

Saiful Islam\*

## **From Afghan Taliban to Pakistani Taliban: An Analysis of Militancy in Pakistan's Tribal Areas**

### **Abstract**

*The decade long Soviet-Afghan War of the 1980s had turned this region into a hub of militant activities with the repercussion being felt for the last thirty five years. The global support to the Mujahideen encouraged thousands of 'Holy Warriors' from all over the world to wage a holy war against the Soviets. The long and loosely controlled border connecting Afghanistan with Pakistan and the colonial set-up under the FCR (Frontier Crimes Regulation) in the tribal areas turned this region into a safe-haven for the militants. The 9/11 turned those militants (now Taliban) not only against the US but also against the Pakistan army. This paper will focus on the causes of the increased militancy in the Tribal Areas and in the rest of the country.*

**Key words:** Taliban, Al Qaeda, 9/11, FATA, Militancy

### **Introduction**

The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 was a turning point in the Cold War era. It was considered a fatal mistake on the part of Soviet Union to enter a country known as the "Graveyard of Empires." No foreign troops succeeded to subjugate the inhabitants of this land in the past. On the other hand, the United States got this a golden opportunity to make Afghanistan a 'Waterloo' for the Soviet forces and a final blow to its existence. The Vietnam War memories were still fresh in the mind of US leadership and it was a God gifted opportunity to level its business with the Soviets in Afghanistan.

The Soviet-Afghan war of 1980s was not declared a religious war in the beginning by the Afghan and was a liberation struggle of the Afghan to liberate the country from the Soviet Union. It was given the status of 'Holy War' to mobilize people on the spirit of Jihad in the later stage when the US and other actors involved in the war theater. During Zia's rule (1977-88), Pakistan became a frontline state in the war against the Soviet Union. During that time, thousands of Afghan refugees (after the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan in 1979, millions of Afghans left their homes for safe places in the nearest countries- Pakistan and Iran. Those who came to Pakistan were mostly settled in the tribal areas, North West Frontier Province

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\* Dr. Saiful Islam, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Buner, KP. [saifuop@yahoo.com](mailto:saifuop@yahoo.com)

(NWFP) and Balochistan. Most of the refugees were part of the Pakhtun population of Afghanistan) were recruited in Pakistan for Jihad in Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup>

The persistent struggle of the Afghan and support from the US and other states in the war finally compelled the Soviet to withdraw her forces from Afghanistan. This unleashed chaos and Intra-Afghan violence in Afghanistan for capturing Kabul. The Afghan Pakhtun attempted to turn over a new leaf in their history and a major shift in the power structure saw these Pakhtun elements being led by clerics whose credibility had increased by spearheading a successful armed resistance movement against the Soviets.

In the official Taliban history, the movement's genesis is traced back to a humble village in Kandahar province where Mullah Omar was studying. The lawlessness and chaos that descended over Afghanistan with the end of Soviet occupation reached such a depth of iniquity that Mullah Omar and a band of his comrades took up arms in rage to install some law and order. The declared aims of the Taliban were to restore peace, disarm the population and enforce Sharia.<sup>2</sup> These were the reasons which compelled the people to support Mullah Umer at that critical time, boosted their movement and successfully captured one city after another.

At that time, the Taliban movement could hardly be considered a revolutionary one, although they constituted an original movement. They are, in fact, the offspring of two different traditions: charismatic mullahs in tribal societies and the Deobandi madaris network.<sup>3</sup> The vast majority of the Taliban cadres were Pakhtun Afghan refugees that had grown up in the refugee camps in Pakistan. They were imbued with an orthodox religious education in the madaris mostly affiliated with the Deobandi – Wahhabi Pakistani religious organizations. This slanted vision led the Taliban to regard the Kabul government as impious and un-Islamic.<sup>4</sup> There is definitely a conflict of generation between the Taliban and the former tribal aristocracy or ulema's establishment. The only modernity of the Taliban is that they are also a result of the crisis of the traditional Pakhtun society.<sup>5</sup> They were not the traditional ulema who only delivered speeches on Friday. They were not the only prayer leaders (pesh imam) but have a clear vision of an Islamic state of Afghanistan.

### **Taliban and Al Qaeda**

There were many reasons which developed links between the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Soon they developed a mutually beneficial relationship in Afghanistan there. The Taliban provided Bin Laden and his associates with a vast sanctuary for

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<sup>1</sup> Sana Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: A History of Religious Mobilization in the Pakhtun Tribal Areas, C. 1890 – 1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.154.

<sup>2</sup> Olivier Roy, "The Taliban: A Strategic Tool for Pakistan", in Christophe Jaffrelt (ed.), *Pakistan: Nationalism without a nation?* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 2002), p.157.

<sup>3</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan Drift into Extremism- Allah, the Army and America's War on Terro* (Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2005), p.186.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.158.

<sup>5</sup> Devin T. Hagerty, "The United States- Pakistan Entente: Third time's a Charm?", in Craig Baxter (Ed), *Pakistan on the Brink* (New York: Oxford University Press, (2004 ), p.08.

their training camps and other terrorist operations, while Al-Qaeda became the Taliban's chief source of military and financial assistance.<sup>6</sup> This was the result of this cooperation that between 1996 and 2001, the Al Qaeda established camps and trained more than ten thousand people for jihadi activities and Afghanistan became a hub of militant activities in the world. The Maktab Al Khidmat once established for the service of Arab volunteers in the Soviet-Afghan war was transformed into Al Qaeda organization to spread the ideology of radical Islam.

The US aggressive policies towards the Muslims, in general, and the Middle East, in particular, other Islamist groups had set up camps in Afghanistan for Jihad against the United States with the help of Al Qaeda and the cover up of Taliban government in Afghanistan made them more dreaded in their policies towards the West. These bonds became stronger when the Afghans and the militants came closer through personal attachments like marriages of the Afghan women with Arab men.

Taliban not only welcomed Al Qaeda militants in Afghanistan but many from other militant from Chechnya to Indonesia also shifted their activities to Afghanistan in the hope that they would replicate Taliban like movement and government in their respective countries. These included: The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Chechens, Indonesians, Uighurs, and Kashmiri separatists. Most of them were present in the Afghan war period and limited their activities only to the liberation of Afghanistan from the Soviet Union but are now engaged in their homelands. This was the reason that many Pakistani Taliban at that time with the help of Al Qaeda and other militant organizations, played their role in the Afghan civil war. Other jihadi groups like Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-i-Jahngavi developed links with Al Qaeda and carried out attacks inside Afghanistan and later on in Pakistan.

Soon after the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan joined the War on Terror with the US and its coalition forces against Al Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan. Before the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan, most of the tribal areas were in a deep restive position. The relationships between the tribal people and the foreign guests were very cordial and were strengthened further with the matrimonial relation between them. They were now part of that tribal society and culture. This relationship not only developed strong support to the militants from the tribal people but also strengthened their bonds by ideological linkages on the Islamic perspective.

After the Soviet-Afghan war, there never remained any law and order situation in the tribal areas. Traditionally and religiously, Pakthun are influenced mostly by the religious leaders in their social and political life. The political and religious ideology of the "Guests" thus became the part of their society influenced by them with the passage of time unnoticed by the government of Pakistan. It was evident from the past history that the Pakthun always supported the movements which were started for promoting the cause of Islam. They wholeheartedly invested all their resources in the name of Allah and Islam without thinking of any worldly benefits. The case of Arab and other foreign fighters was the same. They gave

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<sup>6</sup> Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, Article 246(c).

them not only shelter but put them in high esteem and followed them in their preaching. Interestingly, these foreign guests only selected the tribal areas of Pakistan for their living and not shifted to the other settled parts of the country. The government, as it appears, allowed the activities of those foreign elements and took no action against them and their presence in the tribal areas. The government also did not notice the change of their relationships with the tribal people.

### **FATA- A Brief Introduction**

The international boundary between Afghanistan and the British India was demarcated in 1893 with the name of Durand Line. This demarcation was the outcome of the “Great Game” policy between the British and Russian Empires to safeguard their respective territories from encroachment by making Afghanistan as the “Buffer State.” This boundary line physically divided the Pakhtun population but it did not affect its ethnic and family connection on both sides of the border. The weak physical position of the border and the strong ethnic and family relations of the Pakhtun never deterred them to cross it any time, even in the war times. They consider it an identification mark and not a border as in the territorial context of two sovereign countries.

Along the Durand Line, the British government gave the tribal areas a new set-up, the semi-autonomous status by creating tribal agencies. This status was also retained after the independence of Pakistan and was given a constitutional status as called Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973.<sup>7</sup>

The people of FATA, from the time immemorial, have lived independently and have never allowed any external power to subject them militarily. This was the internal spirit of their freedom that they want to live without any external authority. But the colonizers in the past made some laws and methods which gave them the power to control them through the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) of 1901, set of laws of the British era, which was instrumental in governing the area. Under the FCR, the FATA has the kind of administration which is different from the rest of Pakistan.<sup>8</sup> In societies that are dominated by tribal structures like that of Pakistani tribal areas, tribalism may directly merge with religious affinity and religious extremism as in the case of Deobandi Pakhtun tribal militias.<sup>9</sup>

The Colonial era administration under the Political Agents (PA) and Assistant Political Agents (both civil servant in BPS,17-19), denied basic constitutional rights and political enfranchisement as well as a formal legal and economic

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<sup>7</sup> Brian R. Kerr, “A Progressive Understanding of Pashtun Social Structures amidst Current Conflict in FATA”. *Pak Institute of Peace Studies*, Vol. 03, 2010, (04), (p. 03).

<sup>8</sup> Ekaterina Stepanova, “Terrorism in Asymmetrical Conflict, Ideological and Structural Aspects” *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, SIPRI Research Report No. 23, (2008), p.137.

<sup>9</sup> *International Crisis Group*. (2012, July). “Aid and Conflict in Pakistan”. Asia Report No.227, p.27.

system. The result is extreme poverty, alienation and the lawlessness that provides both sanctuaries and ideal breeding grounds for militant groups.<sup>10</sup>

Levies and Khasadars are the main forces in the Tribal areas for keeping law and order situation and to protect the government buildings and roads. They are ill-paid, ill-trained and ill-equipped. While the government provides arms to the Levies, it is interesting to note that the Khasadars are responsible for arranging their own arms and ammunitions for performing their duties. How would a poor tribal man having a rifle or Kalashnikov and a dozen of rounds be able to fight the strong and fully equipped militants in the areas. This was the reason of its weakness that in 2009 alone, more than 1,000 Levies left their jobs in Khyber Agency because of the threat to their lives from the militants.<sup>11</sup> The Frontier Constabulary (FC) is another force which is trained on the pattern of provincial police. It is headed by a severing police officer called Inspector General and works under the Ministry of Interior, Government of Pakistan.

The laws of Pakistan are not applied here and Parliament cannot make legislation for the tribal areas in spite of the fact that the tribal areas have representatives in both Houses of the Parliament. (Parliament is the legislative body of Pakistan. It has two Houses, the National Assembly (Lower House), elected directly by the people having 342 seats in which FATA members are 12, Senate (Upper House and with the total strength of 104, FATA members are 08. The Senators are nominated by the Provincial Assemblies and have equal representation of the provinces in it but Senators for FATA are nominated by the National Assembly of Pakistan). Till 1996, political activities were not allowed in FATA and the members of Parliament were elected by the Maliks who only enjoyed the right to vote. There is still no local government system with no elections for local bodies throughout the history. It is because of no political activities that the role of other non-state actors has increased with substantial influence on the masses in the tribal areas. A survey conducted in FATA revealed that 94 percent of the respondents were not satisfied with the current administrative setup in FATA.<sup>12</sup>

The Tribal areas, from the very beginning, have been neglected in every aspect of governance. This is evident from its being the poorest part where the per capita income is only \$ 250 per annum which is the lowest compared to other parts of the country.<sup>13</sup> More than 70 percent are living below the poverty line. The literacy rate is very low as not more than 20 percent are literate in male while the female ratio is not more than 05 percent. The health sector is too disappointing as the infant mortality rate in FATA is 87 per 1,000, significantly higher than the national average of 69 per 1,000.<sup>14</sup> It has just 41 hospitals with per doctor ratio of 1:6,762

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<sup>10</sup> Robert. D. Lamb and Sadika Hameed, . Sub national Governance, Service Delivery and Militancy in Pakistan. A Report of The CSIS Program on Crisis, Conflict, and Cooperation, 2012, June, p.36.

<sup>11</sup> FRC- FATA Research Centre. Report -2012. Islamabad, p.24.

<sup>12</sup> Rashid, Ahmad *Descent into Chaos*. London: Penguin Books, 2008. p. 27.

<sup>13</sup> *International Crisis Group* "Pakistan: No End to Humanitarian Crises." Asia Report No. 237, 2012, 09 October, p.16.

<sup>14</sup> *International Crisis Group*. Pakistan's Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants. Asia Report No.125, (2006, 11 December, p.09.

as compared to the national 1:1,359 ratio which is very disappointing.<sup>15</sup> There is no medical college, no engineering university, no post graduate college for women and no public or private university in the whole 10,500 sq. mile areas and having a population of more than 3.5 million till recently. (Recently, the FATA university is established in 2015 in Darra Adam Khel, FR Kohat).

Pakhtun areas have their own culture and tradition and are based on its own code of life. Pakhtunwali- a code of life for Pakhtun, the unwritten but strictly followed in the Pakhtun area is always cherished by its own people. It has its own virtues which the Pakhtun continue to love. Hospitality, bravery, granting pardons, respect for women, respect and honour for the religious leaders and teachers are the main features of the code of life. The Pakhtun have great respect and love for two institutions in their areas; Mosque and Hujra. Mosque is for religious practices and Hujra for resolving the community problems and hospitality for the guests. When a conflict arises in the area, Jirga (an informal conflict resolution institution) is formed which decides the issue in the Hujra. Jirga is designed to deliver verdicts on minor civil and criminal disputes quickly and inexpensively.<sup>16</sup>

### **Militancy in FATA**

The situation in Afghanistan has had direct effect on Pakistan and particularly on FATA and NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) in the last thirty years in terms of the grooming of militant organizations. These organizations have developed connection among themselves for a global cause i.e., the Islamic Sharia in Afghanistan and the neighbouring countries. The Islamic order that was established in Afghanistan during the Taliban era provided a 'Role Model' for a theocratic state in which the Sharia would be enforced along the puritanical lines of the Deobandi School of thought. The Sunni militants dreamed the Talibanization of Pakistan in the foreseeable future.<sup>17</sup>

The influx of Afghan refugees in the area as a result of war against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan made the tribal society militarized. With the establishment of Deobandi madaris in the tribal areas, the rise of religious extremism in the Pakhtun majority borderlands became apparent. The network of Pakistani and Afghan militants spawned in these seminaries forged ties with the Arab fighters during the Afghan Jihad.<sup>18</sup> The madaris network was established there to provide foothold for the soldiers of the Holy War, made the Mullahs more powerful than the Maliks, turned the authority into the hands of madaris students and their teachers. The heavy weapons and the fighting past made those commanders the role model for the youth of the tribal areas.

To understand the growth of militancy in the tribal areas of Pakistan, it is essential to know the weak nature of the border dividing the Pakhtun tribes of Afghanistan

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<sup>15</sup> D. Lamb, *Sub national Governance*, p.34.

<sup>16</sup> Ian Talbot, "Religion and Violence: The Historical Context for Conflict in Pakistan", in John R. Hinnells and Richard King (Ed.), *Religion and Violence in South Asia. Theory and Practice*, 2007, p.154.

<sup>17</sup> M. Maqbool Khan Wazir, "Geopolitics of FATA after 9/11" *Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI)*, Journal xi, No. 01, 2011, Winter, p.61.

<sup>18</sup> Anatol Lieven, *Pakistan- A Hard Country*. London: Allan Lane, 2011, p.419.

and Pakistan: weak in terms of physical control by the two sides, but even more importantly in the minds of the tribesmen themselves. As noted, the anti- Soviet war of the 1980s weakened this border further with Pakistani Pakhtun encouraged by both Pakistan and the West to see the Afghan refugees and the Afghan mujahedeen as their brothers and to fight alongside them.<sup>19</sup>

After the 9/11 and the US attack on Afghanistan, the shifting of Afghan Taliban from Afghanistan into the tribal areas of Pakistan and the mobilization of Pakistani Pakhtun in support of them led the US to demand Pakistan of launching what became in effect a civil war on its own soil.<sup>20</sup> The policy of 'hot pursuit' turned the tribal areas more insecure and violent as the entry of Taliban and Al Qaeda militants brought the war into Pakistan's tribal areas from Afghanistan. To an academician, "Pakistan and Afghanistan are linked together in peace and vice versa. Historically, there are sympathizers of Taliban in FATA and thus they established their networks there and the area became a hub of all militants in the region".<sup>21</sup>

A scholar explained the situation thus; "after the US attack on Afghanistan, most of the militants left Afghanistan for tribal areas and in hot pursuit, the US chased those militants and thus the war zone expanded to Pakistan's tribal areas".<sup>22</sup> The relationship among the militants was the result of shared ideology irrespective of their origin and nationality. Fighters from Central Asia, Western China, Turkey and various Arab countries combined with radicalized Pakhtun tribesmen to train a new generation of Pakistan and European Muslim militants, Al-Qaeda resurfaced in the tribal redoubts of North Western Pakistan with a vengeance.<sup>23</sup>

"The basic reason for spread of militancy in FATA is also historical in nature. It has links with the Kashmir problem too. Soon after the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan, a hope for the Kashmir freedom was emerged among the militants. Those groups inspired from Al Qaeda at the later stage. 9/11 gave them space and a relationship developed among them on organizational basis. Foreign factors like India's involvement also developed here. Thus there are many factors which have contributed to the militancy in FATA".<sup>24</sup> The War on Terror has infuriated the Pakhtun population on both sides of the border who made an alliance against the US/NATO forces in the tribal areas. That has resulted in the anti-American sentiments in the region and the militant groups easily embraced those Pakhtun in their networks which in the past had no such affiliations with them. This developed radicalization in FATA in the first phase.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.410.

<sup>20</sup> Qibla Ayaz, interview, 2013, 28 May, Professor & Ex. Vice Chancellor. University of Peshawar, Peshawar.

<sup>21</sup> Noman Sattar, 2013, 04 June Area Study Centre, Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad. Interview, Islamabad.

<sup>22</sup> Ayesha Jalal, *'The Past as Present'* in Maleeha Lodhi (Ed), *Pakistan- Beyond a 'Crisis State'* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 17.

<sup>23</sup> Gul, Imtiaz. 2013, 04 June. Chief Executive, Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), Islamabad. Interview, Islamabad.

<sup>24</sup> Prof Ijaz Khan., 2013, 18 March. Department of International Relations, University of Peshawar. Interview, Peshawar.

The main ingredients to establish the Taliban network in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were the historical relationship between the Afghan Taliban and FATA's Afghan war fighters. These fighters living in FATA were Pakthun who fought against the Soviet Union in 1980s. After the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, they came back to their home territory along with many foreign mujahedeen friends like Arabs, Chechen, Uzbek etc. They were living there, married with local women and started their livelihood activities in the area lacking government writ. The establishment of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan and then captured Afghanistan by those less trained Afghans bolstered the Pakthun on the other side of the Durand Line to join them in their rule. During this whole period i.e., the Soviet invasions to the capture of Kabul by Taliban, FATA remained a peaceful entity with no visible effect on the local structure of the area. But a wave of Taliban's like rule was preparing in the minds of those war mujahedeen in one way or the other but they did not have a suitable environment or situation which could trigger them to such a big jump.

After the 9/11 event and the US attack on Afghanistan, Taliban and Arabs left Afghanistan and came to FATA and stayed here, as it was not a refugee for them because they had no care or importance to the Durand Line. The local tribes welcomed them and provided shelter in their areas without taking this into account that doing so was a violation of state laws and also like challenging the writ of the state. They gave more importance to their code of social life, hospitality and shelter than to the laws of the state. This was obviously due to the weak structure of the administration, as mentioned earlier.

“There was a social and political vacuum in the tribal areas which was filled by powerful militants. The tribal areas were used for militancy purposes and all kinds of militants shifted from Pakistan's main cities and the rest of the region, to train their men and then started their activities in Pakistan and in other parts of the world”.<sup>25</sup> After gaining ground in FATA, the tribesmen also mixed with them on their ideological front. After shifting to Pakistan's borderland, the Afghan Taliban collaborated with their Pakistani counterparts on the issue of war against the US. The relationship strengthened when the Pakistan Army launched search operations in FATA following by series of full scale military operations. These military operations developed a sense of insecurity on their own soil something they had never experienced during the last sixty five years. This sense of insecurity strengthened the bond of unity and resistance among them which led to a violent struggle against the army. In a few years, they reached to the conclusion to establish an organization as like in Afghanistan to become a combined force.

The Al Qaeda and Taliban militants are not captured because they have been driven into the arms of their supporters, where they have well-established networks built by bin Laden and which include tunnels, caves, and training camps for the Mujahedeen. The presence of troops in the border region means that every

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<sup>25</sup> M. Maqbool Khan Wazir, Winter 2011. Geopolitics of FATA after 9/11. *IPRI Journal* XI (1), p.43.



time the Pakistan Army gets near them, they slip over the border out of their reach.<sup>26</sup>

The Al-Qaeda, operating from the border land, managed to transform and replenish itself with new recruits from among the Pakistani militant groups. This enabled the group in survival from capturing and killing of many its senior operatives. The founding members, mostly from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Libya known as Sheikhs, continued to provide ideological leadership, but the rank and file of the network increasingly comprised of the new militants from Pakistan and other countries including Somalia, Turkey, Indonesia and Bangladesh who managed to shift into the border region.<sup>27</sup> A scholar explained the situation in the tribal areas thus, “The tribal system is based on revenge against the enemy and, hence the Taliban insurgency should also be seen in that perspective in mind too”.<sup>28</sup>

“Initially, there was confusion in the military as how to deal with the militants in the tribal areas. They have not adopted such policies which could restrict this war limited to the border and this had created problems in Pakistan”.<sup>29</sup> An insurgency broke out against American-Pakistani attempts to root out the Taliban fighters who took refuge in FATA after the US invaded Afghanistan. A “war economy” has persisted in the border areas, sustaining training camps and fighters. The militants established their writ in the areas and challenged the state authority openly. The Taliban leaders issued declarations about what is “Islamic” and used these to legitimize their attacks on internal and external claimants to their authority. These acts helped to consolidate their control within specific territory and to ward off outsiders who tried to intervene. FATA has become “the most armed and militant region where the writ of the state appears almost non-existent”.<sup>30</sup> Once the position of the militants became strong, the government initiated dialogue and peace agreement with them which further strengthened their position and ultimately weakened the writ of the state. This trend continued till the final blow against them in shape of operation Zarb-i-Azab in Waziristan.

## **Conclusion**

There are many issues that have caused the spreading of militancy not only in Afghanistan but in the whole region. Militancy can be linked to the 1979 Soviet aggression on Afghanistan and the US resistance to the same. The US not only agreed to the religion’s interpretation of the struggle against the Soviet forces but also encouraged the Muslims all over the world to travel to Afghanistan and take part in Jihad. This policy turned the region into a hub of militant activities not only in the Afghan war period but in the coming days also when there was no Soviet

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<sup>26</sup> Zahid Hussain, “Battling Militancy” in MadeehaLodhi (Ed.). *Pakistan- Beyond a ‘Crisis State’*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.141-2.

<sup>27</sup> Akbar S. Ahmad. 2014, 15 February. Interview in programme ‘Jirga Salim Safi ke Sath’ on Geo TV, Islamabad.

<sup>28</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, 2013, 4 June. Prof. School of politics and International Relations, Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad, Interview, Islamabad.

<sup>29</sup> Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan- the Path to Catastrophe and the Killing of Benazir Bhutto* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2017), pp.141-42.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

army in Afghanistan. This developed a nexus among the militants and encouraged a Jihadi culture in the region. The local youth in the tribal areas got attracted mainly because of the lack of employment. Being already trained in the use of weapons, the unemployed youth equipped with their personal weapons provided manpower for instant participation in belligerency.

Unfortunately, there was a lack of economic and educational opportunities which turned the young people into those groups which had resources as well as weapons in their hands. The marginally controlled borders could not restrict the easy movement of militants across the border, and the menace spread so quickly in the tribal areas. This was even more escalated by the weak administrative structure of the tribal areas and the Government of Pakistan was in no mood to improve the tribal people conditions and to provide the basic needs and requirements to them. Ultimately, these areas remained the most backward parts of Pakistan in basic needs while the most flourishing part in militancy in the region. The basic problem in the tribal areas was the lack of all kinds of rights which a citizen can expect from a democratic government. The more you give the right, more access to basic needs, the more the militancy as way of life would vanish. It needs the overhauling of existing administrative structure on priority basis which is one of the root causes of problems in the tribal areas. Border management and FATA reforms are the most important elements to improve the law and order situation in the tribal areas as well as in the rest of the country.