

Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR) No. 405 15 October 2009

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[Article 1](#) **“Ten Steps to Victory in Afghanistan,” by Op-Ed Contributors, New York Times, 4 October 2009.** *In this op-ed item, ten experts, from various backgrounds, lay out short, specific arguments for how best to move forward in Afghanistan. The titles of their arguments and the experts are as follows: Reform or Go Home—David Kilcullen; End Suicide Attacks—Robert A. Pape; If You Can’t Beat Them, Let Them Join—Linda Robinson; Pump Up the Police—Anthony Cordesman; Kick Out Corruption—Nader Nadery; Learn to Tax from the Taliban—Gretchen Peters; Polls Have the Power—Merrill McPeak; Take a Risk—Andrew McDonald Exum; Don’t Believe That We Can Afford to Lose—Frederick Kagan and Kimberly Kagan; and Pakistani Patronage—Paul R. Pillar.*

[Article 2](#) **“Al-Qaeda Showing Smaller Presence in Afghanistan,” by Robert H. Reid, Associated Press, 6 October 2009.** *Assessing the real strength and threat posed by Al-Qaeda is at the heart of an evolving policy debate in Washington, D.C., about whether or not to escalate the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan. U.S. General Stanley McChrystal is asking for up to 40,000 more American troops so that he can bolster security, especially in northern and western Afghanistan. Opponents of that strategy, notably Vice President Joe Biden, prefer to maintain current U.S. troop levels—about 65,000—and shift the focus to missile strikes and Special Forces operations in neighboring Pakistan, where many key Al-Qaeda figures have sought sanctuary. Meantime, some say a U.S. withdrawal in Afghanistan would be spun by Al-Qaeda as a victory that would invigorate the group regardless of whether it returned to Afghanistan in force.*

[Article 3](#) **“CIA Expanding Presence in Afghanistan,” by Greg Miller Los Angeles Times, 20 September 2009.** *The CIA is deploying teams of spies, analysts, and paramilitary operatives to Afghanistan, part of a broad intelligence “surge” that will make its station there among the largest in the agency’s history, U.S. officials say. The influx parallels the U.S. military expansion and comes as the nation’s spy services are under pressure from Army General Stanley A. McChrystal to improve intelligence on the Taliban and find ways to reverse a series of unsettling trends. For eight years, the CIA’s main priorities in Afghanistan were to hunt for Al-Qaeda, manage relationships with warlords, and rebuild the Afghan spy service. But the agency’s role is likely to shift under McChrystal, who has placed a greater emphasis on protecting civilians and rooting out government graft.*

[Article 4](#) **“U.S. Says Taliban Has a New Haven in Pakistan,” by Pamela Constable, Washington Post, 29 September 2009.** *U.S. officials are expressing new concerns about the role of fugitive Taliban leader Mohammad Omar and his council of lieutenants, who reportedly plan and launch cross-border strikes from safe havens around the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta, in the province of Baluchistan. But U.S. officials acknowledge they know relatively little about the remote and arid Pakistani border region, have no capacity to strike there, and have few windows into the turbulent mix of Pashtun tribal and religious politics that has turned the area into a sanctuary for the Taliban leaders. Pakistani officials, in turn, have been accused of allowing the Taliban movement to regroup in the Quetta area, viewing it as a strategic asset rather than a domestic threat, while the army has been heavily focused on curbing violent Islamist extremists in the northwest border region hundreds of miles away.*

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1. “Ten Steps to Victory in Afghanistan,” by Op-Ed Contributors, New York Times, 4 October 2009 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/04/opinion/04afghanistan.html>). [KBTSAfghanGW, KBTQOverview, KBTIStrategies] We *quote*:

Reform or Go Home—David Kilcullen, a former adviser to General David Petraeus and the author of The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One

Counterinsurgency is only as good as the government it supports. NATO could do everything right—it isn’t—but **will still fail unless Afghans trust their government.** Without essential reform, **merely making the government more efficient or extending its reach will just make things worse.**

Only a legitimately elected Afghan president can enact reforms, so at the very least we need to see a genuine run-off election or an emergency national council, called a loya jirga, before winter. Once a legitimate president emerges, we need to see immediate action from him on a publicly announced reform program, developed in consultation with Afghan society and enforced by international monitors. Reforms should include firing human rights abusers and drug traffickers, establishing an independent authority to investigate citizen complaints, and requiring officials to live in the districts they are responsible for (fewer than half do).

Other steps might include a census and district-level elections (promised since 2001, but never held), fair and effective taxation to replace kickbacks and extortion, increased pay to diligent local officials, the transfer of more budgetary authority to the provinces, and the creation of local courts for dispute resolution. **If we see no genuine progress on such steps toward government responsibility, the United States should “Afghanize,” draw down troops, and prepare to mitigate the inevitable humanitarian disaster that will come when the Kabul government falls to the Taliban—which, in the absence of reform, it eventually and deservedly will.**

End Suicide Attacks—Robert A. Pape, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago and the author of Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism

To win in Afghanistan, the United States and its allies must prevent the rise of a new generation of anti-American terrorists, particularly suicide terrorists. The metric for measuring this threat is not the amount of territory controlled by the Taliban or Al-Qaeda, but the number of people willing to be recruited as suicide terrorists. These individuals are motivated not by the existence of a terrorist sanctuary, but by deep anger at the presence of foreign forces on land they prize.

This is why the number of suicide attacks in Afghanistan, overwhelmingly against military targets, has skyrocketed as United States and NATO forces have increasingly occupied the country from 2006 on. There were nine attacks in 2005, 97 in 2006, 142 in 2007, 148 in 2008, and more than 60 in the first six months of this year. It is imperative to decrease the number of suicide attacks.

Given the ethnic divisions of the country, our best tactic is to use political and economic means to empower local Pashtuns to feel that they have greater autonomy from both Taliban and Western domination, and less need to respond violently. A similar strategy toward Sunni groups in Anbar province reduced anti-American suicide terrorism in Iraq and is our best way forward in Afghanistan.

If You Can't Beat Them, Let Them Join—Linda Robinson, the author of Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq

Within a year, **we must persuade large numbers of insurgents to lay down their arms or switch to the government's side.** Afghanistan's doughty warriors have a tradition of changing alliances, but **success will require both military operations focused on the insurgent leadership and, even more important, incentives for fighters at the local level.**

Mid-level insurgents and their followers should be offered a chance to join a revised version of the Afghan Public Protection Force. These local self-defense forces should be expanded and tied to legitimate local governing structures—both official and tribal. **The majority of development funds should be funneled to leaders to strengthen local governance and development and pay the militias' salaries.** Local self-defense forces in Colombia, Peru, South Vietnam, and, most recently, Iraq, have proved very successful. **The creation of a viable force like this is the single most important benchmark for the counterinsurgency effort in Afghanistan.**

Pump Up the Police—Anthony Cordesman, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

For all the disputes over strategy, **virtually everyone agrees that we need to strengthen the Afghan security forces, make them true partners, and put them in the lead.** Afghans want lasting security, and they want it to have an Afghan face.

General Stanley McChrystal, the top American commander there, **wisely wants to double the size of the Afghan Army and increase the police forces to 160,000 men.** **This requires not just money, but also a commitment** to send more trainers, embedded advisers, and partner units. At the moment, international forces in Afghanistan say they still lack about 30 percent of the trainers and mentors needed to train even the current police force.

Creating effective security forces will also require more aid to create a functioning local justice system with courts, lawyers, and jails. This will take at least a decade, so for the short term we should assist efforts to revive Afghanistan's traditional justice systems.

Kick Out Corruption—Nader Nadery, a commissioner on the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

To defeat the insurgency, the Afghan government and its main partner, the United States, **need to win the confidence of the public**. Accountability must replace the widespread immunity enjoyed by officials who abuse their power. **Despite all the problems with our recent election, the incoming government will have a chance to start fresh, and a proper vetting of all new officials is the place to begin**. This means establishing strict accountability mechanisms for high officials in the districts and provinces as well as in the ministries and directorates in Kabul. **Simply shuffling abusive and incompetent officials among offices**—as has been the norm over the past eight years—**keeps the public from getting the governmental services it needs**.

While the corruption in Kabul is well known, **the alliances that American and other foreign forces have made at the local level with abusive officials and influential figures have emboldened those Afghans and alarmed the Afghan public**. **These alliances must be examined and stopped**. The next government should make a statement by quickly clearing out some of the most blatantly corrupt officials.

Learn to Tax from the Taliban—Gretchen Peters, the author of Seeds of Terror

Skeptics of state-building proposals question whether the Kabul government—now almost fully dependent on foreign aid—**will ever be able to support the military and police forces being trained**. Yet there has been **comparatively little investment by the international community in helping Kabul collect taxes, even though insurgents and corrupt officials have proved it can be done**.

In addition to collecting taxes from the illegal opium trade, Taliban forces extort money from trucks carrying legal cargo through their territories and demand “protection fees” from local businesses, even hitting up construction projects financed by NATO. Government officials also take illegal kickbacks—one governor in the eastern part of the country is reported to earn as much as \$10 million a month extorting trucking firms. But this money doesn’t end up in state coffers—just lines the governor’s deep pockets.

The “civilian surge” should include tax experts who could help federal and provincial officials develop mechanisms for collecting revenue—and make sure that money ends up where it belongs.

Polls Have the Power—Merrill McPeak, the chief of staff of the Air Force from 1990 to 1994

By and large, **my generation of military professionals trained for and thought about what we might call “Type A” war—modern war, featuring the clash of mechanized forces fielded by industrial states**. Happily, we never had to fight the Soviets on the northern German plain, though Operation Desert Storm showed we might have been pretty good at it, had the balloon gone up.

In Afghanistan we’re fighting a “Type B” war that is in some of its essentials “postmodern.” Like postmodernism itself, **the concept has a variety of meanings and may not represent a coherent set of ideas**. **But one thing is clear: the Type B enemy likely has little to lose**—no territory to protect, few important targets at risk, perhaps

even no life worth living. Thus **the Type A objective of fatally weakening an opponent by destroying assets important to his success**—in theory, a measurable process—is replaced in Type B war by the much more complicated, essentially unquantifiable task of defeating him.

In time, democracies tire of war, as well they should. Thus, **the single most important factor a Type B enemy counts on is time**. The outcome in Afghanistan may be determined already, simply because we've been there for eight years.

The strategic center of gravity is American public opinion, which will tell us when we've run out of time. If you want to know how we are doing in Afghanistan, read the polls in America.

Take a Risk—Andrew McDonald Exum, a fellow at the Center for a New American Security

While in Afghanistan last summer as part of General Stanley McChrystal's initial assessment team, I found many American and other international units more focused on protecting themselves than protecting the Afghan population. Traveling through the allegedly secure city of Mazar-i-Sharif with a German unit, for example, was like touring Afghanistan by submarine. What little I saw of the city was through a small slit of bulletproof glass in an armored personnel carrier. (While I was a light infantry officer in both the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, I had never before traveled in an armored personnel carrier.) **The Germans offered their assessment of security in the region**, but since they lack regular face-to-face contact with the people living there, why should I trust their analysis? **Can they speak with authority on the degree to which an insurgent campaign of intimidation is having an effect when they themselves keep the Afghans at such a distance?**

It's not just the Germans, though. Some American and other allied commanders also insist on protective measures that hamper troops from interacting with the population and gathering information on what is driving the conflict at the local level. After eight years of war with little to show for American and allied efforts, **many Americans have tired of the campaign in Afghanistan and are wary of putting our soldiers in greater danger. But if we are to be successful in Afghanistan, it is a risk we must take.**

Don't Believe That We Can Afford to Lose—Frederick Kagan, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and **Kimberly Kagan**, the president of the Institute for the Study of War

America cannot achieve even the minimal objective of preventing Al-Qaeda from re-establishing safe havens in Afghanistan without a substantial increase in forces over the coming year. The Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan's south is growing. The Afghan and international forces there now cannot reverse that growth. They may not even be able to stem it. That is the assessment of the top American commander there, General Stanley McChrystal.

President Obama said in August, "If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which Al-Qaeda would plot to kill more Americans." Some of his advisers now say the opposite: Taliban control will not lead to terrorist havens. Why not? Osama bin Laden first built camps in the territory of a

Taliban leader, Jalaluddin Haqqani, in the mid-1980s. **Relations between Al-Qaeda and the Taliban remain close.** Even if they do not invite Al-Qaeda in, could they, unlike Pakistan, keep Al-Qaeda out? **The president was right: the triumph of the Taliban will benefit Al-Qaeda.**

Rejecting General McChrystal's request for more forces leaves two options. The United States withdraws and lets Afghanistan again collapse into chaos, or it keeps its military forces and civilians in harm's way while denying them the resources they need to succeed. Neither is acceptable.

Pakistani Patronage—Paul R. Pillar, a former national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia and a professor in Georgetown University's Security Studies Program

The government of Pakistan, through its intelligence agency, has long been a patron of the Afghan Taliban, and General Stanley McChrystal recently warned that the collaboration continues. Pakistan sees the relationship as a way of hedging its bets in Afghanistan, an asset in its confrontation with India. It is difficult to define a clear benchmark for ending that aid because the Pakistanis refuse to acknowledge that any relationship exists. **But let us consider it to have ended or gone into remission if, a year from now, six consecutive months have gone by with no credible reporting of the sort that underlay the general's observation.**

The significance of this benchmark is threefold.

First, **Pakistani patronage is an impediment to subduing the Taliban.**

Second, **it is an excellent gauge of how well or poorly NATO's campaign in Afghanistan is going.** Continued Pakistani dealing with the Taliban would reflect Islamabad's judgment that it is going poorly enough that bets still must be hedged.

Third, **an end to the relationship would eliminate one of the biggest paradoxes in the rationale for the counterinsurgency: the Pakistani government that our efforts in Afghanistan are supposedly helping to save is assisting the forces from which we are trying to save it.**

The foregoing is Article No. 1 (TR405A01) in the [Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report \(TOSIR\)](#), No. 405, 15 October 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isincreports@mindspring.com).

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2. **"Al-Qaeda Showing Smaller Presence in Afghanistan,"** by Robert H. Reid, [Associated Press](#), 6 October 2009. [KBTSAfghanGW, KBTQOverview, KBTQNetwork] We quote from http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20091006/ap_on_re_as/as_afghan_al_qaida_s_role:

Kabul, Afghanistan—**Al-Qaeda's role in Afghanistan has faded after eight years of war.** Gone is the once formidable network of camps and safe houses where Osama bin Laden and his mostly Arab operatives trained thousands of young Muslims to wage a global jihad. **The group is left with fewer than 100 core fighters, according to the**

Obama administration, likely operating small-scale bomb-making and tactics classes conducted by trainers who travel to and from Pakistan.

Assessing the real strength and threat posed by Al-Qaeda is at the heart of an evolving policy debate in Washington about whether or not to escalate the U.S. military presence in this country. The war was launched soon after the 11 September 2001 attacks to root out Al-Qaeda and deny the militant movement a safe haven in a Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

[Critics of troop surge in Afghanistan say Al-Qaeda, the real enemy, is in Pakistan]

U.S. national security adviser James Jones said last weekend that the Al-Qaeda presence has diminished, and he does not “foresee the return of the Taliban” to power. He said that according to the maximum estimate, **Al-Qaeda has fewer than 100 fighters operating in Afghanistan** without any bases or ability to launch attacks on the West.

“If the Taliban did return to power, I believe we are strong enough to deter them from attacking us again by strong and credible punishment and by containing them with regional allies like India, China, and Russia,” said former State Department official Leslie Gelb.

But **Bryan Glyn Williams**, a University of Massachusetts associate professor who monitors militant Websites, told the Associated Press **he has collected reports of large numbers of Al-Qaeda fighters in various provinces in addition to across the border in Pakistan.**

Michael Scheuer, a former CIA analyst who tracked bin Laden for three years, **believes the administration may have underestimated Al-Qaeda’s role here because the organization prefers to work in the background providing logistics, propaganda, and training to local allies. Most of the foreigners fighting against NATO in Afghanistan are believed to be Pakistani Pashtuns and Uzbeks, who are harder to identify than Arabs because of ethnic similarities to Afghans.**

NATO casualties have risen dramatically this year at the hands of a resurgent Taliban, and **U.S. General Stanley McChrystal is asking for up to 40,000 more American troops so that he can bolster security**, especially in northern and western Afghanistan. **Opponents of that strategy, notably Vice President Joe Biden, prefer to maintain current U.S. troop levels—about 65,000—and shift the focus to missile strikes and Special Forces operations in neighboring Pakistan**, where many key Al-Qaeda figures have sought sanctuary.

Those critics believe the Taliban—a radical Islamist movement that emerged among the ethnic Pashtun community and ruled in Kabul from 1996 until 2001—pose no threat to the United States. They say the real enemy, Al-Qaeda, lies across the border in Pakistan. Although the Taliban never fully embraced Al-Qaeda’s doctrine of global jihad, the movement has spread among ethnic Pashtuns in Pakistan, threatening the stability of that nuclear-armed country.

“When you see less and less of Al-Qaeda in an Islamist insurgency, it almost certainly means that it is more effective than when you saw more of it,” Scheuer said. “I am sure

that Al-Qaeda is still fielding some field-grade cadre to toughen the Taliban's ranks."

[Even those who doubt Al-Qaeda could stage a comeback won't rule out the possibility]

Some experts believe Al-Qaeda operates in Afghanistan through Lashkar al-Zil, or "Shadow Army," which is believed to have carried out attacks in eastern Afghanistan and Pakistan. "In my opinion Al-Qaeda fighters from the Lashkar al-Zil are actively involved in all Taliban fronts, from Nuristan in the north to Helmand in the south," Williams said. **"While foreigners do not play a considerable role in the current jihad, Al-Qaeda is definitely there."**

Even those who doubt bin Laden's followers could stage a comeback won't rule out that possibility, given Afghanistan's tribal-based politics where alliances forged today are discarded tomorrow. "Afghanistan is a complicated place that has always worked on the basis of discussions and deals where nobody comes out a complete loser and nobody comes out a complete winner," said Richard Bassett, the United Nation's chief Al-Qaeda and Taliban watcher. Nevertheless, **Al-Qaeda's presence has vastly diminished since the 11 September 2001 terror attacks that triggered a U.S.-led invasion a month later.**

U.S. officials in Afghanistan rarely mention Al-Qaeda in sharp contrast to Iraq, where the U.S. military was quick to blame the group for most attacks against Shiite civilians. If there are significant numbers of Arab Al-Qaeda members left in Afghanistan, they maintain a low profile. During the years of Taliban rule, **many Afghans deeply resented the presence of swaggering young Arabs, who in turn looked upon their hosts as backward and primitive.**

Bassett believes **Taliban leader Mullah Omar would never allow Al-Qaeda operatives free rein again because he blames them for provoking the war that drove his Islamist group from power.** "Al-Qaeda has sort of sensed their future lies more with the Taliban groups in Pakistan than with the Taliban groups in Afghanistan," Bassett said.

[U.S. failure in Afghanistan would be an enormous propaganda victory for Al-Qaeda]

However, **Al-Qaeda has maintained longtime ties with a number of key figures within the broad coalition that is fighting U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan.** Chief among them are **Jalaluddin Haqqani and his son Sirajuddin,** whose Pakistan-based forces are battling the Americans and their allies across eastern Afghanistan. NATO officials say the Haqqani group, among the most feared fighters in Afghanistan, may have taken part in the Saturday assault on a U.S. outpost in Nuristan province that left eight American soldiers dead.

Another faction with longtime Al-Qaeda ties is led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former prime minister and rebel commander in the war against the Soviets in the 1980s. **"Al-Qaeda is still very close with Hekmatyar and is also tight with the Haqqanis,"** said **Bruce Hoffman,** a counterterrorism expert at Georgetown University. **"I think one of the problems is that the Americans see the Taliban as a monolithic entity."**

Hoffman believes a **U.S. failure in Afghanistan would be spun by Al-Qaeda as a victory that would invigorate the group regardless of whether it returned to Afghanistan in force.** “They faced annihilation seven years ago and they have certainly rebounded from that setback,” Hoffman said. **“Withdrawal would be an enormous tonic to them in two respects: the propaganda value would be a game changer. They would portray it as having defeated the only other superpower in the world.”**

Michael O’Hanlon, a research director of the Brookings Institution, **agrees a Taliban victory** “would be a big deal for us” because of the psychological boost it would give to Al-Qaeda and associated movements it inspires around the world. **“It would allow Al-Qaeda to say they got the momentum back, after a couple of years in which America did better against them in other locations,”** he said.

The foregoing is Article No. 2 (TR405A02) in the **Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR)**, No. 405, 15 October 2009, prepared by Interaction Systems Incorporated (isinreports@mindspring.com).

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3. “CIA Expanding Presence in Afghanistan,” by Greg Miller **Los Angeles Times, 20 September 2009.** [KBTSAfghanGW, KBTG CIA, KBTKIntel, KBTTSuicide] *We quote* from this article at <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-afghan-intel20-2009sep20,0,1183243.story>:

Washington, D.C.—**The CIA is deploying teams of spies, analysts, and paramilitary operatives to Afghanistan, part of a broad intelligence “surge”** that will make its station there among the largest in the agency’s history, U.S. officials say. When complete, **the CIA’s presence in the country is expected to rival the size of its massive stations in Iraq and Vietnam at the height of those wars.** Precise numbers are classified, but one U.S. official said the agency **already has nearly 700 employees in Afghanistan.**

[Taliban’s geographic gains slowing because already present in almost every Pashtun area]

The influx parallels the U.S. military expansion and comes as the nation’s spy services are under pressure from Army General Stanley A. McChrystal to improve intelligence on the Taliban and find ways to reverse a series of unsettling trends. Among them are a twofold increase in the number of roadside bombs, a growing sophistication in the kinds of assaults aimed at coalition troops, and evidence that a Taliban group has developed an assembly line approach to grooming suicide bombers and supplying them to other insurgent organizations. **U.S. officials have also been alarmed by a more sophisticated suicide attack: sending multiple fighters armed with guns to carry out coordinated assaults before detonating their bombs.**

The spies are being used in various assignments—teaming up with Special Forces units pursuing high-value targets, tracking public sentiment in provinces that have been shifting toward the Taliban, and collecting intelligence on corruption in the Afghan government. **The intelligence expansion goes beyond the CIA to involve every major spy service,** officials said, **including the National Security Agency, which intercepts**

calls and e-mails, as well as the Defense Intelligence Agency, which tracks military threats.

The Obama administration is under pressure to show progress in Afghanistan, calculating that it has only until next summer before public support for the war effort collapses. The deployments coincide with new warnings from U.S. spy services that the insurgency in Afghanistan has continued to gain territory and strength.

“The Taliban is at its most capable level since 2001, when it was ejected from the country,” said a Defense Department official who has access to classified intelligence estimates. The official, and others, spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject.

The official said **the Taliban’s geographic gains have slowed only because it has already pushed into almost every area with a significant Pashtun population, the tribal networks that make up the Taliban’s home turf. “They seem never to have a shortage of manpower,”** the official said. “And there doesn’t appear to be any shortage of funding.”

Officials said **the insurgency is believed to have 15,000 to 20,000 fighters. The estimates are broad,** officials said, **because there are loose affiliations among the groups, each of which has fighters with varying commitments to the cause.** “You’re not talking about fixed formations that rely solely on full-time combatants,” a U.S. counterterrorism official said. **“Numbers ebb and flow; bands of fighters appear and vanish.”**

[McChrystal likely to boost combined teams of CIA operatives, Special Operations soldiers]

CIA spokesman Paul Gimigliano declined to comment on the scope of the agency’s presence in Afghanistan. But a U.S. intelligence official said that **spy agencies “anticipated the surge in demand for intelligence.”** The official said the intelligence community “has, for some time now, been deploying more officers to Afghanistan.” **The CIA’s buildup is the latest in a series of escalations there.** After having only a few operatives there after the 11 September attacks, the agency’s presence climbed to about 150 by the end of 2001, and 300 at the close of 2005.

A recent Senate report criticized the CIA’s role in Afghanistan over the last eight years, saying the agency provided large amounts of money and support to warlords, some of whom had ties to the drug trade and parlayed their U.S. backing into high-level positions in the government. The agency’s station is based at the U.S. embassy in Kabul, the Afghan capital. It is led by a veteran with an extensive background in paramilitary operations, officials said. But **the bulk of the CIA’s workforce is scattered among secret bases and military outposts that dot the country.**

Most recently, **the CIA has been preparing to deploy Crisis Operations Liaison Teams, small units that are attached to regional military commands, giving officers access to information gathered by the CIA as well as satellites and other sources.** One of the largest concentrations of CIA personnel is at Bagram air base north of Kabul, the headquarters for U.S. military Special Operations Forces and for years the site of a secret agency prison.

McChrystal is expected to expand the use of teams that combine CIA operatives with Special Operations soldiers. In Iraq, where he oversaw the Special Operations Forces from 2003 to 2008, McChrystal used such teams to speed up the cycle of gathering intelligence and carrying out raids aimed at killing or capturing insurgents. “He was able to plan during the day and do raids at night, sometimes multiple raids if he could move the information quickly enough,” said a former senior U.S. military intelligence official who worked closely with McChrystal in Iraq. **“What he’s trying to do is get his decision cycle quicker than the bad guys.”**

[CIA likely to place greater emphasis on protecting civilians, rooting out government graft]

Afghanistan presents intelligence officials with steep challenges. Current and former CIA officials said that **operatives and analysts account for only about one-third of the agency’s footprint in Afghanistan. The others are involved in support functions—**such as providing security and managing computer systems**—that are particularly daunting in Afghanistan because of the country’s size and the woeful state of its infrastructure.**

The CIA is also carrying out an escalating campaign of unmanned Predator missile strikes on Al-Qaeda and insurgent strongholds in Pakistan. The number of strikes so far this year, 37, already exceeds the 2008 total, according to data compiled by the Long War Journal Website, which tracks Predator strikes in Pakistan. The agency recently submitted a request for additional Predators from the Air Force, which manages the U.S. drone fleet, one official said. **For years, the CIA drones were operated from inside Pakistan, but some are also flown from an air base across the Afghan border near Jalalabad.**

A drone strike last month killed Pakistan Taliban chief Baitullah Mahsud. U.S. officials said they are watching closely to see whether his death leads to even a temporary drop in the number of suicide bombings. **Mahsud’s organization had become a major supplier of suicide bombers to other insurgent groups,** training attackers that in some cases would be deployed to carry out strikes in Pakistan or Afghanistan.

“He turned it into a business,” the Defense Department official said. **“Putting people through a process to indoctrinate them, prepping them to execute, and then basically they can be bartered or sold.”** Though other U.S. officials said Mahsud did not appear to have been motivated by financial gain, they did confirm the supplier arrangement. **“He didn’t sell suicide bombers like a commodity for profit,”** said a U.S. counterterrorism official. **“He’d offer resources—in this case human beings ready to die—to his sympathizers in exchange for things he needed.** These were deals among tribal figures, not outsourcing agreements among corporations.”

For eight years, the CIA’s main priorities in Afghanistan were to hunt for Al-Qaeda, manage relationships with warlords—doling out inducements that included cash and, in some cases, Viagra**—and rebuild the Afghan spy service.** The difficulty of that task was underscored this month by the assassination of the service’s No. 2 official.

But the [CIA’s] role is likely to shift under McChrystal, who has placed a greater emphasis on protecting civilians and rooting out government graft. U.S. spy agencies have already stepped up their scrutiny of corruption in Kabul. The recent Senate

report described a wiretapping system activated last year that is aimed at tracing ties between government officials and drug kingpins in the country.

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4. “U.S. Says Taliban Has a New Haven in Pakistan,” by Pamela Constable, Washington Post, 29 September 2009 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com>). [KBTSPakWT, KBTSAfghanGW]

We quote:

Islamabad, Pakistan—As American troops move deeper into southern Afghanistan to fight Taliban insurgents, **U.S. officials are expressing new concerns about the role of fugitive Taliban leader Mohammad Omar and his council of lieutenants, who reportedly plan and launch cross-border strikes from safe havens around the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta.**

[U.S. far less familiar with vast region of Baluchistan than with northwestern tribal areas]

But U.S. officials acknowledge they know relatively little about the remote and arid Pakistani border region, have no capacity to strike there, and have few windows into the turbulent mix of Pashtun tribal and religious politics that has turned the area into a sanctuary for the Taliban leaders, who are known collectively as the Quetta Shura.

Pakistani officials, in turn, have been accused of allowing the Taliban movement to regroup in the Quetta area, viewing it as a strategic asset rather than a domestic threat, while the army has been heavily focused on curbing violent Islamist extremists in the northwest border region hundreds of miles away.

As a result, Pakistani and foreign analysts here said, Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan province, has suddenly emerged as an urgent but elusive new target as Washington grapples with the Taliban’s rapidly spreading arc of influence and terror across Afghanistan. “In the past, we focused on Al-Qaeda because they were a threat to us.

The Quetta Shura mattered less to us because we had no troops in the region,” said Anne W. Patterson, the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan. “Now our troops are there on the other side of the border, and the Quetta Shura is high on Washington’s list.”

Patterson also acknowledged that the United States is far less familiar with the vast desert region than with the northwestern tribal areas, where it has been cooperating closely with Pakistan for several years in the hunt for Al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders and where it periodically kills insurgents with missiles fired from remotely piloted aircraft.

The United States does not carry out such drone strikes in the Quetta region. As Patterson put it, bluntly: “**Our intelligence on Quetta is vastly less. We have no people there, no cross-border operations, no Predators.**”

[Pashtuns in Kandahar region of Afghanistan have strong ties with those on Pakistan side]

According to Pakistani analysts, **the Taliban's presence in the Quetta region is more discreet than it was earlier in the decade, when Omar fled there from U.S. and Afghan military attacks. He was joined by thousands of fighters, who blended into ethnic Pashtun neighborhoods and refugee camps.**

But although Omar and his associates now keep a low profile and move constantly among villages and mosques in the lawless Pashtun strip between Quetta and the border, **Pakistani and foreign experts said Baluchistan has reemerged as a Taliban sanctuary, recruiting ground, and command post.**

"Quetta is absolutely crucial to the Taliban today," said Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani expert on the Taliban, in a telephone interview. **"From there they get recruits, fuel, and fertilizer for explosives, weapons, and food. Suicide bombers are trained on that side. They have support from the mosques and madrassas."**

Michael Semple, a former United Nations official in Afghanistan now based in Islamabad, **described the Quetta region's refugee camps as "a great reserve army" for the Taliban.** He said **Pashtun tribes in the Kandahar region of Afghanistan, the Taliban's ethnic and spiritual base, have strong ties with those on the Pakistan side.** "They are intermarried, they have Pakistani ID cards, and you can't tell the difference," Semple said.

On the other hand, he said, **reports of Taliban leaders living openly in Quetta, even attending weddings, are nonsense.** "They are deeply suspicious of the Pakistanis, and they have their own agenda," he said. During Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting that ended last week, **posters appeared on walls across Quetta, asking people to contribute their money, vehicles, and sons to the "fight against occupying forces" across the border in Afghanistan.**

[Critics have long doubted Pakistani willingness to seriously pursue Taliban in Baluchistan]

General Stanley A. McChrystal, the top U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan, has raised new alarms about the Quetta Shura, describing it in his recent report to President Obama as a major command center for the widening wave of Taliban bombings and attacks.

Virtually all of the Afghan Taliban's strategic decisions are made by the Quetta Shura, according to U.S. officials. **Decisions flow from the group "to Taliban field commanders, who in turn make tactical decisions that support the shura's strategic direction,"** a counterterrorism official said.

Unlike Pakistani Taliban groups based farther north in the rugged mountains on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, **the Quetta Shura is considered uninterested in operations inside Pakistan. Pakistani officials have discounted the shura's dominance and even its existence.** But U.S. military officials describe it as "effective" and a **"viable command and control organization."**

Critics have long raised doubts about whether Pakistan's security forces are willing to seriously pursue Taliban leaders and activities in Baluchistan. Some allege that Pakistan's intelligence services continue to secretly train Taliban fighters there, although Pakistani officials assert that they have purged their ranks of religiously motivated officers.

Patterson said **Pakistani officials were growing "extremely nervous" that the current policy disputes in Washington would lead to a premature U.S. pullout from Afghanistan.** "They will not rush to cut ties with the Taliban if they think they will be back in charge there again," she said.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai has repeatedly accused the Pakistanis of ignoring the activities of Omar and his associates. Twice he gave Pakistani officials lists with what he said were the names and locations of Taliban leaders in the Quetta area, but Pakistan flatly rejected the allegations.

Pakistani security officials said they have made significant efforts to stop Taliban cross-border infiltration in Baluchistan, stepping up border patrols at Washington's request. **The army has conducted no major anti-Taliban operations there, however,** leaving raids to the police and frontier constabulary.

[Jamiat-i-Islami ran Baluchistan from 2002-2008, give Afghan extremists more protection]

"From our judgment, there are no Taliban in Baluchistan," said Major General Athar Abbas, Pakistan's military spokesman. Asked about the names of Quetta Shura leaders provided by Afghan and U.S. officials, he said: "Six to ten of them have been killed, two are in Afghanistan, and two are insignificant. **When people call Mullah Omar the mayor of Quetta, that is incorrect.**"

Abbas noted that **the recent Pakistani army operation in the northwest Swat Valley had successfully driven Pakistani Taliban forces out of the area, and he said he hoped the Swat campaign had overcome any concerns Washington might have about Pakistan's willingness to take on the Islamist insurgents.** If the United States has information about Taliban leaders in Baluchistan, "tell us who and where they are," he said. "We will not allow your forces inside, but if you lead, we will follow."

Patterson said **Pakistani officials had "made it crystal clear that they have different priorities from ours," being far more concerned about Taliban attacks inside Pakistan than across the border.** She noted that **Pakistan had once trained Islamist fighters to operate against India and elsewhere and that the same groups have now turned against the state.** "You cannot tolerate vipers in your bosom without getting bitten," Patterson said. "Our concern is whether Pakistan really controls its territory. There are people who do not threaten Pakistan but who are extremely important to us."

Another concern raised by critics and foreign officials is the support by some political and religious leaders in Baluchistan toward the Taliban. They note that **the strong local presence of Jamiat-i-Islami, a conservative Islamic party that backed the original Taliban movement and virtually ran the Baluchistan government from 2002 to 2008, has given the Afghan extremists additional protection.**

Mehmood Jan, a newspaper publisher in Quetta, said in a telephone interview that **there are “thousands” of Jamiat madrassas in the Pashtun belt and that some Jamiat legislators openly champion the Taliban.** Jan said **provincial police forces had regularly raided Taliban hideouts**, including mosques and madrassas, **but with only limited success.** In many Pashtun neighborhoods, he said, “everywhere you see the white turbans of the young Taliban and the black turbans of the adults.”

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