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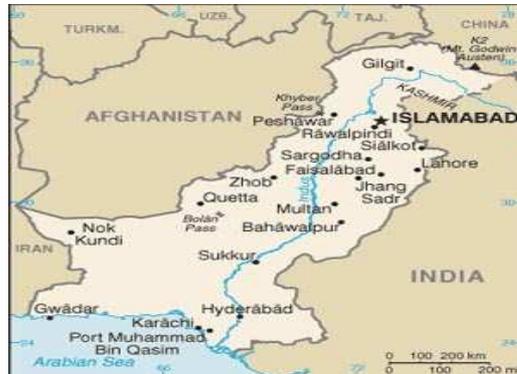
Antiwar.com

Lahore Backlash: In the Wake of Bombing, Anti-US Sentiment Grows

By [Jason Ditz](#)

July 2, 2010

With the [Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan \(TTP\) publicly denying any role](#) in the [deadly bombing of a key Sufi shrine](#) in the city of Lahore the mystery of exactly who is responsible continues to grow. Who is taking the brunt of the backlash from the attack, however, is not, as eyes turn squarely to the US.



[“America is killing Muslims in Afghanistan and our tribal areas, and the militants are attacking Pakistan to express anger against the government for supporting America,”](#) one Lahore resident told the Associated Press. Several others expressed similar sentiments.

The 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan drove a number of refugees and militants across the border into Pakistan’s tribal areas, turning them from a forgotten hinterland far from the control of the national government into an endless warzone into which troops are constantly going, and from which refugees are constantly streaming.

Long easy to ignore, the area is now forefront in the Pakistani mind, as US drone attacks and US demanded offensives have riled up a growing number of militant groups, referred to collectively as “Taliban” or “miscreants” by Pakistani officials but reflecting a broad set of different factions. Some of the more militant of the groups have stopped settling for fighting the Frontier Corps directly and have been launching an increasing number of strikes in major cities like Karachi and Lahore.

These attacks on these cities, far outside the tribal areas, have dramatically increased war fatigue in Pakistan, where locals living far from the so-called problem areas are facing a crumbling national economy and rising violence with no real end in sight. The sense of the Zardari government as a US client state is increasingly a view of not only the militants, but the average person looking for a reason why the nation should be turned upside down by an American war to the north.