

Rethink Afghanistan War (part 2): Pakistan

By: Robert Greenwald, Brave New Foundation (2009)

URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3I6SxMpivo>

Length: 10:41 minutes (Clip)

Key words: Afghanistan, Pakistan, nuclear weapons, Taliban, War on Terror

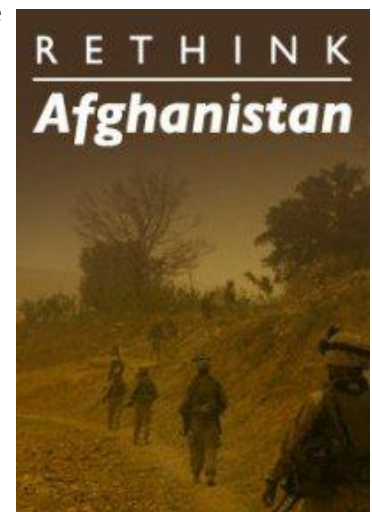
SUMMARY

This documentary help us understand Taliban successes in the Afghanistan conflict by providing insight into regional interests. The main focus is on the interests of neighbouring Pakistan and on Pashtun tribal interests that span the Afghan-Pakistan border. The film argues that any conflict in Afghanistan affects Pakistan and vice versa because of the porous and essentially 'illegitimate' border.

Rethink Afghanistan is a full length documentary campaign that was released in six segments in real time, so they could analyze the war in Afghanistan as it unfolded. This videoclip is part 2 of the 6-part series. Since filming in 2009, Osama bin Laden has been killed and the US has set a deadline for pulling its troops out of Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the documentary offers insights that are relevant today.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The film maintains that Afghanistan and Pakistan are "intricately linked." What reasons are put forth as evidence of this "intricately linked" relationship?
2. The Pashtun people were divided when the British colonials created the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan in the 19th century. How does this impact the conflict? After more than 100 years, should we expect the local citizens to respect the border no matter how it was established, or is it as 'illegitimate' now as it was in the 1800s?
3. The film argues that the presence of foreign troops on the ground in Afghanistan was a provocation and boosted support for the Taliban. Do you think this alone is sufficient reason to pull out of Afghanistan?
4. What elements of this documentary surprised you? Why?
5. Although foreign troops are being pulled out of Afghanistan, what relevance does this documentary have today?



BACKGROUND

War in Afghanistan [TIMELINE](#)

Taliban in Afghanistan 1989-2009 [TIMELINE](#)

Population: 30 million (July 2012 est.)

GDP per capita: US \$1,000

Religion: Sunni Muslim - 80%; other Muslim - 19%; Other - 1%

Pashtuns in Afghanistan: 42%; Pashtuns in Pakistan: 15% [MAP](#)

Children under the age of 5 years underweight: 33%

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[US Afghan withdrawal halfway done](#). AP (July 23, 2012)

[David Cameron 'confident' about 2014 Afghan troop withdrawal promise](#). BBC (July 18, 2012)

[VIEW: Where is Afghanistan headed?](#) Pakistan Daily Times (July 25, 2012)

[OPINION: The crisis and politics of ethnicity in Afghanistan](#). Al Jazeera (June 26, 2012)

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