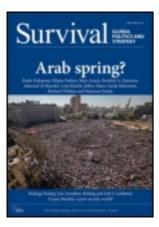
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Lashkar-e-Tayiba and the Pakistani State

C. Christine Fair

Lashkar-e-Tayiba (LeT) is the most lethal terrorist group operating from South Asia. Founded in 1989 in Afghanistan with help from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), it began operations in India in 1990. Until November 2008, US policymakers tended to dismiss LeT as India's problem, despite the fact that the group had been attacking US troops and their international and Afghan allies in Afghanistan.¹ On 26 November 2008, however, LeT made its debut as an international terrorist organisation when it launched a four-day siege of India's port city of Mumbai. In that attack, 166 people perished, including several Americans and Israelis. This was the first time that LeT had targeted non-Indian civilians. Recent revelations that David Coleman Headley, an American citizen of Pakistani origin, conspired with LeT (and, allegedly, a Pakistani army major deputed to the ISI) to launch the Mumbai offensive have stoked fears about American home-grown terrorism and the ability of LeT to attack the US homeland.2 Headley's ties to an al-Qaeda leader, Ilyas Kashmiri, have furthered speculation about LeT's ties to al-Qaeda.3 Rightly or wrongly, some American officials believe it is only a matter of time before LeT will launch an attack on US soil.4

Scholars of South Asian security tend to explain Pakistan's reliance on LeT (and a raft of other groups) as a response to its enduring rivalry with India, rooted in the conflict over the disputed territory of Kashmir specifically and in deep-seated fears about Indian intentions towards Pakistan more

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generally.⁵ Lacking military, diplomatic or political options to resolve its security competition with India, Pakistan has developed a series of proxies that operate in India and Afghanistan, allowing Islamabad to enjoy certain security benefits while maintaining plausible deniability. In Afghanistan in particular, Pakistan has relied on proxies to prevent India from developing influence and deepening its capabilities to foment insurgency in Pakistan's restive territories along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border.

This widely accepted explanation for Pakistan's reliance upon LeT and other Islamist groups results in policy recommendations that stress the

Evidence for LeT ties to al-Qaeda is not robust

importance of resolving the enduring rivalry between India and Pakistan as a necessary (if insufficient) condition for Pakistan to abandon its strategic reliance on Islamist proxies. Calls are regularly made for international intervention to encourage both sides to reach some kind of accommodation.⁶ Similarly, many have argued that Afghanistan will be stabilised only when

the status of Kashmir is resolved, as this alone will permit Pakistan to relax its aggressive deployment there of Islamist proxies, including LeT.⁷

Unfortunately, this conventional understanding of Pakistan's reliance upon militant groups, framed within the logic of Pakistan's external security preoccupations, is dangerously incomplete. It overlooks the domestic significance of militant groups.⁸ In fact, LeT plays an important role within Pakistan, countering other militants that have begun attacking the state and citizens alike, especially since 2002. Equally important, there is little reason to believe that the death of bin Laden and the weakening of al-Qaeda more generally will have a mitigating effect upon LeT or other groups operating in the region. This is in part because the evidence for LeT ties with al-Qaeda is not robust.

One implication of this argument is that a resolution of the Indo-Pakistani dispute (an improbable proposition to begin with) will not be sufficient to motivate Pakistan to abandon LeT and other groups. Indeed, Pakistan's reliance upon LeT is likely only to deepen as security conditions within that country continue to deteriorate. Lamentably, there is little that the United States can do in response, besides preparing risk-mitigation strategies and

attempting to deepen its engagement with Pakistan in a bid to exert maximal influence there.

LeT origins and goals

LeT originally emerged as the military wing of the Markaz Daawat ul Irshad (MDI), headquartered in Muridke near the Punjabi city of Lahore. MDI was founded in 1986 by two Pakistani engineering professors, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed and Zafar Iqbal, with the assistance of the ISI.¹⁰ Abdullah Azzam, a close of associate of bin Laden who was affiliated with the International Islamic University of Islamabad and the Maktab ul Khadamat (Bureau of Services for Arab Mujahadeen, which was the precursor to al-Qaeda), also provided assistance, before he was killed in Peshawar in 1988. MDI, along with numerous other militant groups, was involved in supporting the mujahadeen in Afghanistan from 1986 onwards, and established militant training camps for this purpose. (One camp in Paktia was known as Muaskar-e-Taiba and a second in the Kunar province of Afghanistan as Muaskar-e-Aqsa.) Mariam Abou Zahab notes that MDI/LeT's training camps were always separate from those of the Taliban, which hosted Deobandi militant groups such as Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI) and Harkat-ul-Mujahedeen (HuM).¹¹ This has led some analysts, such as Hassan Abbas and the present author, to conclude that LeT has not had the sustained and organic connections to al-Qaeda enjoyed by the Deobandi groups, many of which became outsourcers for al-Qaeda operations in Pakistan.¹²

In 1993, MDI divided its activities into two related but separate organisations: MDI proper continued the mission of proselytisation and education, while LeT emerged as the militant wing. After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, LeT/MDI shifted focus to Indian-administered Kashmir, staging its first commando-style attack there in 1990. Indeed, for much of the 1990s (with few exceptions), LeT operations were restricted to Kashmir.

LeT itself began reorganising in December 2001, days prior to its designation by the United States as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. American and Pakistani analysts alike believe that the ISI alerted LeT to this impending designation. In response, LeT's leader, Hafiz Saeed, declared there would be two organisations: a militant component commanded by Maulana Rehman

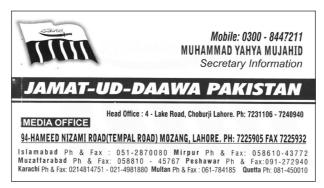


Figure 1. Business card of Muhammad Yahya Mujahid (c. 2004), indicating JuD locations throughout Pakistan (Source: Muhammad Yahya Mujahid, 2004)

Lakhvi and a larger umbrella organisation that became known as Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), into which LeT was able, thanks to the advance warning, to transfer most of its financial assets and personnel. Likewise, LeT-occupied offices and buildings were simply reclassified as JuD facilities. Of course, the militant cells of the organisation continue to use JuD's facilities for their activities and share phone numbers, personnel, bank accounts and offices. Thus, for all practical purposes, the organisations are really one and the same. With this new structure in place, the organisation has been able to retain its stock of fighters while also expanding its recruitment base through the provision of social services. Equally important, JuD has been able to propagate LeT/JuD's unique doctrine and philosophy.

LeT has spawned a vast training infrastructure throughout Pakistan to support its dual mission of training militants and converting Pakistanis to the Ahl-e-Hadith Islamic tradition, and while its 200-acre headquarters remains in Muridke, the organisation today maintains offices in most of the major cities throughout Pakistan.¹⁵ (Figure 1 shows a business card of Muhammad Yahya Mujahid, JuD's spokesperson, indicating these office locations.) These offices undertake recruitment as well as funds collection. In addition to its public offices, LeT also maintains covert training camps throughout Pakistan. Hafiz Saeed is the *amir* (supreme commander) of the organisation.¹⁶ Recruits typically come from cities in central and southern Punjab (including Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Bahawalpur, Vehari, Khaneval and Kasur), reflecting the Punjabi nature of the group and the fact that its

main infrastructure is located in the Punjab. In addition, some recruits come from Afghanistan and Pashtun areas in Pakistan.¹⁷ There is no publically available (much less accurate) accounting of the organisation's end-strength, but the US State Department estimates that it has 'several thousand' members in Pakistan, Pakistan-administered Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir (in Indian-administered Kashmir), and the Kashmir Valley.¹⁸ For its part, the Delhi-based South Asia Terrorism Portal estimates that, with some fluctuation, the group has more than 750 fighters in Jammu and Kashmir, which represents the overwhelming bulk of the foreign militants in the Kashmir Valley.¹⁹ However, LeT operations tend to be conducted by relatively small units of fewer than a dozen fighters.²⁰

A perusal of LeT literature demonstrates a commitment to targeting Indian Hindus, Jews and other kafirs (unbelievers) outside of Pakistan.²¹ LeT has a standard modus operandi, which has often been misconstrued as simply 'suicide operations'. In fact, LeT does not carry out suicide operations per se, in which the goal of the attacker is to die during the execution of the attack. Rather, LeT's fedayeen missions are more akin to high-risk missions in which well-trained commandos engage in fierce combat, during which death is preferable to capture. While martyrdom is in some sense the ultimate objective of LeT operatives, the group selects missions where there is a possibility, however slim, of living to kill more enemy operatives. The goal of LeT commandos is therefore not merely to commit suicide attacks, but rather to kill as many targets as possible before succumbing to enemy operations.²²

Contrary to conventional wisdom, LeT recruits are not predominantly drawn from Pakistan's madrassas. Indeed, the proportion of madrassaeducated LeT operatives is believed to be as low as 10%.23 (This stands in sharp contrast to the madrassa-based networks of many Deobandi groups, including the Afghan Taliban.²⁴) Rather, LeT recruits are generally in their late teens or early twenties and tend to be better educated than other militants, and Pakistanis more generally. A majority of LeT recruits have completed secondary school with good grades, and some have even attended college.²⁵ This reflects both the background of LeT's founding fathers, who were engineering professors, and MDI's commitment to technical and other education. Since the late 1990s, moreover, LeT has continued to develop its

Figure 2. Summary of Militant Groups Operating From Pakistan

Group name	Sectarian background	Regional activities	Overlapping membership
Al-Qaeda in Pakistan	Salafist	Has facilitated attacks inside and outside Pakistan and has planned international attacks from safe havens within Pakistan.	TTP, Afghan Taliban, other Deobandi militant groups
Afghan Taliban	Deobandi	Wages insurgency in Afghanistan; enjoys safe havens in Pakistan.	TTP and other Deobandi militant groups; al-Qaeda
Jaish-e-Mohammed (JM), Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI), Harkat-ul-Ansar, Harkat-ul-Mujahedeen, and similar	Deobandi	Traditionally focused on Indian- administered Kashmir but have operated in Afghanistan (and continue to do so); factions have targeted the Pakistani state.	Al-Qaeda, TTP, Afghan Taliban, Deobandi sectarian militant groups and Jamiat-e-Ulema-e- Islam (JUI)
Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) and Sipah-e-Sahaba-e- Pakistan (SSP)	Deobandi	Historically anti-Shia, have operated in Afghanistan for decades; currently targeting the Pakistani state with the TTP and allied groups.	other Deobandi militant groups and JUI
Hizbul Mujahedeen (HM) and al-Badr	Jamaat-e-Islami	Active in Indian-administered Kashmir.	Jamaat-e-Islami
Tehrik-e-Taliban-e- Pakistan (TTP, Pakistani Taliban)	Deobandi	Targets the Pakistani state, with some commanders mobilising fighters in Afghanistan.	Afghan Taliban, Deobandi militant groups in Pakistan and possibly al-Qaeda
Lashkar-e-Tayiba (LeT)	Ahl-e-Hadith	Fights in Indian-administered Kashmir and the Indian hinterland; Iimited out-of-theatre operations.	Although historically linked with al-Qaeda, its modern ties to the group are subject to debate

operational reach into India. This has involved recruiting Indian citizens and increasingly entails developing an indigenous Indian franchise, the Indian Mujahadeen.²⁶

Interestingly, LeT does not primarily recruit from adherents of the theological tradition from which it derives (Ahl-e-Hadith). There are two reasons for this anomaly.²⁷ Firstly, because many Ahl-e-Hadith religious scholars (ulema) have rejected violent jihad, LeT has split from its sectarian roots. This has unsurprisingly alienated at least some Ahl-e-Hadith adherents.²⁸ Another reason is that the Ahl-e-Hadith community within Pakistan is actually quite small, perhaps representing less than 10% of Pakistan's population of 180 million.²⁹ In fact, LeT overwhelmingly recruits Deobandis and Barelvis (a heterodox Sufi order).

LeT among other armed groups

LeT is by no means the only armed group active in Pakistan today. There are several kinds of militant groups based in Pakistan that can be distinguished by a variety of characteristics, including their allegiance to various Islamic sects or movements (for example, Ahl-e-Hadith, Deoband, Jamaat-e-Islami and so on); their theatres of operation (including Afghanistan, India and Pakistan); the ethnic background of their members (Arab, Central Asian, Pakistani and subgroups thereof); and their objectives (overthrowing the Pakistani government, seizing Kashmir, supporting the Afghan Taliban).³⁰ Based on these distinctions, the following clusters of Islamist militant groups can be identified (see also Figure 2):

Al-Qaeda (in Pakistan). Al-Qaeda operatives based in Pakistan are largely non-Pakistani. However, they work with and through networks of supportive Pakistani militant groups. The strongest ties are with Deobandi groups such as the Pakistan Taliban, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JM) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). From sanctuaries in the tribal areas and within key Pakistani cities, al-Qaeda has facilitated attacks within Pakistan and has planned international attacks.31

Afghan Taliban. While the Afghan Taliban mainly operates in Afghanistan, its members enjoy sanctuary in Pakistan's Baluchistan province, parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as North-West Frontier province), and key cities in the Pakistani heartland, including Karachi, Peshawar and Quetta. The Afghan Taliban emerged from Deobandi madrassas in Pakistan and retains its nearly exclusive ethnic Pashtun and Deobandi sectarian orientation.³²

Kashmiri groups. Several groups claim to focus on Kashmir, among them LeT itself. Other groups include the Jamaat-e-Islami based Hizbul Mujahedeen (HM) and related splinter groups, and several Deobandi groups (including JM, LeJ and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI)). With the notable exception of HM, most of these groups claim few ethnic Kashmiris among their number, and most came into being as surrogates of Pakistan's ISI. In addition, many of these groups now operate well beyond Kashmir when possible.

Sectarian groups. It used to be that the main sectarian groups within Pakistan were anti-Sunni Shia groups that enjoyed support from Iran, but today most sectarian groups are Sunni and engage in violent attacks on Shi'ites. Such groups are almost always Deobandi (such as Sipah-e-Sahabae-Pakistan (SSP) and LeJ). In addition, there is considerable intra-Sunni violence, with Deobandis targeting Barelvis and Ahmediyyas, who are considered non-Muslim in Pakistan and elsewhere.³³

The Tehrik-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TTP, Pakistan Taliban). Groups which selfidentify as the 'Pakistan Taliban' appeared in Waziristan as early as 2004 under the leadership of Waziristan-based Deobandi militants, who had fought with the Afghan Taliban in Afghanistan and earlier in the anti-Soviet jihad. By late 2007, several militant commanders had organised under the leadership of South Waziristan-based Baitullah Mehsud under the moniker 'Tehrik-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan'. Mehsud was killed in a US drone strike in August 2009, leading to much speculation about the TTP's fate, but the group re-emerged under the direction of the vehemently sectarian Hakimullah Mehsud. After a brief pause in the violence, the TTP launched a bloody campaign of suicide bombings that precipitated Pakistani military activities against the group's stronghold in South Waziristan. This prompted another round of TTP-launched suicide bombings intended to punish the state for that campaign.34 While the TTP is widely seen as a largely Pashtun insurgency, Punjab-based groups such as LeJ and other Deobandi groups are important components of this organisation.

None of these categories (or the groups within them) is necessarily mutually exclusive. Deobandi groups, for example, have overlapping membership with each other and with the Deobandi Islamist political party, Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI). Thus, a member of JM may also be a member of LeJ or even an office holder at some level with the JUI. Moreover, Deobandi groups have in recent years begun operating against the Pakistani state following Pakistan's participation in the US-led 'war on terror'. JM and LeJ, for instance, have collaborated with the TTP by providing suicide bombers and logistical support, allowing the TTP to conduct attacks throughout Pakistan, far beyond the TTP's territorial remit.³⁵ Both LeT and several Deobandi militant groups have also been operating in Afghanistan against US, NATO and Afghan forces.³⁶ In contrast, other Kashmiri groups are operating under the influence of the Islamist political party Jamaat-e-Islami, such as al-Badr and HM, which tend to comprise ethnic Kashmiris and have retained their operational focus on Kashmir.

Pakistan has been a victim of sectarian violence (first anti-Sunni, and now anti-Shia) since the late 1970s. However, the current insurgency differs from previous internal security threats. In October 2001, then-Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf supported the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom, launched in response to 9/11.37 In December, JM attacked the Indian parliament. India held Pakistan directly responsible for the actions of its proxies and launched its largest military build-up since the 1971 war. Intense diplomatic intervention by Washington managed to avert a war, but military forces remained on both sides of the border until October 2002. Tensions flared again when LeT attacked the wives and children of Indian army personnel in Kaluchak in May 2002. The United States again inter-

vened to prevent war. These crises imposed severe costs on US military operations in Afghanistan as Pakistan moved its forces from the west to the east, allowing Taliban and al-Qaeda operatives to flow into Pakistan's tribal areas.38

LeT has remained loyal to Islamabad

After sustained American pressure throughout the winter and spring of 2002, that summer Musharraf adopted what has been called a 'moderated jihad policy', according to which he agreed to minimise the infiltration of Pakistani militants into India.³⁹ Tensions between the Pakistani government and its suite of militant proxies had already come into focus when Musharraf's participation in the 'global war on terror' caused many militant groups to reject their patron's decision and rebel. In early 2002, JM split into two factions, one that remained loyal to the state under its founder Masood Azhar and another that began a suicide campaign against the state. (Among the group's targets were Musharraf himself, the Karachi corps commander and several civilian leaders.40) Since then, Pakistan's Deobandi groups have continued to splinter and in some cases target Pakistan's political leadership and citizenry, along with Pakistani military installations and personnel.

It is important to note that all the groups that split from the Pakistani state were Deobandi. In contrast, LeT has remained loyal to Islamabad, and therefore differs from other militant groups in several important ways. Firstly, LeT has never attacked the Pakistani state, nor indeed any other target within Pakistan. It operates exclusively outside of Pakistan, which can be taken as further evidence of tight linkages between LeT and the Pakistani security establishment. Such links may also account for the fact that while several LeT cells have been based in the United States, the organisation has never conspired to attack the US homeland. This is true despite the group's operations against Americans in Afghanistan and in the 2008 Mumbai attack. The ISI likely understands that attacks on American soil would provoke unrelenting retaliation. Indeed, US legislation such as the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 (generally known as Kerry–Lugar–Berman) specifically mentions LeT by name.

Secondly, unlike other groups, LeT has never experienced a leadership split of any consequence since its founding. While it has at various times reorganised, this is not the same thing as dividing into opposing factions because of leadership quarrels. In fact, the ISI has often engineered dissent among the other Deobandi militant groups to retain some control over them and to limit their ability to develop independently of the state. LeT is the only group that Islamabad has kept intact without orchestrating significant cleavages among its top decisions-makers. (As with all organisations, some discord has been observed among local commanders. (42)

Finally, whereas the state has taken action against several Deobandi groups and al-Qaeda, albeit through inept and sometimes inefficacious military operations, it has taken only marginal and cosmetic steps in the wake of the 2008 Mumbai attack. In particular, Islamabad has refused to ban JuD, even though it has banned similar groups in the past and despite a promise to do so after the UN Security Council proscribed the organisation and identified its leadership as terrorists in early 2009. As Some of its leaders have been jailed to appease Washington after Mumbai, but they continue to meet their associates and plan operations. To this day JuD continues to convene high-profile demonstrations, for example to protest against the assassination of Osama bin Laden on Pakistani soil and the release from Pakistani custody of Raymond Davis (a CIA contractor who killed two ISI operatives during an altercation). The group has also shown support for Pakistan's blasphemy law and for the killer of Punjab Governor Salman Tasseer, who wanted to reform that law. JuD (and other Islamist organisations) have taken the

lead in shaping public opinion about these events, which centre on loathing of the United States and calls for the government and military to sever ties across the board. This is an easy sell to Pakistan's increasingly anti-American public, which also appears to appreciate LeT/JuD's ongoing domestic social work and relief activities. 45

LeT and domestic security

While LeT has maintained both its unity and its focus on targets outside Pakistan, Deobandi groups have increasingly targeted a range of actors within Pakistan. Such groups have long supported attacks on Pakistan's Shi'ites and Ahmediyyas, for instance. (Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto declared Ahmediyyas to be non-Muslim in 1974 to placate Islamist opposition groups who demanded this.) Deobandi groups have also begun attacking Pakistan's Sufi shrines in recent years. Examples of such attacks include an assault on an important shrine in Lahore, Data Darbar, in July 2010, and a suicide-bomber attack in April 2011 on a shrine dedicated to a saint, Sakhi Sarvar, in Dera Ghazi Khan. 46 These shrines follow the Barelvi school of Islam in Pakistan, the adherents of which believe in mysticism, revere saints and shrines, and frequent shrines where spiritual guides associated with saints may intercede on behalf of worshippers. Many, if not most, Pakistanis are believed to be Barelvi, although there are no data on this question.⁴⁷ Pakistanis generally hold these shrines in high esteem as Sufi saints brought Islam to South Asia. However, Deobandis loathe and denounce Barelvi mystical practices and beliefs as un-Islamic accretions derived from Hinduism. Deobandis also encourage attacks against Pakistan's non-Muslim minorities, such as Christians.

In short, Deobandis regard Barelvis, Shia and Ahmediyyas as guilty of practicing munafiqit, or acting to spread disunity. The term munafiqit is sometimes translated as 'hypocrisy' in English, implying that perpetrators, known as munafiqin, are not truthful to themselves or others. Anyone who does not espouse Deobandi beliefs is seen as complicit in this crime, including Pakistani security personnel, civilian leaders and individuals who oppose Deobandi groups and their agenda. Such people are liable to be targeted under a sustained campaign of Deobandi violence that first began in



Figure 3. Anti-*munafiqin* graffiti on the wall of a Pakistan Taliban hideout captured by the Pakistani army in the Makeen Valley, South Waziristan, July 2010. The Pashto phrase translates as 'Don't indulge in *munafiqit* [hypocrisy] or you will be debased'. The Pakistani army believes the inscription was written in blood, but this cannot be confirmed by the author. (Source: author photo)

the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and then expanded into the settled parts of the frontier in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and well into the Punjab.

The results of this campaign have been lethal. Using data available from the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, between 1 January 2004 (when the database begins) and 31 December 2010 (the last date available), there have been over 3,517 attacks by Islamist militant groups, the vast majority of them Deobandi. These attacks have killed or injured more than 25,116 victims.⁴⁸ Many of these attacks have been committed since 2006, when the Pakistani state began engaging in vigorous anti-terrorism efforts against militant groups. (See Figure 4 for yearly breakdowns of incidents and victims.) Deobandi militant groups have prosecuted some of the most high-profile attacks in Pakistan, including the 2009 assault on the Pakistan

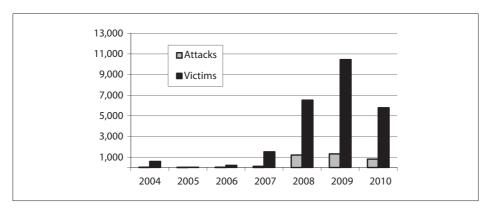


Figure 4. Islamist Terrorist Attacks and Victims, 1 January 2004–31 December 2010 (Source: Worldwide Incident Tracking System, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, https://wits.nctc.gov)

Army General Headquarters, the two assassination attempts on then-President Pervez Musharraf and the 2008 suicide blast which claimed former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

The fact that Deobandi and other groups engage in anti-munafiqin violence while LeT does not greatly contributes to the latter's domestic utility. According to LeT's manifesto, Hum Kyon Jihad Kar Rahen Hain? (Why Are We Waging Jihad?), the group 'does not wage jihad in Pakistan', preferring to focus instead on Kashmir and other regions in which Muslims are oppressed.⁴⁹ Thus, in contrast to Deobandi groups, which savage the state and its citizens, LeT is fundamentally non-sectarian and genuinely committed to the integrity of the Pakistani state and its diverse polity. This is an unusual commitment, particularly given Pakistan's collaboration with the United States since 2001. LeT's manifesto acknowledges that the Pakistani state has made mistakes, but insists that Pakistani Muslims are all brothers, irrespective of their sectarian commitments. 50 Accordingly, Barelvis, Sufis or Shi'ites should not be attacked.⁵¹ Neither are they munafiqin, as Deobandis believe. On the other hand, non-Muslims outside of Pakistan (Hindus, Jews, Christians, atheists) are at war with Muslims and should be attacked. 52 LeT's manifesto urges all Muslims to fight these groups, lest Pakistanis turn on each other (as indeed they have done).

This defence of the Pakistani state helps explain the support LeT has enjoyed both from Islamabad and from ordinary Pakistanis. LeT is the only

organisation actively challenging the Deobandi orthodoxy that has imperilled the domestic security of the state. Moreover, it is the only militant organisation that has defined the targets of its jihad and explained the utility of external jihad in a way that regular Pakistanis can understand. Thus, LeT's doctrine works to secure the integrity of the Pakistani state domestically even while it complicates Pakistan's external relations with India, the United States and others.⁵³

In this context, Pakistan's support of LeT/JuD's expansion into the provisions of social services after 2002 makes sense. By 2004 JuD was providing schools (not madrassas), clinics and other social services throughout

Many journalists are on the ISI payroll

Pakistan.⁵⁴ In 2004, LeT/JuD raised large quantities of funds and relief supplies for the victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami; in 2005 it provided various forms of relief and medical assistance following the Kashmir earthquake; in 2009 it provided social services to internally displaced persons fleeing the military offensive in Swat; and in 2010 it supported victims of the 2010 monsoon-related super flood. Of course, it is entirely possible that Pakistan's

media deliberately exaggerated LeT's contribution to foster popular support for the organisation. Many journalists are explicitly on the ISI's payroll and routinely plant stories on behalf of the ISI or shape stories to suit the ISI's interests.55 Still, it is clear that the state has an enormous incentive to encourage and facilitate the group's expansion throughout Pakistan.⁵⁶ The more JuD enjoys domestic legitimacy, the more effective it becomes in countering the dangerous beliefs of Deobandi groups. This role will only become more important as Pakistan's domestic security situation degrades.

The importance of LeT's domestic roles suggests that Pakistan is unlikely to abandon its reliance upon the group, regardless of what happens vis-à-vis India and despite the increasing threat the organisation poses to international security. Even though Pakistan is sure to be held accountable for future attacks perpetrated by the group, and even though an LeT/JuD attack in India may be one of the quickest routes to an outright conflict with India (or even the United States), it is unlikely that Islamabad will be persuaded to distance itself from the group. While Pakistan's reliance upon LeT may be a risky proposition, LeT/JuD appears to have an enormous role in securing Pakistan's interests externally. Equally and perhaps more importantly, LeT appears to contribute not just to Pakistan's external interests but to the very cohesion and survival of the state.

Similarly, Pakistan is unlikely to decisively squash the Islamist militants now savaging the state. This is in part because certain groups, such as the Pakistan Taliban, overlap with other groups that Pakistan still considers to be assets, particularly groups such as JM, which retain an interest in targeting India rather than Pakistan. Moreover, as the army's various attempted peace deals demonstrate, there remains a latent hope that these groups can be rehabilitated and brought into alignment with Pakistan's foreign interests. Finally, serious shortcomings in Pakistan's legal system, armed forces, intelligence agencies, police and other law-enforcement entities have undermined the state's ability to resist domestic threats.

It is important to note that the death of Osama bin Laden will not dampen the domestic or external utility of LeT, nor will it temper the vicious violence of the Pakistan Taliban. It may even encourage ever more sophisticated violence from the TTP, which has ties to al-Qaeda and the Haqqani network. (Haqqani has long been close to bin Laden.) And, of course, bin Laden's death will not affect enduring US concerns about nuclear proliferation, the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, the country's command-andcontrol arrangements, and the possibility of nuclear escalation during any crisis with India, among other concerns.⁵⁷

Mitigating the threat

Given that Pakistan is unlikely to be induced to abandon its reliance upon militancy for both external and internal reasons, the international community, including the United States, should abandon its optimism that additional foreign or security assistance will shift Pakistan's strategic calculus away from using LeT and other militants to serve its internal and external goals. For Pakistan, LeT is an important asset in the same way that it is an enemy for countries such as India and even the United States. This suggests an urgent need to conceptualise and implement a robust threatcontainment strategy.

Containing Pakistan per se is not feasible, nor is attempting to do so even desirable. Pakistan has many asymmetric options which the United States must take seriously, and containing the country as a whole should be considered only as a last resort. However, there are means of containing the specific threats that Pakistan poses. The United States, the United Kingdom, India and other states victimised by LeT and similar groups should forge closer cooperation on intelligence and counter-terrorism initiatives to interdict planned attacks and to identify and prosecute individuals after the fact. Such prosecutions will likely present evidence that will incriminate others who remain active in the organisation, contributing to further efforts to downgrade their efficacy.58 Greater contacts must be forged with immigration, treasury and other government agencies in those states in North America, Europe, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia that LeT/JuD uses for logistical purposes, movement of recruits into and out of Pakistan and transfers of funds and other materials to sustain operations. The goal of these engagements should be to deny Pakistani militant groups freedom of movement of all assets and to disrupt potential cells and plots.

Because the Pakistani diaspora and converts to Islam remain important sources of recruits and financial support for LeT/JuD, the US and other governments will have to forge sensitive policies that consider the diaspora as an important source of insecurity while ensuring that innocent people are not singled out without cause. ⁵⁹ This has been and will remain a delicate and fraught public-policy issue. ⁶⁰ Governments continue to debate how best to forthrightly concede these threats without alienating Muslims at home, who are important sources of information that can help deter potential attacks and catch those who have successfully executed attacks. However, Islamabad's refusal to shut down militant training camps in Pakistan leaves few options to states seeking to protect their citizens and allies from attacks by Pakistan-based groups or by individuals who have trained with such groups in Pakistan.

National and multilateral institutions, such as the US Department of Treasury, the United Nations Security Council and the European Union, should work to target specific individuals within militant organisations, as well as individuals within the Pakistani state found to be supporting such groups. In the case of the UN Security Council, this may mean working to forge coalitions with Pakistan's key supporter on the council, China. More generally, the United States will have to reach out to Pakistan's friends, as well as its foes, to forge a consensus on the best way to help Pakistan help itself. Indeed, Washington will need to develop a broad-based engagement strategy involving every relevant country (Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, China) to help forge a parallel, if not convergent, threat perception of Pakistan and policies to best address these threats.

Finally, any urge to 'cut Pakistan off' must be tempered, no matter how severe the budgetary crisis in the United States becomes. While it is true that financial and military assistance are never going to be adequate to alter Pakistan's threat perceptions, the United States should still make every effort to intensify and expand engagement, particularly after the demise of bin Laden. This will be difficult under current conditions, because Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies are seeking to limit the US presence in the country and minimise engagement. Nevertheless, US interests in Pakistan extend well beyond bin Laden's death and include securing resupply of US and allied troops in Afghanistan, maximising US oversight of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, and containing the myriad militant groups operating in and from Pakistan.

Despite all impulses to the contrary, the United States needs to stay the course and continue to invest in civilian institutions. Washington should make every possible effort to invest in civilian-led security governance and to provide technical and other support to empower Pakistan's parliament to incrementally increase its ability to exert oversight of Pakistan's defence and intelligence agencies. While a genuinely civilian-led Pakistan seems an impossible dream, any progress, however slim, will matter. Finding ways of providing meaningful support to Pakistan's law-enforcement agencies and judicial system should also be an important goal. Provincial assemblies also need technical skills-training and other forms of professional development. Perhaps the United Nations Development Programme is the best route for such activities. Devolution may also present new opportunities for engagement as each province may have specific needs and, depending upon the programme, may be more receptive. Provincial planning councils and ministries may offer new opportunities as it becomes clearer what devolution means in the Pakistani context.

While it seems dismaying that US investment in Pakistan has not yielded hoped-for security payoffs, this pessimism is not entirely justifiable. Had it not been for the investments thus far, the United States would not have had the resources necessary to identify and neutralise bin Laden and a host of other al-Qaeda operatives. And, as then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates claimed, there is evidence that high-level Pakistani officials did not know bin Laden's whereabouts before he was killed, suggesting that Islamabad's complicity with armed groups is not as widespread as some may believe. In any event, it would be a catastrophic error in judgement for the United States to walk away from Pakistan, forfeiting opportunities to acquire needed information and to help empower Pakistan's civilian institutions.

Notes

- Author experience in Afghanistan between June and October 2007 as a political officer to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.
- US Department of Justice, 'Chicago Resident David Coleman Headley Pleads Guilty To Role In India And Denmark Terrorism Conspiracies', press release, 18 March 2010, http:// www.justice.gov/usao/iln/pr/ chicago/2010/pro318_01.pdf.
- Carrie Johnson, 'US Citizen David Coleman Headley Admits role in Mumbai Attacks', Washington Post, 19 March 2010, http://www. washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/ article/2010/03/18/AR2010031805407. html.
- See discussion in Bruce Riedel, Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America, and the Future of Global Jihad (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2011), pp. 106–18.

- See, for example, T.V. Paul, 'Causes of the India–Pakistan Enduring Rivalry', in T.V. Paul (ed.), *The India–Pakistan Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 3–24.
- See, for example, the discussion between Paul Kapur and Sumit Ganguly in S. Paul Kapur, 'Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia', *International Security*, vol. 33, no. 2, Fall 2008, pp. 71–94; and Sumit Ganguly, 'Nuclear Stability in South Asia', *International Security*, vol. 33, no. 2, Fall 2008, pp. 45–70.
- See, for example, Barnett R.
 Rubin and Ahmed Rashid, 'From
 Great Game to Grand Bargain',
 Foreign Affairs, November—
 December 2008, http://www.
 foreignaffairs.com/articles/64604/
 barnett-r-rubin-and-ahmed-rashid/
 from-great-game-to-grand-bargain.

- For an extensive review of militancy in Pakistan, see C. Christine Fair, 'The Militant Challenge in Pakistan', Asia Policy, no. 11, January 2011, pp. 105-37.
- This section draws in part from C. Christine Fair, 'Antecedents and Implications of the November 2008 Lashkar-e-Taiba Attack Upon Mumbai', testimony presented before the United States House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, Washington DC, 11 March 2009.
- See Yoginder Sikand, 'The Islamist Militancy in Kashmir: The Case of the Lashkar-e-Taiba', in Aparna Rao et al. (eds), The Practice of War: Production, Reproduction and Communication of Armed Violence (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), pp. 215-38; Mariam Abou Zahab, 'I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise: The Pakistani Martyrs of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (Army of the Pure)', in Rao et al. (eds), The Practice of War, pp. 133-58; Saeed Shafqat, 'From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e- Taiba', in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), Pakistan: Nationalism Without a Nation (London: Zed Books, 2002), pp. 131-47.
- 11 Abou Zahab, 'I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise'.
- 12 Personal conversation with Hassan Abbas in autumn 2010. See also C. Christine Fair, 'Militant Recruitment in Pakistan: Implications for Al-Qa'ida and Other Organizations', Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, vol. 27, no. 6, November-December 2004, pp. 489-504.

- See 'US Embassy Cables: Lashkar-e-Taiba Terrorists Raise Funds in Saudi Arabia', Guardian, 5 December 2010, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/ us-embassy-cables-documents/220186; Stephen Phillip Cohen, 'The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan', Washington Quarterly, vol. 26, no. 3, 2003, pp. 7-25.
- 14 See 'US Embassy Cables: Lashkar-e-Taiba Terrorists Raise Funds in Saudi Arabia'.
- According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal, the Muridke Markaz (centre) comprises a 'Madrassa (seminary), a hospital, a market, a large residential area for "scholars" and faculty members, a fish farm and agricultural tracts. The LeT also reportedly operates 16 Islamic institutions, 135 secondary schools, an ambulance service, mobile clinics, blood banks and several seminaries across Pakistan.' See South Asia Terrorism Portal. 'Lashkar-e-Toiba [sic] "Army of the Pure"', http://www.satp.org/ satporgtp/countries/india/states/ jandk/terrorist_outfits/lashkar_e_ toiba.htm.
- South Asia Terrorism Portal. 'Lashkar-e-Toiba'.
- The author, along with Nadia Shoeb, Arif Jamal and the Combating Terrorism Center, is working on a database of LeT shaheed (martyr) biographies obtained from the group's publications. These observations are preliminary and derived from a database of 708 biographies. Data extraction and analysis was done by Nadia Shoeb.
- See US Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 'Chapter 6 - Terrorist Organizations',

- in Country Reports on Terrorism 2007, 30 April 2008, http://www.state. gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103714.htm. Note that many other details in the State Department write-up do not accord with other sources on the organisation. For example, the State Department claims that most LeT recruits come from madrassas, which is not confirmed by the LeT experts cited throughout this article.
- South Asia Terrorism Portal, 'Lashkar-e-Toiba'.
- See Muhammad Amir Ranan (Saba Ansari, trans.), The A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan (Lahore: Mashal, 2004).
- Jamaat-ud-Dawa, Hum Kyon Jihad Kar Rahen Hain? [Why Are We Waging Jihad?] (Lahore: Dar-ul-Andulus, 2004).
- Abou Zahab, 'I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise', p. 138; Nadia Shoeb's analysis of the Combating Terrorism Center's LeT database.
- Abou Zahab, 'I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise', p. 140; Shafqat, 'From Official Islam to Islamism', p. 142; Nadia Shoeb's analysis of the Combating Terrorism Center's LeT database.
- ²⁴ C. Christine Fair, The Madrassah Challenge: Militancy and Religious Education in Pakistan (Washington DC: USIP, 2008).
- Abou Zahab, 'I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise', pp. 133–58.
- ²⁶ C. Christine Fair, 'Students Islamic Movement of India and the Indian Mujahideen: An Assessment', Asia Policy, no. 9, January 2010, pp. 101–19.
- Nadia Shoeb's analysis of the Combating Terrorism Center's

- LeT database; C. Christine Fair, 'Militant Recruitment in Pakistan: Implications for Al-Qa'ida and Other Organizations', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, vol. 27, no. 6, November–December 2004, pp. 489–504; C. Christine Fair, 'The Educated Militants of Pakistan: Implications for Pakistan's Domestic Security', *Contemporary South Asia*, vol. 16, no. 1, March 2008, pp. 93–106.
- Ranan, The A to Z of Jehadi
 Organizations in Pakistan, pp. 296–301.
- There are no reliable estimates for this, as the Pakistani census does not inquire about religious affiliation. Some surveys have included questions about confessional beliefs, but respondents may not answer such sensitive questions truthfully. C. Christine Fair, Neil Malhotra and Jacob N. Shapiro, drawing from a nationally representative survey of 6,000 Pakistanis, report that 8% of respondents said that they were Ahl-e-Hadith. Christine Fair, Neil Malhotra and Jacob N. Shapiro, 'Islam, Militancy, and Politics in Pakistan: Insights From a National Sample', Terrorism and Political Violence, vol. 22, no. 4, September 2010, pp. 495-521.
- This taxonomy is derived from the author's fieldwork in Pakistan from 2002 to 2011. See C. Christine Fair, 'Who Are Pakistan's Militants and Their Families?', Terrorism and Political Violence, vol. 20, no. 1, 2008, pp. 49–65. See also, among others, Arif Jamal, Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir (Hoboken, NJ: Melville House, 2009); Ranan, The A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan; Amir Mir, The True Face of

Jehadis (Lahore: Mashal Books, 2004); Amir Mir, The Fluttering Flag of Jehad (Lahore: Mashal Books, 2008). For an excellent synthesis of the sprawling Pakistani literature on the various militant groups based in the country, see Nicholas Howenstein, 'The Jihadi Terrain in Pakistan: An Introduction to the Sunni Jihadi Groups in Pakistan and Kashmir', Pakistan Studies Research Unit, Bradford University, 5 February 2008, http://www.humansecuritygateway.info/documents/ PSRU_JihadiTerrain_Pakistan.pdf. See also 'Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)', Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism, 1 July 2009, available at http://jwit.james.com; Manzair Zaidi, 'Pakistan's Taliban Warlord: A Profile of Baitullah Meshud', Long War Journal, 30 September 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/ archives/2008/09/pakistans_ taliban_wa.php; 'Pakistan's Most Wanted: Baitullah Mehsud', Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor, 8 February 2009, available at http:// www4.janes.com; Rahimullah Yusefzai, 'Profile: Nek Mohammed', BBC News Online, 18 June 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/ south_asia/3819871.stm; Hassan Abbas, 'A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan', CTC Sentinel, vol. 1, no. 2, 2008, pp. 1-4; 'Tribal Tribulations: The Pakistani Taliban in Waziristan', Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency, 13 January 2009, available at www.janes.com.

See comments made by US National Intelligence Director John Negroponte, cited in 'Al-Qaeda "Rebuilding" in Pakistan', BBC News, 12 January 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_

- asia/6254375.stm; see also K. Alan Kronstadt, Pakistan-U.S. Relations (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 10 November 2008), http://fpc.state.gov/documents/ organization/115888.pdf.
- See, among others, Senator Carl Levin, 'Opening Statement of Senator Carl Levin, Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing on Afghanistan and Pakistan', 26 February 2009, http://levin.senate.gov/newsroom/ release.cfm?id=308740; Ian Katz, 'Gates Says Militant Sanctuaries Pose Biggest Afghanistan Threat', Bloomberg News, 1 March 2009, http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/ news?pid=20601087&sid=aehm IRXgKi20&refer=home; Barnett R. Rubin, 'Saving Afghanistan', Foreign Affairs, January-February 2007, http://www.foreignaffairs. org/20070101faessay86105-po/barnettr-rubin/saving-afghanistan.html.
- ³³ Vali R. Nasr, 'International Politics, Domestic Imperatives, and Identity Mobilization: Sectarianism in Pakistan, 1979-1998', Comparative Politics, vol. 32, no. 2, January 2000, pp. 170-91; International Crisis Group, The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan, Asia Report no. 95 (Brussels and Islamabad: International Crisis Group, 2005), pp. 12, 19-20. See also A.H. Sorbo, 'Paradise Lost', The Herald, June 1988, p. 31; Muhammad Qasim Zaman, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni Identities', Modern Asian Studies, vol. 32, no. 3, 1998, pp. 689-716.
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- 36 See Fair, 'Antecedents and Implications of the November 2008 Lashkar-e-Taiba Attack Upon Mumbai'.
- 37 C. Christine Fair, The Counterterror Coalitions: Cooperation with Pakistan and India (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2004).
- 38 See Imtiaz Gul, The Al Qaeda Connection: The Taliban and Terror in Pakistan's Tribal Areas (London: Penguin, 2009).
- 39 See C. Christine Fair and Peter Chalk, Fortifying Pakistan: The Role of US Internal Security Assistance (Washington DC: USIP, 2006).
- See Mir, The True Face of Jehadis; Mir, The Fluttering Flag of Jehad; Howenstein, 'The Jihadi Terrain in Pakistan'.
- ⁴¹ During his trial for his participation in the 2008 Mumbai attacks, David Coleman Headley claimed direct ISI involvement in his management. Of course, these courtroom allegations may not be true. Sebastian Rotella, 'U.S. Prosecutors Indict 4 Pakistanis in Mumbai Attacks', Washington Post, 26 April 2011, http:// www.washingtonpost.com/politics/ us_prosecutors_indict_4_pakistanis_ in_mumbai_attacks/2011/04/26/ AFaDLhsE_story.html. Moreover, the director-general of the ISI, Lieutenant-General Ahmad Shuja Pasha, conceded that some 'rogue' elements of his organisation were likely involved. However, he denied that

- this operation was 'authorised'. Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010), pp. 46–7.
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- ⁴⁵ The Pew Foundation, 'Opinion of the United States', 2010, available at http://pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=1 &country=166.
- 46 'Deadly Blasts Hit Sufi Shrine in Lahore', BBC News, 2 July 2011, http:// www.bbc.co.uk/news/10483453; Salman Masood and Waqar Gillani, 'Blast at Pakistan Shrine Kills Dozens', New York Times, 3 April 2011, http:// www.nytimes.com/2011/04/04/world/ asia/04pakistan.html.
- ⁴⁷ See, for example, 'Pakistan's Fight Against the Taliban: The Crumbling Centre', *Economist*, 13 January 2011, http://www.economist.com/node/17913432?story_id=17913432.
- Worldwide Incident Tracking System, Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, https://wits.nctc.gov.
- ⁴⁹ Jamaat-ud-Dawa, *Hum Kyon Jihad Kar Rahen Hain?*, pp. 42–5. Author's translation from the Urdu.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 52 Ibid., p. 6.

- Evidence of the organisation's intent to inflame the United States and other international observers can be seen in the banners it produces in (often broken) English. Few Pakistanis can read English and thus these banners are likely intended for Americans and others foreigners.
- See 'Pakistani Group Under Fire After India Attacks', Associated Press, 5 December 20008, available at http:// www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/12/05/ ap/world/main4649577.shtml.
- Tahir Andrabi and Jishnu Das, 'In Aid We Trust: Hearts and Minds and the Pakistan Earthquake of 2005', World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 5440, October 2010, available at http://papers. ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_ id=1688196; C. Christine Fair, 'Not at the Forefront of Flood Relief', ForeignPolicy.com, Afpak Channel, 20 September 2010, http://afpak. foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/09/20/ not at the forefront of flood relief.
- In fact, after the Mumbai attack of 2008. the Punjab provincial government began managing the organisation's substantial assets in the Punjab and has even placed many LeT/JuD workers employed in various purported charitable activities on its official payroll. The government has also made substantial grants to the organisation. See 'Punjab Govt. Gave Rs 82m to JD: Papers', Dawn, 16 June 2010, http://news. dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawncontent-library/dawn/the-newspaper/ front-page/punjab-govt-gavers82m-to-

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- This has been the case with the prosecution of LeT operative David Coleman Headley. See Rotella, 'U.S. Prosecutors Indict 4 Pakistanis in Mumbai Attacks'.
- See Abou Zahab, 'I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise', p. 135.
- 60 The March 2011 US congressional hearing on this topic generated a storm of controversy, drawing criticism from both liberals and conservatives alike. See David A. Fahrenthold and Michelle Boorstein, 'Rep. Peter King's Muslim Hearing: Plenty of Drama, Less Substance', Washington Post, 11 March 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/ wp-dyn/content/article/2011/03/10/ AR2011031002045.html.
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