctuary to our enemies in Afghanistan

Eric Goepner 2018 (visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department; retired colonel from the U.S. Air Force, his military assignments included unit commands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Pacific region; doctoral candidate at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government) " War State, Trauma State: Why Afghanistan Remains Stuck in Conflict" 19 June 2018 https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa-844.pdf

Insurgents have benefited from sanctuary in neighboring Pakistan. The Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium indicates that Taliban leaders have enjoyed safe haven in Pakistan since shortly after the United States initiated combat operations in Afghanistan back in 2001. The so-called Quetta Shura—named after the Pakistani city in which they enjoy refuge— even openly collects funds through various charity fronts in Quetta and other Pakistani cities. In 2009, President Barack Obama publicly called on Pakistan to “demonstrate its commitment to rooting out al Qaeda and the violent extremists within its borders.” President Trump recently repeated a similar refrain when he announced a surge of forces back into Afghanistan: “We can no longer be silent about Pakistan’s safe havens for terrorist organizations, the Taliban, and other groups that pose a threat to the region and beyond.” Presidential protestations aside, Pakistan has provided sanctuary to rebels for 16 years and counting.

3. Retaliation unlikely

Pakistan wants to maintain a good relationship with the US regardless of Trump's aid policy

Bloomberg news 2018 (journalists Chris Kay, Kamran Haider and Khalid Qayum) 1 Feb 2018 " Pakistan Wants Good U.S. Relations Despite Trump, Minister Says" https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-02-01/pakistan-wants-good-u-s-relations-despite-trump-minister-says

Pakistan’s defense minister said his country is determined to retain a positive relationship with the U.S. despite President [Donald Trump](https://www.bloomberg.com/billionaires/id/1252249)’s decision to suspend military aid to the nuclear-armed nation. In an interview in his parliamentary office on Wednesday, Khurram Dastgir Khan played down the significance of Trump’s Jan. 1 halt to about [$2 billion](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/terminal/P23G9R6S9728) in funding, saying aid had been considerably reduced already and the U.S. hadn’t provided spare parts for its weapons systems for three years. Pakistan will increasingly seek weapons from China and Russia, along with Eastern European and South American countries, he said. “Just to say because of one president we’re going to scuttle the relationship, that would be incorrect and unwise,” he said. “We have a long relationship and we want to keep it.”

No reason for concern about Pakistan retaliation

Pakistan Today 2018. " Not concerned about Pakistan retaliating over US aid cutoff: Mattis" 6 Jan 2018 https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/01/06/not-concerned-about-pakistan-retaliating-over-us-aid-cutoff-mattis/

[US Secretary of Defense, James] Mattis, speaking to reporters at the Pentagon, said he was not concerned about America’s ability to use Pakistan as a gateway to resupply US forces in Afghanistan. “I‘m not concerned, no,” Mattis told reporters at the Pentagon, adding he had not gotten any indication from Pakistan that it might cut off those routes. Mattis travelled to Pakistan last month.

4. Insignificant impact: Pakistan will survive without us

They'll survive without our aid and/or they'll get aid somewhere else. "Collapse without aid" threat is a bluff

William Tucker 2018 (Master's degree in Homeland Security; senior security representative to a major government contractor where he acts as the Counterintelligence Officer, advises on counterterrorism issues, and prepares personnel for overseas travel ) 24 Jan 2018 " The Decline of US-Pakistani Relations and the Future of Pakistan" https://inhomelandsecurity.com/decline-pakistani-relations-future-pakistan/

Pakistan has used its instability to great effect in securing aid. While a collapse of the Pakistani state would be devastating to the region, using that possibility as foreign policy has likely run its course. In other words, the Trump administration might be willing to call Pakistan’s bluff in this regard. It is accurate to say that Trump and his advisers disagree on the finer points of handling Pakistan, especially with regard to aid. However, exasperation with Pakistan is legion in Washington.  
**Pakistan’s Future May Require More Support from China and Saudi Arabia**If Pakistan is to continue functioning, it will come to rely on China and Saudi Arabia for continued support (and even Russia as well, to a lesser extent). But these patrons have significant internal issues of their own. China, for instance, has long had an interest in Pakistan. Beijing has invested quite heavily in its neighbor without receiving much return on that investment. Chinese activities at the Gwadar port are a case in point. Pakistan is capable of surviving without the U.S. But planning for the future must include thoughts of self-sufficiency. A policy of relying on the good will and continued financial support of a few friends is no way to run a nation-state.

Aid quantity is too insignificant to have much impact - the aid is too small to give the US much leverage

Dr. Moeed Yusuf 2018. (PhD political science, Boston Univ.) 5 Feb 2018 " U.S. Suspension of Pakistan Military Aid: What It May Mean" https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/01/us-suspension-pakistan-military-aid-what-it-may-mean

U.S. aid to Pakistan has declined steadily from a peak in 2010-11. Last year, American security assistance and its reimbursement to Pakistan for military operations (called “coalition support funds”) were already well below $1 billion. And only part of what was meant to go there made it due to conditionalities and other technical impediments. Within Pakistan’s economy, with a gross domestic product of nearly $300 billion per year, the recent level of U.S. aid “simply doesn’t add up to provide strategic leverage for the U.S.” with Pakistan’s government, Yusuf said.

SOLVENCY

1. Aid won't buy Pakistan's cooperation

Pakistan's cooperation isn't based on aid, it's based on self-interest

Abheet Sethi 2018 (journalist) 5 Jan 2018 "Donald Trump cuts Pakistan's security aid: US has already slashed funds by 62% in 5 years as US sees red over 'safe terror havens' <https://www.firstpost.com/world/donald-trump-cuts-pakistans-security-aid-us-has-already-slashed-funds-by-62-in-5-years-as-us-sees-red-over-safe-terror-havens-4288585.html> (brackets added)

On 3 January, 2018, [US Ambassador to the UN Nikki] [Haley accused](http://edition.cnn.com/2018/01/02/asia/pakistan-trump/index.html) Islamabad of playing “a double game for years”. She said Trump is willing “to go to great lengths to stop all funding from Pakistan as they continue to harbor and support terrorism”."We can review our cooperation if it is not appreciated. Pakistan’s cooperation is not based on any consideration of aid but on our national interests and principles," Maleeha Lodh, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations, said in [response to Haley's](http://edition.cnn.com/2018/01/02/asia/pakistan-trump/index.html) comments.

2. Pakistan isn't helpful in Afghanistan

Pakistan destabilizes Afghanistan – things would be better without them

Dr. Vanda Felbab-Brown 2018. (PhD in political science from M.I.T.; Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution) 24 May 2018 " STABILIZATION: LESSONS FROM THE U.S. EXPERIENCE IN AFGHANISTAN" https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/20180524\_sigar\_afghanistan\_transcript.pdf

I would say that it is a fundamental part of the problem; and this goes back to the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghan people will often tell you that if only Pakistan were not the problem, there would not be problems in Afghanistan; and, indeed, Pakistan has been a tremendously destabilizing complicated actor, no doubt about it. However, if there were good governance in Afghanistan, the destabilizing effects of Pakistan would be far more limited in the effect than they have been.

3. No military solution in Afghanistan

Can't conclude the war in Afghanistan on the battlefield, we need political reconciliation

Voice of America News 2018 (journalist Ayaz Gul) 7 June 2018 "US-Pakistan Tensions Appear to Be Easing" https://www.voanews.com/a/us-pakistantensions-appear-to-be-easing/4428473.html

Army spokesman Major-General Asif Ghafoor acknowledged Pakistan's relations with the United States "are under stress", but said his country would still like U.S. forces to succeed and go back from Afghanistan "with a notion of victory." But Ghafoor said the goal is achievable only through political means, because neither side is in a position to win the war on the battlefield. "The Afghan Taliban cannot conquer Kabul militarily, but no force can eliminate all of them either to bring peace to Afghanistan. So, there has to be a midway to achieve a political reconciliation acceptable to all sides," Ghafoor noted.

US should be reducing its military role in Afghanistan. Intervention isn't needed and is counterproductive

Eric Goepner 2018 (visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department; retired colonel from the U.S. Air Force, his military assignments included unit commands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Pacific region; doctoral candidate at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government) " War State, Trauma State: Why Afghanistan Remains Stuck in Conflict" 19 June 2018 https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/war-state-trauma-state-why-afghanistan-remains-stuck-conflict

Trauma at this level imposes profound limits on America’s ability to effect enduring change in Afghanistan and other places. Accordingly, the United States should decrease its military footprint in the country and focus on efforts to incentivize a more effective and less corrupt Afghan government. More broadly, America should restrain its use of military force to those instances in which it is both effective and necessary, since sustained war in already traumatized states such as Afghanistan increases psychological damage and societal instability, making continued war more likely. Although it has become a common element of U.S. foreign policy, intervening with military force in another country’s civil war is almost never necessary to secure U.S. interests.

4. Afghanistan: Problem too big to be solved

Afghanistan cannot be fixed: The people are too traumatized by 40 years of uninterrupted war. Peace is impossible

Eric Goepner 2018 (visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department; retired colonel from the U.S. Air Force, his military assignments included unit commands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Pacific region; doctoral candidate at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government) " War State, Trauma State: Why Afghanistan Remains Stuck in Conflict" 19 June 2018 https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/war-state-trauma-state-why-afghanistan-remains-stuck-conflict

Afghanistan has become a trauma state, stuck in a vicious cycle: war causes trauma, which drives more war, which in turn causes more trauma, and so on. Thanks to 40 years of uninterrupted war, Afghans suffer from extremely high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental illnesses, substance abuse, and diminished impulse control. Research shows that those negative effects make people more violent toward others. As a result, violence can become normalized as a legitimate means of problem solving and goal achievement, and that appears to have fueled Afghanistan’s endless war. Thus, Afghanistan will be difficult, if not impossible, to fix.

Neither the US nor international community can improve Afghan situation, and even if they stabilize it, it will collapse again

Eric Goepner 2018 (visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department; retired colonel from the U.S. Air Force, his military assignments included unit commands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Pacific region; doctoral candidate at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government) " War State, Trauma State: Why Afghanistan Remains Stuck in Conflict" 19 June 2018 https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa-844.pdf

Seventeen years in, the United States remains torn between maintaining the status quo, surging military forces, or leaving the country altogether. The Trump administration has chosen to surge forces, but regardless of the path pursued, Americans can expect continued civil war involving the Taliban and other insurgent groups, as well as a corrupt, illiberal, and largely incompetent Afghan government. An end to the violence will happen only after one group finally monopolizes the use of force in Kabul and a sufficient number of provinces outside the capital, but even then there is a much higher than average probability that civil war will resume. Unfortunately, neither the United States nor the international community can substantially improve Afghanistan’s situation.

US intervention itself actually creates incentives that guarantee perpetual war. Without it, they lose all our free money

Eric Goepner 2018 (visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute’s Defense and Foreign Policy Department; retired colonel from the U.S. Air Force, his military assignments included unit commands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Pacific region; doctoral candidate at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government) " War State, Trauma State: Why Afghanistan Remains Stuck in Conflict" 19 June 2018 https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa-844.pdf

As noted by the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, the billions of U.S. and international community dollars flooding into the country have inadvertently introduced “perverse incentives.” The artificial and unsustainable increase in the size of the economy encourages Afghans to enter political life for corrupt purposes and further incentivizes them to keep the war going lest Americans and their money leave. Afghan government officials have siphoned off an estimated 20 percent of each contract, while the insurgents typically require a payment as well to prevent them from destroying the new project. The net result? More grievances against the government, increased viability for the insurgents, and more war.

5. Can't regain US influence

Too late: China is already the largest supplier of military aid to Pakistan (63% of its aid comes from China)

Dr. Mercy Kuo 2018 (PhD; former CIA specialist in Asian affairs ) 30 May 2018 "China-Pakistan Relations:  Challenging US Global Leadership" THE DIPLOMAT https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/china-pakistan-relations-challenging-us-global-leadership/

This strengthening relationship has expressed itself in military aid. In 2011, the U.S. and China supplied the Pakistani military with roughly equal proportions of its military aid — 39 percent and 38 percent, respectively. By 2016, however, that number had shifted with 63 percent of its military equipment coming from China and only 19 percent from the U.S. Pakistan is now the largest recipient of Chinese military armaments, receiving 35 percent of China’s total arms exports.

Not solving cash crisis (unless AFF lends them $5B): China is bailing them out with cash

Reuters news service 2018. "Pakistan seeks economic lifeline with fresh China loans" 26 May 2018 https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/pakistan-seeks-economic-lifeline-with-fresh-china-loans/articleshow/64328429.cms

Lending to Pakistan by China and its banks is on track to hit $5 billion in the fiscal year ending in June, according to recent disclosures by officials and Pakistan finance ministry data reviewed by Reuters. The ramp up in China's lending comes as the United States is cutting aid to Pakistan following a fracture in relations between the on-off allies. In February, Washington led efforts that saw Pakistan placed on a global terror financing watchlist, drawing anger in Islamabad amid fears it will hurt the economy.  The new Chinese loans that are being negotiated will help bolster Pakistan's rapidly-depleting foreign currency reserves, which tumbled to $10.3 billion last week from $16.4 billion in May 2017.

China will win influence over Pakistan with economic aid – AFF can't solve

Dr. Aasim Sajjad Akhtar 2018 (PhD from Univ. of London; Master's degree in economics from Yale; assistant professor at the National Institute of Pakistan Studies at Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad) [The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor](https://monthlyreview.org/2018/06/01/the-china-pakistan-economic-corridor/) 1 June 2018 <https://monthlyreview.org/author/aasimsajjadakhtar/> (Brackets added)

At the same time, U.S. aid to Pakistan has never included a substantial economic component—at least not consistently so—and it is on this front that China’s evolving role is likely to prove distinct. While economic cooperation between China and Pakistan has increased considerably since the turn of the millennium, Beijing’s stakes in the Pakistani economy are set to increase exponentially in the form of CPEC [China-Pakistan Economic Corridor] commitments: to date the Chinese government has pledged more than $54 billion.

US hegemony in Pakistan has ended, it's already replaced by China's growing economic influence

Dr. Aasim Sajjad Akhtar 2018 (PhD from Univ. of London; Master's degree in economics from Yale; assistant professor at the National Institute of Pakistan Studies at Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad) [The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor](https://monthlyreview.org/2018/06/01/the-china-pakistan-economic-corridor/) 1 June 2018 <https://monthlyreview.org/author/aasimsajjadakhtar/>

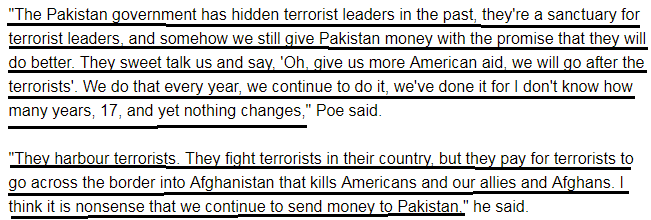
In this context, China’s claim to advance a development agenda that transcends the narrow geopolitical calculus that has long defined regional dynamics should be evaluated carefully. The biggest question mark in the OBOR strategy in South Asia remains Beijing’s frosty relations with New Delhi. Still, the volume of official trade between China and India totaled almost $71 billion in 2016—nearly six times that between China and Pakistan. Thus economic ties are expanding despite the Modi government’s nationalist posturing. In any case, China’s growing economic and political role in the region necessarily means that the era of Washington’s unrivalled hegemony, especially in its longtime frontline state of Pakistan, has ended.

DISADVANTAGES

1. US military aid promotes terrorism

American aid should be cut off because it encourages Pakistan to support terrorists in Afghanistan

Rep. Ted Poe 2018 (congressman from Texas) 21 June 2018 America skeptical of Pakistan when it comes to Taliban, ECONOMIC TIMES (India) https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/america-skeptical-of-pakistan-when-it-comes-to-taliban/articleshow/64677021.cms



Pakistan officials secretly admit they're supporting militant groups

NEW YORK TIMES 2018. (Abbas Nasir, former editor of Dawn, a Pakistani newspaper) 2 June 2018 The Generals and the Art of Undermining Democracy in Pakistan <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/02/opinion/pakistan-military-politics-press-freedom.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FPakistan&action=click&contentCollection=world&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=6&pgtype=collection> (brackets added)

The relations between [Pak. Prime Minister] Mr. [Nawaz] Sharif and the military worsened after the publication of a report in Dawn, the oldest and most respected newspaper in Pakistan, in October 2016. The newspaper revealed that Mr. Sharif, and his younger brother and aide Shahbaz Sharif, had [warned the military leadership](https://www.dawn.com/news/1288350) of Pakistan’s growing international isolation because of its continued support of militant groups.

2. Harms Pakistan

Empowering the military establishment fuels religious extremism and hurts the Afghan & Pak people

Dr. Aasim Sajjad Akhtar 2018 (PhD from Univ. of London; Master's degree in economics from Yale; assistant professor at the National Institute of Pakistan Studies at Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad) [The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor](https://monthlyreview.org/2018/06/01/the-china-pakistan-economic-corridor/) 1 June 2018 <https://monthlyreview.org/author/aasimsajjadakhtar/> ("millenarianism" = religious fervor/extremism as opposed to "secular traditions," where religious zeal is not the driving factor behind government policies)

U.S. imperialism has played an unambiguously destructive role in Pakistan for most of the country’s seventy-year history. Aside from decisively empowering the military establishment, its support of religious militancy in the 1980s precipitated a complete transformation of the body politic. The secular political traditions of other societies in the region were similarly undermined by the rise of millenarianism, with Afghanistan worst affected. Today Washington seeks to maintain its waning influence in the region through a zero-sum strategic game that has seen India, Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan pitted against one another, forcing their own people to bear the cost.

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