

Shia Genocide: The United States' Role

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"Whoever helps in the killing of a believer even with a part of a word, he will meet Allah on the Day of Judgment with the following words written between his eyes: 'Doomed from the mercy of Allah'," said the Prophet of Islam (S).¹

On Thursday 10 January 2013, a series of bomb blasts ripped through Quetta, Pakistan on Alamdar Road killing at least 105 persons and wounding hundreds more, most of them Shia Muslims.² The Al-Qaeda-linked extremist group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, whose stated goal is to transform Pakistan into a Sunni Islamic state,³ has claimed responsibility for the barbaric bombings.⁴ The attack has highlighted the ongoing cold-blooded campaign of Shia ethnic cleansing taking place in Pakistan, which has received sparse coverage in the Middle East and has been largely ignored by the Western media.

A brief survey of recent news headlines from Pakistan emphasizes the gruesome reality of this intentional extermination of Shia Muslims that could justifiably be termed genocide:

- ★ Shia Muslims protest after bombings kill 120 in Pakistan⁵
- ★ 502 Shias killed last year, says MWM report⁶
- ★ Pakistan militants kill 41 in mass execution, attack on Shias⁷
- ★ 14 martyred in 10 days in targeted killing by TTP, SSP and LeJ terrorists across Pakistan⁸
- ★ Shia genocide in Pakistan claims 12 more lives, martyr's son martyred, father and 2 sons martyred, 3 Shia green grocers martyred In Karachi, Quetta and Mach⁹
- ★ A Shia scholar, 2 businessman, police officer, 4 young men, in all 19 Shia men martyred in 4 days by the terrorists of TTP, SSP and LeJ across Pakistan¹⁰

These headlines paint a pessimistic picture of Pakistan as a country whose internal stability situation is headed downward in a bloody spiral to barbarism, and whose security forces are impotent against the sinister syndicates executing the systematic slaughter of its Shia Muslim citizens. A number of questions arise: Who or what is behind this campaign of carnage which has claimed the lives of an estimated 20,000 Shia Muslims over the past few decades?¹¹ Who are the TTP, the SSP and the LeJ, and who is backing them? And what role does the United States play in this escalating violence?

As for who or what is behind the Shia genocide, the answer appears to be Saudi-backed, Al-Qaeda-affiliated Wahhabi terrorist organizations, primarily the TTP, the SSP and the LeJ, whose activities are condoned by Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI),¹² and are sponsored by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia as a counterforce against the increasing Iranian/ Shia influence in the region.¹³ The Economist reports, *"The violence has been notable not just for its scale, but for what lies beneath it: a growing alliance between established anti-Shia militant groups and the Pakistani Taliban, Sunni extremists who have spun out of the army's control, allied with Al-Qaeda, and are determined to attack the Pakistani state."*¹⁴

Founded in December 2007, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) draws its support from tribal leaders across Pakistan. With over 30,000 estimated members, the TTP has declared itself to be an extension of the Afghan Taliban by upholding a loyalty pledge to Mullah Omar made by former TTP commander Baitullah Mehsud who was killed in an airstrike on 7 August 2009.¹⁵ According to statements by Mehsud, the TTP was organized to unite various factions within Pakistan to synchronize attacks against U.S. and British forces, and their Pakistani sympathizers, and to impose Islamic law. Strongly linked to Al-Qaeda, the TTP was organized with its help and receives funding from it. Not surprisingly, the Times Square bomber, Faisal Shahzad, whose “plot” was foiled by U.S. authorities, allegedly was supported by the TTP.¹⁶

Initially named Anjuman Sipah-e-Sahaba and now officially called the Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jamaat (ASWJ),¹⁷ the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) was established in Punjab in 1985 by General Zia Al-Haqq allegedly to counter pro-democracy opposition to his military dictatorship. One source indicates the group was formed in response to the Islamic Revolution in Iran and what was seen as the spread of Shia influence in Pakistan.¹⁸ Considered one of the most influential of the extremist factions, the SSP enjoys widespread political power throughout Pakistan and reportedly receives significant funding from Saudi Arabia.¹⁹ While the SSP changed its name to the ASWJ in 2002 after being banned by the Pakistani government,²⁰ they appear to still operate openly under the former name to spread their anti-Shia hatred and hostility.²¹ Claiming to be “non-violent and non-aggressive towards its opponent,”²² the group refers to Shia Muslims as “terrorists” and “the biggest enemy of Islam.”²³

Organized in 1996, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) was formed by a group of extremists who broke away from the SSP due to ideological differences with the parent organization, which it accused of deviating from the principles of the SSP’s slain co-founder, Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, the LeJ’s namesake. While claiming to be a separate organization, the LeJ shares a common goal with the SSP of violently establishing a Sunni Islamic state in Pakistan, and has leaders who are alumni of the same madrassas as are the SSP cadre.²⁴ A particularly violent anti-Shia terrorist group with ties to Al-Qaeda, the LeJ is a close ally of the SSP and plays a key role in perpetrating the sectarian violence that is destabilizing Pakistan.²⁵

To answer the question concerning the U.S. role in the Shia genocide, we must look at the history of U.S. involvement in the region during the Cold War. On one hand, after its humiliating defeat by the Vietnamese Resistance in the 1970s, the U.S. was not anxious to directly confront the Soviet Union when it invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. On the other hand, General Zia Al-Haqq, who had received military training in the U.S. and had staged a coup in Pakistan in 1977,²⁶ desired to turn the country into a Sunni Islamic state. Hence, the U.S. desire for a proxy army to repulse the Soviets from Afghanistan and General Al-Haqq’s dream of a Sunni-dominated Pakistan coalesced into an opportunity for cooperation and mutual benefit.²⁷ The result was the creation of a proxy army of Saudi Wahhabi extremists,²⁸ which eventually became known as Al-Qaeda, recruited by Osama bin Laden,²⁹ supported and funded by the U.S.³⁰ through a CIA-ISI pipeline, with funding matched dollar for dollar by Saudi Arabia.³¹

After the success of the CIA’s Al-Qaeda proxy force in routing the Soviet army out of Afghanistan, the U.S. administration sent its Islamic insurgents to the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to destabilize their

governments by creating sectarian strife.³² With the subsequent breakup of the Soviet Union testifying to the success of its strategy, the CIA dispatched Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi from its Al-Qaeda ranks to create sectarian violence in Iraq and thus maintain an excuse for the continued presence of American troops. Similarly, Al-Qaeda cells have been established in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Palestine,³³ and most recently, another, the Nusra Front, has appeared in Syria,³⁴ obviously tasked by its CIA masters to destabilize the Assad government by inflaming sectarian strife among the country's Sunni, Alawite and Christian citizens.

Since both the United States and Saudi Arabia view Iran as a serious threat to their regional domination, they are prepared to do whatever is necessary anywhere in the Middle East to neutralize Shia resistance movements, which are always viewed as potential increases in Iranian influence.³⁵ This is the main reason for the U.S.-approved brutal suppression by Saudi armed forces of protests in Bahrain,³⁶ Yemen,³⁷ and within Saudi Arabia itself.³⁸ There is one additional reason in the case of Saudi Arabia: a long-standing Wahhabi hatred of Shia.³⁹

Regarding the U.S. end game in Pakistan, retired Pakistani Army officer and political economist Samson Simon Sharaf explained, "*The civil unrest and failure of state institutions is designed to give an impetus to instability in Pakistan and, therefore, completion of USA's agenda in the region.*"⁴⁰ So we can see the targeted killing of Shia is merely a part of the broader U.S. agenda to ensure Pakistan and the entire Middle East region remain in chaotic confusion by inducing sectarian violence. In this way, the U.S. maintains its imperial grip and thereby prevents people from joining together and mounting any serious threat to its hegemony.⁴¹

Endnotes

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