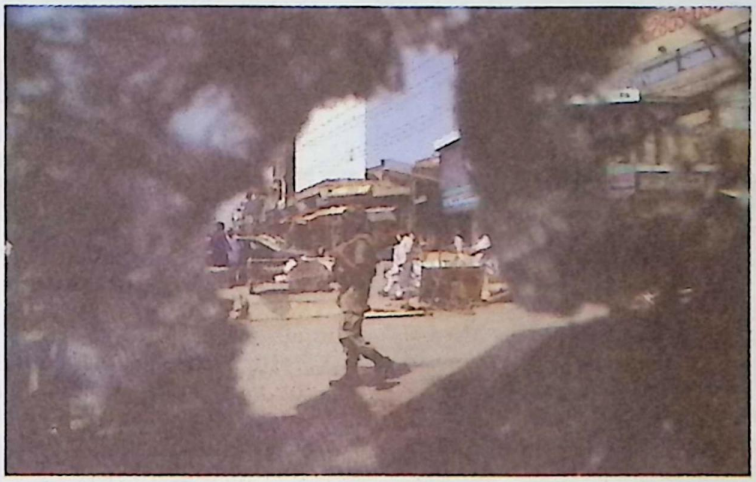
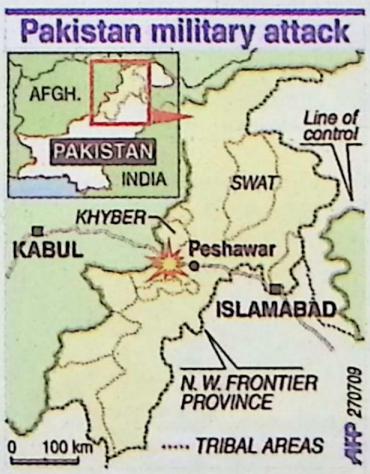
the occupation forces in Afghanistan, has been able to establish a vast spy network operating against all the neighbours, particularly Pakistan, Iran and China. Thus the cause of all the trouble in the region, and "the Mother of All Evil" is the occupation of Afghanistan, by the foreign forces.



The occupation forces are facing tough resistance, which is stronger, more organised and better armed than the resistance the Soviets had to face, during the '80s. The resistance now calls itself the 'Shadow Army' organised into several divisions, and each division consists of a number of Lashkars. The 'Shadow Army' comprises, the old mujahideen who fought against the Soviets in Afghanistan; the Afghan Taliban, mostly born under the shadow of war; veterans from Iraq; old and new volunteers from several countries of the world and the 005 Brigade of Al-Qaeda. It's a formidable force, undertaking large size operations, inflicting over 250 casualties on the occupation forces, in a period of two months. The next few months are crucial. The military adventure is thus failing and saner voices are getting louder and clearer, telling Obama and their allies to change their strategy in Afghanistan.



"The troops are tired and the American people are pretty tired of war in Afghanistan," said Gates. "The situation in Afghanistan has got progressively worse, and the Taliban has got much better, much more violent and much more organised....The Afghan people are much more uncertain now, about their future, " said Admiral Mullen. "Is Afghanistan destined to follow Viet Nam, as another graveyard for US Empire," questioned Martin and R Hertzberg. "Obama's Petraeus - McChrystal policies, in Afghanistan, are a fundamental strategic error..." maintained Chomsky. "We are losing in Afghanistan. US-NATO led coalition faces defeat, and our young men are dying out there," said Paddy Ashdown. The one thing we cannot do is, to go on as we are, led by events. History is littered with the graves of the soldiers who died obeying the call," stated Hamilton. "Obama cannot manage an inherently doomed premise. Colonialism is dead. Occupiers will never enjoy peace in Afghanistan," claimed Ted Rall.

Obama, therefore suggests: "All of us want an effective exit strategy from Afghanistan" - the crucible of terror, the graveyard of invaders.

The economic melt-down, and the shame of defeat in Iraq and Afghanistan, leaves only one hopeless course open to US, as William Pfaff rightly suggests: "The US has become war-addicted. War has become part of the national identity, as well as the national economy, which turns out more weapons and more military high technology than the rest of the world combined. The growing opinion in Europe is that Afghanistan is the US's new Viet Nam. The truth is that it is worse than Viet Nam. In Viet Nam, the US had a clearly identified enemy, supported by a responsible Communist state in North Viet Nam with its government in Hanoi. The US had a theory about what it was doing suppressing the insurrection in the South, and bombing North Viet Nam until the government stopped the war. All of this was, in principle, possible. However, the US acted on a nonsensical theory about the world 'going Communist' if the US didn't win, just as today the US has an even more nonsensical theory about radical Islam conquering Muslim Asia and all of Europe and then attacking the US, if Washington fails. In that respect it's a war of ideas which the US has no theory about how to 'win'."

America is on the wrong side of history, which is imperceptibly changing towards a global order based on the quintessential values of respect for diversity and renunciation of war. On the contrary, China is one country, which is peacefully engaging itself with all the nations, honouring their sovereignty and building paradigm of peaceful co-existence. India and EU unfortunately have opted to be on the other side of the divide. The Americans together with their allies, therefore, need to develop a pragmatic AfPak Strategy, and to establish "a more ordered world at a time of great instability. The world powers have to provide space at the top tables for nations, that do not share our culture, our history, our world view and even our values." - Ashdown.

This article was first published in The Nation (Pakistan). The writer is the former Chief of Army Staff of the Pakistan Army.