

ABSTRACT

Title of thesis: SPARE PARTS: SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION AND THE DILEMMA OF GOVERNANCE, AUTHORITY, AND FOREIGN MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Brian Christopher Merrell, Master of Arts, 2015

Thesis directed by: Professor Jon Tetsuro Sumida
Department of History

This thesis examines the international state-directed arms trade in South Asia following WWII, and describes how attempts to limit the arms flow into the region were subverted by less constrained suppliers and by the superpowers themselves. Donor states distributed surplus items to less industrialized states, who eagerly accepted modern weapons that they could not produce domestically. Small arms are of special interest because of their very low cost; high production volume; low skill requirements for use; and the ease of distribution compared to major weapons systems. The South Asian states examined here pursued their own regional security agendas rather than conform to the Cold War paradigm of donor states. This demonstrated the failure of arms transfers as a diplomatic tool. It also resulted in a decline of civilian governance, the increased primacy of military authority, and the creation of conditions for enduring insecurity rather than security.

SPARE PARTS: SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION AND THE DILEMMA OF
GOVERNANCE, AUTHORITY, AND FOREIGN MILITARY ASSISTANCE

by

Brian Christopher Merrell

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Advisory Committee:

Professor Jon Tetsuro Sumida, Chair

Professor Colleen Woods

Professor Whitman Ridgway

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Preface

During the Cold War, major powers independently pursued a de facto policy of surplus arms production and distribution that enabled less developed recipient states in South Asia to engage in warfare with modern industrial weapons. Though many types of weapons were distributed to the region, the cheapest, and therefore most frequently used, was the common rifle. Small arms were transferred to client states both as end-use items and eventually as a design and manufacturing process. This transfer of military technology significantly increased the lethality of “end users” in these otherwise poorly industrialized states and drastically altered legitimate authority and governance. It also frequently failed to advance the strategic aims of the donor states.

The title of this thesis comes from the tendency in U.S. State Department official communications to label many items as “spare parts” to circumvent the arms embargo put in place by the United States.¹ These “spare parts” included rifles, whole surplus tanks, aircraft parts, and enormous quantities of ammunition. The low capital value of small arms means they receive less consideration in arms trade discourse. Yet in an environment with poorly trained armies, irregular fighters, and multiple non-state actors, they are often the weapons with the most frequent lethal use.² A 1967 study by the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency noted that in 52 conflicts in the two decades following World War II, only about 10 per cent involved significant conventional military forces on both sides,³ indicating the extent armed conflict was

¹ Memorandum from L. Bruce Laingen to Mr. [Joseph] Sisco, NEA: “Pakistan: Outstanding Issues re Arms Supply” February 2, 1973. Box 1. Lot 77D350. DEF 19, Military Assistance 3rd Country/Pakistan 1973. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

² Artillery is very deadly as well, but each of these states supported and/or experienced guerrilla warfare in some fashion, in which small arms are used in far greater numbers. Indeed, this was a major part of the 1971 Bangladesh crisis and later in Afghanistan.

³ “The Control of Local Conflict: A Design Study on Arms Control and Limited War in the Developing

largely a matter of fighting with small arms.

This thesis aims to show that major powers failed to achieve the objectives underlying this state-directed arms redistribution, and instead enabled poorly industrialized states to fight with modern industrialized means. In the particular historical case of South Asia, which for these purposes comprises Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India, this was repeatedly made evident, yet transfers continued through the Cold War. None were members of the Soviet or Western political blocs but were heavy importers of small arms from both. Two of the three states subsequently experienced existential crises largely of their own making, and the behavior of the political leadership in the region illustrates a striking correlation between foreign military aid, the failure of civilian government, and an increase in regional and local warfare.

The influx of surplus weapons into these non-industrialized states increased the level of violence for all combatants and unintentionally subverted the supplier state's goals. The nature of transfers meant that recipients often used the same weapons, making it difficult to distinguish combatants in conflict. In a conversation with the author, former foreign service officer Howard Schaffer related how confusing it was to see the same (American M-47) tanks lobbing shells at each other on the India-Pakistan border, or how the same mix of British and American rifles littered the battlefield after a fight.⁴

Existing scholarship largely focuses on the post-Cold War period and identifies small arms proliferation as a problem mostly in terms of violence on civilians. In contrast, this historical analysis focuses on the broader strategic and political changes in non-producer states

Areas. ACDA/WEC-98, Volume II. Prepared for the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency." June 30, 1967. USGPO. 34-35.

⁴ Post-lecture discussion with Howard and Teresita Schaffer, at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C. June 14, 2011. The Schaffers were foreign service officers in both India and Pakistan during the 1960s and 1970s. Howard Schaffer served twice as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs.

prompted by the massive weapons surplus following the Second World War. Key to this is that it was a “manufactured surplus” rather than just “leftovers”: it was only after the fall of the Soviet Union that trade in existing stockpiles exceeded transfers of new weapons.⁵ This challenges the common understanding of what constitutes “surplus”, as it was not only excess inventory, but also intentional overproduction and distributed production. What has not been adequately explored is why they were distributed, how they were used, and what implications they had for their “final” destination.

Sources referring to Pakistan and India’s arms buildup for this period exist in the form of U.S. State Department cables and CIA documents, though neither are complete records. By contrast, Afghanistan was frequently a “black box” in terms of official sources, and a great deal of material comes from journalistic sources or declassified American intelligence analyses that are fairly speculative in contemporary terms, dealing largely with the Soviet concerns there. Primary source material for this thesis came from several places, including the U.S. National Archives II in College Park, MD. Secondary material was acquired from various booksellers and the University of Maryland Library System; the Pakistan Army and the Pakistan Ordnance Factories, which provided considerable material, both historical and marketing; and online journals. My personal travels to Afghanistan in 2009 allowed me to acquire a small number of Pakistani sources, published in English, including difficult to acquire books by Afghan and Pakistani authors purchased from Shah M Books in Kabul.

⁵ Wulf, Herbert. “Conventional Arms Transfers: Surplus Weapons and Small Arms”. Seminars on Contemporary Arms Control and Disarmament, Geneva Forum. 31 July 1998. p. 8.

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“War is a matter not so much of arms as of money.” -Thucydides

I. Introduction

Equipping fighting forces has almost always been expensive, time consuming, and difficult if the means of production were not readily available. Once individual fighters were no longer expected to provide their own weapons, the cost of arms procurement was a critical challenge to a state’s ability to engage in military action. Then and now, specialized groups in society have been paid to make, distribute, and use weapons. However, modern industrial production and Cold War politics created a new situation in which the most basic class of weapons became essentially free.

Though the arms trade has a long history, the relationship between buyer and seller changed as industrialization and globalization accelerated during the Cold War. In the previous century, the arms trade was heavily dominated by private actors -- both corporations such as Vickers and eccentric but entrepreneurial individuals like Basil Zaharoff and Hiram Maxim. State involvement was primarily as a buyer. Following the First World War, production fell under stricter state direction, but this just further extended what was already becoming a potent state policy tool. After the Second World War, this reached a scale that was previously unattainable. Modern donor states attempted to influence less industrialized states and to also discourage adversaries by tipping the scales in the calculus of local war. Geopolitics and the mechanics of the arms trade combined to ensure a continuous flow of arms, even with the realization that such actions potentially caused more problems than they solved. Unintended effects disrupted the very states that donors attempted to prop up, and often did not achieve the original policy goals.

The arms trade reflected the type of warfare of the era, and the battles of the Second World War still relied primarily on masses of armed men. By the close of the Second World War, 12 million Americans served in the U.S. Army and Marines, despite a shorter period in the conflict than other states. Over 34 million fought in the Red Army. The British Army cycled through about 3.5 million, and the Imperial Japanese Army at its peak is estimated at six million men. Counting minor combatants, the Second World War saw sixty to seventy million people serving in the world's armed forces.¹ What distinguished these soldiers from those of previous wars was the mass produced weapons they carried. By the nineteenth century and even in countries as unindustrialized as Russia, tactics and battlefield success became dependent on industry: “The strength of armies could be measured no longer only by the number of men but increasingly by the firepower available, by the number, deployment and capabilities of soldiers using the new weapons systems, and by the productive capacities of native arms industries.”² Military advantage had come to rest with the larger economy, not just the larger army.

The number of small arms and light weapons produced around this time was staggering. Production of service rifles became both truly “standard” and ubiquitous. Prior to and during the war the Red Army carried various editions of the Mosin-Nagant rifles as the standard infantry weapon, ultimately numbering in the tens of millions. The U.S.S.R. also produced five million PPSH submachine guns. Britain produced over 17 million Lee-Enfield rifles throughout the war and the next half century, along with four million STEN submachine guns during the war period alone, which continued to be produced until 1953.³ Germany produced approximately 14 million

¹ “American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics”, Compiled by Leland, Anne and Mari-Jana "M-J" Oboroceanu. Congressional Research Service, Document RL32492. February 26, 2010.

² Bradley, Joseph. Guns for the Tsar. Northern Illinois University Press. Dekalb, Illinois. 1990. 175.

³ Long, Duncan. Assault Pistols, Rifles, and Submachine Guns. Citadel Press: Secaucus, New Jersey. 1986. 34.

Karabiner 1898 Kurz (K98k) rifles from 1935, when it was adopted as the standard service rifle, until the end of the war in 1945.⁴ This incomplete summary of the most common weapons accounts for almost a hundred million rifles and light automatic weapons.

Small arms production continued into the Cold War despite partial demobilization. Soon after the defeat of the Axis powers, the victorious states began to arm themselves in anticipation of a future conflict. It was not long coming, and though the Korean War in the early 1950s was more localized than WWII, it nonetheless drew in a wide group of combatant states. While the most prominent weapons systems were tanks, planes, ships, and missile systems, and many wars in the post-WWII era were at least at some level armor wars, there is little escape from the “rifle war” aspect in conflict. By sheer production numbers, the individual rifle remained the most prevalent weapon in any arsenal. The transition from the standard semiautomatic rifle to the automatic assault rifle in major powers meant additional production, as new weapons were manufactured while existing models were serviced or produced in smaller quantities.

The cycle of obsolescence and the subsequent production shift was more pronounced elsewhere. British rifles were produced for different markets, and when home markets were no longer financially viable, the UK government disassembled entire production lines and sold them to former colonies – notably Pakistan and India. Soviet weapons were stockpiled, but also distributed to countries within the Soviet sphere. Later, with the creation of the Simonov (SKS) and Kalashnikov rifles, parallel production lines were established in socialist states, leading to unprecedented numbers of small arms – often more than most armies could conceivably field.⁵

⁴ Ibid, 5.

⁵ Anecdotally, there were so many Communist-bloc weapons produced that they new ones were wrapped in plastic and stored in caves; Western arms were often left from decolonization that were too expensive and too worthless to ship home. This will be detailed later, but the distributed production of Communist and Western states nonetheless both resulted in more guns than soldiers able to use them.

This glut of small arms gave birth to a new era of inexpensive mass firepower. Small arms inventories no longer had to be gradually produced or contracted over several years. Instead, they could be acquired from external sources in a relatively short period of time. Combined with a new global order that replaced the separate interests of European colonial powers, the Manichean struggle between two superpowers instigated, or at the very least magnified, a half century of political violence that fundamentally changed how wars were fought, who fought them, and how they were sustained. 'Small wars' and other limited conflicts, which had once been difficult to supply and equip, subsequently became dangerously *cheap* and *easy* by comparison. Non-state actors, who had been less relevant politically and militarily, became much greater threats to state power, and traditional authority structures were more easily disrupted.

Enabling weak states or non-state actors to wage war with industrial means was highly problematic for South Asia. Even after donors witnessed the negative effects from arms transfers, they were still left with the choice of continuing them or disengaging completely. The transfer of arms to the developing world satisfied a necessary condition, creating an “existence-effect” that removed a critical barrier to conflict.⁶ This led to a political and strategic dilemma for major powers, who were seeking to offset the influence of each other without initiating general war.

Indeed, as early as 1967 it was clear that the U.S. Military Assistance Programs to South Asia in general did not serve American national security interests – and probably undermined them – but transfers continued due to a lack of alternative diplomatic tools. Pakistan saw

⁶ “The Control of Local Conflict”, Vol I, p. 5.

international relationships largely in terms of arms procurement as it alternated between military dictatorships and weak civilian governments, and Afghanistan was manipulated by outside actors via arms distribution to the point that central government disintegrated and devolved to local power holders.⁷

The extent of the effects depended heavily on the donor, the recipient, and the context in which increased militarization occurred. Pakistan and Afghanistan, two countries with similar ethnic composition, religion, and culture, and who share a closely intertwined (albeit markedly different) political history, were neither allies nor did they develop equally.⁸ Pakistan had strong military and government traditions inherited from India and Britain, though still lacked the military industrial capacity that India enjoyed. Afghanistan had weaker ties to the British military, less centralized political structures, and a large number of internal factions.

Most recent journalistic sources dealing with this region focus on the heavily armed population and what such a population means for civil society. In particular, the introduction of large quantities of light assault weapons introduced into the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region during the Soviet occupation in the 1980s allowed resistance groups to gain significant power – not just in relation to the Soviet Army, but to each other. These resistance groups reflected the frontier society they were in: highly factionalized, competing, and internally predatory. Because the dominant ethnic group in the area was not bounded by the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and many were based in Pakistan, the rise of these groups had significant political implications for the government of Pakistan. In the border region, both the Pakistani and Afghan governments

⁷ In contrast, India remained comparatively free; there are many possible factors for this, but a key one was that its demographics were a greater concern than any external threat, forcing it to balance its military with other state institutions.

⁸ It should be noted that Afghanistan was the only country to oppose Pakistan's entry into the United Nations, which caused significant diplomatic tension.

were simply seen as two more factions, although in a sense more legitimate and better funded.⁹ Such a characterization is indeed critical to understanding present circumstances, but funding jihadists in the 1980s was not the beginning of the problem.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s Pakistan and Afghanistan received substantial overt military aid from western states and communist bloc countries, despite multiple arms embargoes, as well as informal and semi-formal attempts to limit the number and types of weaponry entering the region.¹⁰ The military aid these two countries received was markedly different, and external suppliers correspondingly attached to it very different political agendas. This resulted in very different political situations in each country. Afghanistan was pushed along a path towards chaos; in Pakistan, it enabled a paranoid military state to strengthen its defense establishment, leaving its civilian government weak. Instead of creating a stable and useful ally, this aid undermined each state's ability to govern society.

Meanwhile, economies and industry in South Asia remained comparatively primitive. Most undeveloped countries, by definition, did not have the means for industrial mass production of modern small arms, even if some small crude manufacturing centers existed.¹¹ Additionally, the limited economies of these countries made them unable to finance weapons procurement independently. Such constraints dictated that arms came from external sources and at an affordable cost. Afghanistan is the extreme case: domestic weapons production was prohibitively difficult, yet because of foreign military intervention, weapons were nearly free. As a result, financial barriers to the use of lethal force for personal relations and politics were reduced.

⁹Bhatia, Michael and Mark Sedra. Afghanistan, Arms, and Conflict. Small Arms Survey, Routledge, New York. 2008, 15.

¹⁰ Stohl, Rachel and Suzette Grillot. The International Arms Trade. Polity Press, London. 2009. p 36.

¹¹ e.g., Darra on the Afghan-Pakistan border.

Pakistan also procured weapons mostly from foreign sources, although the use of those weapons and the resultant political effect was markedly different. The military-dominated state was strengthened at the expense of civilian functions. This limited overall state efficacy, and the arm of state power with the capacity to use force became the only relevant institution. Frontier factions were supported as an undeclared reserve force, while civil society withered. Ultimately, this proved to be a greater challenge for state authority as it was unable to control the very factions they initially supported.¹²

The “modern” problem of state directed arms trade to South Asia is post-partition, post-WWII, and shaped by the Cold War. Consequently, it can be considered in three distinct periods. The first period could be defined as a two decade interval after the end of the Second World War, when both superpowers armed clients in an attempt to bolster them against the influences of the other. In the South Asian context, it is tempting to begin this timeline in 1947 with the Partition of India and Pakistan. The year 1954 was also a key year, as it immediately followed the truce halting the Korean War, was shortly after the death of Josef Stalin (marking a change in Soviet politics), and the United States and Pakistan had just signed a Mutual Defense Agreement that elevated Pakistan to a status not shared by other states in the region. The war in 1965 marks the end of the “golden era.”

Second, there was a period following the 1965 Pakistan-India war until the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, when much of the western world made a genuine attempt to limit arms transfers. Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration placed an embargo on American weapons to South Asia, and to Pakistan in particular. This effectively limited newer, more sophisticated weapons

¹² Bhatia and Sedra, 58.

flowing into the region. Both India and Pakistan initially used surplus weapons from American WWII stockpiles, but Pakistan was particularly affected because it had depended primarily on American weapons. Though it was quickly subverted through the provision of “spare parts” and third party sales, the embargo was still in effect through the 1960s and 1970s, changing the patterns of arms procurement and political relationships in South Asia and strengthening bonds with less constrained suppliers. It was during this time that the East-West rivalry in South Asia started to become further complicated.

The third period was marked by the direct involvement of the Soviets in Afghanistan at the end of the 1970s. Large numbers of weapons were introduced into Afghanistan not only by the Soviets, but other parties through Pakistan. Pakistan had been getting significant transfers of arms from China for free or extremely low prices. They then proceeded to arm not only their own soldiers, but frontier fighters as well. The scale and nature of these transfers changed over time, but they were cheaper and more reliably delivered than the occasional and heavily encumbered transfers from the West. Pakistan needed them for their own military requirements, its military industrial complex having only made halting progress. It also needed the transfers so that it too could hand out weapons, both to the militant groups it had cultivated in anticipation of yet another war with India, and for insurgents it was training and equipping in Afghanistan on behalf of the United States. The embargo was mostly meaningless by the mid-1980s despite specifically directed legislation from the U.S. Congress. Well into the Soviet-Afghanistan conflict, with funds and weapons from both East and West, the region approached chaos.

The bulk of the literature on the arms trade falls roughly into two camps. The first tends to be journalistic and focused on descriptive narratives of war. This literature has some value in

that it captures a level of detail that is otherwise lost. But it lacks analysis and appreciation of the larger Cold War context. The second camp is highly quantitative, occupied by economists and political scientists, and the primary metric is estimated quantity of arms (often abstracted out to just their dollar value) and subsequent number of dead civilians. Both models have their shortcomings.

Though this subject would appear to lend itself easily to being treated like a simple economic analysis, such as Lewis Fry Richardson's *Arms and Insecurity* (1960), this requires a caveat. Richardson's approach may provide a model for considering gross state-vs-state behavior using a limited set of variables. However, it does not adequately explain the relationship between the introduction of new ways of engaging in violence, the subsequent political upheaval, and the relationship between the military and the political objective it seeks to achieve. Nor does it seem to hold well when the arms are free. Others, like Gregory Sanjian's analysis of the India-Pakistan arms race, shoehorns an enormously complex situation into a systems model that fails to capture the fact that there were not merely two sides, but many. He proposes, as others have, a set of functions relating arms imports to the quasi-quantitative concept of military balance, with the effects on political relationships simplified into client-patron transactions.¹³

While tempting because of its comparative ease of quantitative manipulation, in reality it is likely that statistical analysis alone fails to provide useful conclusions due to both scarcity of data and the complexity of political and military decision making. Western sources of data are sporadic and disaggregated, while Eastern sources frequently do not exist. When deals were hidden, or the guns were free, or deaths were never reported, these numbers quickly become less

¹³ Sanjian, Gregory S. "Cold War Imperatives and Quarrelsome Clients: Modeling U.S. and USSR Arms Transfers to India and Pakistan". *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 42, No 1 (Feb., 1998). 97-127.

meaningful. Instead, it is useful to use the timing and presence of these weapons as a set of conditions, and examine the decisions made possible or more likely by them. These conditions resulted from the decisions of a small number of leaders and in a context that was simultaneously broadly global and narrowly regional. The issue can be approached by probing what exactly it was that those involved really wanted, and whether or not they got it – and what happens when an outside entity makes it politically, economically, and diplomatically easy for the other to take one path over another.

This thesis examines the distribution of small arms by western NATO countries and the Eastern bloc to Afghanistan and Pakistan (and by comparison, India) following the Second World War until the middle of the 1980s. These countries are chosen because often the arms transfer was a political act in itself and not just an economic or purely military concern. It examines some of the basic mechanics of the twentieth century arms trade, shifting from industrial powers down to the nonindustrial states of South Asia; who the producers, sellers, and recipients were; the ostensible reasons behind the distribution; and the actual effects of the distribution. The effect that the ubiquitous presence of modern weapons in a non-industrialized state is that instead of enhancing security, these arms transfers removed constraints on war, and often changed the very idea of legitimate authority.

II: The End of the Second World War, the Rise of Superpowers, and the 1965 War

“You cannot simultaneously prevent and prepare for war.” – Albert Einstein (attributed)

Chapter 1: The Suppliers, Buyers, and Fighters

The traditional mechanics of the small arms supply chain were more accidental than designed, with private firms managing most aspects of the trade. The nineteenth century saw rapid technological change in weapons and their production. Though regulation increased in many European states, governments adopted the distribution mechanisms already in place. A favorable regulation status and advances of the Industrial Revolution created a boon for European manufacturers. Yet out of the First World War a public perception emerged that war itself was driven by a profit motive, and subsequently the trade fell under significantly more state direction. In Britain, the public believed that once brought under the control of the government, tools of war would be tools for peace and prosperity.¹⁴ In practice, regulation did not reduce trade, nor were weapons produced solely for national militaries.

The most recognizable weapon may have been the common rifle, even if artillery caused the greatest number of casualties in the first half of twentieth century land warfare. However, small arms were portable and the life of a weapon could span many users. The producing state was not necessarily, and indeed was unlikely to be, the ultimate end user. Each subsequent class of rifle generally became more combat effective, lighter, and easier to use. Repeated patterns of production and obsolescence meant that older weapons were resold or otherwise redistributed instead of destroyed. In South Asia, this pattern played out with reutilized colonial weapons.

¹⁴ Stohl and Grillot, pp 14-16.

Despite decreased demand in the primary market due to post-war demobilization, production of the British Army's primary service rifle did not cease. The Lee-Enfield was manufactured in some fashion and quantity for many decades, with several revisions, editions, and in far flung factories.¹⁵

Manufacturing excess was hardly a new problem. While the later Kalashnikov and the “socialist production system”¹⁶ was a genuine twentieth century phenomenon, industrialized states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially those with extensive external concerns – colonies, foreign trade, or frequent military engagements – produced heavily. The violence of the First World War diminished the appetites of many European states for large war machines, but with colonies to defend, much of the world’s arms production remained in the hands of first tier manufacturing states, and trade was brisk.

In some respects, government involvement made arms transfers easier. The supplying state provided credit to buy weapons from a major producer. Far from inhibiting trade, this streamlined the process and it became a more entrenched tool of government foreign policy and diplomacy. A second major war did nothing to slow this; directly following World War II in 1946, the arms trade was substantial, totaling seven billion dollars, exploding to over twenty billion dollars by 1953.¹⁷ The five largest producers through most of the Cold War were the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Belgium, and France. This list changed depending on type of weapon, time period, and events, though not drastically. And rarely could the civilian

¹⁵ Long, among others. The Lee-Enfield was still in wide use when the Soviets began their occupation of Afghanistan. It has been produced in England, and in former British colonies. An entire assembly line was physically moved to Pakistan to be integrated into the POFs.

¹⁶ This term is used to describe the distributed production of Soviet designed weapons in communist states. It served to improve economic output while providing for an effectively distributed armory.

¹⁷ Stohl and Grillot, p 15-17.

market be entirely separated from the military one. Production for multiple complementary markets was a fine arrangement for firms and governments alike, and met two important policy goals: assist client states with armaments, and benefit one's home economy.¹⁸

Nonetheless, the primary market for a producing state remained the military, and the standard service rifles for the Second World War were usually bolt action rifles that fired a high power cartridge. Following the war, significant study was dedicated to determine the "optimal" size for standard cartridges and to eventually create a portable and fully automatic weapon. Yet the concept of the "assault rifle" had not yet been completely worked out, and the "greatest victor," the United States, continued to place faith in (and more importantly, produce) the M1 Garand, firing a large, high power cartridge. In contrast, the Soviet Union tested a number of possible designs. They first produced the semiautomatic SKS, designed in the last years of the war, but eventually settled on what would be the Automat Kalashnikov - Model 1947 (commonly known as the AK-47). Both the SKS and the AK-47 used the same 7.62x39 mm cartridge (M43).¹⁹ The use of smaller cartridges for a main service rifle was an innovation that would take Western governments some time to adopt.

This difference was borne from their respective experiences coming out of World War II. The general sentiment of the United States Army was that the M1 had "won the war", leading them to issue it as its standard rifle for a decade after the end of hostilities.²⁰ The creation of NATO led to a set of standardized cartridges, first the 7.62 mm NATO round, and much later the smaller 5.56 mm NATO round. Manufacturing firms in the United States, Great Britain,

¹⁸ Ibid, 18-19.

¹⁹ Chivers, CJ. The Gun. Simon & Schuster, New York, NY. 2010. pp 156-161.

²⁰ Long, 100.

Belgium, and elsewhere designed weapons around the new ammunition. Likewise, the Soviet Union was designing new rifles around the M43 cartridge. More significant than just the product was the production process: despite an assumed industrial superiority of the West, NATO small arms production would be dwarfed by the Kalashnikov family of weapons, which would be copied in China, Czechoslovakia,²¹ Hungary, Israel, North Korea, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Yugoslavia, Finland, and Egypt.²² Adding to the large number of weapons from the war sitting in national inventories, or being handed out to third parties throughout the world, the number of small arms produced during the Cold War period was staggering. This massive surplus, of both “obsolete” and current generation weapons, was neither destroyed nor left idle, but was sold or transferred to clients throughout the world.

Less Developed Countries (LDCs) were the largest importers of arms throughout the Cold War era. Despite various arms control measures, the largest importers included India (10th) and Pakistan (14th). Nominally friendly states rounded out the top ten, including Iran, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea.²³ As the superpowers and their industrial allies upgraded, they divested themselves of their outdated stocks. East and West had produced so much that they were able to indefinitely store unused weapons: there was anecdotal evidence of rifles being placed in salt mines and kept wrapped in plastic for decades reaching back to the interwar period, housing up to three million rifles of various vintage, from Mosin-Nagants and K98ks to modern Kalashnikovs.²⁴

²¹ In a manner; the Czech VZ-58 did not, strictly speaking, use the Kalashnikov operating system. It was independently developed, but still around the use of the Soviet M43 cartridge.

²² Long, 89.

²³ Gilberg, Trond. “Eastern European Military Assistance to the Third World” in Communist Nations' Military Assistance, ed. by John F. Copper and Daniel S. Papp. Westview Special Studies in International Relations. Westview Press. 1983. p 76.

²⁴ Chivers, pp 343-344.

The Soviet bloc, with its paranoia about insecure borders, had a reputation for never removing much from its inventory if it might be of the slightest use. Russia held a large number of vintage Mosin-Nagant rifles long past their expected useful life, only to transfer them a half century later. In the 19th century, the Mosin-Nagant was emblematic of the globalizing arms trade, as Russia had initially lacked sufficient manufacturing ability to produce them domestically. The rifle required more complex manufacturing processes than its predecessors. When introduced, production was overseas, in France, Belgium, and even the United States. The order for five hundred thousand rifles from the French government directly preceded the Franco-Russian treaty of 1891. This procurement was a way for Russia to give itself time to adjust to the industrial realities of modern warfare, however, while still benefiting from a new rifle; all machines had to be turned over to the Russian armories following production. By 1902, over three million rifles were produced.²⁵ These became “throwaway” weapons, left behind by Americans in eastern Russia following the First World War. They also ended up in the Ottoman Empire and even Japan, though a large number (approximately 140,000) were given to Mao's new communist China in 1950-1951.²⁶

In terms of production and service life, the western European equivalent was the British Lee-Enfield .303 series. It had been produced in various forms from 1895, and was the primary rifle of the British Army throughout WWI, and again in WWII, with major revisions mid-war. Ammunition for it was ubiquitous. Britain produced seven billion rounds during WWI alone, and this was easily eclipsed in later years. This extremely long production run meant that it was nearly everywhere; the late British imperial era brought it around the world.²⁷

²⁵ Bradley, pp 170-172.

²⁶ Chivers, pp 216-217.

²⁷ Long, p. 9. Previously cited in relation to WWII, but it existed before and after.

The Lee-Enfield .303 holds a special place in South Asian history. Following the 1947 Partition, India had production facilities that Pakistan lacked, including small arms factories well inside Indian territory, notably at Ishapore in West Bengal where the Lee-Enfield rifles and its subsequent copies were manufactured. The Indian Army continued to produce them, later converting factories to make a version chambered for 7.62 mm rounds. Pakistan also had large stocks and continued to receive supplies from Britain after 1947, and a production facility was relocated to Pakistan near Rawalpindi.²⁸

The British also had a widely proliferated submachine gun, the STEN. Stamped out of sheet metal, it was cheap and easy to produce. That it was British and cheap meant it showed up in Commonwealth countries like India. The STEN used 9 mm Luger ammunition and was frequently copied. It was produced in Britain, Canada, and the United States, with modified copies in the Czechoslovakia, Israel, and Germany. The sheer numbers – nearly four million – meant that it, too, found its way throughout the remnants of the British Empire.²⁹ This paled in comparison to the bolt action Lee-Enfield, but since official production of the STEN lasted until 1953, it still represented an enormous stock of automatic weapons.

The perceived success of the semiautomatic M1 Garand and its derivatives in the Second World War, with over six million Garands produced and several million derivatives, led the American military to believe that it was suitable for all battlefield conditions. After realizing the challenge presented by the Kalashnikov, the M14 was produced -- but only for five years, with a total of just over a million made. It would be replaced by the AR-15/M16, which remained the standard rifle family of the United States.³⁰ Though American rifles had problems, the United

²⁸ Indian Ordnance Factory Board History. <http://ofbindia.gov.in> downloaded April 2011.

²⁹ Long, pp 35-37.

³⁰ Chivers, p 292.

States possessed sufficient industrial capacity to manufacture them at an impressive rate. The M16 was made almost exclusively by Colt,³¹ but with licensed local copies; however, distribution was far more limited than the Kalashnikov.

The Belgian FN FAL was a popular European infantry weapon, which Duncan Long identified as the “classic post war assault weapon”³² Fabrique Nationale produced over two million of these weapons, though it has been copied, modified, or been the inspiration for dozens of other local designs, and in a sense has competed with the Kalashnikov as the assault weapon of choice.³³ India, in particular, used the FAL from the mid-1950s through the 1990s as their standard rifle, and continues to produce enormous quantities of ammunition for it.

Weapons manufacturing in the Soviet bloc was kept at a high pace in preparation for another world war. Even in the early days of the socialist production model, the idea of sending older equipment and spares to client states was part of the decision making process. The height of socialist production and export, between 1950 and 1970, still consisted of creating primary orders for the Soviet armed forces from the domestic defense budget while using funds from various trading organizations for export inventory. The latest models of any weapons system, even one as basic as the Kalashnikov, was not permitted to be sold until the Soviet armed forces was sufficiently equipped. The relationship with recipients was extended by providing spare parts for maintenance, as well as ammunition, though the costs were surprisingly low: a 7.62 mm caliber rifle in 1950 was the same price as a single tank round.³⁴ Many nascent socialist movements received weapons for free.

³¹ And its reincarnations; it had repeated business problems requiring government intervention.

³² Long, p 77.

³³ Both are chambered for 7.62 mm caliber rounds, though the NATO cartridge is longer.

³⁴ Kirshin, Yuriy. “Conventional Arms Transfers During the Soviet Period.” Russia and the Arms Trade. Ed by Ian Anthony. SIPRI. In the United States by Oxford University Press, 1998, 49-53.

The USSR also allowed communist bloc nations to distribute essentially on Moscow's behalf. This involved many countries, though the partnership between the Soviet Union, Cuba, and the GDR was a reliable “tripod” of sorts, with Soviet arms and heavy transport, Cuban manpower, and East German technical expertise.³⁵ After overcoming some manufacturing difficulties, the Kalashnikov saw full-scale production in 1954 in the USSR, and was quickly transferred under a special arrangement to China. Within the production “tripod” noted above, it was said that the “beauty” of the Kalashnikov line was that the weapon could be manufactured in China, the ammunition made in Cuba, and then used in Africa. This model was a globalized production and supply chain long before the late twentieth century “innovation” of doing the same for consumer products. What further differentiated the Soviet military supply system was that it was an integrated political, economic, and military production system that incentivized client states into buying more arms.³⁶

Additionally, Eastern bloc nations kept weapons stockpiles that they would never need. The Small Arms Survey at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva attempts to use official state numbers combined with other sources, including field research, and lists that in 2003 Russia had as many as 45 million military arms for an army of approximately three million, including non-combat personnel. Part of this excess resulted from an expectation of sudden expansion in times of crisis. Official doctrine reflected a perpetual national paranoia of external threats, expecting rapid conscription and requiring massive stores of arms.³⁷

³⁵ Gilberg, “Eastern European Military Assistance to the Third World” in Communist Nations' Military Assistance, 1983. p 83.

³⁶ Anthony, Ian. “Trends in post-cold war international arms transfers”, Russia and the Arms Trade. Oxford University Press Inc., New York. SIPRI 1998. p 28.

³⁷ Small Arms Survey 2005: Weapons at War. Project of the Graduate Institute for International Studies, Geneva. Oxford University Press: Oxford, New York. 2005. pp 76-78.

Additionally, the countries hoarding massive surpluses still had enough to also be net exporters. China, which began the 1950s with a mix of imported Mosin-Nagants and SKS rifles and very limited domestic military production capacity, was able to produce large numbers of its own SKS and Kalashnikov pattern rifles by the end of the 1950s. This major secondary source added to those being manufactured in eastern European states, such as the AMD-65 in Hungary. The Chinese Kalashnikov clone is commonly known as the Type 56, possibly because the designs for it were transferred (along with the SKS and M43 cartridge) in 1955. Like the Russian AK-47, “Type 56” became a catch-all name for a whole family of Chinese small arms.³⁸

It took a few years for South Asia to use Eastern weapons. Following Partition in 1947, Indian and Pakistani armies were equipped with a mix of equipment, and like most of their weapons, the rifles reflected donor inventories. The “standard” rifle was the British Lee-Enfield firing the .303 round. According to the Pakistan Ordnance Factory's (POFs) self-published history, there were sixteen ordnance factories built by the British during the colonial era, all entirely within Indian territory. In December 1951 Pakistan created its own at the Wah Cantonment near Rawalpindi with assistance from British Royal Ordnance. Pakistan openly states that the initial arms and associated production facilities were British; the infusion of American money and technology came after.³⁹ Today, Wah is a small city almost wholly devoted to weapons production, but it took Pakistan years before it could provide for its own needs.

In the interim, Pakistan became an eager buyer. In response to India's lean toward Moscow, Western Europe and the United States were willing to give Pakistan significant military assistance. In 1954, Pakistan requested help from the United States. It received it a wide array of

³⁸ Chivers, p 217.

³⁹ Undated Pakistan Ordnance Factories pamphlet; also available at <http://www.pof.gov.pk> (as viewed December 19, 2010). Official histories are suspect, but this point is not controversial.

surplus equipment. Pakistan, however, got a large number of essentially incompatible surplus arms from Britain and the U.S. Pakistan also worked closely with West Germany, and eventually produced a local copy of the H&K G3 automatic rifle. Aid from China started after China's 1962 conflict with India, with very favorable conditions; much of the military aid to Pakistan has been interest-free, and in the case of small arms, many were completely free.⁴⁰

Unfortunately for Pakistan, ammunition shortages were a frequent problem. Through its series of short, ill-advised wars with India, Pakistan lost a large quantity of ammunition due to both ammunition spent and depots destroyed or captured.⁴¹ While not difficult to produce in small quantities, Pakistan could not domestically replace ammunition stocks and had to import from elsewhere – indeed, everywhere. Because it used eastern and western small arms, Pakistan produced and imported large quantities of NATO 7.62x54mm ammunition as well as Kalashnikov 7.62x39mm. It would eventually become both an importer and exporter, though it would not have reached that production level without factories established with British, American, and German assistance and equipment.⁴²

Impoverished, rural, and non-industrial, Afghanistan does not appear to ever have had a significant secondary production market. There are some ammunition factories⁴³ but nothing as in Pakistan or India. In 1954, the government of Afghanistan requested broad assistance, including military assistance from the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States

⁴⁰ Siddiqa-Agha, Ayesha. Pakistan's Arms Procurement and Military Buildup, 1979-99: In Search of a Policy. Sang-e-Meel Publications. 25, Shahr-e-Pakistan, Lahore. p 103-108.

⁴¹ Siddiqa-Agha, p 14.

⁴² Undated Pakistan Ordnance Factories pamphlet; also available at <http://www.pof.gov.pk> (as viewed December 19, 2010)

⁴³ Author's travels. A building identified as an ammunition factory sits along the river in Kabul. The small compound could not have produced sufficient ammunition for even the pre-Soviet Afghan Army, and was heavily supplemented by Soviet imports.

declined, offering civilian aid instead. While this resulted in significant improvements in agriculture, power generation (through the Kajaki Dam), health, and transportation, it did not create the critical relationship with the Afghan Government that was hoped for. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, offered aid to attempt to industrialize Afghanistan, especially the areas abutting the Soviet Union's Central Asian SSRs. It also offered massive military aid.

Nearly all of Afghanistan's weapons are externally provided. Unlike Indian and Pakistan, Afghanistan almost always received them for free, one way or the other. From the 1950s through the Soviet era, Afghanistan received massive quantities of military aid from the USSR. Along with training, aircraft, armored personnel carriers, and trucks, it received everything else required by a primarily infantry force, to include boots, helmets, and weapons. Naturally, Afghanistan's military equipment would reflect that of its Soviet benefactor.⁴⁴ The Kalashnikov found a new market.

Of course, this supply chain came to work against the Soviets. The Kalashnikov used by their enemies were at first from either captures or desertions, and later, through a massive arms flow from the south funded by the United States and Saudi Arabia and enabled by Pakistan. The non-state actors gaining power in Afghanistan, and forcefully changing its political landscape, were using externally provided weapons as well. They too, were cheap or free. An echo of another former non-state actor, Mao Tse-Tung, comes to mind: “Guerrillas must not depend too much on an armory. The enemy is the principal source of their supply.”⁴⁵ Afghanistan did not have many armories, but it was to have an enemy.

⁴⁴ Cronin, Stephanie. “Building and Rebuilding Afghanistan's Army: An Historical Perspective”. *The Journal of Military History* 75 (January 2011): pp 67-68.

⁴⁵ Chivers, p 364.

Chapter 2: The 1950s and Cold War Competition in South Asia

India was officially nonaligned during the Cold War. During the first decade and a half of its existence, it relied heavily on the large stocks of British equipment and production facilities it possessed prior to Partition. This changed little, as it was still using legacy equipment well after it had introduced new generation weapons.⁴⁶ Despite the tendency to hold onto old equipment, surprisingly India became the largest customer for Russian arms through much of the Cold War, as measured by issued licenses (though not necessarily in equivalent dollar terms).⁴⁷ This led Washington to be wary of Indian intentions, and was a major reason it sought to shore up Pakistan.

The idea of a state customer and its link to policy complicated the picture. Governments, rather than non-state actors, are the entities that bought weapons in any large quantity. In this case, Afghanistan and India were primarily buyers of Soviet weapons, and Pakistan was an all-source buyer, initially dependent on the United States. Pakistan became increasingly wary of this relationship. The Pakistani military felt the need to maintain a constant supply regardless of the international diplomatic issues it might experience. Despite public complaints from American critics, Pakistan continued to be a purchaser of American small arms in varying quantities, as part of both surplus military stocks and repurposed civilian firearms. This odd piecemeal procurement method meant that with American help it could bypass arms embargoes.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ "India: Armed Forces". National Intelligence Survey, dated September 1973. Prepared for the NIS by the Defense Intelligence Agency, in parts, in February 1970 and updated May 1973. CIA-RDP01-00707R000200110057-1. 2. Though this was written a long time after the period in question, it expressed surprise at equipment from decades before still in use.

⁴⁷ Anthony, Ian. "Trends in post-cold war international arms transfers", Russia and the Arms Trade. Oxford University Press Inc., New York. SIPRI 1998. 30-33.

⁴⁸ State Department sources throughout much of the 1960s, which will be detailed later, show weapons transferred at the rate of single rifles to the mid-hundreds. The suggestion was that these were samples or guard weapons, but this appears incongruous with the millions of rounds of ammunition shipped with them

Yet when pressed, Pakistan procured weapons from communist China, with one transfer in the 1960s estimated in the tens or low hundreds of thousands of rifles. The actual composition of the mid-1960s shipment is unknown, but an educated guess can be made. China's production capacity of Type 56 Kalashnikov clones likely had not reached a point where they exported them on a large scale. However, it is plausible that it was re-exported inventory. China itself had received large, late WWII inventories from the USSR in 1950, on roughly the same scale.⁴⁹ These were obsolete once China began manufacturing modern rifles, so it is likely that some ended up in Pakistan's inventory.

Furthermore, Pakistan's domestic arms production was similar to revolutionary China's, except several decades behind. In both cases, industry was poor. During and immediately following Mao's Revolution, the Chinese Communists relied on captured weapons from old Japanese stocks, supplies from defeated Nationalist forces, and from shipments from the Soviet Union once victory became apparent. The Chinese Nationalists also relied on external sources for small arms, notably the United States. Mao thus inherited an immature weapons industry upon the Nationalist flight to Taiwan.⁵⁰ Following Partition, Pakistan similarly depended on Colonial leftovers, because the new weapons manufacturing complex established after independence took decades to develop.

The domestic politics of Pakistan were rooted in fear of rival India, and thus dictated the prioritization of the military. Insufficient industrial capacity or expertise required the importation of foreign weapons. Pakistan's import options were limited, given its rising relationship with the

and other specifically military equipment.

⁴⁹ Kirshin, Yuriy. "Conventional Arms Transfers During the Soviet Period." Russia and the Arms Trade. 57-59.

⁵⁰ Copper, John F. "China's Military Assistance" in Communist Nations' Military Assistance, ed. John F. Copper and Daniel S. Papp. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado. 1983. 110.

United States. Following the Sino-Soviet rift, however, the USSR was competing with China just as much as it was with the United States.⁵¹ Afghanistan annoyed Pakistan regarding tribal politics, especially in regards to the Pashtunistan issue. India, on the other hand, controlled Kashmir and by extension the fate of a large number of South Asian Muslims. Pakistan's priorities, therefore, were to confront India, not Afghanistan.

To do this meant framing regional security threats in Cold War terms. Though India had several strategic advantages over regional rivals, including wealth, manpower, and industrial capacity, it also received a regular supply of Soviet armaments. Afghanistan and India were not part of the "Eastern bloc" nor the Central Asian Soviet Republics, but nonetheless tilted toward the Soviet Union. Pakistan went so far as to outlaw its own domestic Communist Party in July 1954, when it initiated its first explicit military relationship with the United States. This balance of interests and influence was intentional on the part of the superpowers and the clients, and factored into the patterns of arms trade much like the politics of the South Asian states did. In this way, Cold War security interests and the regional concerns of each state were mutually reinforcing.

During this period, Pakistan committed a significant portion of its budget toward defense at the expense of the civilian economy. Though countering the Soviet Union's influence was very much in the forefront for American policy makers and strategic planners, they did not wish to precipitate regional conflict. The U.S. State Department developed estimates of Pakistan's military expenditures, use of foreign aid, and whether it was diverting funds to hidden military

⁵¹ Copper and Papp, p 55.

spending.⁵² These estimates illustrated the primacy of the military establishment in Pakistan at the time, since it was able to take funds from the nominally civilian government.⁵³ Much of the aid to Pakistan from the West, and in particular the United States, came with strings attached or accounting requirements. However, money was fungible and easily hidden within less controversial programs or simply not reported. In some years, Pakistan leveled off or even reduced its defense spending, but as a trend overall, it increased in both percentage and absolute terms.⁵⁴ The competing pressures from outside powers to both reduce its offensive capabilities (to limit the likelihood of conflict with India) and to increase defensive capabilities (to serve as a frontline state in the Cold War) complicated its allocation of military resources.

Spending priorities by recipients naturally took into account what was being granted for free. At Partition, the weapons in hand were Lee-Enfields. Pakistan later adopted American M1 Garands, and then a mix of Chinese Type 56s, and finally German G3 rifles as its standard infantry weapon.⁵⁵ New weapons were chosen on the basis of available inventories, leading to a cycle of legacy equipment dependence rather than any particular bias toward the donor. Transitioning some units to Kalashnikovs and its copies was not only due to the grants of military aid by China and the USSR, but because of the wide availability of 7.62x39mm

⁵² Unclassified Memorandum, "Indian and Pakistani Defense Expenditures", dated 30 June 1967, from Thomas P. Thornton (INR/NEA/PAF) to Mr. Guy C. Mallett, NEA/PAF. Defense Affairs, DEF 4, SEATO: July – December, 1967. (Possibly misfiled) Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP) NOTE: This was accompanied by several informal notes, some handwritten, indicating the frustration over the difficulty in penetrating South Asian defense spending with any sort of precision.

⁵³ Or in some periods of its political history, the military government. Even then there were competing priorities.

⁵⁴ State department cables and secondary data suggest this. Precise numbers will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

⁵⁵ Both Chinese SKS and the Kalashnikov clones were confusingly referred to by the name "Type 56", though it more frequently meant to refer to the Kalashnikov clone.

ammunition. After 1965, both India and Pakistan nominally standardized on 7.62x51mm NATO rounds, though both also had a large inventory of 7.62x39mm rifles. Sufficient ammunition of both types was available, so while Pakistan and India may have armed their infantry with different rifles, all were chambered for mutually compatible cartridges.⁵⁶

Pakistan and India had sufficient economies and geostrategic positions such that they could actually absorb donors' military aid. This was not true of South Asia's poorest member. Afghanistan requested military aid from the United States in 1953, but was denied because the United States did not assess its military as capable of making good use of sophisticated equipment and its internal security needs were not demanding enough to require it. Instead, it was offered civilian aid in the form of agricultural programs, infrastructure improvement, economic development, and technical aid -- all necessary, but was valued less than military assistance. Afghanistan's leaders quickly turned to the Soviet Union in late 1954 for help.⁵⁷

Soviet leaders provided the requested aid, and in the process turned the Afghan military into a Soviet oriented one. Journalist Henry Bradsher noted that a "July 1956 agreement began the orientation of the Afghan army and air force to Soviet ways. Their technical language became Russian, and they became dependent on Soviet expertise and spare parts."⁵⁸ Cast off weapons were given to Afghanistan, including (by then ancient) Mosin-Nagant rifles with some PPSH submachine guns.⁵⁹

Beginning in 1954, the Soviets practically built the Afghan Army from scratch. Soviet

⁵⁶ Chivers, p. 166.

⁵⁷ Bradsher, p. 2.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ From photo dated late 1950s, republished in article "Once Upon a Time in Afghanistan" by Mohammad Qayoumi, Foreign Policy, May 2010. The photo clearly shows Afghan soldiers carrying what were by then quarter-to-half century old weapons.

aid built airfields, roads, and industrialized the north. The Soviet military also trained Afghan officers in the USSR, sent thousands of advisors to Afghanistan, and established technical training programs within the Army. Police pistols all the way through light machine guns bore the stamp of Izhevsk, the main Soviet gun works. This ample supply of weapons would come back to bite the Soviet Union later. A CIA document from the day after the invasion noted the danger of Afghan Army units with [Soviet provided] weapons joining the rebels.⁶⁰ Just as they had with British rifles a century before, a generation of Afghans grew accustomed to Soviet engineering and military hardware.

India was able to take care of its own procurements more easily. Defense spending figures indicate that it was able to match and exceed its northwestern neighbor. A comparison between the two countries' defense spending domestically and in terms of U.S. Foreign Military Sales indicates that in 1959/1960, India was spending approximately twice what Pakistan was on defense: India's expenditure of 2220 million rupees versus Pakistan's 1128 million rupees. The gap widened in the early 1960s, and within three years India had already doubled its spending in absolute terms. Pakistan attempted to maintain a 50 percent spending ratio, but the following year its spending plunged to less than it spent even in 1959, while India increased by another 30 percent.⁶¹ Pakistan simply did not have the economic wherewithal to compete. Both countries moderated spending in 1964 and 1965, yet in mid-1965 the two went to war.

Fiscal statistics provide little insight into exactly what was purchased by each country

⁶⁰ CIA Document 26 December 1979, Memorandum "Capabilities and Requirements of the Afghan Insurgents", National Foreign Assessment Center, CIA- RDP81B00401R000600140009-5.

⁶¹ Unclassified Memorandum, "Indian and Pakistani Defense Expenditures", dated 30 June 1967, from Thomas P. Thornton (INR/NEA/PAF) to Mr. Guy C. Mallett, NEA/PAF. Defense Affairs, DEF 4, SEATO: July – December, 1967. (Possibly misfiled) Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

and how they used it. This illustrates a failure of approaching the problem from a purely financial perspective, as small arms are plentiful, cheap, and reproduced widely. Photographs and other scattered data suggest that in the 1965 war, Indian and Pakistan Army units were using a mix of Lee-Enfield rifles and American M1s. These were augmented with whatever else was available, suggesting a relatively immature small arms procurement program as part of the above gross expenditures. India still held the clear advantage, beyond rupees. India had an industrial base to make much of its basic military equipment, including necessary spares for the above Enfields. Pakistan had nothing. Its reliance on external sources was by simple necessity, making competition both regional and, because of imports, also international.

South Asia is not alone in its resistance to outside analysis. The Small Arms Survey, an annual publication by the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, notes that the Middle East has been, for the most part, able to completely avoid “small arms transparency” and to successfully hide the size of their arsenals.⁶² South Asia shared many of the same political dynamics of those post-colonial developing nations with armed conflict as a commonplace occurrence. All three states have had nominal disarmament programs that have not been anywhere near a scale to match the influx of weapons – largely from multiple foreign powers seeking to use them as a policy tool. In the case of India and Pakistan, they are producers in addition to buyers, and the influx adds to the domestic supply. This growing supply and the complicated nature of the international donor-recipient relationship meant that clear lines of influence did not exist.

⁶² Small Arms Survey 2005, 71-72.

Chapter 3: Enemy and Ally: Ostensible Reasons for Aid Requests in the Early 1960s

The political and security concerns of South Asia did not fall neatly into patterns aligned with Cold War dynamics. This inconvenient reality was materially advantageous for India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Both India and Pakistan played the post WWII and post Korea arms regime to their benefit as non-aligned “states of importance.”⁶³ This behavior was not limited to South Asia, as Turkey received over three billion dollars in economic aid over a twenty year period from the Soviet Union starting in 1954.⁶⁴ However, economic aid did not translate into military assistance or political influence. Pakistan followed a similar pattern, accepting economic aid from the USSR but little in the way of military aid. This is likely due to the options available to Pakistan than it is to the nature of any relationship with Moscow. But the trade was not limited to superpowers. In the decade before the 1965 war, Pakistan accepted around \$700 million in military aid from the United States, but also purchased or was granted weapons from China, Indonesia, Iran, France, Germany, Turkey, and the USSR.⁶⁵

Such a broad supplier base may have seemed surprising, as much of this equipment would be incompatible. However, not only did Pakistan take advantage of the market to reduce capital costs, there was some separation in sources depending on military function. If aircraft were procured from France and the UK, tanks from Turkey, radar from Iran, missiles from China, and different radar from the USSR, these did not necessarily need to integrate with each other. Additionally, the selection changed over time. China gave Pakistan a large number of SKS

⁶³ Tahir-Kheli, 15.

⁶⁴ Kanet, Roger E. “Soviet Military Assistance”. In *Communist Nations' Military Assistance*, ed. John F. Copper and Daniel S. Papp. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado. 1983. p 58.

⁶⁵ Briefing fragment, “Pakistan’s Defense Spending”, April 17, 1967. . Box 2. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

rifles and later, Type 56 assault rifles. Pakistan would later locally produce a copy of the German H&K G3 assault rifle, with production machinery acquired from the United States and Germany. Pakistan's aid relationships with NATO countries were nonproblematic, but those with Warsaw Pact states raised concerns over whether Pakistan could be considered an enemy or ally.⁶⁶

Aid certainly affected the donor-recipient relationship, but did not guarantee the donor any military payoff. Afghanistan was wholly dependent on the Soviets for military aid, and it never provided any real strategic value to the USSR. India was very nearly the largest recipient of Soviet economic aid, and was consistently one of the larger recipients of Soviet military aid in absolute value terms. Yet it only granted the Soviets access to its facilities on the same order as it did other nations, suggesting that the influence was not as great as might be expected.⁶⁷

For western governments, the lack of solid quid pro quo relationships muddled the policy picture. Pakistan was usually assumed to be anti-communist and India assumed to be a de facto client state of the Soviet Union. From this perspective, military aid to Pakistan was meant to contain the Communist sphere, though also to place a check on expenditure. If the U.S. held the purse strings, it had some say in what was acquired and for what end. Pakistan's internal security did not appear to be a great concern for the United States, and providing military equipment for that purpose was against U.S. law. It was also assumed that Pakistan and Afghanistan would not engage in major conflict, minor border disagreements and posturing notwithstanding. However, these assumptions were weak. None of the South Asian countries were formal allies within either NATO or the Warsaw Pact, and SEATO suffered from general nonparticipation by its member

⁶⁶ Confidential memorandum, "Pakistan-Communist China Relations: Current Status". NEA/PAF, 3/27/1967. Box 2. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, compiled 1972-1974, documenting the period 1961-1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park. (NACP)

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp 55-59.

states, rendering it ineffective. Without meaningful defense obligations, external input on arms procurement was thought to be one way to apply diplomatic pressure to these countries.

If the two regional rivals were arming themselves against each other, this left Afghanistan as a strategic afterthought. Indeed, Afghanistan could barely maintain territorial integrity, let alone play on the regional stage. Prime Minister Daoud was in dire need of *internal* security assistance; Afghanistan was a fragile state with some uncertainty as to who held power, and this led to the state's reliance on the military. In the summer of 1955, the Afghan Ministry of National Defense issued an order to demobilize, and the effect was to lower the prestige of Prime Minister Daoud -- who was also a lieutenant general, and also gave the order. It was a misstep not unnoticed by its neighbors. In fact, the CIA had even suspected that Pakistan had "sought to undermine Daoud's position" for some time, understanding their complete dependence on (unreliable) external aid.⁶⁸ This was also coincident with a large increase in assistance from the USSR, the Soviet military aid program having started in 1956.

Though Afghanistan would accept Soviet military support for decades, it had no real affinity for the leadership in Moscow. Iran had more influence in Afghanistan than Moscow despite the large amount of Soviet aid. The domestic politics of Afghanistan were so contentious and fractured, not to mention generally hostile to Soviet ideology, that military aid there was in effect aid to a faction rather than a friendly state.⁶⁹ In contrast with Pakistan, Afghanistan accepted the only source of aid it could, motivated by the struggle for primacy within its own territorial boundaries.

The reality of Afghanistan's independence was in question. Despite the government's

⁶⁸ "Current Intelligence Bulletin, 30 July 1955" Office of Current Intelligence, CIA. p 5. CIA-RDP79T00975A002100320001-1.

⁶⁹ Siddiqa-Agha, p. 15.

repeated public statements proclaiming its sovereignty, the state relied on Soviet equipment, training, and direction. Its financial condition and weak organization meant it could not continue to field an army or police force to maintain its authority. Without a meaningful arms industry, a government like Afghanistan's was dependent on others for this function.⁷⁰ Additionally, no faction exercised control over production capabilities, so control over procurement ability translated into power. Indeed, Daoud consolidated his power not through his relationship with the royal family, but instead through his status as a lieutenant general in the Afghan Army and defense minister. Even after "retirement," he retained a great deal of influence and was able to shape reforms in the critical Kabul Army Corps.⁷¹

The notoriously complex internal politics of the Afghan government often frustrated outside powers' use of traditional foreign aid instruments, as it was not always clear to whom to give aid or even start negotiations. Along with the ethnic balancing act that characterized the Afghan political scene, there were regional, local, and even familial tensions, and this confused political environment discouraged significant investment by donor states. Following a 1964 agreement, the Afghan king Zahir-Shah was a constitutionally limited monarch and real power was held by the prime minister – his cousin, Mohammed Daoud Khan. Prime Minister Daoud tried to take advantage of the uncertainty and was able to court multiple sources of aid. He requested military assistance from the Americans, and when that was refused, turned to the USSR. Much to the Soviets' disappointment, he rejected political advice, and frustrated the U.S. and their Pakistani allies through unpredictable acts of noncooperation. A meeting on 12 July 1955 indicates that Daoud would not abandon the idea of an independent "Pushtoonistan," a

⁷⁰ Stohl and Grillot, p 18.

⁷¹ Cronin, Stephanie, pp 66-67.

contentious issue since the Durand Line was drawn in 1893, separating Afghanistan and British India. This insistence caused repeated breakdowns in relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, deteriorating significantly in the 1960s.⁷²

From a western perspective, Afghanistan's weakness left Pakistan as the strong point in the region. By the mid-1960s Pakistan was a major recipient of aid in all forms, though not at a rate that suggested mobilization for war. Defense expenditure for the time was comparatively low, from around the equivalent of two hundred million dollars to less than three hundred million dollars through the 1950s and first half of the 1960s, and even through 1965. Contemporary analysts expected that Pakistan was focusing on its military at the expense of other sectors – which it was – but on paper, it did not rise at an alarming rate. While it did increase, the rate of increase slowed, and did not pick up again until *after* the war with India in 1965.⁷³ This ran against the usual model that analysts apply to arms races and conflict, and specifically to the case of the India–Pakistan arms race; the expected behavior is a constant or even rising increase.⁷⁴

When Pakistan did increase its defense spending, briefly doubling after the 1965 war, it was followed by two consecutive years of declines.⁷⁵ Several studies were undertaken by the U.S. Government to see if Pakistan and India were hiding significant portions of their defense spending. Pakistan had reduced its defense spending from 5.1 percent to 3.7 percent of GNP.

⁷² "Current Intelligence Bulletin, 15 July 1955" Office of Current Intelligence, CIA. p 7. CIA-RDP79T00975A002100190001-6.

⁷³ Briefing fragment, "Pakistan's Defense Spending", April 17, 1967. Box 2. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, compiled 1972-1974, documenting the period 1961–1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

⁷⁴ There are other examples of prewar downturns, notably Japan's spending prior to the 1904 war with Russia. Lewis Fry Richardson noted this as an apparent contradiction despite his efforts to convert into "days of work" of the average Japanese laborer. This remains anomalous. Richardson, Lewis Fry, *Arms and Insecurity* pp 73-74.

⁷⁵ Briefing fragment, "Pakistan Defense Expenditures", 12/13/1967. Box 2. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, compiled 1972-1974, documenting the period 1961–1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

India also reduced spending for a short period after the 1965 war, though consistently maintained absolute spending levels at around three times that of Pakistan. This did not follow the model applied in the L.F. Richardson analysis in his influential work “Arms and Insecurity”, which suggests that reductions in expenditure trend toward stability in the power relationship between two rival states, and that (in conflicts after 1870) arms races preceded modern wars unless hostilities were a complete surprise.⁷⁶ In Richardson's model, the behavior of India and Pakistan was not an arms race -- even if they were adversaries, arming themselves, and clearly hostile. Yet it is likely that because much of the military expenditure was hidden or masked by non-lethal assistance elsewhere, that this situation fails to fit his model.

Pakistan was a hybrid case. Militarization of politics created a very strong central state in some areas (Sindh) but a weak or nonexistent state in others (NWFP). Firearm ownership in Pakistan was technically by strict permit, but the state had such weak control in some areas, and weapons proliferation was so great, that independent groups had virtually free access to weapons and subsequently could control local territory independently.⁷⁷ The influx of modern arms allowed this to move toward the extremes: in one area, a post-colonial semi-police state obsessed with an external threat; and a frontier zone where the state's writ did not extend, and concepts like law, justice, legitimacy, and authority were managed by a combination of maliks (sub-governors), khans (landowners), and those who could deliver the greatest security (commanders). The military was the primary interface to the state for many citizens.

The heightened role of the military also meant that the Pakistan arms procurement policy overshadowed most other state concerns. Despite this, it could neither keep up with India nor get

⁷⁶ Richardson, Lewis Fry. *Arms and Insecurity: A Mathematical Study of the Causes and Origins of War*. The Boxwood Press: Pittsburgh; Quadrangle Books: Chicago. 1960. pp 70-71.

⁷⁷ Bhatia, pp. 15-16.

suppliers to sell – that is, until Pakistan became strategically necessary again. Such significant transfers served multiple purposes for Pakistan's military establishment and allowed them to make easy choices. Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha summarized the South Asian problem as follows:

Financial constraints put policy-makers at a loss.... The two options they always resorted to were finding a source that (a) would be willing to provide Islamabad with cost-free equipment, or at financially palatable terms, as part of some strategic alignment, and (b) would provide it with a credit facility. Pakistan's relations with China, US, and some European states were framed in the context of potential arms transfers.

Arms transfers between Pakistan and America formed the core of their relations. Weapons supplied by the US, first during the 1950s and then in the 1980s, was the hallmark of Pakistan's military modernization. This was contrary to the American view of its South Asia ally which saw the Pakistan-US relations as essentially woven into the Cold War paradigm...⁷⁸

Siddiqa-Agha's statement has multiple implications. First, external relations were almost purely military-based. The Pakistan government's continuing dependence on aid, despite a gradually improving manufacturing capacity, gave significant advantage to the military in internal budgetary politics, making the military the real source of authority in almost all important matters of state. If Western states – specifically the United States – felt there were sufficient interests at stake to attempt to influence Pakistan, then the way to attempt this was through the military.

A second implication is the type and nature of transfers over time. The 1950s arms transfers were post-WWII surplus transfers from Western stocks. Tanks, trucks, planes, rockets, rifles, ammunition, and other munitions were considered excess items and handed to Pakistan. These were more advanced than the frontier rifles Pakistan had previously, and transformed it into a “real” state military. Though the 1980s would involve more sophisticated and updated

⁷⁸ Siddiqa-Agha, p 91

technology, the 1950s still signaled a moment where Pakistan was able to quickly modernize without the requirement of developing its own industrial base.

At the center of this was the Pakistani military government, which brought stability and certainty to the country. Pakistan also maintained high rates of economic growth, which the population strongly associated with the military's political leadership. This popular military state provided a single point of contact for U.S. diplomatic efforts. This was useful for Pakistani leadership, as virtually every national leader of Pakistan was able to secure military aid from external powers and use it to establish or strengthen his political position. The first overt instance of using the military's supremacy was Ayub Khan, who morphed from General to Commander in Chief to President in 1958. Though it was the previous head of state who declared martial law, he would be deposed only two weeks later. Ayub's military dictatorship lasted eleven years.

Under Ayub's direction, Pakistan's "independent" foreign policy was designed to play donors off each other. Clearly the government recognized the need for external assistance, but Ayub took care to not be perceived as a puppet. A 1967 State Department memo noted this, and made a point of the travels of Ayub and his close advisors: "President Ayub has tried to keep his relationships with the United States, the USSR, and Communist China in balance. In September, he went to Moscow; on October 1 his senior cabinet minister headed a large delegation to Peking; and a few days later his Foreign Minister visited Washington where he had talks with President Johnson...."⁷⁹ Given how much aid Pakistan received throughout the 1960s, seeking assistance from Moscow caused concern in Washington – precisely as it was designed to do.

⁷⁹ Unaddressed Confidential State Department Memorandum: "Pakistan – Current Situation" dated 11/3/67. Political Affairs & Relations, 1969. POL 1 – 7/69. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

China was a greater problem for Pakistan's relationship with the United States. Pakistan recognized Communist China in 1950, shortly after Mao's army forced the Nationalists to U.S.-recognized Taiwan. Despite China being barely out of its revolution, by the early 1960s it was providing Pakistan with economic and military aid. However, the relationship revolved almost entirely on issues regarding third countries, primarily India. This did not escape analysts in Washington, who noted, not without some disapproval, that Pakistan did not seek help from CENTO or SEATO in its conflicts with India, but instead accepted tens of millions of dollars in aid from China. In addition to legitimate aid such as rice and wheat to supplement Pakistan's domestic supply, transfers included MiG-19 aircraft, artillery, and thousands of small arms.⁸⁰

Whether Pakistan was a true democratic ally of the West or a crypto-client of the Soviet Bloc was an uncertain thing for western policy makers. Afghanistan, which relied on aid not just for its military but basic functions of state, was an even greater unknown. The most effective policy tool was military aid, even if it had questionable effects on actual security or state capacity. India had been written off as leaning toward the Soviets because of its massive arms imports. Yet alone among South Asian states, India's military did not overshadow the civilian government. The other two states complicated their domestic legitimacy by using the military as a primary state organ, ensuring that military assistance would remain the dominant diplomatic instrument.

⁸⁰ Confidential Background Paper, "Pakistan and Communist China", from the SEATO Council Meeting in Washington, April 18-20, 1967. Drafted by D.A. Macuk and L.B. Laingen. Political Affairs and Relations, POL 1, General Policy; Background. 1967. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972-1974, documenting the period 1961-1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

Chapter 4: Actual War Aims, in Defiance of Cold War Objectives in 1965

The 1950s and 1960s provided an active market for surplus arms. By this point, the western victors of the Second World War had allied together to create NATO and the United Nations, and to fight a war against an aggressive communist regime in Korea. Containment had been established as U.S. foreign policy and western leaning governments were granted military aid or allowed to purchase weapons at significantly lower costs. Likewise, the Soviet Union had intensified its military supply policy to its client states. However, the recipients had not necessarily adopted their donors' priorities. Old hostilities distinct from the Cold War paradigm festered, and recipient states took advantage of foreign powers' willingness to supply them. Political and economic differences between new nations were frequent causes of conflict, whereas nominal orientations toward capitalism or communism were only occasionally the real cause.⁸¹ When donors realized that local politics overshadowed wider policy goals, the overt arms flow usually slowed or stopped. This would be the case in the 1965 war between India and Pakistan.

Donors' policies were constrained by an unwillingness to start another world war and an inability to directly control recipient states' behavior. Rachel Stohl and Suzanne Grillot, two researchers on both the historical and present day arms trade, note that in an abstract sense, the point of supplying weapons was to gain advantage without risking a direct military presence. Improving strategic positions at the relatively small expense of a few million small arms was an attractive proposition. Yet recipients could not be relied on to act according to supplier policy nor even keep the items themselves. Often the weapons were re-exported with the expectation

⁸¹ Kirshin, Yuriy. "Conventional Arms Transfers During the Soviet Period." Russia and the Arms Trade. Ed by Ian Anthony. SIPRI. In the United States by Oxford University Press, 1998. pp 60-61.

that more would be forthcoming. For many recipient states, the original purpose behind acquiring the weapons was rarely to assist with the donor's larger geostrategic goals. Rather, the weapons were intended to fight local conflicts, provide internal security, or advance some other agenda.⁸² Aside from the simple mismatch of regional and international policy goals, which may be *incidental*, there was actual *intent* on the part of recipient states to use the system this way.

Unsurprisingly, South Asian governments were more influenced by maintaining power and settling scores with regional rivals than participating in their respective donors' plans. The governments in Kabul and Islamabad based their authority heavily on their ability to present the appearance of military might, not just to potential foreign rivals but to their own domestic populations. The creation of Pakistan was in hostile opposition to the Hindu nation to its east, and the government existed as a provider of strength against it. Kabul was only as strong as the king's ability to exact compliance from the local power brokers, and present itself as a defender against foreigners. India, by contrast, held together a multiethnic, multinational state through a mix of economic development, political maneuvering, and security provision, and generally had a broader basis for its legitimacy.⁸³

Though aware of the situation, this is not what donor states had in mind. At the core of U.S. policy was containing communism, but the tactics used to achieve this broad objective were flexible. In spite of a history of failures in the region, the United States reapplied policies that previously had been rescinded, as military aid became permitted once again. A classified Arms Control and Disarmament Agency staff paper examined U.S. objectives in the Middle East and South Asia and identified difficulties in its rivalry with the USSR in the developing nations. It

⁸² Stohl and Grillo, pp 18-20.

⁸³ Indeed, if it was not for the massive quantities of arms it imported, and the aid it provided to groups in Bangladesh, it would be a comparatively uninteresting case. This will be discussed in later chapters.

interpreted the problem of expanding Soviet influence extremely broadly and therefore allowed for a great number of potential policy solutions. This was certainly open to skepticism, as the paper claimed that “[t]he Soviet Union began to challenge the Western presence in the area even before World War II ended.”⁸⁴ While occasionally venturing to make less credible, even paranoid claims of world domination by Soviets, the paper does reference a series of Soviet actions that indicate a desire to spread its political system beyond existing boundaries through the use of both non-military and military aid. Competing with Soviet expansion demanded selective but similar actions.

Pakistan understood Washington's objectives even if it had its own. Writing on Pakistan's defense establishment, Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha states that “[b]y joining the US-sponsored military assistance pacts in the 1950s and 1960s, SEATO and CENTO, Islamabad had become part of a group of frontline states that were to deter the former USSR from any military adventures. . . . Countering the communist threat was precisely the factor that brought the U.S. back to Pakistan in the 1980s.”⁸⁵ Bringing the U.S. back was precisely Islamabad's goal, and it was willing to pay lip service to anti-communist policy to get it there.

On the other side, the Soviet Union, noting the shipments of arms to Pakistan from China, restarted weapons shipments to India on September 17, 1965. It had earlier agreed to an embargo in principle and even pursued this in the United Nations Security Council (along with the United States) as part of UNSCR 211. In reality neither superpower completely ceased shipments (though the U.S. had reduced *lethal* items to nearly zero for a time) and, accordingly, neither

⁸⁴ CIA Document “ACDA Staff Paper: Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and Other Middle East Arms Control Issues”. Full title page release denied and so technically undated, but assumed early 1982 by context. p. 2. CIA-RDP84B01072R000200160019-1.

⁸⁵ Siddiqa-Agha, Ayesha. Pakistan's Arms Procurement and Military Buildup, 1979-99: In Search of a Policy. Sang-e-Meel Publications. 25, Shahrah-e-Pakistan (Lower Mall), Lahore. p. 91.

India nor Pakistan completely withdrew their forces. A temporary settlement was not reached until early the following year in a meeting in Tashkent brokered largely by the Soviet Union. Pressure on both India and Pakistan to settle was high, as British and American supplies to the region had slowed so much as to make operations unsustainable.⁸⁶ Neither India nor Pakistan held much concern for their donor states' Cold War concerns, and instead measured their actions by how they advanced or constrained their own regional goals.

The UNSCR and the national embargoes had different effects on each state. Afghanistan was not included, but was also not being competed over at this point. India was hardly hurt; at the time of partition, it had a greater amount of military equipment and stores, more units, better training, military education, and most importantly, production facilities than its neighbors.⁸⁷ While it could not produce fighter aircraft, it could manufacture rifles from the same patterns the British had used for a half a century.

The 1965 war tested the limits of the Pakistan-American relationship. Single source reliance had demonstrated to Pakistan the problem of external donors attempting to control its behavior, even those considered an "ally." The 1965 embargo by the United States initially made it difficult to procure arms compatible with its current stocks, nearly all which were U.S. supplied. This was precisely the point of the embargo: a State Department briefing from early 1967 noted that the U.S. policy had attempted to establish a "limited non-lethal sales

⁸⁶ Tahir-Kheli, Shirin. Soviet Moves in Asia. Printed by A. Salam Khan at Ferozsons Ltd., 32-Empress Road, Lahore. 1975? pp. 40-41.

⁸⁷ Secret memorandum, unattributed, "Foreign Assistance", 2/21/67, Military Assistance Program. Political Affairs and Relations, POL 1, General Briefing Papers, July – December, 1967. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

program...carefully tailored to our interests.”⁸⁸ Despite a treaty that had promised to aid Pakistan in the event of a conflict, the United States believed the 1965 war to be Pakistan's fault and suspended military aid, leaving Pakistan in a position of severe material disadvantage.

Unfortunately it also left the United States in the position of having little other direct influence.

Chinese aid quickly replaced the lost American aid program, though was not meant to be in direct competition with the United States. Examinations of aid patterns showed that sometimes it was intended to do the opposite, and that there was “some evidence that China placed conditions on this assistance to force the Pakistani government to change its attitude toward the United States and to accept U.S. military aid”, despite Pakistani misgivings.⁸⁹ At least three major signals during the 1960s and 1970s may have influenced Beijing's view of American aid in Pakistan: suspension of lethal aid to India; partial normalization of relations under the Nixon administration; and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Through this lens it is possible to see that much of Beijing's aid was focused not at countering the United States, but at balancing the region against India and the Soviet Union. Though the “evidence” Copper cites is circumstantial, it is nonetheless plausible given China's border stance on India, and is supported by other Chinese military-diplomatic actions, such as building airfields and aircraft repair facilities in Pakistan.⁹⁰ Not only did this assistance herald a new actor in the region, it also demonstrated that even non-superpowers used military aid as a lever into the governments of South Asia.

This new presence in the region caused immediate political problems. There was a

⁸⁸ State Department Briefing Paper, “Questions and Answers: Pakistan” dated March 15, 1967. Political Affairs & Relations, 1969. POL 1 – 7/69. (possibly misfiled based on date.) Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

⁸⁹ Copper, John F. “China's Military Assistance”, p 110.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

pattern of aid modifications (though not true reduction) over several decades between South Asian clients and larger donors. Pakistan's confidence in U.S. support had already been shaken during the 1962 invasion of northern India by China when the U.S. sent many of the same arms to India that it had previously provided to Pakistan. Subsequently, Pakistan caused some discomfort in 1967 when the U.S. noticed MiG-19 aircraft, tanks, and a significant number of (probable Russian-origin) small arms delivered to Pakistan from China.⁹¹

While the U.S. was reluctant to provide “sophisticated” weapons to non-NATO allies, these large weapons systems illustrate the quandary of “if-not-from-us-then-from-someone-else” that the U.S. found itself in when dealing with Pakistan. Thus, it carried out occasional transfers of sophisticated items anyway. Reductions were not particularly effective, and American options were limited, causing them to revert to traditional tools. In a similar State Department briefing as above, it is noted that arms sales are “a means by which the U.S. can continue to exercise some influence on the direction of legitimate defense spending and thus on the composition and orientation as well as the size and shape of the armed forces of both countries.”⁹²

Transfers waxed and waned with the perceived level of hostility. During low points, both India and Pakistan, unable to get U.S. supplies, bought military items from Britain, France, China, and the USSR. This perplexed U.S. diplomats; in a secret memorandum from the Near East Affairs desk to the Secretary of State, it was noted that the United States “alone, among

⁹¹ Confidential Background Paper, “Pakistan and Communist China”, from the SEATO Council Meeting in Washington, April 18-20, 1967. Drafted by D.A. Macuk and L.B. Laingen. Political Affairs and Relations, POL 1, General Policy; Background. 1967. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 - 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

⁹² State Department Briefing Paper, “Questions and Answers: Pakistan” dated March 15, 1967. Political Affairs & Relations, 1969. Previously cited for interests, it should be noted that “interests” are not arms sales targets but defined elsewhere as regional stability and to counter Soviet influence, in that order.

major suppliers treat India and Pakistan differently from all the others.”⁹³ Though it referred to comparatively sophisticated weapons, this was a useful point because of the unit cost and difficulty of transfer. Small arms are referenced elsewhere as an adjunct and in numbers (hundreds or sometimes thousands) whereas the numbers of planes are in the tens.⁹⁴

This market flexibility was again illustrated in a mid-1969 internal State Department memorandum discussing the sale of a number of weapons, primarily surplus tanks, in a deal that cost Pakistan roughly ten percent of the original value. Typifying the complicated nature of the trade, this was not directly with Pakistan, but between Turkey, to whom the U.S. had also given 1950s vintage tanks and associated weapons, and Pakistan, who had a large number of the same, damaged in the 1965 war with India. The United States had to give permission for Turkey to complete the sale or risk being seen as discriminatory against Pakistan. The dilemma was whether stopping the sale would signal to Pakistan political abandonment, or if allowing it would signal to India a violation of one's own rules for the sake of political expediency. Ultimately, the office of the President and the State Department gave tacit approval by not halting the sale.⁹⁵ Later that year, military representatives from the UK, Turkey, and Iran met with the President of the United States to discuss military alliances and economic security.⁹⁶ A memorandum of conversation filed by Harold Saunders cited the president stating that he was pleased with how

⁹³ State Department Action Memorandum, “Military Supply Policy for India and Pakistan”, dated Jan 3 1967. Political Affairs and Relations, POL 1, General Policy; Background. 1967. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

⁹⁴ The previous memorandum closes with a recommendation to authorize State to work out an agreement with DoD – supporting the impression from other documents that removing the ban on lethal spares and new equipment was an initiative of the State Department.

⁹⁵ Secret Memorandum from NEA chief Joseph J. Sisco to Secretary of State, “Tanks for Pakistan – Where We Stand” dated Jun 16 1969. Political Affairs & Relations, 1969. POL 1 – 7/69. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

⁹⁶ the assumption being that there was a direct link between the two.

the military in Pakistan was able to aid in economic progress.⁹⁷

This conflated view of economic and military aid and conflicts between agencies or even branches of the U.S. government indicated a lack of coherence on South Asian policy, and on Pakistan specifically. The U.S. recognized that Pakistan was not a particularly cooperative partner and took matters of military and political alliance only as far as it served their interests. On the one hand, Pakistan's supply was interrupted “arbitrarily” following the 1965 conflict. But Pakistani frustration with U.S. arms sales was misplaced from the American perspective; the U.S. had already readdressed military supply policy in 1967, 1968, and again in 1969, and was providing arms, albeit on an irregular basis. Meanwhile, Pakistan felt that it was able to ignore its long standing treaty obligations. In a telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan “CENTO and Military Supply Policy,” it was noted that Pakistan had long since given little priority to CENTO. Though the alliance was given little military significance by the Soviet Union and was unsuccessful in improving relations between member states, it reduced U.S. affairs to an almost purely bilateral issue with Pakistan. By this point, it may have been a moot issue: an unclassified telegram from the period explained the ambassador's belief that “the liberalization of U.S. military supply policy to Pakistan as the best and perhaps only means of maintaining strong bilateral ties and Pakistani ties with the West.”⁹⁸ This marked an explicit acknowledgement of limited American diplomatic tools.

The confusion of global policy objectives, military supply as a foreign policy instrument, and regional tensions and objectives illustrated above demonstrated that this was not a simple

⁹⁷ FRUS 1969-1976 Vol XXIV, Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969-1972; Jordan, 1970. United States Government Printing Office, 2008. p 25.

⁹⁸ “Tele. 3842 (April 16 1969)”, FRUS 1969-1976, Vol XXIV, Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969-1972; Jordan, 1970. United States Government Printing Office, 2008. Document 8.

top-down supplier-buyer relationship. The system that had developed to counter the influence of superpowers served the short-term goals of the recipient states without lasting benefit for the donor states. The supply enabled local and regional hostilities to develop, and despite nominal embargoes, the arms trade was sufficiently fluid to keep supplying South Asian conflicts.

III. Embargoes, the Breakaway of Bangladesh, and the Daoud Premiership

*A scrimmage in a Border Station
A cander down some dark defile
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee jezail.
-Rudyard Kipling*

Chapter 5: Arms Embargoes After 1965 and 1971 Wars

Kipling's verse may have been about handmade weapons in the wilds of India and Afghanistan, used against a western force equipped with modern arms. These jezails, rough though they may have been, often had technology taken from only slightly older *Western* firearms. Components were adapted from stolen, surplus, or broken rifles, and reused to fight wars for which they were not originally intended. A century later, western small arms, small arms components, and technology were adapted to fight wars the global powers had not anticipated. Despite some attempts at limiting armed conflict by restricting weapons flow, military leaders in South Asia still managed to increase their arsenals.

Weapons sold to Pakistan and Afghanistan were ostensibly to aid those countries for national defense, and also to keep them in line with donors' ideological positions. But Pakistan's strategic calculus included two assumptions: that the United States would support them in a conflict; and that India was at a material and moral disadvantage following the 1962 border conflict with China. This perception of a weak adversary, a strong ally, and aggrieved Pakistani nationalism made conflict likely, and was a contributing factor to the war three years later.

The embargo put in place after the 1965 war was imperfect at best. Islamabad transitioned from wholesale buyer to an on-again, off-again client of the United States for advanced weaponry, dual use items, and small arms. Additionally, successive Pakistan

governments repeatedly looked to China for larger and more regular transfers as a way to counter India without directly engaging the Soviets. The effect of this multi-source acquisition strategy was a military state that used Cold War security politics to pursue its own policy goals regardless of the donors' geopolitical concerns.

China was a very reliable source, although this was at varying levels of generosity depending on its own interests, e.g., there were years when more attention was paid to North Vietnam than Pakistan. When faced with embargoes, or even normal diplomatic pressure from Washington, Pakistan and Beijing arranged weapons transfers that excluded whole units (Completely-Built-Units, CBUs) and instead shipped parts. This was an old trick; the Americans had done the same to get 'spare parts' to the Pakistanis despite their own embargo following the 1965 war with India. China provided Pakistan with smaller interest free loans in 1964 (as a gesture following China's 1962 conflict with India) and 1969, of \$60 million and \$40.6 million. These paled in comparison to the \$217.4 million loan – again interest free – Beijing offered in several parts in November 1970 through 1971.⁹⁹

These numbers are estimates and often more aid was transferred without ever recording the cost. This allowed Pakistan to shift funds elsewhere while still maintaining or increasing the resource allocations toward the military. After 1962, the Pakistan government spent less as a percentage of its total budget on the military, but maintained or increased capacity. An NEA brief from 1967 noted that from 1954 to 1966, Pakistan's army personnel strength more than doubled from around 100,000 to just over 212,000. The vast majority of this was composed of infantry divisions (ten in 1965) with small arms provided increasingly by Communist China.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Siddiqa-Agha, pp 105-108.

¹⁰⁰ Draft briefing fragment, "Pakistan's Defense Establishment", dated 2/21/67. Political Affairs and Relations POL 1. Box 2196. Lot 77D350. (Possibly misfiled) Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974*,

Older British and American surplus rifles were still in use but becoming less common. This represents a rather large transfer of basic infantry weapons from China to Pakistan.

Despite the Western embargo on weapons to South Asia and the belief that Pakistan misused its aid, the United States still sought to genuinely commit to the security of both India and Pakistan. Its Cold War calculus meant that it clearly had a much closer relationship with the Government of Pakistan, but, according to State Department memoranda from 1967 and 1968 the U.S. Government was willing to provide security guarantees to India after the 1965 war. The difficulty the US faced was how to provide security from perceived Soviet encroachment without compromising its own stated limitations on military aid – aid that it acknowledged as increasing tensions in the region. A memorandum dated January 17, 1968 to the Near East Affairs division noted that “the policies of the fifties toward the subcontinent are no longer totally relevant”, and hinting at “more realistic policies, based in part on a better understanding of the subcontinent and of what we can and cannot do.”¹⁰¹

There was no misplaced idealism. A Military Assistance Program (MAP) Summary from late 1969 states in explicit terms the purpose of aid to Pakistan that it was, “[t]o assist in maintaining US influence and to exercise a moderating influence over Pakistan's arms purchases.”¹⁰² It also sketched out in rough dollar terms the expected aid amount for upcoming

documenting the period 1961 – 1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹⁰¹ Memorandum from Mr. Linebaugh to Douglas Heck, NEA/INC: “Draft Paper on South Asia and the Great Powers”. January 17, 1968. Political Affairs & Relations, 1968. POL 17. Box 1. Lot 72D71. DEF 19-1 Defense Affairs – Military Assistance 3rd Country 1967. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹⁰² (Edited Draft) Secret Memorandum, “Military Assistance Program: Plans for FY 1971”, from Colonel Bunte to Mr Spengler, dated 4 Aug 69. Box 1, Lot 77D350. Defense Affairs, DEF 19 – MSP – Pakistan/U.S. 1969. (Possibly misfiled.) Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

USG fiscal years (approximately \$25 million per year). It identified India as the obvious threat, downplaying the idea of a direct Soviet incursion, indicating that the State and Defense Departments were well aware of Pakistan's real worries separate from larger Cold War concerns. It also noted Pakistan's only "self-help" capability as "An ordnance factory capable of producing small arms and ammunition [which] has been in existence for some time near Rawalpindi in West Pakistan and two additional ordnance factories are being established in East Pakistan."¹⁰³ They could hardly have foreseen the 1971 war over what would become Bangladesh, a little more than a year later, but the independence of East Pakistan resulted in the direct loss of a great deal of Pakistan's only domestic arms production capability.

Attempts at building domestic capacity notwithstanding, Pakistan continued to take military aid, purchasing what it could afford without outright bankrupting the government. This was a genuine concern, as there was an insistence on mostly cash sales with the West by this point. Using its ongoing relationship with China to induce concern in the U.S. government, it was able to secure "non-lethal" spares in February 1966, and in the following year, the United States again relaxed its policy to allow lethal spares on a case-by-case basis. "Spares" were very loosely defined. Following the resumption of aid, twenty-three million dollars were programmed for spare parts, in large part composed of light vehicles, light weapons, and ammunition.¹⁰⁴

As restrictions on aid were relaxed, military assistance was expected to rise to just over \$25 million beginning in FY1971 (i.e., late 1970) and remain steady. This increase was despite

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Confidential Briefing Memorandum, "Discussion with President Mohammad Ayub Khan, Rawalpindi, November, 1967; U.S. Military Supply Policy – GOP; Request for Medium Tanks" (Background Section). Box 3196, Lot 77D350. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

an evaluation of Pakistan forces that suggested that perhaps it had not needed the assistance. The MAP Plan Summary noted that “no internal security forces are supported under MAP”; and that “Pakistan obtains military matériel from any available source, East and West, but details concerning the extent, cost and terms are not known.”¹⁰⁵ The clear implication was that China continued to supply the bulk of Pakistan's non-sophisticated items.

Pakistan’s domestic military-industrial base was still in its early stages, and prioritization was unclear. Some of the decision making behind Pakistan’s arms procurement and production was based on factors besides necessity or the threat perception from India. Inter-service rivalry, intra-government power politics, and even personal bias played as much a part in what to either purchase or develop.¹⁰⁶ While Pakistan made repeated attempts to create a domestic arms industry, it lacked serious research and development capacity, and external assistance was needed. In 1967, Germany licensed small arms manufacturing to Pakistan and assisted in establishing an additional facility at Wah (already a manufacturing site for older British pattern rifles) to make local copies of the G3 rifle. By that point, the G3A2¹⁰⁷, was intended to become the standard service rifle beginning in 1968, though other sources imply that this was not ready for actual production until the early to mid-1970s.¹⁰⁸ That this apparent incompatibility with existing inventory complicated logistics does not seem to have been considered.

What the nominal embargo did achieve was to allow the United States to reassess its military aid relationships with both India and Pakistan. Beyond the embargoes, regular U.S. Military Assistance Programs for both countries were discontinued after the 1965 war, and this

¹⁰⁵ Secret Memorandum, “Military Assistance Program: Plans for FY 1971”, from Colonel Bunte to Mr Spengler, previously cited.

¹⁰⁶ Siddiqi-Agha, pp 2-4.

¹⁰⁷ Though locally designated the G3P2, it was identical to the German G3A2.

¹⁰⁸ Walter, John. Rifles of the World, 3rd Edition. Krause Publications, Iola, WI. 2006. p 170.

applied to India equally as it did to Pakistan, though with different effects. India was better placed to recover from this disruption given its broader supply relationships, which it believed had validated its official policy of nonalignment.¹⁰⁹ Additionally, it had a more developed domestic industrial sector and was able to pay for the weapons it received from the Soviet Union. When the U.S. adjusted its policy in April 1967, permitting sales of non-lethal end-items, spare parts for lethal items on a case-by-case basis, and ammunition, it greatly helped India, but this did not mean that India had been militarily crippled as Pakistan had been.

A November 1967 briefing on the Indian military buildup noted that following the 1965 war, India increased its overall armed forces personnel from 900,000 to 1,100,000, with a particular focus on infantry and armor. India was already the numerically superior force relative to Pakistan, and this widened the gap. It was able to produce the majority of its own “minor” equipment, to include rifles, while Pakistan was not. Yet India complained that Pakistan was able to procure advanced hardware from western European sources, reducing the magnitude of Indian military superiority.¹¹⁰

Pakistan was aware of the overwhelming mismatch and wanted to achieve a degree of parity¹¹¹ and was willing to acquiesce to U.S. pressure if guarantees could be made. However, the 1965 experience did not bode well for the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, and the U.S. knew Pakistan might seek assistance elsewhere:

Pakistan, in response to US suggestions, made a slight reduction in its current defense budget. However, Pakistan is extremely nervous about Indian arms acquisitions and

¹⁰⁹ “India: Armed Forces”, p 1. (previously cited in Ch. 2)

¹¹⁰ “Relevant Indian Developments: Buildup of the Indian Military” briefing fragment dated November 1967, from NEA/INC. Political Affairs and Relations POL 1. Box 2196. Lot 77D350. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹¹¹ Frankly, it could not. Pakistan's industrial capacity aside, it also lacked the population, material wealth, educated workforce, and political cohesion to achieve parity – as should be obvious.

military productive capacity and is unlikely to hold the line on defense expenditures if it is convinced that India is not following the same course. The US has considerably more leverage on Pakistan than on India, but the leverage may not be effective if Pakistan reaches the point where in desperation it seeks to match what it regards as excessive and unjustified Indian arms increases.¹¹²

Ultimately, the American embargo against Pakistan and India was less effective than it was inconvenient. It was also not particularly consistent. The United States secretly changed its Military Supply Policy toward South Asia several times: in 1967, ramping up to a “new normal” in 1970-1971, and a reinvigorated embargo following the 1971 conflict. There is little wonder why Pakistan sought assistance elsewhere. In a document dated January 23, 1967, the State Department notes that “USG alone among major suppliers treats India and Pakistan differently from all others; our policy complicates our relations with both countries...”. The “tangible progress that we had hoped for from GOI and GOP in tackling arms levels and other problems between them” was considered an unreachable goal for the foreseeable future, leading U.S. policy makers in the State Department to conclude that the policy must be changed – especially if the U.S. wanted to continue using certain facilities in Pakistan for intelligence purposes.¹¹³

The exemption of “spare parts”, distinct from items that might be called “new”, was critical to differentiating legal versus illegal transfers – even when the matériel may have already been shipped to or residing in the host country. In a discussion regarding 70 tons of equipment already stored in Pakistan, the Deputy Secretary of State Christopher van Hollen (Sr.), the NEA chief Joseph Sisco, and DoD had to decide how to dispose of “spares”. The stored items were

¹¹² Unaddressed Confidential State Department Memorandum: “Pakistan – Current Situation” dated 11/3/67. Previously cited in Ch. 3.

¹¹³ Secret Joint State/Defense Message to Ambassadors Locke and Bowles, titled “Military Supply Policy”, dated 1/23/67. Defense Affairs, 1967, DEF 19-1: Military Assistance – General MAP. Box 1, 71D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

only worth \$1.2 million, a fraction of the total aid, but Pakistan either wanted to integrate it into its inventory or have DoD buy it back. The decision rested on whether this could be considered new materiel or replacement for previously provided items.¹¹⁴ The administration was already feeling political heat because of the arms shipments it was alleged to have provided during the 1971 conflict, contrary to law but supposedly directed by the National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger. It was a sensitive issue even when the details pertained to “minor” items.

The pretense of spares was no longer credible by the early 1970s. By 1973, after another war and during a period of constitutional upheaval in Pakistan, the United States was again forced to reset its policy. A memorandum titled “Pakistan: Outstanding Issues re Arms Supply”, pertaining to a previously negotiated but undelivered deal with Pakistan, touched on the complex set of factors that weighed on policy makers. The U.S. Government felt compelled to deliver, but did not want to provide weapons which would be used against India and would also create public relations difficulties. The document specifically addresses this problem of lethal spares:

The USG laid itself open to severe criticism from the press and the Hill which failed to comprehend how we could include ammunition in an essentially non-lethal policy. If we again label ammunition as a lethal spare part, our public relations problem could be considerable, especially after the 1971 experience. Inclusion of ammunition would also make it harder for the Indians to 'accept' our revised sales policy.¹¹⁵

Not including ammunition in a continued supply policy was a position held by the desk responsible for affairs pertaining to India. Including it was favored by the Pakistan-Afghanistan

¹¹⁴ Confidential/EXDIS Memorandum from NEA/PAB Peter D. Constable to NEA Mr. Sisco, “Meeting with Pakistan Ambassador, 4:30 p.m., June 22”. Dated June 22, 1972. “Pak '72: DEF 12 – ARMAMENTS Pak/U.S.” Box 3196, Lot 77D350. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP) *Interestingly, this was initialed by DepSecState van Hollen, who was supposedly only copied on the memorandum, and for materials that should not have been of high concern.

¹¹⁵ Confidential memorandum from L. Bruce Laingen to NEA chief Joseph Sisco, “Pakistan: Outstanding Issues re Arms Supply”, dated February 2, 1973. Box 3196, Lot 77D350. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP).

(PAF) desk. This difference of opinion was indicative of the internal debate in the State Department, and the U.S. Government in general.

The embargoes following the 1965 war were self imposed and largely ineffectual, both because of their non-binding nature and because third countries were in no way compelled to also refrain from arms sales. Both Pakistan and India began transitioning to domestic manufacturing for non-sophisticated items such as small arms, but India was far ahead of Pakistan, benefiting from the gift of British stocks and manufacturing facilities, as well as a military that was by then more experienced in effective infantry operations. It could assess and meet its needs with greater accuracy than the comparatively backward Pakistani state, which was more or less totally reliant on external supply even for basic equipment.

What counted as an embargo was also surprising. The amount of military aid granted to India and Pakistan through the 1950s and until 1965 was quite high – between \$600 and \$700 million. But between the two wars, from 1966 to 1971, the United States provided just over \$100 million in military assistance to South Asia, weighted toward Pakistan. This was considered “relatively little” in the larger Cold War calculus.¹¹⁶ Such an assessment is surprising when its “surplus” nature is considered, and given the more strictly enforced ban on large sophisticated weapons systems (e.g., missiles, radar, and naval vessels). Yet it is understandable when both states were also receiving hundreds of millions (or even billions) of dollars worth of military aid from the Soviet Union and China. Even if the source had changed, Pakistan's strategic calculus counted on both sophisticated and basic arms imports to continue, regardless of where they were manufactured.

¹¹⁶ “US Policy Toward South Asia” Congressional testimony, dated March 12, 1973. Box 3196, Lot 77D350. Records Relating to Pakistan, compiled 1972-1974, documenting the period 1961–1974. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP).

Chapter 6: Chinese Arms to Pakistan and Soviet Military Support to Afghanistan

Information about U.S. transfers to Afghanistan and Pakistan may not be complete enough for satisfactory “data driven” analysis, but it is abundant enough to illustrate how donor policy was altered to meet other objectives. A satisfactory figure for Chinese aid to Pakistan and Soviet aid to Afghanistan may never be known, not only for want of access but because it may never have been recorded. Estimates from intelligence reports and contemporary research organizations are likely the best that are available. While the official amount of military aid given by China to the Third World is rather small – “one-fourth of that of Eastern European countries, about one-fortieth that of the Soviet Union, and one-seventieth that of the United States” -- this assessment is misleading for at least two reasons. First, a large portion was never reported, or if it was, it was undervalued or reported without cost. Second, Pakistan was special in China's strategic calculus. This was evident in the 1962 war between India and China, and again with Chinese support for Pakistan in the 1965 war between India and Pakistan.

The extent of the support China could afford was qualified by its own situation. China’s exceptionally large military did not directly correlate to expenditures. China’s overall military spending was significant, yet if taken in manpower expenditure terms (per soldier), it does not rank highly. The Chinese military-industrial complex during the mid twentieth century was notably unsophisticated compared to the Soviet Union, and surprisingly even India.¹¹⁷ However, as Chinese industrial production increased and the military modernized, so did its ability to provide resources to other nations and movements.

Indeed, the 1960s and 1970s saw a significant increase in the amounts of aid transferred

¹¹⁷ Copper, John F. “China's Military Assistance” in Communist Nations' Military Assistance, 1983. pp 96-100. It would eventually rank third in overall spending by the late 1970s.

from China to Pakistan. In addition to interest-free loans, outright grants of weapons and canceling of previous debt were among the forms of aid. Between currency and much needed hardware, the amount was over a billion dollars in the span of a decade. Weapons included large systems such as older Soviet MiG jets, tanks, submarines, patrol boats, and torpedoes. Transfers often included an “unspecified” number of small arms.¹¹⁸ The frequently mentioned interest free loan of \$60 million in July 1964 was officially an *economic* aid package, with half intended for general development and half used toward “commodities.” Yet in the first few months of 1966, Chinese tanks and heavy arms began appearing in Pakistani military parades. There are multiple photographs, some sourced from the Pakistan Army itself, showing the use of Chinese weapons as early as 1965, including the then relatively new Type 56 Kalashnikov clone. This was followed in 1967 by a delivery of what intelligence reports assessed to be “sufficient small arms to equip an estimated two infantry divisions”¹¹⁹, which amounts to about 40,000 weapons (based on the organization of the Pakistani Army). The goal of these transfers was to prevent India from dominating the subcontinent and the nonaligned movement. While China may have had an interest in using aid to Pakistan as a hedge against Soviet influence (as this was after the Sino-Soviet split), Pakistan had a buffer state between it and the USSR. It accepted such aid not with Soviet issues in mind, but rather with India.

If Pakistan was the reliable buyer no matter who was selling or what was offered, Afghanistan was the odd customer, to say the least. At various times depending on the internal

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p 108-110. Of various small arms and light weapons types, very likely including the Chinese Type-56 given its overt presence.

¹¹⁹ Briefing, “Current Strengths of the Indian and Pakistani Armed Forces”, Secret/NOFORN, Division of Near East Affairs / Pakistan-Afghanistan, dated 12/13/1967. Political Affairs and Relations, POL 1, General Briefing Papers, July-December, 1967. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

political positioning of government officials, it openly acknowledged its outright dependence on foreign aid, but would inexplicably reject it, regardless of how it might have served its regional interests. This issue was stated in frank terms in a State Department memorandum from mid-1969 discussing meetings between Near East Affairs division staff and the ambassadors to Afghanistan and Thailand, noting that there was, at that moment, a periodic high point in relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, but that Afghanistan was characteristically non-committal toward all parties, including the Indians, Pakistanis, Americans, and the Soviets. It also cited the extent of Soviet aid to that point, amounting to \$700 million in economic assistance and \$200 million in military assistance. By comparison, U.S. civilian projects totaled around seven million dollars for that year. Despite this apparent gross mismatch in aid, which would seem to heavily weight toward the USSR, Afghanistan refused to enter into a new, larger regional security pact with the Soviets.¹²⁰

It is, perhaps, in the context of rather explicit acknowledgment of Pakistan's and India's dependence on external supplies for sophisticated weapons that Afghanistan had played out their balancing act. Following the 1965 war, subsequent agreements (e.g., the Tashkent Declaration in January 1966) and various discussions in the UN Security Council, Afghanistan knew it was not in a strong position. Even the Tashkent meeting was Soviet led, which allowed Moscow to appear as the peacemaker while maintaining dependence relationships in the region. Even then, Pakistan's continued acceptance of Chinese aid prompted the USSR to increase its support to

¹²⁰ Confidential Memorandum, "Your Meeting in Bangkok with Ambassador Neumann", from William F. Spengler (NEA/PAF) to Joseph Sisco and Ambassador Christopher Van Hollen, dated July 25, 1969. POL 17. Box 1. Lot 72D71. DEF 19-1 Defense Affairs – Military Assistance 3rd Country 1967. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

India.¹²¹ This effectively put Afghanistan in the position of accepting Soviet aid or be seen as allied to Pakistan.

During the period between the 1965 and 1971 wars, about half of aid to Pakistan came from China, with the other half coming from various western sources, including the United States. In the same period, the Soviet Union provided approximately 80% of India's total external military procurement. Afghanistan received almost no western military aid – receiving almost all of its external support from the Soviet Union.¹²² In the absence of western arms, South Asian governments would replace them with others. In Pakistan, Chinese aid rose to replace waning American support. In Afghanistan, Soviet aid filled the vacuum.

If there was supposedly an arms embargo on the region and Pakistan's other arms supplier was a nation hostile to the United States, and the relationship with the other two countries in the region was weak at best, what was the nature of the western military aid to Pakistan vis a vis Chinese? The United States was prohibited by law from transferring sophisticated lethal arms to Pakistan (or India for that matter), yet American arms still accounted for many millions of dollars of items shipped to Pakistan. Given that advanced equipment such as aircraft and missile systems came from elsewhere, it is difficult to reconcile the aggregate numbers with the types of weapons shipped.

A joint State and Defense Department working group was established in 1966 to coordinate arms sales to the region, with the State Department holding ultimate authority on what and to whom to sell. Two memoranda from June 1966 and February 1967 illustrate the

¹²¹ Tahir-Kheli, 40.

¹²² Question and Answer “Fact Sheet”, fragment found among other documents related to U.S. assistance to South Asia. Pak – Pol 1.2 “Briefing Papers” 1973. Box 3196 Lot 77D350. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

extent of the dissonance on policy for India and Pakistan. One, addressed to Granville Austin, a historian working with the State Department, detailed items sold with a curious note attached, stating, “Interestingly, rifles, cartridges, sidearms, etc., are classified as 'non-lethal,' presumably on the grounds that they are for sport or police use.”¹²³ The attached group of documents that followed contained some surprising numbers and vaguely worded descriptions, such as “Unshipped balance of material for previous license” followed by the associated cost of \$433,646.03, and line items for 300,000 cartridges (for a mere \$2,153.10), followed by 23 7mm rifles and 40 .22 cal rifles.¹²⁴

If this had been the extent of the items, it would have been plausible that they were for police use, despite the explicit prohibition on items intended for internal security. However, the list continues: 500 unused surplus Spanish Mauser rifles (7x57mm) at \$16 each, an additional 50,000 .22 cal cartridges, and 50,000 7mm cartridges. Aside from the large amount of ammunition, it also notes radar parts, military parachutes, oxygen masks, harnesses, and other items far from the normal police kit.¹²⁵ The breadth of equipment along with the caliber of rounds undermines the idea that this was anything but for the military.

In a confidential memorandum intended for Defense-State coordination, the items continued to be listed as “non-lethal” despite being clearly otherwise. Tucked in with a list of aircraft spares, maps, and “navy publications”, were fuses, small caliber rifles, 31,000 30-06

¹²³ Otherwise Unmarked and not classified note in a bundle with documents classified Confidential, titled “Sale of Non-Lethal Military Equipment to India and Pakistan”, Undated but clipped to a document marked February 15 1967. Box 1, Lot 71D340 Defense Affairs 1967, DEF 19-8 Equipment and Supplies – General (Mil. Assistance). Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Springfield cartridges, flight helmets, tactical radios, and more parachute gear. There was also nearly a million rounds of ammunition.¹²⁶

If by this time Pakistan had acquired many thousands of Chinese small arms and integrated them into their inventory, supplanting older British and American equipment, then buying millions of rounds of American ammunition per year appears as a potential logistics and organizational nightmare. But standardization was not immediately achieved. The Pakistani military retained its old inventory, giving some divisions and specialized units newer equipment and the pick of weapons. Garrison troops in less critical areas, meanwhile, got leftovers.

The United States was not alone in providing lethal weapons under the guise of spares. An early 1968 Memorandum from the Near East Affairs division to the office of Secretary McNamara indicated that China had provided “spares” for equipment provided in 1965 and 1966.¹²⁷ Given that China did not provide sophisticated arms to Pakistan during this time – missile systems or radar and the occasional tank would be slightly later – and that the bulk of it was small and light weapons, this is likely to be interpreted as spares for infantry equipment, including the several divisions worth of rifles.

Given the Cold War dynamics at play in the region, the 1960s were an echo of the 1950s with a slightly different arrangement of players. Pakistan's first patron, the United States, played a quieter role, officially refusing military aid but providing it intermittently and with constraints.

¹²⁶ Confidential Memorandum addressed to Mr Simmons, SOA, from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Subject: “Pak Non-Lethal Sales” 25 June 1966. Box 1, Lot 71D340 Defense Affairs 1967, DEF 19-8 Equipment and Supplies – General (Mil. Assistance). Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹²⁷ Secret Memorandum to John Ausland, from Sidney Sober (NEA), titled “Secretary McNamara's Posture Statement”. January 17, 1968. Box 1, Lot 72D71 Political Affairs and Relations 1968, POL 17 Ambassador Oehlert. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

Pakistan then found a more willing partner, much to the distress of its old one. Afghanistan, meanwhile, found itself initially unhappy with its Russian suitor, but upon feeling the pain of inadequate military capabilities, it usually gave in to Moscow's demands.

In the 1950s, soldiers in Pakistan and India held the same surplus American and British rifles. In the 1960s, they still had plenty of these and bought enormous quantities of ammunition. The United States thus subverted its own policy by labeling them spares. The difference was that now soldiers in India and Pakistan, and Afghanistan had acquired newer Soviet and Chinese rifles – again barely distinguishable. Efforts to limit weapons to non-sophisticated weapons, or to “spares”, failed to recognize two things: first, that the nature of warfare in South Asia was still mostly defined by men with rifles; second, if one supplier refused, there was always a competitor.

7. The National Crisis of Bangladesh and Military Rule

When Pakistan lost the 1971 war with India, it also lost much of what was then known as East Pakistan. Tensions already existed between the two halves of Pakistan, so the split was not entirely due to conflict with India. Indeed, the gross human rights violations committed by [West] Pakistan, then operating under martial law (and its second military ruler), provoked the rebellion months before India began its support. Losing the poor, catastrophe prone eastern half was not as terrible a material defeat as it was a psychological one, though Pakistan had placed some military industrial assets there which had to be written off as complete losses. Perhaps most critically, Pakistan no longer surrounded India from two sides.

Pakistan sought to replenish its lost inventory following the 1965 war with India. Its relationship with China allowed it to maintain a supply of arms leading up to the conflict, which was critical after several embargoes were put in place. Though the overall “supply chain” continued, there are no indications that China provided arms during the actual conflict. This was likely a logistical problem; the war took place in December, inhibiting transport. According to a contemporary DIA assessment, artillery, naval equipment, and small arms and ammunition from Chinese inventories that had been promised in November may not have arrived – or if it did, not in time to be used against India. Owing to winter route closures and interdiction, there were significant constraints on the Chinese ability to deliver both overland and by sea.¹²⁸

By contrast, the military industrial base India had inherited from the British and its supply relationship with the Soviet Union meant it did not have the same matériel concerns as its

¹²⁸ “DIA Intelligence Appraisal: Communist China's Capability to Support Pakistan”, dated Dec 9 1971. NPMP, NSC Files, Indo-Pak War, Box 572. Retrieved from the GWU National Security Archive, as part of “The Tilt: The U.S. and the South Asian Crisis of 1971. National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 79, edited by Sajit Gandhi. December 16, 2002.

adversary. Not only had it rapidly increased the size of its armed forces from approximately 900,000 men to 1,100,000 men between the 1965 and 1971 wars, it was also producing domestic copies of small arms, machine guns, and ammunition in quantities to supply its forces.¹²⁹ More sophisticated weapons and systems, such as MiG combat aircraft and tanks, were still externally sourced. Attempts to locally manufacture such items failed and had to be acquired from the Czechs and Soviets.¹³⁰

“Domestic production” in South Asia at this point should be evaluated carefully, as most weapons were local copies of equipment that originated elsewhere. India produced small arms and light weapons in the factories left over from the British, and also licensed copies from designs and with machinery imported from the Soviet Union. On the other end of the manufacturing spectrum, Afghanistan had virtually no domestic weapons production aside from tiny local ammunition plants. Pakistan did produce ammunition domestically, though not nearly in sufficient quantities, and in the late 1960s slowly established a manufacturing facility for licensed copies of German H&K G3 rifles. Thus the point of production moved forward, but this production technology was “surplus” as far as the donor states were concerned.

The second order effects of such a locally produced surplus weigh heavily in present day discussions about South Asia. A frequent (and very warranted) criticism of Pakistan is that it has supported non-state guerrilla groups with arms and training in an effort to undermine India. What is striking about the 1971 war is not that it was a series of major battles between two states, but

¹²⁹ “Relevant Indian Developments: Buildup of the Indian Army” Undated briefing paper (with papers addressed to HB (Howard) Schaffer, possibly misfiled with documents related to Pakistan 1967) Political Affairs and Relations, 1967. POL 1 General Briefing Papers July – December. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹³⁰ Ibid.

that India had been covertly supporting what began as a homegrown guerrilla force in Bangladesh, fighting Pakistan with its own weapons.¹³¹ Pakistan responded with heavy conventional means to the nascent East Pakistani political movement, which rapidly transitioned to an insurgency.

In 1971 Pakistan lost its eastern half anyway. As many governments have discovered, a guerrilla force relying on mostly small arms and operating domestically is easier to sustain than a large conventional force with heavier weapons. Pakistan's military response was particularly stressed because all but one Pakistan Army division was in West Pakistan. The single East Pakistan division could not handle the domestic insurgency, especially after India began its assistance. This lone division was there to handle internal security and act as a token of Pakistani state power, but was incapable of defending against external threats even when such a threat was indirect.¹³² Pakistan's army, still adapting to the 1965 war, did not adequately respond to the challenge of a rebellion from a population it took for granted as being predominantly Muslim and economically dependent. It also discounted the effect of a population armed with large quantities of less sophisticated weapons, which made it difficult for the Pakistan Army stationed in East Pakistan to both retain control and respond to external actions.

The combination of insurgency and external threats to the state was not limited to the east. While Pakistan was primarily concerned with India, it had internal security issues even in the western half. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto used the military against armed Baloch insurgents, which

¹³¹ This was ironic, given India's unpleasant experience with its own guerrilla insurgents.

¹³² "Military Supply Policy Toward South Asia In the Context of our General Posture There", White Paper forwarded to Christopher Van Hollen by Hal Saunders, dated Jul 8, 1969. Informal note attached requesting opinion on Comte-Levy. Defense Affairs 1969: DEF 19 – MSP – Pakistan/U.S. Box 1, Lot 71D340. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

numbered in the thousands and constituted a political party of sorts. This was a major enough operation that the U.S. defense attaché was notified, although no direct appeal for aid was made, according to the available documents.¹³³ It also demonstrated the unintended consequences of undermined state power when rebels used captured weapons against the government.

For the U.S. and NATO, this situation was politically complicated. Pakistan, the only nominally anti-communist state in South Asia, was effectively a military dictatorship. Pakistan went in and out of periods of official martial law under the rule of Ayub Khan and, following his resignation in 1969, the brief rule of Yahya Khan, leaving little doubt that the military set the government's priorities. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the West faced a dilemma: balancing aid between India and Pakistan, and attempting to attenuate the influence of both the Soviet Union and China. The U.S. Government had difficulty in managing relationships when the region did not fall along the same clear delineations as Europe. Communist China as a rival to India created further problems, especially as the Soviets supported India. This was complicated by Pakistan, given its hostility toward India and support by the United States. The United States did not appreciate Pakistan's appeal to China for small arms in 1965 and likewise, Pakistan did not appreciate Washington's aid to India following the 1962 border clash.¹³⁴ This combination of national feelings, politics, and personalities made the situation that much more volatile in 1971.

The responsibility for this difficulty did not lie wholly with the military leadership of Pakistan, nor with the nominally nonaligned but socialist leaning government of India. While the United States had repeatedly undermined its own embargo regime toward Pakistan and India, key individuals exacerbated this situation. Henry Kissinger, in his role as National Security

¹³³ CIA Document, "National Intelligence Bulletin, 12 September 1974". United States Intelligence Board. CIA-RDP79T00975A026900010010-1.

¹³⁴ Tahir-Kheli, 34-35.

Advisor, prior to serving as Secretary of State, unilaterally agreed to an arms transfer¹³⁵ to Pakistan in 1970 without informing the U.S. agencies legally required to manage such agreements. These promises could not always be kept, though the United States did provide some weapons leading up to the war with India.¹³⁶

Pakistan's ability to cheaply arm itself prior to the war enabled it to make decisions it might not otherwise have made. Kissinger wrote a memorandum to President Nixon in early 1971 stating that Yahya Khan of Pakistan was not financially able to sustain operations in East Pakistan. The memo, following a certain bureaucratic cliché format, outlined three possible courses of action where two were weakly supported or otherwise infeasible, leaving a preferred third option. That third option was to continue providing economic, food, and military assistance at current levels while delaying some particularly lethal items.¹³⁷ Once hostilities broke out – that is, once Pakistan attacked India and started a war it could not win – the U.S. withheld lethal items. The damage was done, however.

The embargo, officially in place after 1965 and reinforced in 1971, put Pakistan in a difficult position. The Pakistani leadership cared little for larger Cold War priorities but required a steady military supply. As long as any decision served Pakistani national security, other issues were consideration secondary.¹³⁸ This was rational and had been the policy of most states caught up in the Cold War, but it had external effects. Furthermore, the escalating conflict between

¹³⁵ However, these were generally sophisticated weapons from third party states, and did not involve small arms or light weapons. "Third party states" were Western clients such as Iran and Jordan.

¹³⁶ Spear, Joanna. Carter and Arms Sales. St. Martin's Press, Inc., 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY. 1995. pp 28-29.

¹³⁷ Secret document from Kissinger to President Nixon, "Memorandum for the President", *Policy Options Toward Pakistan*, dated April 28, 1971. NPMP, NSC Files, Country Files: Middle East, Box 625. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹³⁸ Tahir-Kheli, 27.

Pakistan and India, with contrasting undercurrents of Hindu-Muslim tensions and Cold War politics, spilled over into other states in the region. At the time Iran was a western ally, but Afghanistan was still considered Soviet-leaning. Pakistan had tensions with Afghanistan not only because of political relations such as the Durand line and the Pushtunistan issue, but because an ostensibly India-allied, Soviet-supplied Afghanistan was on its northern border. All made half-efforts to improve relations but this was only temporary.¹³⁹

Pakistan felt squeezed by its regional competitors and the political climate, but rather than seek political resolutions to a problem it could never militarily win, it began seeking additional military supply channels. Bhutto¹⁴⁰ visited Moscow in an attempt to secure aid from the Soviets. The Soviets, for their part, were keen on weaning them from China, though not from the United States, which was in a cool period for weapons shipments. It did not work. Bhutto's visit overlapped with Henry Kissinger's, and Pakistan was unwilling to sever ties with what it perceived to be its least demanding supplier, China.¹⁴¹

This period demonstrated that both military and nominally civilian rule in Islamabad resulted in an agenda heavily prioritized toward acquiring arms and military technology in general. Pakistan desired parity with India regarding sophisticated weapons systems such as combat aircraft and naval technology, and had to negotiate with external suppliers for them. Surprisingly, it struggled to match India on relatively basic equipment as well. As late as the 1971 war, despite assistance from West Germany's H&K, Pakistan did not possess the industrial

¹³⁹ Tahir-Kheli, 36.

¹⁴⁰ In a brief respite from military rule, Bhutto succeeded Yahya, and actually won elected office. The military was prioritized nonetheless.

¹⁴¹ CIA Document, "National Intelligence Bulletin" (Pakistan-USSR brief), October 23, 1974. United States Intelligence Board. CIA-RDP79T00975A027100010010-8. Previously cited in relation to Pakistan's security concerns.

base to provide its own infantry equipment, small arms, and light weapons. This prompted it to seek aid from even the Soviet Union, though how sincere this appeal was is certainly debatable. It is just as likely that, despite the high level visit of Pakistani leadership to the USSR, this was designed to influence the subsequent debate on western military aid. The 1971 war was far too immediate in the world's view and the Nixon Administration had other problems to worry about, including Vietnam, and later, domestic concerns such as Watergate. Nonetheless, Pakistan's courting of Soviet aid would not go unnoticed later in the decade.

There was an important contrast between Pakistan and India in this period. Pakistan experienced several episodes of military rule while India did not. Under India's constitution, defense policy is a civil rather than a military responsibility, and the military does not determine the course of [domestic] politics.¹⁴² This is not to say that the military was starved for resources. On the contrary, defense expenditures were rather high in India. However, India's government paid attention to other concerns, including an enormous and growing population, staggering poverty, endemic disease, and highly disruptive land reforms.

Pakistan's leadership would not survive the breakup of its territory. In response to the humiliating defeat to the Indians and the territorial loss of East Pakistan, Yahya Khan resigned in disgrace on 20 December 1971. Succeeding him was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, first as president and chief martial law administrator, then with the transition to parliamentary government, as prime minister. While Bhutto was a civilian, not a member of the military, the government was no less a military regime; Pakistan would remain under martial law until 1973.

Bhutto's rise also marked a severe downturn in relations with the West. Bhutto reached

¹⁴² "India: Armed Forces" p. 3.

out to western nations, but was wary of the United States. Aid virtually stopped, and as a result Bhutto strengthened ties with the Communist world, especially China. Despite less hostile relations between the U.S. and the PRC by this point, Bhutto's move was not welcome by any American administration during the 1970s. The U.S. response to Pakistan's belligerence, combined with Pakistan's unwillingness to toe the line on Cold War policy, was to more or less cut it loose. Aid after Nixon would resume at only extremely low levels.

Waiting to provide aid were the Poles, the Germans, and as always, the Chinese. China gave both diplomatic and material support. They vetoed Bangladesh's entry into the United Nations while also rebuilding Pakistan's army, which lost nearly 100,000 men to capture. But this characterized the difficult nature of the donor-recipient dynamic in the context of the United States, China, and Pakistan. Pakistan was the recipient of arms of various types from countries that were not on friendly diplomatic terms, but neither were they at war. From one major donor, aid was restricted, inconsistent, and composed of items that could not fully equip Pakistan's army with equally modern weapons as its adversary. From the other, aid was comparatively unrestricted, more consistent, and most importantly, arrived in quantities and types that helped the less industrialized Pakistan army properly equip its fighting forces.

Pakistan was able to balance U.S. pressure handily. A CIA National Intelligence Bulletin from 1974 anticipated that Pakistani Prime Minister Bhutto's official visit to Moscow was both to request economic aid and to "probe the possibility of getting them to resume supplying arms, in an effort to put himself in a position to intimate to the US that he has the option of turning more toward Moscow if Washington does not ease its embargo on weapons shipments to Pakistan."¹⁴³

¹⁴³ CIA Document, "National Intelligence Bulletin" (Pakistan-USSR brief), October 23, 1974. United States Intelligence Board. CIA-RDP79T00975A027100010010-8.

While Pakistan was a reliable buyer – albeit often with credit – they were also an equal opportunity buyer. The same intelligence document noted Pakistan's close ties to China, which was not on friendly terms with the United States but quite willing to supply weapons to developing nations. The embargo put Pakistan in a difficult position and they were not above using Cold War geopolitical rivalry to achieve their regional ends.

The Soviet Union was also unsettled by Pakistan's relationship with both the United States and China, and had restarted transfers to India. Pakistan felt threatened by the Soviet's conventional military assistance to India and Afghanistan, with “the suspicion that the USSR, India, and Afghanistan are conspiring together to undermine Pakistan's security and territorial integrity.”¹⁴⁴ Pakistan's paranoia regarding India and its allies led it to take actions more consistent with countering it than any communist threat.

This paranoia was fueled by Pakistan's own internal security problems. Pakistan was dealing with a domestic insurgency in the Baluchistan province and in the NWFP, and a cache of small arms from Iraq was found in February 1973.¹⁴⁵ Poorly trained and equipped, but very much opposed to control by the Pakistani government, the Baluch nationalists waged a low level war that was met with a multiyear campaign by the Pakistan Army until 1977. The Pakistani press attributed this fighting to Soviet gunrunning, especially AK-47s and ammunition. This may have reflected Pakistani paranoia more than actual factual knowledge of the transfer. Either way, the southwest of Pakistan was at war with itself, all using communist made guns.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Secret State Department Memorandum “Discovery of Iraqi Arms Cache in Pakistan and Its Consequences”, from L. Bruce Laingen to Mr. [Joseph] Sisco and Ambassador Meyer, dated February 16, 1973. Political Affairs and Relations, POL 1, General Policy; Background. 1967. Box 1. Lot 72D386. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

The presence of these weapons altered the Pakistani leadership's security calculus in several important ways. First, it lowered the cost and difficulty of going to war with an adversary that was, objectively, far stronger. Lacking a mature domestic military industrial base, even at this relatively late state it relied on external suppliers. It was able to sufficiently leverage this external supply chain to sustain operations for a time, even if they were eventual failures.

Second, it defined a system in which one donor state, China, was able to extract far greater diplomatic value than the equivalent dollar value of the transferred materiel, allowing it to be perceived as a truer ally. As China was also an adversary of India, Pakistan's security paranoia about its eastern neighbor was reinforced. Popular legitimacy of this anti-India stance was buoyed by a state that had additional reasons and resources to define it similarly. Attempts by the United States to decrease tensions and maintain security parity between Pakistan and India were undermined by an unwillingness to provide substantial lethal aid. When the U.S. did provide lethal aid, it was in the form of a few combat aircraft or some tank parts. The small, if nonetheless substantial, pieces counted less to the Pakistan government than the tens of thousands of rifles or millions of rounds of ammunition that the Chinese provided.

Third, when Pakistan lost the 1971 conflict with India, it was forced to reassess how its forces were designed to fight and the relative value that aid provided from one donor has versus another. Pakistan attempted operations for which it was poorly prepared, and it made a series of strategic and operational assumptions that could hardly have been more wrong. This demonstrated both the difficulty of Pakistan's ambitions and the extent to which Pakistan's military government tried to squeeze its preindustrial society into waging industrial war.

8. Daoud's Coup and Factions within the Afghan Army, Society, and Resistance

Soviet assistance had a long history in Afghanistan. Not only were the pre-USSR Bolsheviks the first to extend recognition to post-British Afghanistan in 1919, but they gifted 5,000 rifles to fight off Uzbek bandits at the Oxus River. Afghanistan was also the first recipient of Soviet post-war aid in 1953, equivalent to four million rubles, and increasing significantly the next year to 14 million rubles (approximately 3.5 million dollars).¹⁴⁷ Though hardly the scale of the U.S. Marshall Plan in Europe, this was substantial for the Soviet Union, which was still recovering from the catastrophic losses of the Second World War as well as its burden of assistance to the emerging Stalinist state of North Korea. Small though it may have been at first, this aid dramatically changed the already fragmented political landscape.

It is important to note that free weapons were not the only, or even primary, form of aid to Afghanistan. The country's need was great, and after the Second World War, Afghanistan became a large recipient of aid from both the United States and the USSR. Aid from the United States was over \$500 million until the Soviet invasion in 1979, mostly in the form of grants and cheap loans applied to development projects. The American decision to arm Pakistan to counter the Soviet-friendly India caused Afghanistan to look more toward the USSR for assistance. During a roughly coincident period as that for the American aid, the Soviet Union contributed the equivalent of over a billion dollars in economic aid, the majority of it to be repaid in the form of natural gas rights from fields close to the USSR. But this was matched with military aid from early on; in 1956, then-prime minister Mohammad Daoud Khan requested military aid from the Soviet Union, in equipment and training for the Afghan army and air force, both of which were

¹⁴⁷ Tahir-Kheli, pp 79-80.

primitive by international standards. Over the subsequent twenty years, the USSR gave military aid totaling the equivalent of \$1.25 billion. This included 3725 Afghan military officers trained in the Soviet Union, and sufficient small arms to equip the entirety of the Afghan army.¹⁴⁸

The decision of the United States to arm Pakistan, ostensibly to defend itself from India, deeply bothered the Afghans. Tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan over “the Pushtunistan issue” were at a cyclic high. The idea that the millions of Pashtuns straddling the border deserved an independent state naturally agitated Pakistani leaders. While two sides to the same coin regionally, the issue was of tangential concern to their patrons. But such parochial issues were critical locally, and Afghanistan under Daoud, while not considered communist by any reasonable definition, was nonetheless willing to politically play all sides as long as the aid continued. His dissatisfaction with American policy in the region resulted in a de facto alignment with the Soviet Union.

Daoud and the King, Zahir Shah, were at odds over foreign policy, and it exacerbated already difficult relations with Pakistan as well as its western patrons. As early as 1955 the King was apologizing for Daoud's behavior toward Pakistan – characterized opaquely as “misdeeds of commission and omission” – yet at the same time would not abandon his campaign of Pashtun nationalism, which by 1960 and 1961 had caused riots in Kabul and skirmishes on the border with Pakistan. In response, Pakistan closed its consulates throughout Afghanistan, and the United States looked on with a mix of interest and exasperation.¹⁴⁹ Perhaps most disconcerting was that Daoud had the capacity to operate so independently; his dual position as a lieutenant general in

¹⁴⁸ Bradsher, Henry S. Afghan Communism and Soviet Intervention. Oxford University Press, 1999. pp. 2-3.

¹⁴⁹ “Current Intelligence Bulletin, 15 July 1955” Office of Current Intelligence, CIA. p 7.
CIA-RDP79T00975A002100190001-6.

the Afghan Army and Prime Minister gave him extraordinary power. This was backed up by Soviet military and intelligence assistance, which may have already reached the equivalent of 400 million dollars (in aggregate, to include everything from uniforms and rifles to armored cars).¹⁵⁰ While still comparatively modest when taken over a decade and relative to states like India, it was more than any competing faction in Afghanistan could claim. Daoud's heavy dependence on outside support for his agenda, in combination with his tendency to anger almost everyone, was a structural weakness.

His position was far from secure. The Soviets could easily redirect support to another faction or primary actor they felt was more stable. Within weeks of the King's apology, the Afghan Ministry of National Defense – more or less under the control of Daoud – issued an order for demobilization. The high cost of maintaining a standing army without continued external support was impossible for Afghanistan. Daoud fell in both prestige and effective power in the face of the Soviets' waning support, combined with pressure from Pakistan, which had effectively countered Daoud's propaganda campaign while arming its own Pashtun border tribes. “From the beginning of the dispute with Afghanistan, Pakistan has sought to undermine Daud's position,” noted contemporary observers.¹⁵¹

Daoud's insistence on Pushtunistan resulted in a complete diplomatic break with Pakistan in 1961, after Pakistan closed the border and enforced it with the army. For a landlocked country economically tied to its southern neighbor this was very damaging, and Daoud was removed from office in 1963 – though, surprisingly, by a simple request from Zahir Shah. Responding to the crisis, the king instituted a constitutional monarchy, though he was unprepared for the effects

¹⁵⁰ Tahir-Kheli, p 32.

¹⁵¹ “Current Intelligence Bulletin, 30 July 1955” Office of Current Intelligence, CIA. p 5. CIA-RDP79T00975A002100320001-1.

of such a move, especially as power had been wielded mostly by Daoud.¹⁵²

In 1965, a weak but nonetheless more Soviet-aligned Afghan communist party formed. The leaders tended to be educated in the West and with few exceptions came from privileged backgrounds. This new party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), resembled the early development of the Soviet Union in certain respects; perhaps most critically, it was composed of a small cadre of intellectuals who did not represent in any significant way the rural population it spoke for. There were fewer than a 100,000 workers in Afghanistan who could be considered industrial, out of a population of over 15 million. The party recruited primarily from two pools: from Kabul University; and from the armed forces. The branch from Kabul University tended to be argumentative and factional, and were resisted by the Islamists who would later become *mujahideen* leaders. Those from the army were better organized and took orders from the Soviet military intelligence directorate, the GRU. The PDPA subsequently split into two factions – the *Khalqi* and the *Parchami*, named after the newsletters published by each – though initially had to compete with a dozen minor, short-lived other parties. However, the *Parchami* had closer ties to the Soviet embassy in Kabul. Some military officers had independent ties to Moscow, confusing the lines of loyalty.¹⁵³

Out of formal power but far from inactive, Daoud soon made a bid to return to national prominence. Pro-Soviet groups and individuals, especially from the *Parchami* and from the military, aided Daoud in his coup against the King on July 17 1973. Daoud's rank in the Afghan army meant he was able to rally some officers around him, who then deposed the king and proclaimed a republic. Yet Daoud, despite relying on the Soviet Union for weapons, training, and

¹⁵² Tanner, Stephen. Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban. Da Capo Press. 2002. pp 227-228.

¹⁵³ Bradsher, pp 7-13.

economic aid throughout his tenure as prime minister, made a stunning public rejection of the influence of “imported ideology” – a statement clearly aimed at the Soviet Union – and moved to reduce the power of major factions like the *Khalqi* and the *Parchami*. Almost immediately, both Islamists as well as pro-Soviet officers (hardly natural allies) began plotting against him. KGB efforts began in earnest in 1977, primarily with recruits from the Afghan Army.

Daoud approached some issues with caution but with others he was still inexplicably reckless. Now in his presidency, he ceased putting pressure on Pakistan over the Pushtunistan issue, but aggravated the overall foreign policy situation when he sought aid from Iran and India -- the latter critically important, as officers could train with Soviet weapons but with fewer political ties to Moscow. Soviet military advisers present at this time were being marginalized and removed, further reducing Soviet influence. This led to overt confrontations with Soviet leadership in 1975 and 1977, in which Daoud expressly rejected Soviet political advising.

Despite their initial positions, the *Parchami* and *Khalqi* factions merged in response to Daoud’s actions, although their “military wing[s]” remained separate. The KGB maintained close ties to the Afghan military, and the indoctrination of military officers and the equipping of its armed forces was designed to extend the influence of the Soviet Union. The highly ideological nature of the Soviet foreign policy was reflected in military training manuals, which would eventually (by the mid 1970s, certainly) explicitly set out a role for the military to provide “support and aid to liberated countries in suppressing the imperialist export of armed counter-revolution.”¹⁵⁴ Soviet leadership thought this applied to the tiny fledgling Marxist movement in Afghanistan. Yet assistance and training did not result in particularly close control,

¹⁵⁴ As cited in Bradsher, p 39.

as the now partially unified PDPA plotted a coup against KGB advice (though, once under way, almost certainly under KGB control). Characteristically Afghan factionalism and an uncertain command chain did not give the Soviets much hope for success with any Afghan faction, even if their weight was greater with the PDPA than the erratic and unreliable Daoud.¹⁵⁵

Yet while the Soviet Union influenced a small number of decision makers – early on, both Taraki and Amin practically offered themselves openly as puppets – ultimately these individuals were far from well organized or particularly loyal to Moscow. Indeed, they proved to be quite the opposite: fractious, competing, and far too independent. That the aid relationship was not working out as planned perplexed the GRU and KGB, whose connections to each of the South Asian states were significant. At the same time, they initially wrote off much of the region as either too backward (in the case of Afghanistan) or as a tool of the British (in the case of India, and later, Pakistan).¹⁵⁶ For the Afghans, the dependence on the USSR proved to be a double-edged sword. In return for modern weapons and support, the Afghan leadership had to submit to Soviet control over most aspects of its operation. Unexpectedly for the Soviets, it armed their eventual enemies.

Newly acquired authority was enforced with Soviet weapons. Law, even by Afghan standards (arguably, especially by Afghan standards) ceased to become important and violence for political purposes and to settle old scores merged with official actions of the state. The Pul-i-Charki prison became a new state apparatus where summary executions were commonplace – one source claiming dozens nightly.¹⁵⁷ Modern weapons relegated older forms of law, such as those based on Islam or community status, to a much lower relevance.

¹⁵⁵ Bradsher, pp 17-23.

¹⁵⁶ Tahir-Kheli, Shirin. Soviet Moves in South Asia. pp 2-5.

¹⁵⁷ Bradsher, p 41.

In this context, what weapons were primarily in use, what was their effect, and how were they controlled? The difficulty in answering this question comes from not only in the difficulty in accessing the data – much of it is in Russian – but also that unsophisticated weapons were considered an almost unimportant aspect of the overall picture, and furthermore, by Soviet standards, the aid was not part of a major political effort to expand the Soviet sphere into South Asia. At this early stage, serious Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was not being contemplated. It did not see the government in Kabul as a credible communist partner and despite early and even substantial aid, did not grant much *advanced* military assistance. By 1971, however, the Afghan government had played up its pro-Soviet leanings, or at least its anti-Pakistan (by extension anti-US) leanings. Military assistance to Afghanistan was by comparison rather minimal against Eastern European states, or other 'socialist-leaning' countries in Asia and Africa. But at a point when the Soviet Union was freely distributing Kalashnikovs to its client states, handing out portions of its small arms inventory was not problematic for Moscow.

Introducing them to the incoherent Afghan political environment was a serious mistake on Moscow's part. Dealing with Kabul was difficult enough, but even Kabul did not have much influence beyond the area immediately surrounding the capital and a few cities. Authority and political legitimacy were amorphous and radically different from what either the Soviets or, surprisingly, even the educated Afghans waiting to herald communism into Afghanistan had in mind. The reality was that sources of authority were (and are) patronage, charisma, and one's traditional place in society; part of this is the administration of organized violence. The rise of a large number of armed groups -- tanzims, warlords, arbakai, etc. -- meant that authority now

centered around the ability to kill challengers.¹⁵⁸ Though Kabul had traditionally been important only in international affairs and national disputes, it now increased its reach by extension of its ability to procure modern weapons. However, not only was this in dispute between the capital and the rest of the country, but within the capital itself. Daoud may have staged a coup, but it would not be long before he faced one himself.

¹⁵⁸ Small Arms Survey, 2009: *Shadows of War*. Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva. 2009. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, UK. 2009. pp 290-291.

IV. Zia ul-Haq, the Soviet Era in Afghanistan, and the Covert Western Response

“Peanuts.” --Zia ul-Haq

9. Zia and the Generals

President Muhammad Zia ul-Haq described Carter's offer of military aid following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as “Peanuts,” implying that it was far too small a sum to make a difference to Pakistan's security -- or more to the point, the American objective of containing the Soviet Union. Whether this was true was arguable. However, it demonstrated the leverage that Pakistan momentarily had to redefine its weapons procurement program.

This was not lost on American decision makers. Many contemporary State Department sources had showed Ayub just as eager to play the superpowers back in the 1960s, but now the U.S. very much needed Pakistan, owing largely to its proximity to a newly active Cold War battlefield. Zia ul-Haq had a golden opportunity that his predecessors did not: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Here was Pakistan's moment to upend the previous decades of embargoes and limitations. It also displayed a large degree of hubris in thinking it could control its northwestern neighbor. But by going along with the scheme, the West perhaps displayed its gullibility.

Zia succeeded a civilian leader, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, though the difference between the two was ultimately small, as Bhutto nonetheless used martial law to impose order. Talks between Bhutto and his political opposition broke down, and Zia, recently appointed head of the Pakistan Army, used the opportunity to take power on July 5, 1977. Prime Minister Bhutto was arrested, and the president, then a figurehead, was not able to legally resist. As a four-star general and the Chief of Army Staff, Zia held considerable authority within the Pakistan Armed Forces and had been able to sequester those loyal to Bhutto. The coup was not validated by the Pakistani

legislature, but by the heads of the separate armed services. His subordinate generals depended on his approval for their careers – and as would be made evident, their very lives. The Supreme Court rubber-stamped the coup as legitimate through the “Doctrine of Necessity,” which postulated that the situation was untenable and something had to be done. It was a military junta by all reasonable definitions. True to form, it instituted martial law almost immediately.

The transition from Bhutto to Zia ul-Haq was also a transition from 'alternate' (Chinese, mostly) sources of weapons back to the U.S. as the choice supplier, for advanced weapons as well as basics. Perhaps most interestingly, he used American money to buy non-American weapons. Zia played on escalating tensions and the threat of a potentially explicitly communist state in Afghanistan to position himself better with the West. Bhutto had made the relationship with Eastern Bloc nations and with China part of his attempt to pursue an “independent” foreign policy, but Zia knew an opportunity when saw one. This did not in any way preclude Pakistan from continuing to acquire Chinese matériel; some estimates put the total value over two decades at around two billion dollars, though as with other estimates this is a difficult value to judge given that not only are Chinese transfers often obscured, but they are occasionally undervalued or without monetary cost.¹⁵⁹

China's opacity is highly problematic. The Small Arms Survey for 2005, titled “Weapons at War,” notes that while internal security has not been a pressing problem for China, it has produced many more weapons than it needs for either its police services or its extremely large military. It noted that beginning in the 1970s and continuing through today, that the Chinese government moved away from a strategy of mass formations and Mao's guerrilla warfare to a

¹⁵⁹ Copper, John F. “China's Military Assistance”, p 110. Following his sourcing, though, indicates this is an Indian source, which given the target, suggests bias.

more modern military organization. The baggage of the past remained, however:

PLA is undergoing extensive transformation as it sheds the guerrilla and large-formation doctrines inherited from its formative experiences in the Communist revolution and the Korean War (Scobell, 2003). Most of its equipment is the legacy of past doctrinal assumptions. Military factories produced small arms on a scale required to arm not only PLA regulars and reserve units but also politically reliable groups like Communist Party members, trusted classes, and students. Millions of these weapons were exported to allies and clients abroad. The number stored in China appears to reach the tens of millions (Small Arms Survey, 2002, p 96).¹⁶⁰

The Small Arms Survey states that in recent years the PLA has actually decreased in size; however, it is possible that it holds upwards of 25 million small arms, from pistols to Type 56 Kalashnikov clones to copies of the venerable SKS (also confusingly called the Type 56).¹⁶¹ Because China has almost never reported its arms exports (with a few exceptions) it is nearly impossible to get a value, let alone volume number, regarding small arms exports. However, given the doctrine of the Chinese military throughout the period of study, this was likely its chief export by quantity. The proof on the ground was abundant Chinese small arms and light weapons on the India-Pakistan border after the mid-1960s transfers.

Toward the end of the 1970s, just prior to the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Army, the United States was wondering how Pakistan might react, especially in light of the arms embargo still in effect. This was reflected in a memorandum distributed only weeks after the initial invasion in which the CIA posed the question: “How will Moscow respond if Pakistan accepts a substantial increase in military assistance from the US and/or China?”¹⁶² The U.S. would soon find out.

¹⁶⁰ Small Arms Survey 2005, p 81.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² CIA Document, “Food for Thought”, To National Intelligence Officers from Richard Lehman, Chairman, National Intelligence Council. Dated 18 January 1980. Office of the Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment, NFAC #0457-80, CIA-RDP83B01027R000100180019-8.

Despite perceived negative consequences for the diplomatic relationship, the late 1970s, would see a firmer stance by Washington on arms transfers. Carter's presidential directive PD-13 noted that "arms transfers are an exceptional foreign policy implement, to be used only in instances where it can be clearly demonstrated that the transfers contribute to our national security interests."¹⁶³ While it addressed specific mechanisms by which arms transfers should be limited and reported, fundamentally it dictated two things: that human rights must be respected; and that the United States would not introduce new, advanced weapons systems into any region [with a potential for conflict].¹⁶⁴ A new embargo had already existed via several loose policy statements, flexibly authored congressional acts, and agreements between the State and Defense departments, but this was a bolder line coming directly from the White House. Pakistan was again left looking for other sources.

Pakistan had begun work on a domestic arms capacity within a year after Partition, but the facility at Wah, close to Rawalpindi, took decades to develop. It was not until 1980 that it became fully functional and capable of producing anything, and this was only with external assistance. As small arms are concerned, it produced ammunition for domestic use and some for export, along with copies of the H&K G3 rifle, a small number of Kalashnikov copies, and associated spare parts. It also produced (and still produces) ammunition for rifles firing the .303 round.¹⁶⁵ Given the procurement pattern, these represented a very small portion of the defense budget, but also represent a priority in public relations and development effort.

¹⁶³ President James Carter, Presidential Directive/NSC-13, Subject: "Conventional Arms Transfer Policy". Federation of American Scientists Intelligence Resource Program, <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/direct.htm> ; downloaded August 12, 2011. It is interesting to note that "high-turnover spare parts" were exempted from the policy.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Though for limited purposes, it does speak to the exceptional lifetime of these weapons.

The 1980s would be a boom decade for the Pakistani military. Its defense budget doubled from 1978 to 1982, then again by 1986 – but even an influx in foreign capital and the leverage it held over the United States regarding the matter of Afghanistan could not bring it anywhere near parity with what it continued to perceive as its greatest threat.¹⁶⁶ In the 1950s and 1960s, the Indian military was almost always two to three times the size and capability of the Pakistani military, and this would prove to be an impossible lead to overcome. Despite multiple military aid packages from the United States – at least three large installments, starting with a 5 year, \$3.2 billion dollar offer in 1981 – Pakistan remained far behind India: in 1979, India had manpower of 1.1 million, 614 combat aircraft, and 2,120 tanks; Pakistan had 450,000 men, 220 aircraft, and 1,300 tanks. A decade later, in 1988, India's forces had increased to 1.36 million, with 714 aircraft, and 3,250 tanks; Pakistan grew to only 480,000 men, 338 aircraft, and 1600 tanks. (Strangely, Pakistan's artillery assets fell by almost 70 percent.)¹⁶⁷ While it certainly benefited from the relationship with the United States, Zia's hope that Pakistan would be able to reach any sort of military balance with its eastern neighbor was pure fantasy.

This did not stop Zia from trying. Whatever effort he may have put into establishing a broadly distributed process for acquisition and decision making, his position as a military dictator did not promote the development of a modern bureaucratic institution. It certainly had the trappings: the British tradition of rank, title, and organization provided a veneer of civilian bureaucracy, but in reality, personal relationships with the Pakistan Army remained the way things actually got done. In theory the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance were supposed to consult each other to determine a balanced and rational

¹⁶⁶ Siddiqa-Agha, p 80.

¹⁶⁷ Siddiqa-Agha, pp 29-32.

approach to arms procurements. In reality, Zia's foreign policy and arms procurement was ad hoc, and what was a scatter-shot arms procurement regime only became worse. Flush with American money and covert support in the 1980s, Pakistan attempted to procure tanks from Poland and Ukraine, combat aircraft from the United States, and small arms from the U.S., Germany, and China.¹⁶⁸

With such a breadth of suppliers, the “Cold War surplus” had evolved yet again, from moving the point of production forward to buying a third party's weapons or technology with the patron's money. It would be politically unacceptable for mass shipments of American M16s to show up in Pakistan, and besides, the Pakistan Army had already long since standardized on the German H&K G3 battle rifle in 1967. It finally modernized its manufacturing line and arsenal with the G3A3 (G3P3) in 1986.¹⁶⁹

As always, specifics were difficult to pin down. However, one may divine it from two facts: first, the Pakistan Army saw the lion's share of defense spending (averaging 40 percent), followed by the various “Defense Production Organizations” (28 percent); second, the value of actual arms imports went from 470 million dollars in 1985 to 330 million in 1986, rising slightly to 340 million in 1987. Only in 1988 did it rise back to about 460 million dollars.¹⁷⁰ This suggests a mix of outright imports and local licensed production, with weight toward imports as it became easier to use others' money. Lacking real insight into the decisions of the military leadership of Zia's government, these are only correlated data, and the two may not be causative. However, it echoed the Chinese shipments and change in defense spending from the mid 1960s. In a sense, this was the Western version of the Socialist production model; licensed and assured a

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, pp 69-71.

¹⁶⁹ Walter, p 170.

¹⁷⁰ Siddiq-Agha, pp 80-83.

profit for intellectual property, a European arms manufacturer had its machinery and weapons operating in South Asia.

This arrangement was of course intentional. Citing “blackmail” and the insufficiency of “fighting with borrowed weapons”, Army chief Abdul Waheed promoted a surge in domestic weapons production.¹⁷¹ In 1985, Zia ordered via a presidential directive that all arms acquisitions should be accompanied with a technology transfer, enabling Pakistan to produce weapons locally. The results were mixed; while Pakistan gained the *license* to produce many of the arms it acquired, it lacked the industrial capacity to actually manufacture them. Insufficient attention was paid to research and development, to industrialization, and to education. Frustratingly for the military establishment, “defense industrial activities were limited to the assembly and manufacture of a few, technologically less advanced weapon systems. Islamabad could not markedly reduce its dependence on foreign sources for supply of major weapon systems especially when no efforts were made to expand the industrial base.”¹⁷² Through multiple decades – the 1970s, 1980s, and even into the 1990s – small arms stand out against more sophisticated weapons: “the only area with a certain level of excellence being the manufacture of small arms and ammunition.”¹⁷³ This was a mix of import, license, and reverse engineering. Like China, production, use, and export numbers are not available from the government, with only imprecise estimates in IISS and SIPRI data. Also like China, Pakistan has used this capability as a policy tool of its own. Military power as a source of influence had come full circle.

Pakistan's shift back to the West and attempt at creating a true domestic arms production

¹⁷¹ Ibid, p 109. Quoted from a lengthy memorandum with a questionable date, but statement consistent with contemporary Pakistan policy.

¹⁷² Ibid, p 110. This is heavily implied everywhere save for Pakistan Ordnance Factories marketing material; even that does not deny the dependence on foreign machinery and technical expertise.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

capacity was concurrent with major events in its northwestern neighbor. Afghanistan had undergone internal upheaval throughout the 1970s, and the long-standing military relationship it continued to have with the Soviet Union created expectations on the part of not only the Kabul government, but rising factions within the small political class and the Afghan Army. Once the Soviets essentially occupied the Afghan capital and took command of major military installations, the Carter administration sought to create a viable resistance. It could not do this through direct aid to the now neutered Kabul government, and there was no obvious primary resistance group at the outset -- nor would there be, despite the focus now given to the Northern Alliance. The reflexively anti-government tribal Pashtuns were the answer, Pakistan was the door, and Zia held the keys.

Chapter 10: Daoud and the Autocrats fall to the Soviets

Coinciding with Zia's rise was Daoud's fall. Daoud had regained power by deposing the king and instituting a nominally socialist government, with faint lip service to Soviet communism; however, once in power, he quickly purged anyone he felt too loyal to Moscow in an attempt to ensure loyalty to himself. His behavior did not reflect a democratic or a communist vision, adhering more to something between a military autocrat and a weak king. He used the army to maintain political control – for a short time at least.

Daoud seized power in 1973 in a bloodless coup while the king was out of the country for medical treatment. It was a mostly seamless transition, as he had held office previously. He had the loyalty of some military officers, especially those educated abroad, and rather than claim the throne – as expected – he declared Afghanistan a republic based on socialist principles, with optimistic but unrealistic ideas of a modernized Afghanistan. Even the non-royal members of the government prior to his coup were not ideologically out of line with Daoud's stated goals; the royal prime minister, Agha Shafiq, prioritized development and modernization, and was doing it with foreign funding as much as could be negotiated.¹⁷⁴ Overall, there were no huge changes expected in Afghanistan's long relationship with the Soviet Union.

Though viewed as a Soviet puppet by the West, at heart Daoud was an Afghan nationalist. This was, perhaps, precisely the problem, as the factions conspiring against him were ideologically motivated and Soviet backed. Not content with mere modernization and a socialist agenda, two key groups with strong support within the military and political elite had Daoud in

¹⁷⁴ Brief: "US Policy Toward South Asia", dated March 12, 1973 (not long before the coup). Box 3196, Lot 77D344. PAK – POL 1.2 1973 Briefing Papers. Records Relating to Pakistan, *compiled 1972 - 1974, documenting the period 1961 – 1974*. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archives II, College Park, MD. (NACP)

their sights: the Parchams and the Khalqs. Both came from the fractured PDPA and were communist in theory, and despite their differences, cooperated and functionally merged long enough to work toward Daoud's end.

It is difficult to overemphasize how tumultuous the second Daoud period was for Afghanistan. A 1971 survey from the Helmand River Valley, representative of much of the country,¹⁷⁵ illustrated how wealth and influence was gained in a community. Despite the lack of record keeping, land ownership was key to wealth and authority.¹⁷⁶ Previous governments did not make serious efforts at changing this feudal arrangement. While the King's reign was broadly incompetent and failed to modernize the country beyond a few urban pockets, at the very least it was peaceful and, owing to its fealty to Afghan tradition, stable enough. Daoud did two things to disrupt it: first, despite being related to the King, he terminated the monarchy; second, he tried to make wealth and authority flow from Kabul alone, rather than allow local polities to function autonomously. He did this through his control of the military and his authority to negotiate external aid.

Daoud's muscular and military-aided path to consolidating power, however, became uncertain. On a state visit to Moscow in late 1977 he rejected additional political assistance from the Soviet Union, greatly upsetting Brezhnev. Indeed, 'rejected' was perhaps too polite a way to describe the event: Daoud reportedly banged his fists on the table, declared that “Afghans made their own decisions”, and refused to apologize for his attempts to reach out to Egypt, Iran, and Turkey – all Muslim countries, and hopefully, ones who would provide him with aid.¹⁷⁷ Some

¹⁷⁵ Consistent with author's understanding of other rural areas in Afghanistan.

¹⁷⁶ Scott, Richard B. “The North Shamalan: A Survey of Land and People” USAID/Afghanistan, Special Publication, August 1971. pp 6-12.

¹⁷⁷ Tanner, p 230.

did: Egypt trained his officers, and Iran gave some basic military equipment. Perhaps Daoud felt that this gave him some freedom in his relationship with what was still his principal donor, but new suppliers or not, this episode likely marked the beginning of the end for the elderly Daoud.

In April 1978 not only did the situation become volatile, it became completely untenable. Daoud's purges left reduced capacity for government institutions to respond, and when the time came, "government machinery had been so much decayed and rendered incompetent that no one gave any attention to this important and vital action."¹⁷⁸ That "vital action" was the seizure of power by the Moscow-backed PDPA. The security forces, all Soviet equipped and trained, moved to arrest Daoud and his family. Given the units involved, 'arrest' was not quite the right term, as a rebel brigade seized the airport and ordered the Afghan Air Force to strafe the palace with their Mig-21s (more to pin the force down than to destroy it). Detaining Daoud was not really the intent, though they were also eliminating Daoud's 1,800 strong personal guard. Within two days, over two thousand people had died across Kabul.¹⁷⁹

Details of these events were confusing, or at least painted a picture that suggests chaos instead of a PDPA-led revolution. Armed groups roamed the capital instead of acting with real purpose. A purported firsthand account noted that upon the announcement of the coup – supposedly in order to counter "anti-Islamic forces" – Daoud's death was not immediately apparent. Low level police and Afghan Army personnel were unsure of whom to support. In short order, groups with no clear line of authority were roaming Kabul, where seemingly everyone was carrying Kalashnikovs. The police, now virtually a separate faction, was just as well armed as the Army, attacked the Ministry of Interior. Surprisingly, the presumed heads of

¹⁷⁸ Nights in Kabul: Actions behind the curtain during the last two decades in Afghanistan , by General Umarzai p 37.

¹⁷⁹ Tanner, pp 230-231.

the PDPA were not wholly aware of the coup, or at least the extent to which it had progressed. A possibly apocryphal story makes the claim that as Babrak Karmal was being released from detainment, he expressed surprise upon being congratulated.¹⁸⁰ The PDPA, with strong support in the Army and possessing independent ties to Moscow, knew to whom it owed its place. The KGB, however reluctant, was not going to allow another rogue revolution on the Soviet border.

Following the coup, a series of party bureaucrats were installed by the Soviet-supported military. The various factions with sufficient military backing took care of Daoud's supporters, and Taraki, the head of the Khalq faction, briefly became the de facto head of state, though as head of a communist committee rather than as president or prime minister. Moscow, once unwilling to support a revolution in a country it deemed unready, was now backing one, albeit with tepid enthusiasm. Adding to the political situation was the problem of tribal score settling – many, in fact, assumed that the coup was more about traditional conflict between eastern Ghilzai Pashtuns and southern Durranis. The effect was that many of the competent technocrats and specialists were removed or killed. The PDPA leadership, mainly Babrak Karmal and Najibullah, complained to Moscow that insufficient capacity existed in either the party or the now hollowed out government. In response, Moscow more than doubled the number of military advisers active in the Afghan Army (from 350 to 650 and then to 1000 within less than a year) and dispatched approximately 2000 political and economic advisers.¹⁸¹ Moscow was now committed.

Committed to precisely what was not clear. The central government was following an ideology devised by the PDPA and assisted by the KGB, but the leadership barely coordinated

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, pp 39-42. The story about Karmal, especially, is plausible but somewhat unlikely; however, it did capture the widely held sentiment that the leadership of the PDPA was not truly in control, and in actuality the PDPA was being controlled by KGB elements in the military.

¹⁸¹ Bradsher, pp 41-42.

with more experienced advisors from the USSR and was blind to the realities of life outside the capital. Decrees from Kabul backed (at first) by the Army mandated land reforms that wholly subverted the power of landowners and creditors in the name of revolution, “free[ing] peasants from the yoke of oppressing exploiters.” Those unwise enough to take Kabul's offer of not paying debts were often killed as an example to the next debtor. Other decrees, which may have had good intentions, refused to acknowledge that social arrangements such as the place of women in Afghan society was both a matter of traditional honor and economics, as men invested considerable portions of their lifetime wealth in the institution of marriage. Finally, Kabul attempted to grant land to “landless workers”¹⁸² at the expense of landowners who held more than a centrally established amount of land. Not only was this against the direct interests of powerful landowners (who generally could command a local militia of some sort), and not only did it run counter to Islamic ideas of property rights, but once put into place it handed land to people who had no agricultural skills beyond basic labor. In short, it failed spectacularly.¹⁸³

This did not stop Kabul from trying to make it happen. Maliks and mullahs (i.e., landowners and local powerbrokers) who resisted were shot in front of villagers. In turn, locals began organizing to fight government forces.¹⁸⁴ Such rebellion was not unusual; the central government in Afghanistan was never very strong. Authority was only exercised for a few issues and local matters were left to the communities they affected. This worked when killing was more difficult and there existed a nominal higher legitimate authority. However, the influx of Soviet weapons during that decade and the flood in the following one meant that many local and private

¹⁸² 'landless workers', used here, was a concept of social class maladapted from communist ideology to traditional Afghan society; while there were workers who were landless, that they were being exploited was not problematic in the same way that European serfs might have been in Leninist/Marxist ideology.

¹⁸³ Bradsher, p 44-45.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

conflicts became much worse. A sociologist working with the U.S. Army in Afghanistan would later observe that “the presence of small arms in Afghanistan is so overwhelming and easily apparent that an exploration of their significance appears almost redundant. Whether over land, water, business, or marriage, conflicts between individuals, families, and communities become all the more violent by the ready stockpiles of mines, explosive ordnance and guns.”¹⁸⁵ The irony was that the communist government gave them a common enemy.

In March 1979, following communist executions of those who resisted, a rebellion broke out in the western city of Herat. This time Afghan Army units from the 17th Division joined in, fighting any still-loyal government forces and Soviet advisers. Any who were suspected of sympathy with the communists were rounded up and brutally killed; unconfirmed reports of victims being skinned alive or beheaded were widespread.

Taraki panicked. He ordered an armored unit of 30 tanks and several hundred loyal troops from Kandahar to restore order. They did so a little over a week later, with overwhelming air support from Shindand, just south of Herat. The bombing heavily damaged the city, and little effort was made to differentiate between civilian targets and combatants. Adding to the 3,000 dead from the rebellion were another 4,000-25,000 dead – most civilians.

Knowing that this bode extremely poorly for his nascent regime, Taraki requested assistance from Moscow. A series of phone calls on 17 and 18 March 1979 more or less consisted of Taraki begging for the Soviets to send the Soviet Army, and Moscow flatly refusing. This provided an interesting moment of clarity in Soviet thought on the Afghan problem at its beginning: indeed, Alexei Kosygin, a member of the Politburo with responsibility over the

¹⁸⁵ Bhatia, p 14.

Afghan mission who had recently returned from Kabul, stated that it would “not be possible to conceal this...everyone will begin to shout that the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan has begun.”¹⁸⁶ The Politburo's stance on the Afghan affair was confused but generally not in favor of any Soviet presence in the country. Brezhnev himself was adamantly against intervening. Reluctant though they may have been, they promised additional military equipment and weapons for free. Noting the enormous gulf between Kabul and the rest of the country, that Afghans strongly distrusted the government, and that 'inexperienced' PDPA leaders rarely heeded advice (while nonetheless demanding aid), the Politburo stated that any direct intervention would “reveal the weakness of the Taraki government and would widen the scope of the counterrevolution both domestically and abroad...”¹⁸⁷ It also stated that it would, however, do what it could to help improve the Afghan Army.

Against the judgement of so many, within ten days Soviet cargo planes were flying into Bagram and Kabul, delivering armored vehicles, helicopters, and crates full of weapons. Also arriving into Kabul was Lieutenant General Lev Gorelov and Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov of the Soviet General Staff. Ogarkov, asked whether Soviet troops should be dispatched to Afghanistan in case of a crisis, responded matter-of-factly that “this should not be done.” The General Staff quickly recalled all Russian women and children outside of Kabul rather than see a repeat of Herat; in their place, more military advisers were sent from Moscow.¹⁸⁸ Continued Soviet support to Taraki and the PDPA's bumbling revolution despite negative assessments by both the military and political leadership was, in retrospect, baffling. It is likely, however, that they viewed the complete abandonment of Afghanistan as both loss of investment and a loss of face.

¹⁸⁶ Bradsher, p 48.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, p 50.

Taraki lasted slightly over a year before Hafizullah Amin, a western educated but also supposedly communist leader, had him killed. The cult of personality that had developed around Taraki and the severe decay in relations between the two main factions in the PDPA degraded political decision making to the point of uselessness and made the situation almost comically hostile. Coups and counter-coups were planned; leaders were exiled; assassinations were plotted. Most were undone by the incompetence of those involved. Even within parties the alliances could not hold despite the advice of the Soviet ambassador to work toward unity. Taraki and Amin were once the closest of friends and allies, but Taraki's repeated failures led to Amin taking action. Amin gained effective control of the Army in July through politburo maneuvering and sidelined Taraki, preventing Soviet advisers from meeting with him. He had Taraki arrested, and subsequently killed on 14 September.

Amin believed the Soviet leadership's apparent indifference constituted approval. In reality, Brezhnev was furious, and "next steps" were debated. While Amin was "tightening" the party by having disloyal members killed or packed into Pul-i-Charki prison, the Soviet politburo was deciding how to handle the new situation. Which was troubling indeed: political prisoners numbered in the tens of thousands; the PDPA stopped counting or releasing names after 12,000, but western estimates were between 35,000 and 50,000.¹⁸⁹

His foreign policy, though far more moderate, only made things worse for him. He attempted to increase bilateral discussions with Pakistan and Iran, both seen as U.S. oriented. Amin, just as dependent as his predecessors, did not have the real option of cutting off Soviet aid. He lacked popular support; his government was run largely by Soviet advisers, his military

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p 62.

by Soviet officers; and his supplies came from the SSRs directly north of him. The massive Soviet military machine provided political authority, albeit not legitimacy.

Questioning the true source of this authority was remarkably unwise. Thus, through every action he took, Amin reinforced the view that he was troublesome, unreliable, and owing to his extended time in the United States, not really communist. (Moscow, in fact, suspected him of being an agent of the CIA.) In late December 1979, scarcely three months after he assumed power, Soviet special forces entered Afghanistan and assassinated Amin. His tenure lasted 104 days.

His gruesome exit from Afghan politics is commonly taken as the beginning of the Soviet invasion. On the night of December 24, Soviet special operations forces (Spetsnaz) executed an assault on Tajbeg Palace, a well-defended fortress south of the city. Spetsnaz stormed the palace, and despite heavy losses, killed nearly everyone inside. Amin's death was not immediately announced, the only indication being references to "ill health." The gunfire and shelling of the palace betrayed the coup, however. In his place, the Soviet Union installed Karmal, who, thanks to thousands of Soviet troops, weapons, and money, survived almost seven years.

From the outside, the Soviet occupation was not entirely unexpected. American and Pakistani intelligence realized that the Afghan government was fragile and that Soviet intervention was necessary for it to remain. Opposition group weapons were a mixture of holdovers from British wars and what could be captured or scavenged from Afghan government stocks. A CIA report from one day before Soviet troops took Kabul noted that it had "little evidence on the number of insurgents, the amount of weapons they have, or their need for additional equipment. They have captured significant amounts of rifles, mortars, antiaircraft

weapons, ammunition...from retreating or deserting Afghan troops and by ambushing supply convoys.”¹⁹⁰ Anticipating the insurgency but not yet willing to get involved, and lacking on-the-ground information, it still noted that consumables were becoming scarce, stating that “the price of ammunition in Pakistan is already becoming prohibitively expensive.”¹⁹¹ Competition between the groups meant that a coordinated supply chain was impossible.

The Kabul government's problems were, to some degree, mirrored in the rebel groups. In addition to a crushing dependency on externally provided arms, they also suffered a lack of consistent or continuous leadership. The inability to unite behind a broadly legitimate authority figure was also the condition for the vast majority of the factions looking to overthrow the government: less than a month into the Soviet occupation the CIA noted not only insurgent strongholds and their weapons sources from Pakistan, but their tendency to fight each other as much as they did the Soviets and the Afghan Army. The failure to form a government-in-exile pointed to the lack of a single national authority, but also how emerging leaders used their control of the Pakistani arms flow to gain power.¹⁹² Certain features of Afghan society exacerbated the problem, as legitimacy predicated on other bases – e.g., religion – could no longer be assumed. And while individuals in society possessed weapons in previous eras, suddenly there were several orders of magnitude more. It was a short leap to a disrupted societal order, making the unification of the Afghan resistance a more difficult problem. Internal divisions in society and Pashtun tribal dynamics, combined with the need for individuals to

¹⁹⁰ CIA Document “Capabilities and Requirements of the Afghan Insurgents” Memorandum dated 26 December 1979. National Foreign Assessment Center, Asian Branch, Regional Analysis Division, Office of Strategic Research. CIA-RDP81B00401R000600140009-5.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Intelligence Memorandum, “The Afghan Insurgents and Pakistan: Problems for Islamabad and Moscow”, dated January 1980. National Foreign Assessment Center. CIA-RDP81B00401R000600140008-6.

prove themselves in battle, provided a path to status distinct from old ways, i.e., land ownership. Newly captured weapons and a common enemy meant that a man could establish his place within society quickly, instead of spending a lifetime accumulating wealth and prestige through more traditional methods.¹⁹³

Unfortunately, these conditions also led to a breakdown in law. As new groups appeared in response to Kabul's heavy handed tactics and the Soviet presence, demand for weapons increased. The result was an essentially criminal enterprise on the Pakistan border, run by newly minted commanders controlling separate valleys. A CIA paper from just after the Soviet invasion assessed the “fractious exile groups” as ungoverned, where no single leader had sufficiently broad legitimacy to control the others. Arms distribution was decentralized and based on many factors, from family ties to operational need to simple price pressures; yet there was a “low level of capable individuals for actual governance,” all having “small guerrilla capability” but without any sort of coordination.¹⁹⁴ This kept the insurgents from launching major attacks; it also gave Kabul and Moscow dozens of problems instead of a single one. The report emphasized that “exile groups are likely to continue their infighting and probably will have no more than a marginal effect on the course of the insurgency unless Pakistan takes the lead in trying to unite or at minimum increase the coordination among the diverse groups.”¹⁹⁵ Through the ISI, with CIA and Saudi money, and Chinese weapons, this is exactly what would happen.

¹⁹³ Liebel, Vern. “Pushtuns, Tribalism, Leadership, Islam, and Taliban: A Short View”. *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol 18, No 3, 492-510, September 2007. pp 496-502.

¹⁹⁴ CIA Intelligence Brief “Afghan Exile Groups Based in Pakistan”, dated 9 January 1980. National Foreign Assessment Center. CIA-RDP81B00401R000600160008-4. pp 1-3.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

Chapter 11: The Covert Western Response

The American response to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan was to massively fund and equip an insurgency already in progress and based in the Pashtun areas along the southern border with Pakistan. This was done with heavy Pakistani involvement, and to a large extent was directed by parts of the Pakistani military intelligence apparatus, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI). From the American side, it was conducted almost completely via the Central Intelligence Agency, which negotiated the supply with Saudi funding and Pakistani support.

The supply of weapons was not limited to direct external sources, especially prior to the “pipeline” that would develop in the mid 1980s. A CIA study written in the early days of the insurgency noted that many of the weapons insurgents used came from years of military buildup. Mutinies within the Afghan military were a huge source: “Although the Afghan tribesman are able to purchase weapons and ammunition in Pakistan, most of their military supplies were either in their hands before the insurgency began or have been obtained – through desertions and capture – from the Afghan military.”¹⁹⁶ The same study continued to assess the insurgency as homegrown and supported, in what is clearly the beginning stages, before it reached the levels it did in 1984 and 1985. External support significantly increased as the years dragged on and the Soviets used more aggressive tactics.

This CIA study must be taken with a bit of skepticism, however. It was written in the first few weeks following the invasion and western access was limited. It also makes the claim that “Islamabad would have difficulty controlling the supply of arms to the insurgents from

¹⁹⁶ CIA Document “The Afghan Insurgents and Pakistan: Problems for Islamabad and Moscow” Intelligence Memorandum, published by National Foreign Assessment Center, CIA. January 1980. pp 1-2. CIA-RDP81B00401R000600140008-6.

Pakistan,”¹⁹⁷ and that most of the weapons were from private dealers; this was an odd observation given the rise of anti-Indian, Kashmiri, and Pathan (Pashtun) tribes that Pakistan had been cultivating for decades. Lacking the industrial capacity or nuclear capabilities of India, Pakistan had attempted to ensure that any serious Indian action would be met with a bloody asymmetric response. There are hints at this when it is acknowledged in the assessment that China would likely funnel weapons to insurgents,¹⁹⁸ although does not speculate why; it is possible they would support insurgents as a method of checking both the Soviets and India. Border areas, where Pakistani law was weak, were the primary areas for the arms trade. However, this trade was enabled by Pakistan and was considered more an asset than liability.

The year 1979 completely reversed U.S. policy on arms transfers as stated in PD-13 less than three years before. The Carter Administration offered Pakistan \$400 million in military aid – famously rejected by General Zia as “peanuts”. According to Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha, some within the Pakistani military government believed that Zia had possibly manipulated the Afghanistan situation so as to take advantage of Cold War concerns. Although firm evidence to support this is lacking, it is nonetheless plausible: Zia had postponed the signing of a 1978 agreement with Daoud, and was well aware of the factional nature of Afghanistan's political system.¹⁹⁹

Records on the details of the transfer are still not public, though the larger framework is known. The total U.S. aid package was increased to \$3.2 billion, half of which was military aid. Based on previous patterns of arms transfers, it is reasonable to assume that the bulk went to sophisticated weapons systems or modernization items – tanks parts, aircraft (or the promise of

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 3.

¹⁹⁹ Siddiqa-Agha, p 92.

them – in this case, a small fleet of F-16s), and so on.²⁰⁰ By this time, Pakistan had developed some ability to produce simpler weapons systems, from grenades to portable artillery, though still not at the scale to meet its needs.

The SIPRI register from 1975 touches only on major weapons systems and platforms yet runs several pages, and lists a surprising number of suppliers. The majority of the big ticket items came from the UK and the U.S., throughout a twenty-five year period (1950-1975).²⁰¹ SIPRI sources cited elsewhere from the subsequent two decades (to include the crucial 1980s) showed something different: a near total reliance on the U.S. as a source. The weapons platforms ranged from the very large – destroyers, frigates, and three Boeing 707 aircraft – to 250 Stinger MANPADS and various infantry portable artillery.²⁰² By this point in Pakistan's military development, the Pakistan Ordnance Factories had been able to create a scalable small arms production model. Here the shift from small arms recipient to small arms producer (with western factory equipment) and small arms conduit started to become apparent.

This was overt assistance, and could clearly be interpreted as effectively payment for Pakistan's assistance in arming the Afghan *mujahideen*. Clearly none of the naval assets it received and few air platforms could be utilized by Afghans fighting in the mountains; these items certainly had nothing to do with defending against the Soviets. They did, however, serve the Pakistani military goal of balancing against India. Much of the Pakistani buildup is listed in “Pakistan’s Arms Procurement Procurement and Military Buildup, 1979-1999: In Search of a Policy” (Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha) and is clearly focused on its perennial Indian concern.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, p 94-97.

²⁰¹ The Arms Trade Registers, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The MIT Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts. 1975. pp 32-40.

²⁰² Siddiqa-Agha, p 96-97.

Even if it was not intended for the Pakistan Army, the bulk of the aid granted to Pakistan naturally went to its military. As might be expected, this increased the relative influence as compared to the civilian leadership. Pakistan inherited the British concept of a bureaucratic civil service, but both as an institution and a source of leadership, the military continued to reign. While this created civilian resentment, they could do little about it. Attempts to place controls on the funds were futile; money and weapons were flowing through and to the military, not to the civilian leadership. Worse for the Americans, however, was that in addition to the corruption that kept aid for the military was that even when some did reach the insurgents, it was a far smaller amount and bought far worse weapons than intended. Reports from Peshawar in 1984 claimed that “between one third and one half was diverted by Pakistan, which was widely accused of keeping the best weaponry for itself and giving the resistance its obsolescent equipment”. Western estimates were more optimistic, claiming that perhaps 10 percent, or at most 30 percent, of the funds and weapons failed to reach its intended recipients.²⁰³

This was exacerbated by the way that the Pakistani military and political leadership viewed Afghanistan. Zia saw the Pathan/Pashtun population as both “belonging” to Pakistan as well as a useful method of providing “strategic depth” to conventional Pakistani forces in any future existential conflict with India.²⁰⁴ That a large portion of this population resided in Afghanistan did not appear to be a concern to Islamabad; they incubated the same sort of fundamentalist Islamic militancy there as they did in their own territory, and cared little what Kabul felt. After all, historically Afghanistan wanted a combined “Pashtunistan”, so turning this situation to Pakistan's advantage was not considered off limits.

²⁰³ Bradsher, pp 220-221.

²⁰⁴ Siddiqa-Agha, pp 100-102.

Arms meant for the tribal fighters came through Pakistan through a complicated, inefficient, but nonetheless effective network. The route was well known enough: from Karachi, the arms were moved via rail to an arms depot owned by the Pakistani ISI at Ojhri Camp in Rawalpindi. After minimal sorting, they were placed in trucks and brought over the border to Afghanistan by road – not really a secret route. This was also hardly the only one. What was not on trucks was on the back of pack animals, which traveled over well-known trails in the mountainous Afghan-Pakistani border region. While visible, there were simply enough weapons and ammunition in motion to escape any sort of real curtailment. Chivers notes that rifles and ammunition was a fairly hefty ten thousand *tons* in 1983 (equivalent to roughly 150 modern American tractor trailer loads), increasing to an astonishing sixty-five thousand tons in 1987.²⁰⁵ Such numbers are staggering and indicative of the scale of the problem facing “legitimate” authorities – an open question when the government is actively abdicating its monopoly on violence. As would be evident shortly after the exit of Soviet forces, the groups that exercised violence in the name of their particular ideologies may have seen the Russian and Afghan communists as the larger danger, but they did not recognize even Pakistan's nominally Islamic government as exempt.

Early in the insurgency Soviet troops attempted to interdict arms imports; on the signed order for deployment of the Soviet 40th Army to Afghanistan was the need to “render assistance to friendly Afghanistan in the struggle against the counterrevolution” and that it was “necessary to cut off the flow of weapons, ammunition, and equipment from Pakistan and Iran.”²⁰⁶ Clearly this was impossible; when threatened, insurgents simply withdrew into Pakistan, where the bulk

²⁰⁵ Chivers, p 362.

²⁰⁶ Bradsher, pp 91-92.

of the trade existed anyway. The routes used by early insurgents were paths already used for other sorts of smuggling – illegal logging, the opium trade, etc – or weapons were openly transported via main roads. Later, the CIA helped develop routes less prone to monitoring or interception by Soviet aircraft, after which insurgents had a better idea of how to evade modern search techniques.²⁰⁷

The first American shipment of small arms was only weeks after the Soviet invasion and was by some measure quite laughable in comparison to the modern weapons the Soviets carried. The Americans shipped mostly British Enfield .303 rifles, mainly because anything else may have appeared too obviously foreign. It arrived at the border on 10 January 1980. Within a year, military aid from the United States alone was approximately \$60 million and combined with aid from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and China – all working through Pakistan's ISI. Soviet rifles from Egypt were sold covertly to America and then to Pakistan to distribute to Afghan fighters, while Israel gladly offloaded hundreds of tons of Soviet materiel it had captured from Lebanon. On the battlefield, this would be indistinguishable from the weapons the *mujahideen* captured from government forces and foreign troops.²⁰⁸

Once Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency, aid money increased substantially and the flow changed from surplus equipment gathered from around the Middle East to what would become the main supplier: China. In late 1982, the Reagan administration began supplying other light weapons, such as bazookas/RPGs and packable mortars, grenade launchers, and land mines. Almost everything came from China, whose equipment often mirrored that Soviets.²⁰⁹ While the

²⁰⁷ "Prospects for Closing the Afghan-Pakistani Border: An Intelligence Assessment" National Foreign Assessment Center, 8 July 1981. GW National Security Archive, CIADOC_0000515451.

²⁰⁸ Bradsher, pp 215-216.

²⁰⁹ Ibid. pp 217-218.

origin of the weapons was an open secret by the middle of the decade, using Soviet and Chinese weapons did two things: first, they gave the U.S. Government a certain degree of plausible deniability; second, they created a consistent set of operating and maintenance guidelines for the Afghan fighters, important in a place where far more people were illiterate than not.

The domestic U.S. debate illustrated policymakers' level of awareness regarding American support. Indeed, as much as any intelligence document could, congressional testimony indicated the ways in which Afghanistan and Pakistan were given special attention. An unclassified cable from CIA and the State Department to appropriate embassies in South Asia explained how significantly Pakistan (and by extension arms and training for Afghan rebels) factored into U.S. government budget considerations. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Howard Schaffer and OSD representative John Stempel testified before the Subcommittee on Foreign Relations, House Appropriations Committee on April 12, 1984, and gave some surprising numbers. Aid to the region was approximately seven percent of all U.S. foreign aid (military and economic); the greatest share, about \$630 million, went to Pakistan. The testimony notes that "the Pakistan program involves a number of special considerations," and that "the driving force behind the design and mix of our assistance program is our perception that a stable Pakistan...can serve as an anchor for the entire region...conversely, an unstable, insecure Pakistan adds to regional tensions and invites outside interference." This is immediately followed by discourse on Afghanistan, and the need "to persuade the Soviets that further aggression would entail an unacceptable cost."²¹⁰ This is barely coded language for the not-very-covert arms shipments that the CIA was paying for, channeled through the Pakistani military.

²¹⁰ CIA Document, Cable Abridged Transcript of NEA Testimony to HAC on South Asia Foreign Assistance Program, State Cable 84-3909184 reproduced as CIA-RDP90B01370R000801040026-1.

Toward the close of 1984 and beginning of 1985, there were already signs that the massive support for the insurgents had become somewhat self sustaining. A CIA yearly summary of the conflict in Afghanistan dated 20 December 1984 noted that there were 150,000 insurgents who had come from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border with about 30,000 to 40,000 additional insurgents per year.²¹¹ This mostly agrees with a Soviet estimate cited in Bradsher, which estimated that by the beginning of 1986 there were 150,000 active mujahideen. The more surprising metric is that these were distributed among approximately 1300 distinct groups.²¹²

CIA involvement and reporting by this point was far more extensive than it was in 1980, and the reports indicate the power that the insurgents were able to bring to the fight, especially when each could be counted on to be armed with a rifle. In the beginning of the war this could have meant an old Lee-Enfield or even a Mosin-Nagant, both comparatively ancient weapons from Russian and British imperial days that were becoming difficult to keep supplied with ammunition. The best estimates note that rifles and ammunition for the mujahideen in the first year came mostly from captures and desertions – as high as 80 percent – but that this dropped to 35 percent within four years.²¹³ By then, most fighters were equipped with captured Russian Kalashnikovs or with Chinese Type 56 copies. This improvement in small arms eroded Soviet advantages in firepower, especially in an extremely rugged environment where the overwhelming conventional superiority of the Soviet Army could not be exploited.

It is important to note that from the insurgents' perspective, this was almost a wholly small arms war, with few sophisticated systems available. While not allowing for tactical or

²¹¹ CIA Document "Afghanistan: Glimmerings of Soviet Discomfort – 1984" dated 20 December 1984, pp 1-3. CIA-RDP86M00886R001300140002-4

²¹² Bradsher, pp 206-207.

²¹³ Ibid, p 208.

operational parity, these weapons allowed a far greater number of people to engage in violence than could previously. Clearly the United States' goal was to use various groups in the border region to drive out the Soviets through a protracted defensive war. And this was achieved, to be sure; however, it was also true that violence was used to settle local disputes, sometimes with much greater frequency than to drive out the Soviets. The state put in place by the Soviet Union lacked the capacity or legitimacy to act outside of the cities, and Afghanistan was and is an overwhelmingly rural place. Michael Bhatia notes that “the absence of a state able to act as an arbiter accountable in local disputes allows the commander to acquire community legitimacy in exchange for protection.”²¹⁴ As reflected the fracturing authority structures during the late Daoud era, keeping track of and focusing the various groups fighting the Soviets was difficult. It was also difficult to keep them from fighting each other, to the point where often it was not attempted as long as eventually someone got around to also fighting the Soviet 40th Army.

When the Soviets withdrew, for the most part so did American assistance. Though he did not live to see it concluded, Zia was unhappy with the proposed terms of the Geneva accord since it limited Pakistan's ability to establish a regime in Kabul that would be friendly to Pakistan. He pressed the military to make the insurgents in Afghanistan a part of future military planning, anticipating a conflict with India in which the asymmetric warfare style in Afghanistan could be used again. GHQ followed suit, something that Pakistan's benefactors in Washington did not support.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ Bhatia, p. 11.

²¹⁵ Siddiqa-Agha, pp 100-101.

Chapter 12: The Afghan Army, Lessons of Arming a Weak State, and Effects on Policy

Through each decade from 1950 through 1990, arms transfers by the two superpowers were more or less at parity with each other. A table produced by Stohl and Grissot from data in the SIPRI Arms Transfers Database indicated that the two superpowers distributed to Less Developed Countries (LDCs) roughly equal dollar values of arms, save for two anomalies – first in 1950 and again in 1980, corresponding to the expansion of the Eastern Bloc, and later to the establishment of the Soviet-supported Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.²¹⁶ The Eastern Bloc was accompanied by a prolonged Soviet presence, while South Asia was not; the Eastern Bloc's security priorities were effectively replaced with Soviet ones, while South Asian priorities were not. A generic analysis of the situation might proceed as follows: LDCs have modern industrial weapons, imported from donor states who often train the at-first friendly local military, but the local power brokers pursue their own set of security and political policies rather than play the intended part in the Cold War. In the particular case of South Asia, the effect is that not only did the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries – mainly the United States and USSR – fail to achieve their policy goals or gain any lasting political influence, but to a lesser or greater degree the local social and political structure collapsed as well.

Most work on this area has focused on dollar equivalent amounts of aid, which shifts the focus toward large weapons platforms. In actuality, the most transformational sort of military aid was small arms and light weapons that came overwhelmingly from communist donor states and frequently at little cost. The abundance of Kalashnikov type weapons made use of anything else a less worthwhile gamble for client states – or anyone fighting them but who lacked an

²¹⁶ Stohl and Grillot, p 21.

indigenous industrial production capability. The Afghan Army had been supplied Kalashnikovs by the Soviet Union, but many of these weapons were subsequently captured or turned over by deserters. Later, arms were purchased by the thousands from China by the CIA and the Saudi government, and shipped to Karachi. Ammunition came along with it by the ton; in fact, so much ammunition piled up at Rawalpindi, and so little care was taken with its condition, that the depot exploded in 1988.²¹⁷ This was just a knot in the bark: Chivers quotes a source describing the distribution to a tree, with the roots in Karachi, and not branching out until they passed the border – after which the branches were so numerous and widespread that they could never all be accounted for.²¹⁸

Such ubiquity led to an economic phenomenon whereby individual Kalashnikovs became so cheap that (according to CJ Chivers in *The Gun*) by the end of the conflict they sold for at or below cost; in local terms, this was about twelve thousand Pakistani rupees, equivalent to about US\$200, most of which was transport costs. These were from surplus stocks in Eastern Europe, with Romania or Hungary as prime sources, often at half that price, and because they were produced in numbers that far exceeded the military needs of those nations, they were often in completely unused condition.²¹⁹ The abundance also meant that the distribution, reliant as it was on so many third parties, was haphazard. Many weapons did not go to legitimate state-controlled fighters, but instead to civilians who self organized against the Soviets or whomever they believed to be the enemy at the moment. This led to multiple factions fighting for dominance, criminality, and resistance to state authority. This could be ignored when the state was considered “the primary enemy,” but would prove problematic later.

²¹⁷ Chivers, p 362.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid, p 385-387.

The effects of these transfers were of course well known. The U.S. Departments of Defense and State were both aware that the influx of weapons would significantly and negatively affect the region, exacerbating local conflict and preventing civilian governance from becoming dominant (or sometimes even relevant). The [previously cited] Controlling Local Conflict report used sixteen case studies from a twenty year period following the Second World War. It noted two important trends: First, even when states had the capacity to establish, or had already established, a domestic arms production industry, they *still* imported arms. Second, the greater degree of “partiality” – that is, an external actor (especially a great power actor) giving support, the more difficult it is to prevent or later terminate the conflict.²²⁰

Furthermore, often the conflicts had a civil component, most notably in Afghanistan. The report found that internal conflicts are much harder to control than interstate conflicts. Weapons, small arms especially, are problematic because they have extraordinary longevity and are easily transferred. In many conflicts, especially where everyone is using similar weapons (common in internal conflicts and the rule in South Asia), the issue of arms capture means that transfers are not of a voluntary nature, but still happen to a significant enough degree to make a difference. Also, ceasefires and restrictions are often ineffectual, even counterproductive, since they do not resolve the actual dispute and simply give time for rearmament.²²¹

These conflicts caused significant disruption to existing governing structures. For the sake of expediency and owing to the unity created by martial contexts, military leaders wrested control of communities for supposedly short term needs. As time and conflict went on,

²²⁰ “The Control of Local Conflict: A Design Study on Arms Control and Limited War in the Developing Areas. Summary Report, ACDA/WEC-98, Volume II. Prepared for the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.” June 30, 1967. USGPO. P 10.

²²¹ *Ibid*, pp 11-15.

commanders replaced elders and religious leaders as authority figures; the legitimacy of Islam, the *qawm*, the village, or the state was replaced by the ability of the local militia or warlord faction to protect its territory. The proliferation of small arms had the various disruptive effects, but the most notable ones aside from an increase in general violence is the empowering of a new elite class that was not from the traditional religious and tribal institutions, extending the influence of military commanders to new economic and political spheres, and allowing strongmen (warlords) to replace community elders as legitimate authorities. Additionally, all the money that was involved in moving arms, narcotics, and enabling corruption destroyed existing patronage networks and systems, created new ones, or twisted them toward less broadly meaningful ends.²²²

Whether it was the single minded national policy of Pakistan or a thousand different groups fighting for dominance, military or paramilitary power was used toward the objectives at the local level. In Pakistan, this led to bouts of military dictatorship that taints politics even today, and to a much closer relationship between Pakistan and China than any American administration would ever be comfortable with. Across the border in Afghanistan, the outcome was shocking. The many factions within the resistance were, if anything, far worse than those in the Afghan Army. Various *mujahideen* groups, especially the well known ones [to get their own acronym] such as HiG (under Hekmatyar Gulbeddin), HQN (Haqqani Network), Sayyaf, etc. tortured and killed political enemies and kept prison camps in their refugee areas.²²³ The ability to do this without widespread revolt indicated that, within the southern Pashtun belt at least, they held far more legitimate authority than the central government in Kabul.

²²² Ibid, pp 14-15.

²²³ Bradsher, p 328-330.

To say that the West had been aware of its own failures is certainly true, and the lessons of arming weak states and what this actually achieved were not new ones; this was not an idea borne only out of hindsight twenty years after. Unfortunately, any open acknowledgment that military aid upended legitimate authority while failing to achieve policy objectives was too much to expect in donor states. If Moscow dumped more resources into the war merely to save face and support a nominally revolutionary government, the other side was driven by myth. Congress was afraid of seeming weak on Communism, and the public saw a heroic vision of Afghan freedom fighters. Yet the debate was ongoing during the 1980s while the trade was still happening.

Initially any support to Afghanistan using Pakistan as a middleman was seen as possibly embarrassing for West and East alike. Multiple resolutions were blocked in both the U.S. House and Senate from 1982 to 1984, preventing any “effective material assistance” to Afghanistan. This changed; by 1984, the fact of American funded external sources for arms was an open secret, and was more publicly debated in the U.S. Congress. A Congressional Quarterly Foreign Policy Note commented on the legislation before both the Senate and House Foreign Affairs committees: the resolutions, Senate Continuing Resolution 74 and House Continuing Resolution 237, were written to give room for Executive maneuver in provision of aid. The commentary indicated a certain level of understanding between administration and the Congress; the language was carefully crafted to allow for maximum flexibility, such that the administration was not compelled to do anything it did not want to, and the Congress was not compelled to pay for anything it did not want to. It also took care to tread lightly in dealing with Pakistan, whom it

was depending on to deliver arms and training.²²⁴

Even the public was tuned toward the war and how “right” of a decision it was to help the Afghan resistance. On ABC's “This Week with David Brinkley” on 28 October 1984, Brinkley asked Stansfield Turner and William Colby, two former directors of the CIA, difficult questions about the legality and ethics of giving Afghans so many weapons. Turner replied directly: “Yes, I believe it is ethical to give them guns.”²²⁵ This appeared to reflect the mood in 1984.

Fundamentally this showed that the United States on all levels believed that arms transfers and other forms of aid were effective at achieving broad foreign policy goals. Very narrowly, if the policy is to “kill Russians”, it was possibly effective, though the data show that it was far more effective at killing Afghans – mujahideen, government forces, and civilians alike. Through the various Indo-Pakistan wars, during the Soviet invasion, and even after it, U.S. administrations had been unable to positively change local policy toward reducing defense spending (over the long term), reduce conflict, or reduce the influence from communist countries. Indeed, all three things military aid was supposed to attenuate happened or became worse.

Along with the massive military aid must have come some policy ideas. In 1988, Zia ul-Haq envisioned the end of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and stated that Pakistan had “earned the right to have a very friendly regime there...we won't permit it to be like it was before, with Indian and Soviet influence there and claims on our territory.”²²⁶ It is not clear that Pakistan has seen the failure of this policy either. Zia did not; he died in a suspicious plane crash in

²²⁴ “Foreign Policy Note”, Congressional Quarterly Sept 29, 1984. Page 2403. Reproduced by CIA without comments as CIA-RDP95B00895R000300060014-2.

²²⁵ CIA Annotated transcript of “ABC This Week with David Brinkley”, dated 28 Oct 1984. CIA-RDP91-00901R000500060005-5, p 7.

²²⁶ Bradsher, p 320. Excerpted from a longer block quote.

August 1988 along with two dozen other high ranking military and civilian staff.

In 1969, the Secretary of State, William P. Rogers, wrote a memorandum to the Office of the President that stated that, given the events of 1965, it may be more prudent to reduce the United States' commitment to South Asia and remain distant from it, especially with regards to weapons sales. Indeed, Rogers wrote, "...having gotten out of the arms business in South Asia, we would do well to stay out." It was ignored.²²⁷ The effects of this were evident in early 1970s, again in the 1980s, and in somewhat different but no less violent ways in the late 1990s and 2000s. South Asia remains one of the least secure, least governed places in the world, where the question of legitimate authority is still being worked out – with words and with firepower.

²²⁷ Memorandum to the President: "U.S. Military Sales Policy for India and Pakistan", signed by William P. Rogers, dated July 9 1969. p 3.

Conclusions

It may appear obvious that small arms transfers do not result in increased security for either the donor or recipient state. One might expect, then, that the huge number of weapons that were amassed following the Second World War would have remained in national stockpiles. Instead, they ended up in practically every dusty corner of the world, far from their point of origin and with little connection to their original purpose. The donors did not give hundreds of thousands of fighter jets, or hundreds of thousands of tanks; they gave hundreds of thousands of small arms, knowing that wars were still fought primarily by armies on land, which meant men with guns.

Major Cold War powers continued to produce millions of weapons after the War, leading to a cycle of production and obsolescence that rapidly led to an extreme surplus. This surplus was distributed to states to obtain diplomatic leverage and to create a series of strategic backstops in key regions. The more that were produced, the more were distributed. The increasing tensions of the early Cold War period had a feedback effect, especially when conflicts were no longer confined to a single theater; Korea was just as much fair ground as was Eastern Europe. So it was with South Asia.

If the original purpose was to keep armies supplied in a potential war against Cold War adversaries, this purpose was never fulfilled. Even if the conflicts in South Asia could be viewed as part of a larger Cold War struggle – which is in any case problematical – the more immediate effects were a rapid disruption of civilian governance and a shift of power that ultimately affected both donor and recipient in very negative ways. The South Asian states of Afghanistan and Pakistan became inarguably less secure from both external adversaries and internal security

concerns. Against the interests or advice of its western patrons, Pakistan experienced fits of military dictatorship, initiated three wars with its eastern neighbor and lost all of them, never achieving its goal of gaining territory.

The superpower competition also led to a forced binary split in relations. Diplomatically, countries were divided between pro-West and pro-Soviet states. The idea of allies became confused, as in reality states tended to pursue their own security interests. India and Pakistan both paid lip service to the Cold War dynamics, but far more important to their governments was how they could position themselves against the other. Afghanistan, on the other hand, was merely trying to maintain its sovereignty.

Attempts at limiting the flow of arms through embargoes and legislative measures in the West simply meant that they came from a different source, and the flow continued unabated. Embargoes were subverted or worked around to fit the strategic need of the moment, but also because no other diplomatic tool seemed to have the same value with the recipient state. In the case of Pakistan, free weapons made it a military with a state instead of a state with a military.

Afghanistan became further dependent on two competing powers – the United States and the Soviet Union – and was susceptible to constant influence by its southern neighbor. Additionally, the notoriously fractious internal politics of Afghanistan were exacerbated to the point of anarchy, allowing internal factions to make war on each other in ways they had not since before their 1919 independence. Rather than strengthening the state or allowing it to become a military dictatorship, ethnic and regional divisions and a history of internal political isolation combined with the very tools needed to upset existing power structures and create near lawlessness. Who was in charge became a question of who could field more guns, and legitimacy

was tied directly to the ability to effect violence. And like in Pakistan, attempts at limiting the constant stream of modern twentieth century small arms resulted in only redirection, rather than any sort of halt.

India, perhaps once truly non-aligned but transformed into a de facto client state with the USSR by Cold War posturing, was possibly the only state to escape the cycle. Armed with the population and industry to protect itself against its closest major threat (Pakistan), and distant enough from a dangerous competitor (China), India was able to successfully fight defensive wars against less able adversaries and refrained from overextending its military in ill-advised conflicts. Still, it was also both player and conduit in the South Asian arms trade, receiving from the Soviets and giving to the nascent state of Bangladesh.

The flow of “surplus” weapons from industrial to non-industrial states, and subsequently to non-state actors, enabled both conventional war between nation states and “people's war” against existing authorities – that is, insurgencies. In previous eras, states were limited by the ability to procure arms and train fighters. The real innovation of the new age was the production and distribution system created in a wartime environment, combined with a new paranoia about the world order. Thus, the post-World War II era saw the removal of such limitations: South Asia, and Afghanistan and Pakistan in particular, gained the benefits of industrialized war without actually industrializing. Yet “benefits” is used here with some irony. The regimes may have acquired weapons for essentially nothing, but nothing is the real gain, as neither the Pakistan nor Afghan state could be said to be more legitimate or stable because of it. Pakistan's government is no more legitimate in the frontier provinces than the local malik, and Afghanistan remained under the thumb of competing warlords.

China became Pakistan's supplier after American refusals to support its regional objectives. Though it greatly upset the United States government, it proved that Pakistani concerns trumped those of its previous donors. These supplies also had a second order effect as Pakistan turned around and became a supplier as well as recipient of the one thing it could produce in quantity: small arms. Pakistan as supplier started as a security hedge against possible Indian invasion. However, they used the same model when the United States asked them to train and equip the Afghan insurgency.

This turned out to be a bad idea, as the insurgents also did not particularly care for Cold War objectives, but were instead fighting a very local conflict with what they perceived to be an illegitimate government and foreign invaders. That they did not have broad national legitimacy was also not a consideration, demonstrating the inability to consider what would happen following hostilities.

The contradiction between supplying weapons to states and expecting conflict reduction was not a new one. Security assistance promised to provide security, when in reality it often intensified local conflicts. Not long after the 1965 war, the Departments of Defense and State had data and analysis to tell them precisely this. They found that of most conflicts they examined, "high commitments of will and resources by conflict adversaries tend to go with continued hostilities."²²⁸ The expectation was, of course, that the client states would fight the donors' wars. In reality, they fought their own.

I am reminded of an experience that happened in October 2009 at the Kabul Airport. A friend's flight had been changed without notice and he needed three hundred US dollars in cash

²²⁸ "The Control of Local Conflict: A Design Study on Arms Control and Limited War in the Developing Areas. Summary Report, ACDA/WEC-98, Volume I. Prepared for the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency." Jun 30, 1967. USGPO. p. 11.

to catch the next plane to Dubai. I was stopped at the airport by an Afghan police officer. I had an ISAF badge that usually meant I was not to be stopped. In a mix of Dari and English, I began to argue the point, trying to get to my friend. The argument was stopped short by the officer's very casual statement: *In-am Afghanistan, e Kalashnikov daram.* (“This is Afghanistan, and I have a Kalashnikov.”) If ever there was a statement that illustrated who was “right”, it was this one.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

CENTO: Central Treaty Organization. Membership included Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, and UK.

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency (US)

FAL/FN FAL: Fusil Automatique Léger ("Light Automatic Rifle"), made by Fabrique Nationale

GDR: German Democratic Republic; East Germany (DDR in German)

GHQ: General Headquarters. In the South Asian context, akin to the U.S. Pentagon.

GOA/GOI/GOP: Government of Afghanistan / India / Pakistan (respectively)

H&K: Heckler and Koch, GmbH. German arms manufacturer.

ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence. Main intelligence agency of Pakistan.

KGB: "Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti" The main intelligence/security apparatus of the USSR.

LDC: Less Developed Country

MANPADS: Man Portable Air Defense System

MAP: Military Assistance Program

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NEA: Near East Affairs (bureau within U.S. Department of State)

NWFP: Northwest Frontier Province (PK)

OSD: Office of the Secretary of Defense (US)

PAF: Pakistan-Afghanistan Affairs. Issue Desk at State Department

PDPA: People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan

PLA: People's Liberation Army (specifically, the Chinese Army)

POF: Pakistan Ordnance Factories

SEATO: Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. Membership included the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, France, Pakistan, Thailand, and the Philippines.

SIPRI: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

STEN: An extremely basic submachine gun able to be made from low quality materials; acronym derivation: Shepherd and Harold Turpin, ENgland.

SKS: *Samozaryadnyj Karabin sistemy Simonova*, a widely distributed Soviet semiautomatic carbine

SSR: Soviet Socialist Republic. Many component states of the USSR were, in theory, independent.

UNSCR: United Nations Security Council Resolution

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

USG: United States Government

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