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(Mijas Pueblo, Spain)

Sidebar

Terror In Pakistan

I Terrorism Turns Against Pakistan. I have been reading some perturbing reports about “terror” in Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto’s death may be the result of such activity. Al Qaeda and Taliban foreign fighters in 2001 fled Afghanistan and settled in the tribal region of South Waziristan. These fighters had fought against US and NATO soldiers. Recently, Bill Gates—US Defense Secretary—said that they (al Qaeda militants) had turned against Pakistan. What is discouraging is that foreign terrorists are being joined by Pakistani militants. Their elements have expanded substantially. This, indeed, is troubling for the US and its allies—trying to stabilize Pakistan. A direct confrontation is developing within Pakistan. Plans to eliminate President Pervez Musharraf and Nawaz Sharif (an opposition leader) have been reported. Perhaps, the first casualty was Mrs. Bhutto (wife of Asif Ali Zardari). Leaders of the expanded militants reside and train young fighters in Waziristan. One leader was killed in the region in July 2006. There are many other groups (situated in tribal areas) training and exporting suicide bombers. One of the leaders claims to have hundreds of bombers ready to attack government and military targets in Pakistan. These developments pose a challenge to the war on terror.

II Need To Secure The Nukes. Equally important is the need to secure the nukes in Pakistan. The US has invested about 10 billion dollars in Pakistan: (a) to fight terror, and (b) to protect the nukes. (Osama bin Laden has not been captured or killed.) Has it failed? Do we need a new policy? Are the bombs in the hands of the “bad elements”? Let us hope that President Musharraf and his supporting generals (so far) are guarding the warheads. Some think Musharraf & Co. is the bad elements. The US and its allies must protect the nukes. So, they must walk a fine political and social line. Terrorists (al Qaeda and Taliban) fight against the US and NATO (and now against Pakistan) by “brainwashing” young people’s minds—hate the West. The nukes most not fall to them. What can the free world do?

III Allies For Peace and Democracy. The US and its allies (such as Iraqis, Afghans, Pakistanis, and others) should form a voluntary “peace corps” to educate possible terrorists on peace and democracy—a form of contra-brainwashing. (The UN has not been active on the ground.) This “peace corps” should perform in all militant regions—in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and in Pakistan. The war on terror is not going to be won anytime soon just by the use of military force. (There is little force being used in Pakistan’s tribal regions. The lack of action has permitted al Qaeda and Taliban to “work” in the tribal regions.) Education of possible militants, in the hot areas, is required—risky, yes, but necessary. This may sound simplistic, but if not tried we will never know if it works.