The Role of Pakistan in the War Against Terrorism (A)

Defining Terrorism

The quest for a satisfactory definition of terrorism, described by Nicholas J Perry as the search for the 'Holy Grail', is one pursued by law and various other branches of the social sciences. To define terrorism, however, assumes that such a phenomenon exists. As a concept, terrorism has oscillated in meaning, reflecting ideas contextually specific to the time period and location to which it is being applied. Many etymological studies of the origins of terrorism trace the term back to the aftermath of the French Revolution and Maximilien Robespierre's 'reign of terror' between 1792 and 1794.

The Oxford English Dictionary first mentions the word 'terrorism' in 1795, shortly after this violent period, and today the Oxford English Dictionary still starts its definition of terrorism with this 'at once too literal and too historical' definition. As a result, this definition is, according to Bruce Hoffmann, not 'of much use' when trying to understand the concept of terrorism. Terrorism has deviated from this original meaning of State-sponsored violence designed to induce fear and terror in order to control and dominate an otherwise anarchical society, to describe the exact opposite: political violence directed against the State.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, terrorism was often used to refer to anarchists, particularly following the assassination of US President William McKinley in 1901 by Leon Czolgosz—a self-confessed anarchist. At the same time, in Europe terrorism was gaining its connection with 'freedom fighters' as a result of renewed struggles for Irish independence from Britain using tactics such as bombings, assassination techniques and guerrilla warfare. This evolution from State-sponsored to State-targeted terrorism was not linear, however; in the 1930s, terrorism again became associated with State-sponsored violence due to the rise of violent, authoritarian regimes in Italy, Spain and Nazi Germany.

Following the end of World War II and the decline of the European empires, terrorism again became linked with freedom fighters and the violent methods used by various anti-colonialist groups seeking self-determination. Today, these two issues of whether States can commit terrorism, and whether one can distinguish the terrorist from the freedom fighter struggling against an oppressive regime are the fundamental problems afflicting attempts to provide a definition of terrorism in international law. For this course following definition of terrorism will be used "*The unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims*". For more details please see **International and Comparative Law Quarterly, Volume 66, Issue 2.**

How War Against Terrorism Started

On the morning of September 11, 2001, 19 terrorists hijacked four planes at Boston's Logan airport. They chose planes headed for the West Coast because they would be loaded with fuel. They planned to cripple the U.S. economy by destroying three centers of power: Wall Street, the Pentagon, and the White House. The first two planes hit their targets. American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into Tower One of the World Trade Center at 8:46 a.m. United Airlines Flight 175 crashed into Tower Two at 9:03 a.m. At 10:05 a.m., millions of television viewers saw Tower Two collapse. Tower one collapsed from the top down at 10:28 a.m. Tower Seven collapsed at 5:20 p.m.

American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon at 9:37 a.m. Portions of the building collapsed at 10:10 a.m. United Airlines Flight 93 never made it to its target, the White House. At 9:23 a.m., after the World Trade Tower crash, dispatcher Ed Ballinger texted all flights he was following, including Flight 93. He said, "Beware any cockpit intrusion two a/c hit World Trade Center." Five minutes later, the terrorists killed the pilots and took control of the plane. By that time, at least 10 of the passengers had talked to loved ones via cell phone. They heard about the World Trade Tower attacks and figured out their likely fate. At 9:57, the brave passengers attacked the terrorists. Flight 93 crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania at 10:03 a.m., killing all 30 people aboard.

On September 20, 2001, President Bush called for a War on Terror. He said, "Americans should not expect one battle but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen." Then he put it into action. Bush launched the War in Afghanistan to find and bring to justice Osama bin Laden. He was the head of the al-Qaida organization that launched the 9/11 attacks. In its first year, Congress appropriated $29.3 billion in emergency funding for the war. On March 21, 2003, President Bush sent troops into Iraq. He said the Central Intelligence Agency had found weapons of mass destruction. He added that Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein, was aiding al-Qaida operatives. Congress appropriated $36.7 billion in emergency funding for the War in Iraq in its first year.

The 9/11 incident had strong connections with Cold War conflicts during the 1980s. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 to halt the fundamentalist rebellion against the Kabul regime and forestall the possibility of western involvement in the civil war. At the same time another great change occurred across the western border of Pakistan, where a revolution ousted the Shah of Iran. The cumulative effect of these historic events at Pakistan's doorstep was an upsurge of terrorism in its many manifestations in the country.

It is generally believed that the main reason for the growth of terrorism in Pakistan was the involvement of the US in Afghanistan in the 1980s. The border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan had been turned into a base camp in the war against the Soviet Union. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) trained Arabs, Afghans and Pakistani militants were organized to fight against the "infidel" and assisted the operations of

the Mujahideen from the Jihadi components in the tribal areas of Pakistan. They established a very large secret infrastructure for training guerillas on the Pak-Afghan border.

After the withdrawal of Soviet Union in 1989, Pakistan assisted in forming an Afghan government in Kabul composed of war lords. But civil war broke out and they were replaced by the Taliban. However, the events of 9/11 changed the whole scenario turning erstwhile Mujahideen into terrorists. As a result the US and its coalition forces invaded Afghanistan and ousted the Taliban from power. The US and coalition forces launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) to save Americans from another 9/11. Pakistan supported and cooperated with the US and the coalition forces in OEF.

Pakistan has also deployed a large number of troops along the Afghanistan border in support of OEF and employed a large portion of its logistical reserves to support the coalition. The Taliban and al Qaeda members, on the other hand, have managed to re-assemble in the tribal areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan. As terrorist activities are increasing, the economy of Pakistan has been sliding downward. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has fallen due to high level of security risk. The cumulative economic impact runs into billions of dollars and Pakistan is likely to continue to suffer as long as there is no peace in Afghanistan.

International Community Response on War on Terror

The international community fully supported strikes on the Taliban. Indeed, over a month after Operation Enduring Freedom began, the Security Council condemned the Taliban "for allowing Afghanistan to be used as a base for the export of terrorism by the al Qaeda network and other terrorist groups and for providing safe haven to Osama Bin Laden, al Qaeda and others associated with them. "The 'war on terror' launched with a broad base of international support and the Northern Alliance ousted the Taliban from power. Germany, France, the Netherlands and a few other countries contributed towards development assistance in Afghanistan

In 2002, strong majorities supported the U.S.-led War on Terror in Britain, France, Germany, Japan, India and Russia, according to a sample survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. By 2006, supporters of the effort were in the minority in Britain (49%), Germany (47%), France (43%) and Japan (26%). Although a majority of Russians still supported the War on Terror, that majority had decreased by 21%. Whereas 63% of Spaniards supported the War on Terror in 2003, only 19% of the population indicated support in 2006. 19% of the Chinese population still supports the War on Terror and less than a fifth of the populations of Turkey, Egypt, as well as Jordan support the efforts. The report also indicated that Indian public support for the War on Terror has been stable.

Andrew Kohut, while speaking to the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, noted that and according to the Pew Research Center polls conducted in 2004, "the ongoing conflict in Iraq continues to fuel anti-American sentiments. America's global popularity plummeted at the start of military action in Iraq and the U.S. presence there remains widely unpopular. Marek

Obrtel, former Lieutenant Colonel in Field Hospital with Czech Republic army, returned his medals which he received during his posting in Afghanistan War for NATO operations. He criticized the War on Terror as describing the mission as "deeply ashamed that I served a criminal organization such as NATO, led by the USA and its perverse interests around the world.