

# Terrorism in South Asia: The Origins of Pakistan's "Non-State Actor Policy" in Kashmir

A lot of people think that Pakistan began its non-state actor policy either during the Soviet jihad in Afghanistan, or perhaps a little bit later, circa 1990 in Kashmir. Of course, the truth is that it began this policy well before that. In fact, it began the use of non-state actors as early as 1947.

To understand the origins of Pakistan's jihad strategy, you have to know a little bit about how Pakistan came to being in the first place. Pakistan came out of the division of the British empire, also known as the Raj, in 1947. The people that fought for an independent Pakistan argued for this thing called the two nation theory. And this two nation theory held that Muslims and Hindus were inherently separate nations. They were separate peoples. And, therefore, Muslims could not live under a Hindu-dominated state.

So, after a considerable political battle, and going back and forth with the British authorities, it was in fact finally decided that when the British de-colonized, that they would break up the Raj into an independent India, which was going to be secular, multi-ethnic, multi-religion. And that there would be a Pakistan. And this Pakistan was imagined to be the homeland for South Asia's Muslims.

In the Pakistanis' founders' imagination, they believed that they had to have the most important state for their interests, which was Kashmir. Kashmir was, at the time, a Muslim-dominated-- somewhat Muslim-dominated-- state that was under the rule of a Hindu sovereign. Unlike much of British India, the Maharajah actually had a separate legal arrangement with the British. And therefore, the British couldn't simply tell him whether he was going to join the dominion of India or the dominion of Pakistan. Now, this Maharajah preferred, quite frankly, to remain independent, which was something that neither India nor Pakistan preferred. But this was the option that he was holding out for.

As it seemed ever more likely that Pakistan was not going to get Kashmir-- and I may add that the "k" in Pakistan is for Kashmir-- tribal raiders, sometimes called marauders, sometimes called jihadists, from Pakistan's federally-administered tribal areas began attacking in waves in Kashmir. Now the Maharajah was becoming quite worried about this. While he had his own military forces, they weren't terribly capable. And he actually asked India for military protection. India said, sure. We'll definitely give you protection-- provided that you join India. So the Maharajah signed the Instrument of Accession. And India then sent troops to Kashmir. And thus became the first India-Pakistan war of 1947-48.

When that war ended, Pakistan had about 1/3 of the territory of Kashmir, and India had the

remaining 2/3. But what this dispute bequeathed to these two states is an enduring rivalry. So from 1947 onward, Pakistan was obsessed with taking the rest of Kashmir from India.

Now what was happening, very interestingly, from the 1950s onwards, the Americans were allied with the Pakistanis. And we were actually giving them military training. And we were interested in having the Pakistanis work with us in counterinsurgency. Yet, while they were training with American soldiers and with our doctrine, they were thinking that in fact, they could sustain and wage an insurgency. So while we were hoping that Pakistan would be a partner with us in Korea and in other theaters, they were taking away from that training the insights as to how they might be able to start and sustain a Kashmir insurgency that would eventually result in India letting go.

So this strategy was again tried in 1965. The Pakistanis, again using non-state actors variously known as Islamist warriors, variously known as jihadists and so forth, with assistance from the regular Pakistan army, again, raided Kashmir. They didn't succeed in starting the insurgency as they had liked, but they did start the second Indo-Pakistan crisis, or the second Indo-Pakistan war.

When that war ended, the Kashmir territory still remained more or less as it was before the war. 1/3 remained within Pakistan. 2/3 of it remained within India. As the events in South Asia continued to evolve, Pakistan's interest in Kashmir did not weaken or wane. In fact, Pakistan continued in its interest in how we could get Kashmir from India.

However, other regional events soon intervened. And Pakistan's immediate focus was taken off of Kashmir, and it was moved westward. And specifically, I'm talking about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It turns out that this would be an important watershed event for the use of jihadi actors in this region and beyond. Pakistan, eventually with the United States and Saudi Arabia, helped to train, arm, man, mission, and direct an army of mujahideen to oust the Soviets in Afghanistan.

When those mujahideen were no longer needed, when the Soviets left Afghanistan, Pakistan then used those mujahideen in Kashmir. At the time, it turns out this was very, very coincidentally convenient for the Pakistanis, because there had been an indigenous insurgency that began to take place in Kashmir in the late 1980s, principally because the Indians had mismanaged Kashmiri political grievances. So the Pakistanis thought, at long last, there was this opportunity to try to wrest the remainder of Kashmir away from the Indians. And so we have seen, steadily, since 1990, the use of Islamist militants now, not only in Kashmir, but also throughout the rest of India.