



Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America, and the Future of the Global Jihad

Bruce Riedel

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Pakistan and the United States have been locked in a deadly embrace for decades. Successive American presidents from both parties have pursued narrow short-term interests in the South Asian nation, and many of the resulting policies proved counterproductive in the long term, contributing to political instability and a radicalized public. This background has helped set the stage for the global jihad confronting much of the world today.

In *Deadly Embrace*, Bruce Riedel explores the forces behind these developments, explaining how and why the history of Pakistan-U.S. relations has unfolded as it has. He explains what the United States can do now to repair the damage and how it can avoid making similar mistakes in dealing with extremist forces in Pakistan and beyond.

Riedel is one of America's foremost authorities on U.S. security, South Asia, and terrorism, and he helped to craft President Obama's 2009 speech referring to the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands as the "most dangerous region of the world." He follows up *The Search for al Qaeda*, his influential 2008 analysis of the terror network's ideology and leadership, with a sober, authoritative, and sometimes alarming look at the history, importance, and current role of Pakistan, epicenter of the global jihad movement, beginning with the history of U.S.-Pakistan relations since the partitioning of the subcontinent in 1947.

The relationship between Pakistan and America is a fascinating yet muddled story, meandering through periods of friendship and enmity, symbiosis and distrust: it's no wonder that people in both nations are confused. *Deadly Embrace* explains how the United States, on several occasions, actually helped the foes of democracy in Pakistan and aided in the development of the very enemies it is now fighting in the region. The book seeks to unravel this paradox, revealing and interpreting the tortuous path of relations between two very different nations, which remain, in many ways, stuck with each other.

Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America, and the Future of the Global Jihad Details

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Emmett says

Riedel's follow up to The Search For al Qaeda is an important look at the history of Pakistan from its formation to its current political situation. Riedel provides a history of relations between the U.S. and Pakistan and highlights the drastic changes that have occurred with American and Pakistani regime change. Riedel reveals a little more of his political leanings and is harshly critical of the Bush administration in this book. He also reveals his favor for Obama. Like George Packer in his book The Assassin's Gate, Riedel seems to hold a paternalistic view of Pakistan and wants to see it succeed. While he does spell out the dangers of the worst case scenario in Pakistan (an Islamic extremist regime with the capability of firing and distributing nuclear weapons) he seems somewhat optimistic about the future.

Sam says

This is written by a senior fellow in Foreign policy, former CIA officer and adviser to 4 US presidents. I found some fact interesting, but the approach is typically that of the administration(s) and don't get the local culture. He has understood that most Pakistanis "hate" the US, and describes this in some detail, but the solutions suggested will not solve much. A disappointing book

Tauseef Zahid says

The most important chapter to read in this book is chapter six. The author tapping into his vast experience acknowledges that there is not much US can do should there be an Islamic State in Pakistan.

Also the last line of the book summarises the American view towards Pakistan, which is to use Pakistan for American objectives in the region or whatever hampers American objectives - Pakistan to be a transactionary State which does American bidding for American interests.

The last line ... "common purpose: to defeat the Jihadi monster" is it really a common purpose or US interest?

S P says

Must read. Typical Bruce Riedel book. The hallmarks of a master story-teller, an ability that Bruce must have developed from the numerous briefings to senior US Govt officials and Presidents.

Well researched book on how the strategic partnership between US and Pakistan has been a deadly embrace. Narrow Short term interests from various American Presidents have let this rough relationship to continue, with periods of large expansion.

Author presents the history of U.S.-Pakistani relations from partition of India in 1947 to present day. How the Islamization happened in Pakistan. The dynamics of US policy and engagement of Pakistan, the crests

and troughs of the bumpy ride from deep friendship to enmity between two countries from 1947 to first decade of 21st century, or President Obama's first term. In the end, author acutely discussed the possible trajectories for Pakistan, options that US has to deal with it, and India figures in it all.

Overall it provides an insightful perspective on the relations between two very different countries that still remain stuck with each other in many ways.

Must read to understand today's Pakistan, where it can go, what would be its implications for US, India, South Asia and the world as a whole.

Recommended for people studying Indo-US relations, since almost all Indo-Pak issues had some bearing from the major world powers of the time and this book covers those aspects very well.

Kevin says

A very readable and brief description of America's relationship with Pakistan. Riedel clearly knows his stuff, but I wish the book had more discussion of Pakistan's domestic politics. He does discuss this a bit, but I would have liked to see a discussion of how Riedel's proposed solutions are workable in the present political environment within Pakistan. For example, he proposes a "soft" border between Indian and Pakistani Kashmir. But I wonder whether this is really a politically achievable solution in Pakistan.

Justin says

Extremely informative in terms of Pakistan's tumultuous history of military and civilian rule. The information surrounding each ruler's rise and rule is detailed without sacrificing reader attention.

An extremely effective perspective of the underlying Indo-Pakistani regional power struggle (particularly over Kashmir) and the nuclear arms race is presented.

In ensuring to thoroughly document the American role in the region since 1945, the fractious and often bipolar relationships between American and Pakistani administrations is presented clearly and effectively.

Suggested solutions are plenty and based on factual realities.

All of this in under 150 pages. Worth it for a quick, but useful, brush up on Pakistani history and its significance to terrorism efforts in 21st Century.

Book was published in 2011 and could use an updated preface incorporating rise of lone wolf terrorism and post-ISIS Pakistan. Author seems to downplay actors like Zarqawi (and the pre-ISIS faction of al-Qaeda) as 'victims of their own brutality' as it related to their poor relations with local tribes (by 2016 an unfortunately outdated analysis). Only one or two sentences about those that would become ISIS and I would be very interested in this author's 2016 analysis.

Rabia says

This book took me a year to read dec 2018 to January 2019 ?

How a book about other developing country could be neutral if it is written by an agent/an officer of a developed country. The book is dealing with various issues in single time it is dealing with Pakistan is difficult, dangerous and so very important.

This book travel on road of Pak-US relations and road is rocky one. The writer discuss various events happen on this road, these relations are some time Jihaad and some time terror .

Basically the book is based on analysis of a particular person, while the analysis is about strategic and political one. And this analysis is going upon the most troubled and nuclear region where different countries occupying nuclear weapon as well as Pakistan is holding best nuclear capability, US remains hurdle between all process and always furious about this matter. While on other hand Riedel accepting this Pakistan has one of best nuclear missiles/equipment. The writer is trying to involve different countries in same belt of region. He focus on Pak-Af and told how jihad has change the history of this region. If we see the book in neutral point of view Pakistan remains important for US but at same time it is dangerous and important for US. This book is totally in opposition of Pakistan a hard country which is considered as neutral book on History of Pakistan.

One point need to be ponder author discuss about global jihad but the base of jihad is in Pakistan only while with change of time global jihad has changed its phenomenon as well as now its changing in Islamic terrorism and this title is also provided by USA.

The last chapter of book is important to read particularly the last paragraph is concluding or summarizing the book in its own way and covering the loops of author.

It summarise the American interests to Pakistan, which means to using Pakistan for the purposes of American policies and make successful these policies in the region whatever hampering American objectives through Pakistan and making Pakistan a bargaining State which is working on American instructions for American interests in the region.

This book is pre 9/11 book and we consider 9/11 as a game change but this clears that game is on before this event and we are the puppets of America since our establishment all this cause of relying on western and ignoring communism. 9/11 was nothing but an event of paving the ways of America towards Pak-Af.

This book is old but it is historical one so recommend to all history reader and foreign policy reader as well makers of policies.

joycesu says

Admittedly, my knowledge of The Middle East is close to, if not fully, pathetic. Riedel, a former C.I.A. officer working with several presidents over the past decades, covers U.S.-Pakistan relations in this brief, but dramatic book, along with a quick run down of Pakistani history, particularly focusing on militant rule in the worn-torn nation.

I found the book to be incredibly fascinating, and I highly recommend it to anyone with a short attention span that wants to get right into the meat and bones of our issues with The Middle East.

EDIT: Correction- "Central Asia," as pointed out by my best friend - "normally saying middle east has connotations of being arabic (and to a lesser extent muslim), so while Pakistan is muslim, it is not arabic." - Thank you :]

Obviously geography is not my forte. That needs to change...

Ajay Chopra says

A nice overview of the global terrorism landscape. Interesting to discover how the terrorism factory is run by a relatively small group of people. Also, interesting to learn that the global community has always been aware of Pakistan's dubious role as a terrorist monger as well as a black marketeer of nuclear technology but more or less did nothing. A useful read for all interested in Pakistan as well as global terror.

John Stevens says

While reading "Obama's War" I discovered Bruce Riedel through Bob Woodward's very solid newshound research. Pres. Obama brought him in for an assessment, 90 days, of what was really going on. Despite the fact that he had some of the best guys, and I'm not a Democrat, in the top Security/Pentagon/Cabinet slots he wanted to hear from the world's foremost authority on that region of the world.

What a book that was. Details all the way. No fluff. But, so well written that folks that like mystery, war, crime, documentary style reads will love it. After my own research and discussions with friends (in the know) I felt confident that Riedel gave us a very real perspective on radical Islam and just what is going on. Very scary stuff. Very, very real.

I'm looking forward to getting through this one. So, I haven't read it. But, knowing Riedel, who is not an author, per se, it's gonna be good.

Bruce Riedel is an intelligence expert. He's been turned to by everyone that matters when it comes to the Jihad.

Enjoy. But, you will learn things that can be frightening.

Gohram Khan says

Awesome

AR Bangash says

A brief primer on security dimension of US-Pakistan relations, specifically war on terror with necessary background information. The part I found particularly interesting is the contemplated hypothetical scenario of a Pakistan led by Jihadists. It provides an insight into how folks at Washington view their South Asian nightmare. Bruce Riedel was engaged by Obama to provide recommendations for his administration's Af-Pak Policy. The last chapter in the book summarizes that recommendation report, providing path forward for US-Pakistan relations.

The book seems a bit outdated due to rapidly changing dynamics of Islamic terrorism. The title is also a bit misleading, since global jihad only in context of groups operating from Pakistan is discussed.

Umesh says

This book, written by Burce Riedel (a former CIA officer and advisor to four US Presidents on Middle East and South Asian issues), is an indepth analysis of the US foreign policy towards Pakistan and its consequences in AfPak region. The author, wherever necessary, has critically reviewed the decisions and policies of United States towards Pakistan. It also outlines US decision to hob-nob with Pakistan's military dictators at various points in last half a century, which has been to a great extent one of the reason for emergence of golobal 'jihad' as we know it today. The book is very insightful and divulge on many intricate issues for understanding of situation in AfPak.

Conrad Barwa says

Written by an Obama insider and long-term CIA employee Bruce Ridel; this book from 2011 has become quite dated and reads very much like a Brookings policy paper rather than a full length book. It does however have the benefit of having interviews and contributions from the major political actors involved in the Pakistan-US relationship owing to the author's access to the individuals in question and his own part in the relationship between the two countries.

Patricia says

Written by a true insider (member of Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy and 30 years with the CIA) and adviser to four US Presidents. Slightly out-of-date (before the assassination of Osama bin Laden) but still very pertinent and informative as it tells the story of the US's mishandling of its relationship with Pakistan since the Partition of 1947. Few westerners have any real knowledge of Pakistan history. For example, did you know that "The name *Pakistan* is basically an acronym compiled from the names of the areas of Punjab, Afghania, Kashmir, Sindh and Baluchistan" (p. 4)? I didn't.

After an excellent short summary of the history of relations between the US and Pakistan, Riedel turns to his major theme: concerns over the rise of the jihadist state in Pakistan and the escalation of global violence. The last chapter contains his experienced and realistic (but bound-to-be-unpopular-with-some) recommendations of how to begin to get US-Pakistani relations back on track by building dialogue and trust.

Much of Pakistan's situation today is the result of its focus on its neighbour (India)--the rise of its military establishment, the ISI, the appeal of military dictatorships, the ambivalent attitude towards its MANY political and jihadist factions. His recommendations, which after reading the preceding chapters, have the sound of pragmatism to them include resolving border disputes (Afghanistan, Kashmir) which necessitate a strong army and nuclear arms; helping Pakistan with its infrastructure (water, education) problems without the strings of past imposed "foreign aid" restrictions; engaging in strengthening Pakistan's civilian-elected leaders starting with the freely elected prime ministers (and NOT focusing on single individuals who may be rogue leaders in the end (e.g. Reagan's support of Zia, GW Bush's support of Musharraf) but in supporting all those fighting for democracy and free elections); providing them with the helicopters needed to fight highly mobile guerilla insurgent groups in the field; and in working with both India and Pakistan in ways that are supportive of peaceful relations between the two. As Riedel writes, "Pakistan is a complex and combustible

society undergoing a severe crisis, which American helped create over the years" (p. 118). Yet he remains confident that Pakistanis and Americans can "transform what has long been a deadly embrace into a union of minds with a common purpose: to defeat the jihad monster" (p. 144).
