



BOSTON DEBATE LEAGUE

Transforming School Culture Through Debate

2010-2011 Novice Packet Tournament One

- **Afghanistan Affirmative**
- **Afghanistan Negative**

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reduce its military and/or police presence in one or more of the following: South Korea, Japan, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Iraq, Turkey.



BOSTON DEBATE LEAGUE

Transforming School Culture Through Debate

Afghanistan - Aff

Afghanistan Affirmative

Explanation	1
Glossary.....	2
 Afghanistan IAC	 3-10
 Global War Add On.....	 11-12
 <u>Inherency Extensions</u>	
Inherency: Troop Buildup Continues In Afghanistan	13
Inherency: US Not Planning to Withdraw	14
 <u>Harms Extensions</u>	
<u>Regional War and Terrorism Advantage</u>	
Harms: War Cannot Be Won - Cultural Differences	15
Harms: War Cannot Be Won - Troop Requirements	16
Harms: War Cannot Be Won - Nationalism	17
Harms: Impact Extensions - Afghanistan.....	18
Harms: Impact Extensions - Pakistan.....	19
Harms: Troops in Afghanistan Increase Risk of Terrorism	20
Harms: Al Qaeda is Capable of a Serious Terrorist Attack.....	21
 <u>Global War Advantage</u>	
Harms: Global War – Instability Draws in Others.....	222
Harms: Global War – Central Asia War Impact	233
 <u>Solvency Extensions</u>	
Solvency: Withdrawal Creates Local Cooperation in Afghanistan.....	24
Solvency: Limited Presence More Effective in Afghanistan	25-26
Solvency: Plan Helps Stabilize Pakistan.....	27
AT: Afghan Military Unprepared.....	28
AT: Afghanistan Government is Ineffective / Corrupt	29
AT: History Proves Affirmative Will Fail.....	30
AT: Plan is a Total Withdrawal.....	31
 <u>Off-Case Answers</u>	
AT: Topicality.....	332
AT: Allied Proliferation Disadvantage	33-34
AT: Readiness Disadvantage.....	35
AT: START Disadvantage.....	36

Explanation

In response to the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, the United States led an international military intervention into Afghanistan, resulting in the removal of the Taliban government. Eventually, an interim authority was established led by President Hamid Karzai, a new Constitution was drafted and a national assembly was elected. Karzai was elected and then re-elected in November 2009.

During his 2008 campaign, President Obama promised to focus American attention back on the conflict in Afghanistan. After he conducted a yearlong review, in December 2009 he announced that the United States would deploy significantly more troops to Afghanistan. He raised the number of soldiers from 32,000 to over 90,000. At the same time, he announced that America would begin to pull out its troops in July 2011, with no definite date for complete withdrawal.

By June 2010, the conflict in Afghanistan had become the longest war in America's history, surpassing the previous record of eight years and seven months by the Vietnam War. President Obama's stated goals for our operation in Afghanistan: to ensure that "Afghanistan is stable, can stand on its own two feet when it comes to security issues, and is not a base for terrorist activity launched against the United States."

SUMMARY OF THE AFGHANISTAN AFFIRMATIVE: America's current policy toward Afghanistan is to expand our forces there to fight al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Unfortunately there is little chance this strategy will work, and violence continues at significant levels. Many observers predict that the U.S. will not adhere to the July 2011 deadline to begin withdrawal, as military assessments on the ground will be pessimistic. Therefore, the United States will indefinitely continue its policy of combating the insurgency with tens of thousands of American troops.

Not only is this force expensive in terms of American lives and dollars, a large military presence will not increase stability in Afghanistan. Instead, it causes the connection between al-Qaeda and the Taliban to tighten, increases anti-Americanism, and also increases the success of terrorist recruiting. Past experience with counter-insurgency strategies in other countries proves it will be a failure. Indeed, evidence indicates the Taliban is gaining strength and the government is becoming more anti-American.

Not only will our large military presence be counterproductive in Afghanistan, it will also increase radicalization in neighboring Pakistan. The large occupation force will increase anti-Americanism in Pakistan, which threatens the pro-American regime in power. Pakistan has nuclear weapons, so a civil war of any kind would present a huge risk that weapons of mass destruction will fall into terrorists' hands. In addition to threatening a civil war, radicalization of Pakistan would increase the likelihood they would be dragged into a conflict with archenemy India. A nuclear war could result.

The affirmative plan would reduce our military presence by changing our mission from counter-insurgency to counter-terrorism. It would not be a complete withdrawal from Afghanistan. It would leave about 10-15,000 troops in Afghanistan for the foreseeable future to remain on guard against terrorist bases and activities. It would facilitate targeted strikes against specific terrorist actions.

An announcement of our future reduced presence would create positive political change within Afghanistan and Pakistan, strengthening our efforts to produce stability and modernization.

Glossary

Important People and Groups:

Hamid Karzai: President of Afghanistan

Pashtun: One of the many Ethnic groups that make up Afghanistan

David Petraeus: American general, head of US forces in Afghanistan

Lashkar-e-Taiba: A Muslim terrorist organization active in Pakistan and Afghanistan

Taliban: Sunni Muslim political movement that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until it was overthrown by the American invasion in 2001. It operates in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The organization provided shelter to members of Al-Qaeda, and allowed them to plan the September 11th attacks.

National Assembly:

Al Qaeda: Militant Islamic group led by Osama Bin-Laden. The group was responsible for the September 11th terrorist attacks and several other high profile terrorist attacks against the United States.

Terms:

Insurgency: Insurgency is an armed rebellion against a centralized governmental authority. The insurgency in Afghanistan is attempting to discredit both the American military presence and the secular central government led by Karzai.

Counter Insurgency: Military strategy designed to overcome insurgent attacks. Often relies on winning popular support of the occupied population in order to enlist its help in overcoming the insurgent attacks

COIN :Counter Insurgency, strategy currently adopted by the US military in Afghanistan

Radicalization: Refers to the surrounding areas of Afghanistan becoming more militantly Islamic and opposed to US interests and policies in the region.

Afghanistan IAC [1/8]

Contention 1: Inherency

The United States is committed to an expanded military presence in Afghanistan, oriented toward propping up the government and conducting counterinsurgency against the Taliban.

Michael Cohen, Fellow, New American Foundation, Spring 2010

[Dissent Magazine, Spring 2010 pp. 5-9]

The United States has been fighting the war in Afghanistan for more than eight years. That's longer than U.S. participation in the Second World War or the Iraq War. By the end of 2010, it will have surpassed the length of the Soviet war in Afghanistan. It has taken the lives of just under one thousand Americans, more than nine thousand others have been wounded, and it has cost more than \$250 billion. Most important, the original goal of the mission has been achieved; al Qaeda's safe haven in Afghanistan has been destroyed and its Taliban allies pushed from power. Yet when Barack Obama delivered a major speech on the topic at West Point in December, he was not there to claim victory but to make the case for why the United States should stay longer in Afghanistan and actually increase its military presence. The president's announcement that thirty thousand more troops would be deployed to Afghanistan meant the U.S. military footprint would rise to nearly one hundred thousand—all this to face a Taliban insurgency that by some estimates totals around twenty thousand core fighters and an al Qaeda organization in Pakistan that counts perhaps two hundred key operatives.

Afghanistan IAC [2/8]

Contention 2: Harms

The United States Military presence in Afghanistan risks an expanded regional war and a Nuclear Attack on the United States

The US is losing the war in Afghanistan on every front – there is no chance of success

Dorransoro, scholar at the Carnegie Endowment, expert on Afghanistan, Turkey, and South Asia, 2010 (Gilles, 5/11, “Karzai comes to Washington,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=40779>)

Current U.S. strategy in Afghanistan has not been successful and the security and political situations across the country continue to deteriorate. The coalition has failed to defeat the Taliban and there simply aren't examples of improvement on the ground. The situation is bad everywhere. Counterinsurgency in practice is different than how it was sold in Washington. The only place that counterinsurgency has been tried is in Marjah and the result has not been good, despite some early favorable press reports. There is no similar operation planned in the future. The upcoming offensive in Kandahar will not be counterinsurgency, because there is no way to clear a city of nearly one million people. Furthermore, military operations in Marjah and Kandahar are unlikely to alter the course or outcome of the war. Will the upcoming offensive in Kandahar help militarily or politically? Without a credible and reliable local partner in Kandahar, there is virtually no chance for success. Ahmad Wali Karzai, President Karzai's half brother, is the dominant leader in Kandahar and despite efforts by the United States to have him removed, he will continue to be the local strongman. Under Ahmad Wali Karzai's control, opportunities to reform the local government will be blocked. Due to low levels of trust in local officials and high levels of corruption in the local judiciary, people in Kandahar routinely seek Taliban judges to settle their disagreements. The total corruption of the local government has enabled the Taliban to set up a shadow government. Also, thousands of coalition troops will not make major gains in a city of almost one million inhabitants. Small tactical successes are within reach, and undoubtedly will be highlighted in U.S. media, but this will not shift support to the Afghan government. Coalition forces are not welcome in Pashtun areas and the heavy fighting will undoubtedly increase tensions and casualties on all sides, further eroding the coalition's political capital.

FYI: Hamid Karzai = President of Afghanistan

FYI: Pashtun = One of the many Ethnic groups that make up Afghanistan

Afghanistan IAC [3/8]

More troops are counterproductive. Adding more causes them to kill more civilians, which increases anti-Americanism and resentment in Afghanistan, providing support for the Taliban and other terrorists.

Dorrnsoro, scholar at the Carnegie Endowment, expert on Afghanistan, Turkey, and South Asia, 2010 (Gilles, 5/11, “Karzai comes to Washington,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=40779>)

The supposed “ink spot” strategy—whereby the coalition establishes control in a key part of a province and security radiates outward—is not working, because of the social and ethnic fragmentation. Stability in one district doesn’t necessarily bleed over into the neighboring one, since groups and villages are often antagonistic to one another, and compete for the resources provided by the war economy. In this context, to secure an area means essentially to stay there indefinitely, under constant attack by the insurgency. Even if only 20 percent of a village sympathizes with the insurgents, “clearing” cannot work. As long as the coalition persists in its current strategy, increasing the number of troops in country will not only be inefficient, it will be dangerously counterproductive. As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said not so long ago, more troops would fuel opposition amongst the Afghan population. Considering the growing illegitimacy of the Karzai regime, more foreign troops will be resented as a military occupation. To this end, the coalition’s communiqués stating that the foreign presence in Afghanistan will go on for two generations—which were intended to reassure the Afghan partners—are staggering diplomatic blunders, especially in a country where feelings towards outsiders are at best ambiguous. The more foreign troops fight to take territory back from the Taliban, the more the population rejects them, because it sees them as the major provider of insecurity. In addition, more troops mean more casualties, leaving the coalition less time to do its work before public opinion turns too far against the war. Yet it is unrealistic to expect quick results, especially in training the Afghan National Army. And at the same time, it is more and more difficult to argue in support of the discredited Karzai regime.

Afghanistan IAC [4/8]

Also, the large American military presence increases recruitment of terrorists and militants that cross the border into Pakistan, which will lead to the collapse of the Pakistani government.

Malou Innocent and Ted Galen Carpenter, Foreign Policy Analyst at Cato Institute and Vice President for defense and foreign policy studies at Cato, 2009 (“Escaping the ‘Graveyard of Empires’”, <http://www.cato.org/pubs/wtpapers/escaping-graveyard-empires-strategy-exit-afghanistan.pdf> |

Contrary to the claims that we should use the U.S. military to stabilize the region and reduce the threat of terrorism, a 2008 study by the RAND Corporation found that U.S. policies emphasizing the use of force tend to create new terrorists. In “How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qai’da,” Seth Jones and Martin Libicki argue that the U.S. military “should generally resist being drawn into combat operations in Muslim societies, since [a U.S. military] presence is likely to increase terrorist recruitment.” ²²Some policymakers claim the war is worth waging because terrorists flourish in failed states. But that argument cannot account for terrorists who thrive in centralized states that have the sovereignty to reject external interference. ²³ That is one reason why militants find sanctuary in neighboring, nuclear-armed Pakistan. In this respect, and perhaps most important, is the belief that our presence in the region helps Pakistan, when in fact the seemingly open-ended U.S. presence in Afghanistan risks creating worse problems for Pakistan. Amassing troops in Afghanistan feeds the perception of a foreign occupation, spawning more terrorist recruits for Pakistani militias and thus placing undue stress on an already weakened nation. Christian Science Monitor correspondent Anand Gopal finds, “In late 2007, as many as 27 groups merged to form an umbrella Taliban movement, the Tehreek-e-Taliban, under guerrilla leader Baitullah Mehsud.” He continues, “Three of the most powerful, once-feuding commanders—Mr. Mehsud and Maulavi Nazeer of South Waziristan and Hafiz Gul Behadur of North Waziristan—formed an alliance in response to US airstrikes.” ²⁴America’s presence has already caused major problems for the government in Islamabad, which is deeply unpopular for many reasons, including its alignment with U.S. policies. ²⁵ There are also indications that it has raised tensions in Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries. For Islamic militants throughout the region, the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan— like the occupation of Iraq—is an increasingly potent recruiting tool. Only by prolonging our military presence do we allow the Taliban, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar’s Hizb-e Islami, the Haqqani network, and even Pakistani Taliban militants to reframe the conflict and their position within it as a legitimate defense against a foreign occupation. In this respect, policymakers should recognize that not everyone willing to resist U.S. intervention is necessarily an enemy of the United States. Most importantly, we must understand that not every Islamic fundamentalist is a radical Islamist, let alone one who is hell-bent on launching a terrorist attack against the American homeland.

Afghanistan IAC [5/8]

A collapse of the government in Pakistan will cause nuclear war

William Pitt, New York Times correspondent and bestselling author, 5/8/09

“Unstable Pakistan Threatens the World,

<http://www.arabamericanews.com/news/index.php?mod=article&cat=commentary&article=2183>)

But a suicide bomber in Pakistan rammed a car packed with explosives into a jeep filled with troops today, killing five and wounding as many as 21, including several children who were waiting for a ride to school. Residents of the region where the attack took place are fleeing in terror as gunfire rings out around them, and government forces have been unable to quell the violence. Two regional government officials were beheaded by militants in retaliation for the killing of other militants by government forces. As familiar as this sounds, it did not take place where we have come to expect such terrible events. This, unfortunately, is a whole new ballgame. It is part of another conflict that is brewing, one which puts what is happening in Iraq and Afghanistan in deep shade, and which represents a grave and growing threat to us all. Pakistan is now trembling on the edge of violent chaos, and is doing so with nuclear weapons in its hip pocket, right in the middle of one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the world. The situation in brief: Pakistan for years has been a nation in turmoil, run by a shaky government supported by a corrupted system, dominated by a blatantly criminal security service, and threatened by a large fundamentalist Islamic population with deep ties to the Taliban in Afghanistan. All this is piled atop an ongoing standoff with neighboring India that has been the center of political gravity in the region for more than half a century. The fact that Pakistan, and India, and Russia, and China all possess nuclear weapons and share the same space means any ongoing or escalating violence over there has the real potential to crack open the very gates of Hell itself.

A collapse of the Pakistani government would also allow nuclear weapons to fall into the hands of terrorists to be used against the United States

Bruce Riedel, senior fellow, Middle East Policy, Brookings, National Interest, June 23, 2009

[<http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=21644>]

The new regime would be quick to take control of the nuclear arsenal as it purged the army of any dissident voices. And it would welcome Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri from their hiding places of the last decade (although they would presumably keep a low profile to avoid being attacked by outside security services). Certainly al-Qaeda, LET and a host of other terrorist groups would have much more room to operate, free of any significant constraints on their activities from the Pakistani authorities. Even worse, the new government might abet their terrorist activities, providing the use of embassies and missions abroad for staging operations. In the end, we would be left with an extremist-controlled Pakistan, infested with violence, an almost completely dysfunctional economy, harsh laws and even-harsher methods for imposing them, and above all a nuclear-armed nation controlled by terrorist sympathizers.

FYI: Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET)= A Muslim terrorist organization active in Pakistan and Afghanistan

Afghanistan IAC [6/8]

A nuclear terrorist attack against the United States would cause massive destruction and possibly extinction

**Mohamed Sid-Ahmed, Egyptian Political Analyst, Al-Ahram Newspaper, 8/26/2004
Al-Ahram Online. <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/705/op5.htm> |**

What would be the consequences of a nuclear attack by terrorists? Even if it fails, it would further exacerbate the negative features of the new and frightening world in which we are now living. Societies would close in on themselves, police measures would be stepped up at the expense of human rights, tensions between civilizations and religions would rise and ethnic conflicts would proliferate. It would also speed up the arms race and develop the awareness that a different type of world order is imperative if humankind is to survive. But the still more critical scenario is if the attack succeeds. This could lead to a third world war, from which no one will emerge victorious. Unlike a conventional war which ends when one side triumphs over another, this war will be without winners and losers. When nuclear pollution infects the whole planet, we will all be losers.

Plan: The United States federal government should withdraw all forces performing counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan IAC [7/8]

Contention 3: Solvency

Withdrawal would immediately reduce support for the Taliban. The American troop presence is the single greatest factor undermining Afghanistan in the status quo.

Gilles Dorronsoro, Visiting Scholar, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2009, "Focus and Exit: An Alternative Strategy for the Afghan War,"
http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/afghan_war-strategy.pdf

This three-zone strategy is not, per se, a gamechanger, and it must be accompanied by an incremental, phased withdrawal. The withdrawal would not be a consequence of "stabilization," but rather an essential part of the process. Since the presence of foreign troops is the most important factor in mobilizing support for the Taliban, the beginning of the withdrawal would change the political game on two levels. First, Jihad would become a motivation for fewer Afghans; instead, the conflict would be mostly seen as a civil war. Second, the pro-government population (or, more exactly, the anti-Taliban one) would rally together because of fear of a Taliban victory. There is an argument against withdrawing combat troops: namely, that al-Qaeda would retain its sanctuary in Afghanistan because the Afghan state would not have control of some parts of the country, especially in the east. Though superficially compelling, this argument is weak for two reasons. First, the international coalition lacks the resources to control the periphery of the Afghan territory anyway. Second, the withdrawal of combat troops does not preclude targeted operations with the agreement of the Kabul government. So, in terms of physical security, the withdrawal of combat troops does not bring clear gains for al-Qaeda.

There are two important reasons for withdrawal.

First, the mere presence of foreign soldiers fighting a war in Afghanistan is probably the single most important factor in the resurgence of the Taliban. The convergence of nationalism and Jihad has aided the Taliban in extending its influence. It is sometimes frightening to see how similar NATO military operations are to Soviet ones in the 1980s and how the similarities could affect the perceptions of the population. The majority of Afghans are now deeply opposed to the foreign troops on their soil. The idea that one can "stabilize" Afghanistan with more troops goes against all that one should have learned from the Soviet war. The real issue is not to "stabilize" but to create a new dynamic. The Taliban have successfully framed the war as a Jihad and a liberation war against (non-Muslim) foreign armies. The concrete consequence of this moral victory is that the movement has been able to gain ground in non-Pashtun areas. The situations in Badghris Province (northwest) and in Badakhshan Province (northeast) are extremely worrisome, because the Taliban have been able to attract the support of some Pashtun tribes and fundamentalist networks. A province like Wardak, initially opposed to the Taliban in the 1990s, is now one of its strongholds. Insecurity bred by the narcotics trade and the infighting of local groups in the north also provides the Taliban opportunities to find new allies on a more practical, rather than ideological, ground. This trend is extraordinarily dangerous, since the spread of the war geographically would put Western countries in an untenable position.

FYI: Pashtun = One of the many ethnic groups that makes up Afghanistan

Afghanistan IAC [8/8]

Additionally, withdrawal would shift momentum away from the insurgents and provide legitimacy to the Afghan Government

Gilles Dorronsoro, Visiting Scholar, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2009, “Focus and Exit: An Alternative Strategy for the Afghan War,” http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/afghan_war-strategy.pdf)

Second, withdrawal would create a new dynamic in the country, providing two main benefits. The momentum of the Taliban would slow or stop altogether, because without a foreign occupier the Jihadist and nationalist feelings of the population would be much more difficult to mobilize. Furthermore, the Karzai regime would gain legitimacy. If Karzai (or his successor) receives enough help from the international coalition, he would be able to develop more centralized institutions in the strategic areas or at least keep local actors under control. The regime would remain corrupt but would appear more legitimate if it succeeded in bringing security to the population in the strategic zones without the help of foreign troops. The support of the urban population, which opposes the Taliban, is a critical issue. Corruption is a problem primarily if it accelerates the independence of Afghanistan’s peripheral regions.

Finally, withdrawal prevents radicals from gaining control of Pakistan

Malou Innocent, foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute, 6/28/2010, “Away from McChrystal and Back to the Basics,” Huffington Post, 6/28, http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=11934)

Moreover, if America's interests lie in ensuring the virus of anti-American radicalism does not infect the rest of the region, discontinuing policies that add more fuel to violent religious radicalism should be the first order of business. The dominant political force within Pakistan is not radical fundamentalist Islam, but rather a desire for a sound economy and basic security. But the foreign troop presence risks uniting otherwise disparate militant groups from both sides of the border against a hostile occupation of the region.

Global War Add On

Instability in Afghanistan threatens other countries because interconnections due to drug trafficking

Rollie Lal, PhD, Assistant Professor @ Vlerick Management School – Leuven, 2006

“Central Asia and its Asian Neighbors,” <http://stinet.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=A450305&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>

The relationship between the Central Asian states and their neighbors is complex and heavily influenced by the situation in Afghanistan. Afghanistan forms the link between regions, and it has endured a great deal of meddling from various sides, as in the past few decades, the United States, Pakistan, India, Iran, Russia, Uzbekistan, and other countries have attempted to push for a friendly government in Afghanistan. Since September 11, 2001, and the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan has also gained in importance as a feasible key transport route for increased trade and security cooperation between the countries of Central Asia and India and Pakistan.¹ Stability in Afghanistan has had a profound effect on Central Asian security as both religious radicalism and drugs emanating from Afghanistan threaten the region. During the Afghan-Soviet war, the United States in effect, through Pakistan, supported fundamentalist Islamic teachings and military training of Afghan, Pakistani, and other Central Asian militants in an effort to expel the Soviet Union from Afghanistan.² The growth of Islamic fundamentalism from the Afghan-Soviet war accelerated the spread of a religious ideology throughout the formerly communist countries. The Taliban trained Uzbek, Tajik, and Uighur radicals, spurring the growth of destabilizing fundamentalist movements throughout the region.³ In 1992, leaders of the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) fled Tajikistan to take refuge and regroup in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, and Russia.⁴ During the 1990s, Afghanistan also became a haven for the IMU.⁵

Specifically, instability in Afghanistan creates war in Central Asia

International Crisis Group, Nonpartisan organization working to prevent conflict worldwide, Asian branch, 9/28/01,

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1761&l=4>

Two decades of conflict in Afghanistan have already had a major impact on Central Asia. During the Soviet period, Central Asia bore a heavy burden of casualties from the war in that country. In more recent years, the IMU, which is supported by the Taliban, has carried out incursions into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan from bases in Afghanistan. Refugees from the Afghan civil war have been a major problem for Tajikistan. Indeed, **all the countries are concerned that war may spill over into their territory.** Moreover, much of Afghanistan’s drug production flows to Europe through Central Asia. Central Asian governments have been inclined to repress even moderate and non-violent religious groups for fear that they will become a significant source of opposition. By forcing most political opposition underground, however, nations like Uzbekistan have made extremism more attractive to broader sections of their populations. It is also easy to understand that societies dominated by corruption, crime and Mafia-like economic elites might find attractive the message of discipline and order carried by Islamist groups. All of these countries continue to struggle with widespread poverty and difficulties in implementing market reforms. The 55 million people of Central Asia have shown themselves increasingly dissatisfied with their political and economic circumstances. In this environment, strategic partnerships between the international community and the current governments in the region may produce dangerous and unintended consequences

Global War Add On

Instability in central Asia is the most likely scenario for great power war

Svante E. Cornell, Research Director at Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, January, 2001

(The Caucasus Under Renewed Russian Pressure. Cornell Caspian Consulting.
http://www.cornellcaspian.com/pub/10_0101russianpressure.html

Especially from a national interest-oriented approach, there are compelling reasons to refute such a Russia-first policy. The Caucasus and Central Asia are areas that carry a deep importance for Eurasian security, and affect the west profoundly. First, the region's chronic instability permits the operation and growth of terrorist movements that often have a global and specifically anti-American scope. Second, and related to this, the surge of the drugs trade throughout the region targets western societies and provides a major source of funding for terrorist groupings. Third, the Caspian is an emerging oil producing region vital to unimpeded energy access, and an important alternative to Middle Eastern oil on which the developed world is increasingly dependent. Finally, regional conflicts in this volatile area have the potential of developing into major power confrontations that cannot but affect the security of the U.S. and its allies. Arguing that the west lacks interests in this region is hence untenable. As for the possibility of working in tandem with Russia, the U.S. and the Europeans have spent a decade trying to portray their activities in this region to the Russian leadership as a win-win situation. Russia, it is argued, will benefit as well from the opening up of the region to the world economy. However, the Russian élite to a large degree still reasons in terms of a zero-sum game. Appeasing Russia by granting it concessions in the Caucasus and Central Asia may not necessarily lead it to accept the U.S. stand on other policy priorities such as missile defense. Quite to the contrary, appeasement may be understood as a sign of weakness, prompting increasing Russian inflexibility on such issues. On a more principal level, the U.S. claim to leadership in today's world is not based simply on its superior might compared to other states. Rather, the U.S. claims to support freedom and liberal market principles as ways to promote stability and peace. As Zbigniew Brzezinski has noted, American primacy serves to prevent the emergence of a destructive international anarchy which would in the end affect America itself: there is a historical opportunity for the U.S. to promote an enduring framework for geopolitical cooperation.[10] Nowhere is the risk of such anarchy developing and spreading higher than in Central Eurasia, surrounded as it is by major powers such as Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. The configuration of power in this region is more than anywhere else characterized by multipolarity and instability, and as a result the U.S. by virtue of its global primacy can have a major influence in the developments there. In order to do so, the U.S. needs a strategy. In the late 1990s, the U.S. has been engaging the region, but has done so in an ad hoc manner, with a policy characterized more by reactive tactical measures than proactive policies based in a strategy aiming to affect the situation positively. Basically, the U.S. has not had the initiative in the developments in the region. More than any other power, America has had the potential of projecting stability into this unstable region. However, by its lack of predictability and endemic insecurity regarding its commitment to the regional states, U.S. policy has as often been destabilizing as stabilizing. The recent decision to join forces with Moscow over Afghanistan is an illustration of this. Having been on the sidelines of the Afghanistan conflict in the 1990s, Washington was better positioned than anyone else to act as a mediator in future negotiations between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance, and moreover as a facilitator in the relations among regional powers with interests in Afghanistan. However, Washington forfeited this advantage, made itself a party in the conflict by imposing unilateral sanctions on one of the belligerents, thereby in practice militarily supporting the Northern Alliance.[11]

Inherency: Troop Buildup Continues In Afghanistan

Troop Buildup continues in Afghanistan

Michael O'Hanlon, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution, April 26, 2010

[http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/0426_afghanistan_troops_ohanlon.aspx]

Probably sometime in late May or early June, American military forces in Afghanistan will outnumber those in Iraq for the first time since 2003. This is a significant development. While an artificial milestone in some ways, it is worth noting, since it tells us a good deal about the two wars and where our efforts stand in each. As of this writing in late April, we now have nearly 90,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan and just under 100,000 in Iraq. Contractors employed by American firms and the American military roughly double these numbers in both places (though most of those hires are not Americans). The U.S. buildup in Afghanistan continues, as does the drawdown in Iraq, at the pace of a couple thousand GIs per month in Afghanistan and more than 5,000 a month in Iraq. The total U.S. troop strength in Afghanistan is expected to total about 100,000 by summer's end, at which point our military presence in Iraq will have declined further to 50,000.

The U.S. is committed to a counter-insurgency strategy

Michael Cohen, New American Foundation, World Policy Journal March 2010

[<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+myth+of+a+kinder%2c+gentler+war.-a0223748533>]

Shortly after he assumed command of all U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. Stanley McChrystal provided his soldiers with operational guidance for fighting insurgent Taliban forces. McChrystal's words directly reflect the Pentagon's new model of U.S. warfare and inform the philosophy behind the current U.S. military escalation in Afghanistan: "The ongoing insurgency must be met with a counterinsurgency campaign adapted to the unique conditions in each area that: protects the Afghan people, allowing them to choose a future they can be proud of; provides a secure environment allowing good government and economic development to undercut the causes and advocates of insurgency." According to McChrystal, the "Afghan people are at the center of our mission ... in reality they are the mission." These sentiments are reflective of what has become the new way of American war--population-centric counter-insurgency (COIN). The focus on COIN doctrine was enshrined by Gen. David Petraeus and the 2006 publication of the Army and Marine counter-insurgency manual, FM 3-24, which calls for a military approach that seeks to convince the population that counter-insurgents, acting on behalf of a sovereign government, can be trusted and are worthy of popular support.

Inherency: US Not Planning to Withdraw

Obama's withdrawal strategy allows him to push off reductions indefinitely

National Review Online, 6/24/2010

[6/24/10, " Is Obama Backing Off the Timetable for Withdrawal in Afghanistan? ", <http://corner.nationalreview.com/post/?q=NWJhM2U3NDcyNDhlNzdiMGEzNWYzMTJjMGMzNWY1NTc=>]

Obama was careful not to frame July 2011 as a withdrawal date, but the beginning of a transition. "We didn't say we'd be switching off the lights and closing the door behind us. We said we'd begin a transition phase that would allow the Afghan government to take more and more responsibility," he said. That part isn't so much news. But immediately after, Obama also said that at the end of this year his administration will undertake a second comprehensive review of its Afghanistan strategy. That point was also hit today by SecDef Gates and CJCS Adm. Mullen. Gates said that the administration would be looking to see if "by December we have enough evidence to demonstrate, if you will, the proof of concept" of the strategy. By connecting the deadline talk with the strategic review talk, Obama and his national security principals are begging us to add the missing premise: if the review doesn't show things proceeding smoothly in Afghanistan, the deadline could be pushed off, indefinitely. Of course, nobody in the administration wants to say that outright. But the hopes seems to be that it will be reassuring enough to signal it.

Despite promises there will be no immediate troop withdrawal in Afghanistan.

Times of India, 6/25/2010

(No immediate withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan:

Obama<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/US/No-immediate-withdrawal-of-troops-from-Afghanistan-Obama/articleshow/6088533.cms>)

WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama on Thursday categorically ruled out immediate withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan from July 2011, the date he had earlier set for drawdown of troops from the war torn country. "We didn't say we'd be switching off the lights and closing the door behind us. We said we'd begin a transition phase that would allow the Afghan government to take more and more responsibility," Obama said at a White House joint press briefing with his Russian counterpart, Dmitry Medvedev. "Here's what we did not say last year. We did not say that, starting July 2011, suddenly there would be no troops from the US or allied countries in Afghanistan." Obama said in response to a question. That is the tragedy that was put forward and what we've also said is, is that, in December of this year, a year after this strategy has been put in place, at a time when the additional troops have been in place and have begun implementing strategy, that we'll conduct a review and we'll make an assessment, he said.

Harms: War Cannot Be Won - Cultural Differences

A large military presence in Afghanistan creates instability- culture insensitivity increases tensions

Dorrnsoro, visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 9/23/09

(Gilles, The National Interest, “Afghanization,”

<http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=22218>)

The Taliban have successfully exploited local grievances against corrupt national officials and the behavior of the foreign forces, framing them as a jihad. Moreover, the Taliban are generally careful not to antagonize the population. They are much more tolerant of music and beardless men than they were before 2001, and Mullah Omar has repeatedly made clear that fighters should show respect for the people, paying for the food they take, for instance. In a land of mixed religious and nationalist feelings, local solidarities tend to work in favor of the Taliban and against foreigners, who remain extremely unpopular in the Pashtun belt, especially when fighting occurs. This political context is a key driver of the insurgency. How does the coalition control the (supposedly) cleared areas? There is no trust between the coalition and the Afghan population—especially the Pashtuns—and after eight years in the country, it has definitely lost the battle for hearts and minds. The coalition forces simply don’t know how to be accepted locally: patrolling the villages is useless, and the linguistic and cultural barriers are de facto insurmountable when the average soldier’s stay in the country is no more than six months. The behavior of the coalition forces has also not been beyond reproach, and has included cultural insensitivity, heavy-handed searching of houses, aggressive behavior on the roads, arbitrary imprisonment, beating of prisoners and of course the inadvertent bombing of civilians.

FYI: Pashtun = ethnic group within Afghanistan

Counterinsurgency efforts in Afghanistan will fail because the military doesn’t know enough about Afghan culture

Nir Rosen, Fellow at the New York University Center on Law and Security, February 2010,

Boston Review, “Something from Nothing: U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan,”

<http://www.bostonreview.net/BR35.1/rosen.php>)

The troubles with COIN are institutional. The American military and policy establishments are incapable of doing COIN. They lack the curiosity to understand other cultures and the empathy to understand what motivates people. The new counterinsurgency manual gets it right: political factors have primacy in COIN. But the military is not a political party, and the Surge is the exception to the rule: Afghanistan 2009 is not Iraq, certainly not Iraq 2007, and confusing the two cases—rural/urban; ungoverned/governed; history of expelling occupiers/no comparable history; largely organized insurgency/multiple, competing insurgencies—promises disaster. The Americans have been ignoring the right lessons from Iraq—such as the use of community outposts—and internalizing the wrong ones. For example, all of the talk about bribing Afghan tribes shows that the Americans do not understand why Sunnis stopped resisting in Iraq (they lost) and overemphasizes the importance of tribalism in Afghan society.

FYI: COIN = Counter-Insurgency

Harms: War Cannot Be Won - Troop Requirements

Troop demands are too high – impossible to win the counterinsurgency

Gilles Dorransoro, Visiting Scholar, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2009,

“Focus and Exit: An Alternative Strategy for the Afghan War,”

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/afghan_war-strategy.pdf)

It is already clear, based on counterinsurgency literature, that the number of troops in Afghanistan is far too low to control the territory. There are just not enough troops to fight a serious war in half of the Afghan provinces, and the Taliban presence is growing in the north as well as the south and east. The current level of troop commitment is not enough to seal the border or to control the ground extensively. Hence, it is not reasonable to assume that we can militarily defeat the armed opposition at the current level of engagement. It is possible to send more troops and money to Afghanistan, but the numbers will still be relatively limited. Resources invested in Afghanistan have grown substantially since 2001 but remain relatively small in comparison with those committed to Iraq. In addition, there is no possibility of transferring all the resources invested in Iraq to Afghanistan. There will never be more than 150,000 international coalition troops in Afghanistan, yet just sealing the Afghan–Pakistani border would necessitate tens of thousands of troops. Without a change in the political dynamics, a surge is not going to be sufficient to defeat the insurgency. In addition, inserting more troops would imply a higher cost in lives and money; as a result, the United States would have less time to achieve its objectives, because the growing human and financial costs would make Congress and the public more impatient for success.

We would need over 600,000 troops in order to stabilize Afghanistan, four times the current amount

Ivan Eland, Senior Fellow and Director of the Center on Peace & Liberty at The Independent Institute, 12/9/2009

Ivan Eland, “Can the U.S. Withdraw from Afghanistan and Iraq?”

<http://www.independent.org/events/transcript.asp?eventID=145>)

Now, even if the surge had been the deciding factor in the reduction of Iraqi violence, the question is can you transplant that to Afghanistan? Afghanistan is a much different country and a much harder fight to win. Here are some of the reasons: The Taliban has a more zealous insurgency than Iraq. Afghanistan is a bigger country, has more people than Iraq, and there are fewer forces there. According to the U.S. military’s own rules of counterinsurgency warfare, the U.S. would have to have nearly 600,000 troops in Afghanistan to be effective. Now, of course that’s a rule of thumb, but the basic principle is that we’re way under that and there’s no hope that we’ll ever get up that high. So, I think we see the daunting task ahead. Iraq is flat. Afghanistan is mountainous, of course, making it much easier for the guerrillas. Unlike Iraq, the Afghan Taliban have a sanctuary in Pakistan, which is supposedly our ally, but which only goes after the Pakistani Taliban and not the Afghan Taliban. Now, the Afghan Taliban is always useful to the Pakistani government to counter the Indian influence in Afghanistan, especially when the U.S. is likely to leave as the President signaled his intention to at least start pulling out troops by 2011. So that was I think a message to elements of the Pakistani military that they should keep supporting the Afghan Taliban. Now, in Iraq the insurgency was primarily urban whereas in Afghanistan it’s rural. Because of the war, the civil war, and the assassinations, in addition, the tribal leadership is weaker in Afghanistan than in Iraq and there is no Awakening Movement in Afghanistan.

Harms: War Cannot Be Won - Nationalism

Even if the US won every battle, it would lose the war because of massive resistance to foreign occupiers

Gilles Dorronsoro, scholar at the Carnegie Endowment, expert on Afghanistan, 5/11/2010

“Karzai comes to Washington,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,
<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=40779>)

Afghanistan may be the right war, but the United States could very well fight it in the wrong place. Present plans call for most of the new troops to be deployed to the southern and eastern regions of the country, where they could win every battle and still fail to hold the ground. In a land already notoriously averse to foreign invaders, the southern province of Kandahar is particularly hostile to outsiders. In the 1980s, when the Soviets or the Afghan government wanted to punish one of their soldiers, they sent him there. Helmand, the other hot spot in the south, has no cities and few towns—very little of strategic value, except the road to Herat. In the eastern provinces, it’s important for Obama and his team to recognize that regardless of how the United States revises its strategy, American troops and their NATO allies will still face “hit and run” attacks from across the Pakistani border to the east. There is no quick fix to this situation: even with the full support of the Pakistani government and military (a very optimistic hypothesis) the border will stay out of control for years. And even if Kandahar and Helmand could be secured, U.S. troops would be stuck there, unable to prevent a stubborn Taliban infiltration and progression in the north. And when U.S. troops inevitably withdraw, what little order had previously existed would dissolve overnight. Regardless of how well U.S. troops there fare, the Afghan National Army forces that eventually replace them will be simply unable to ward off the Taliban. This is the Taliban’s historical base and they understand the political dynamics of these regions better than any foreign forces ever could.

Harms: Impact Extensions - Afghanistan

Instability in Afghanistan creates war in Central Asia

International Crisis Group, Nonpartisan organization working to prevent conflict worldwide, Asian branch, 9/28/01,

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1761&l=4>

Two decades of conflict in Afghanistan have already had a major impact on Central Asia. During the Soviet period, Central Asia bore a heavy burden of casualties from the war in that country. In more recent years, the IMU, which is supported by the Taliban, has carried out incursions into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan from bases in Afghanistan. Refugees from the Afghan civil war have been a major problem for Tajikistan. Indeed, all the countries are concerned that war may spill over into their territory. Moreover, much of Afghanistan's drug production flows to Europe through Central Asia.

Harms: Impact Extensions - Pakistan

Pakistan instability causes an Indo-Pak nuclear war

Richard Lugar - US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman, 1/28/04

“LUGAR STATEMENT ON INDIA-PAKISTAN,” January 28th, Lexis Nexis Congressional

Only Pakistan and India can resolve the issues between them. Yet, it is more important than ever that the United States sustain active engagement in South Asia to encourage continuation of this positive momentum. We have seen opportunities for peace squandered in South Asia in recent years. To ensure success, it is crucial that both parties prevent extremists from disrupting the process. Stability in this troubled region is vital to U.S. national interests, both because an Indo-Pakistani conflict could escalate into nuclear war and because of the potential nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Hostility between India and Pakistan boosts Islamic extremists in the region, and provides them fertile ground for terrorist recruitment. Greater instability also means that nuclear weapons could fall into the wrong hands. A stable South Asia in which Pakistan and India engage each other will eventually weaken the extremists. It will allow both countries to focus more time, energy, and resources on building better lives for their people.

Pakistan instability risks nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists

Graham Allison and John Deutch, Professor of Government at Harvard Kennedy School AND a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, 3/30/09

http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/18935/real_afghan_issue_is_pakistan.html)

The problem in Pakistan is more pressing and direct. There, the U.S. does have larger vital national interests. Top among these is preventing Pakistan's arsenal of nuclear weapons and materials from falling into the hands of terrorists such as Osama bin Laden. This danger is not hypothetical -- the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, A.Q. Khan, is now known to have been the world's first nuclear black marketer, providing nuclear weapons technology and materials to Libya, North Korea and Iran. Protecting Pakistan's nuclear arsenal requires preventing radical Islamic extremists from taking control of the country. Furthermore, the U.S. rightly remains committed to preventing the next 9/11 attack by eliminating global terrorist threats such as al Qaeda. This means destroying their operating headquarters and training camps, from which they can plan more deadly 9/11s.

Harms: Troops in Afghanistan Increase Risk of Terrorism

A small force is sufficient to keep the Taliban down and prevent the recreation of al Qaeda safe havens in Afghanistan

David Cortright, director of policy studies at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, OCTOBER 19, 2009,

“No Easy Way Out”, http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=11917 |

This analysis suggests the need for a thorough reorientation of U.S./NATO policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Obama administration has responded to requests for more troops in Afghanistan by calling first for the development of a new strategy. This is a sound approach, but the contours of a new strategy have yet to appear. U.S. commanders remain wedded to a policy of counterinsurgency and the maintenance of a large and expanding military footprint in the country. Stewart and other analysts have advocated an alternative approach of reducing the number of foreign troops and demilitarizing Western strategy. A smaller number of foreign troops would be enough, they argue, to assure that the Taliban does not return to power. Special operations forces would be sufficient to maintain pressure on Al Qaeda and disrupt any attempts to re-establish terrorist bases. These more limited objectives would fulfill the primary objective of Western policy without the enormous costs and risks of prolonged counterinsurgency. These approaches would be combined with an increased international commitment to development, responsible governance and the promotion of human rights in the region. By demilitarizing its involvement and increasing its commitment to diplomacy, democracy and development, the United States and its allies could achieve their purposes more effectively and with greater justice.

Presence in Afghanistan only increases terrorism and Taliban resurgence

Rebecca Griffin, Political Director of Peace Action West, 12/2/09,

“President Obama’s escalation in Afghanistan: unrealistic and costly”,

<http://blog.peaceactionwest.org/2009/12/02/president-obamas-escalation-in-afghanistan-unrealistic-and-costly/>

History has proven that military force is highly ineffective when it comes to dealing with terrorist groups. The RAND Corporation reviewed all terrorist groups that ended in the last 40 years, and determined that only 7% were defeated by military force. Policing and intelligence and political reconciliation were far more useful, and they extrapolate from this information that the US should have a light military footprint in Afghanistan if any. Escalation will backfire. Not only is sending additional troops unlikely to improve the situation on the ground, it could easily exacerbate the situation. Afghanistan expert Gilles Dorronsoro noted that the presence of foreign troops is the top factor in the resurgence of the Taliban, and recommended that “the best way to weaken, and perhaps divide, the armed opposition is to reduce military confrontations.” Rather than reducing the momentum of the Taliban, the stated goal of President Obama’s policy, escalation will light a fire under a growing insurgency. President Obama is correct in noting that the Taliban is not popular with the Afghan people, but the United States’ popularity is on the wane. In a poll in early 2009, just 18% of Afghans said the number of foreign forces should be increased. US intelligence reports this year noted that only about 10% of the insurgency is ideologically motivated Taliban; the majority are people fighting to repel foreign invaders or for economic gain. The US is adding fuel to the fire by aggressively pursuing insurgents who have no international agenda with an escalation of troops.

Harms: Al Qaeda is Capable of a Serious Terrorist Attack

Al Qaeda is still a serious threat to US security

Bruce Hoffman, Professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and a Senior Fellow at the U.S. Military Academy's Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, May/June 2008

“The Myth of Grass-Roots Terrorism”, Foreign Affairs , May/June 2008

Sage-man's impressive resumé cannot overcome his fundamental misreading of the al Qaeda threat, which is at the heart of his book. He contends: "The present threat has evolved from a structured group of al Qaeda masterminds, controlling vast resources and issuing commands, to a multitude of informal local groups trying to emulate their predecessors by conceiving and executing operations from the bottom up. These 'homegrown' wannabes form a scattered global network, a leaderless jihad." According to Sage-man, al Qaeda has ceased to exist as either an organizational or an operational entity and is therefore irrelevant to U.S. security concerns. Sage-man believes that "al Qaeda Central has receded in importance" and goes so far as to assert that it has been "neutralized operationally." Instead, the principal terrorist threat today, Sage-man claims, comes from diffuse low-level groups. But this view flies in the face of the two most recent authoritative analyses of terrorist threats to the United States: the July 2007 National Intelligence Estimate and the annual threat assessment presented by the director of national intelligence, Mike McConnell, to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence this past February. The publicly released portion of the 2007 NIE, for example, stated unambiguously that al Qaeda "is and will remain the most serious threat to the Homeland, as its central leadership continues to plan high-impact plots, while pushing others in extremist Sunni communities to mimic its efforts and to supplement its capabilities." This was also the unambiguous conclusion offered by the former CIA and National Security Council official Bruce Riedel in these pages a year ago ("Al Qaeda Strikes Back," May/June 2007). The unmistakable message is that al Qaeda is a remarkably agile and flexible organization that exercises both top-down and bottom-up planning and operational capabilities. It is not exclusively focused on the grass-roots dimension, that is Leaderless Jihad's sole preoccupation. The NIE further stated, "We assess the group has protected or regenerated key elements of its Homeland attack capability, including: a safehaven in the Pakistan Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), operational lieutenants, and its top leadership." These findings are dismissed by Sage-man as "alarmist" without any further analytic explanation or empirical justification whatsoever.

Al Qaeda is actively seeking nuclear weapons for use – nuclear energy expansion means risks are multiplying fast

Michael Evans, Pentagon Correspondent, Washington, 4/12/10,

“Hillary Clinton fears al-Qaeda is obtaining nuclear weapons material”,

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article7094876.ece

Terrorists including al-Qaeda pose a serious threat to world security as they attempt to obtain atomic weapons material, Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, declared on the eve of a global summit in Washington to prevent a nuclear terror attack. President Obama will call on the leaders of 47 nations today — the biggest gathering of heads of state by a US leader since the founding of the UN in 1945 — to introduce tougher safeguards to prevent nuclear material ending up in the hands of terrorists. As far back as 1998, Osama bin Laden stated that it was his Islamic duty to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction. During the two-day Nuclear Security Summit, Mr Obama will try to convince representatives, including David Miliband, who is standing in for Gordon Brown, that the dangers of loosely guarded atomic material are so grave that a global agreement is needed to stop al-Qaeda going nuclear.

Harms: Global War – Instability Draws in Others

Afghanistan instability has historically drawn in large powers such as Russia with catastrophic consequences for global security

Elie Krakowski, Ph.D., Columbia, MA, Johns Hopkins, International Studies, 7/1/02,
"How to Win the Peace in Afghanistan"

<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/001/403lrkrt.asp>

Success in Afghanistan is important, however, not solely because the United States has invested its military might and honor there. It is also crucial to the peace and independence of the surrounding states--for the same Islamist terrorists who targeted the Twin Towers and the Pentagon dream of creating an Islamist empire across a swath of Asia. Strategically insignificant on its own, Afghanistan has been a bone of contention between empires. And it still is. It is this characteristic--that it sparks the desires of outsiders--that continues to dominate today. This is why any settlement of Afghanistan's massive problems has little chance of success unless it addresses adequately the regional context. Contenders for control over Afghanistan in the nineteenth century were the British and Russian empires. In the second half of the twentieth there was a southward thrust by the Soviets (1979-1989), followed by an attempted northward thrust by the Pakistanis after the Soviet troop withdrawal and the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991-2001). It was this second attempt to control Afghanistan from the outside that served to destabilize not just that country but also all those around it, a process that has not yet been brought to an end. And it is that destabilization that would be measurably increased should the United States fail in Afghanistan, with catastrophic consequences for all concerned.

Harms: Global War – Central Asia War Impact

Instability in Central Asia is the most probable Scenario for Nuclear War

Stephen J. Blank, Expert on the Soviet Bloc for the Strategic Studies Institute, 2000

(American Grand Strategy and the Transcaspian Region. World Affairs. 9-22)

Thus many structural conditions for conventional war or protracted ethnic conflict where third parties intervene now exist in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia. The outbreak of violence by disaffected Islamic elements, the drug trade, the Chechen wars, and the unresolved ethnopolitical conflicts that dot the region, not to mention the undemocratic and unbalanced distribution of income across corrupt governments, provide plenty of tinder for future fires. Many Third World conflicts generated by local structural factors also have great potential for unintended escalation. Big powers often feel obliged to rescue their proxies and proteges. One or another big power may fail to grasp the stakes for the other side since interests here are not as clear as in Europe. Hence commitments involving the use of nuclear weapons or perhaps even conventional war to prevent defeat of a client are not well established or clear as in Europe. For instance, in 1993 Turkish noises about intervening on behalf of Azerbaijan induced Russian leaders to threaten a nuclear war in that case. Precisely because Turkey is a NATO ally but probably could not prevail in a long war against Russia, or if it could, would conceivably trigger a potential nuclear blow (not a small possibility given the erratic nature of Russia's declared nuclear strategies), the danger of major war is higher here than almost everywhere else in the CIS or the "arc of crisis" from the Balkans to China. As Richard Betts has observed, The greatest danger lies in areas where (1) the potential for serious instability is high; (2) both superpowers perceive vital interests; (3) neither recognizes that the other's perceived interest or commitment is as great as its own; (4) both have the capability to inject conventional forces; and (5) neither has willing proxies capable of settling the situation.(77)

Solvency: Withdrawal Creates Local Cooperation in Afghanistan

Announcement of U.S. withdrawal would force cooperation from warlords and the government

David Wildman, executive, United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, April 14, 2010

[http://www.fpif.org/articles/afghanistan_should_we_stay_or_should_we_go]

But I think most of all the United States needs to announce an exit strategy. When that happens the warlords who are with parliament, who are getting kickbacks and a lot of the reconstruction funding, will start changing their tune. The Karzai government with all the corruption that is associated with that will start changing its tune. The Taliban and other armed groups are likely to change their tunes. It will become more possible for the rest of the international community to engage in non-militarized strategies to address people's needs.

Withdrawal can achieve US security goals cheaper and more efficiently by enlisting support of local groups

Andrew J Bacevich , professor of international relations and history at Boston University, 12/30/08

“Winning In Afghanistan” <http://www.newsweek.com/2008/12/30/winning-in-afghanistan.html>

All this means that the proper U.S. priority for Afghanistan should be not to try harder but to change course. The war in Afghanistan (like the Iraq War) won't be won militarily. It can be settled—however imperfectly—only through politics. The new U.S. president needs to realize that America's real political objective in Afghanistan is actually quite modest: to ensure that terrorist groups like Al Qaeda can't use it as a safe haven for launching attacks against the West. Accomplishing that won't require creating a modern, cohesive nation-state. U.S. officials tend to assume that power in Afghanistan ought to be exercised from Kabul. Yet the real influence in Afghanistan has traditionally rested with tribal leaders and warlords. Rather than challenge that tradition, Washington should work with it. Offered the right incentives, warlords can accomplish U.S. objectives more effectively and more cheaply than Western combat battalions. The basis of U.S. strategy in Afghanistan should therefore become decentralization and outsourcing, offering cash and other emoluments to local leaders who will collaborate with the United States in excluding terrorists from their territory. This doesn't mean Washington should blindly trust that warlords will become America's loyal partners. U.S. intelligence agencies should continue to watch Afghanistan closely, and the Pentagon should crush any jihadist activities that local powers fail to stop themselves. As with the Israelis in Gaza, periodic airstrikes may well be required to pre-empt brewing plots before they mature. Were U.S. resources unlimited and U.S. interests in Afghanistan more important, upping the ante with additional combat forces might make sense. But U.S. power—especially military power—is quite limited these days, and U.S. priorities lie elsewhere. Rather than committing more troops, therefore, the new president should withdraw them while devising a more realistic—and more affordable—strategy for Afghanistan.

Solvency: Limited Presence More Effective in Afghanistan

The smaller, well-focused policy of the plan is the only way to build political support for our efforts over the longer term. Large counter-insurgency efforts are unsustainable.

Steven Simon and Jonathan Stevenson, Senior Fellow, Council of Foreign Relations and Professor of Strategic Studies at the US Naval War College, October 2009

[Survival Magazine, volume 51, issue 5, pp. 47-67

www.informaworld.com/smpp/section?content=a915362559&fulltext=713240928]

An effort on that scale would garner majority US domestic support only if the public sees likely victory and Congress, the White House and the Beltway punditry line up decisively behind the policy. The emerging trends are pointing in the contrary direction. As monthly and annual US casualties in Afghanistan reached historical peaks in August 2009, and the Afghan national election loomed, a poll conducted by ABC News and the Washington Post indicated that most Americans did not support an extended US military commitment in Afghanistan.³¹ Congressional Democrats are balking at anticipated requests for more troops.³² And even conservative columnists, like the influential George F. Will, have turned against a maximalist Afghanistan policy.³³ Overall, increasingly strong perceptions of the Karzai government as inept and corrupt are making prospects that the United States could enlist it as an effective counter-insurgency partner and lend it the legitimacy required to rebuild the country seem more and more baseless. The upshot is that only if the United States establishes a well-calibrated limited policy now will it have the political flexibility to sustain it over the longer-term and thereby to effectively contain the jihadist threat in Central Asia. If, on the other hand, the Obama administration promises more than it can deliver in Afghanistan, a reprise of Vietnam may occur: once failure becomes clear, domestic support will evaporate, the administration will be compelled to withdraw precipitously, and the United States will lose considerable traction in the region. These factors suggest that the United States should limit its Afghanistan/Pakistan policy to counter-terrorism and disown country-wide counterinsurgency and state-building in Afghanistan. At the same time, Washington must remain highly sensitive to the dynamic whereby decreased military activity in Afghanistan combined with robust operations in Pakistan could induce al-Qaeda to return to Afghanistan and render it a main threat once again. In that light, any abrupt wholesale American military withdrawal from Afghanistan would be too risky. Instead, the United States should seek to facilitate a glide-path to a substantial drawdown - and with it fewer casualties and lower expenditures in Afghanistan - over the next few years.

The United States can better achieve its goals with a scaled-down counter-terrorism policy

Steven Simon and Jonathan Stevenson, Senior Fellow, Council of Foreign Relations and Professor of Strategic Studies at the US Naval War College, October 2009

[Survival Magazine, volume 51, issue 5, pp. 47-67

www.informaworld.com/smpp/section?content=a915362559&fulltext=713240928]

That policy would reflect the reality that a deeply committed counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan is potentially counterproductive, probably unwinnable and in any event unnecessary. The United States can protect its interests and fulfill its international security obligations with a far more circumscribed counter-terrorism effort focused on Pakistan. Under such an approach, US policy would recognize Afghanistan as the residual problem that it has, in fact, become.

Solvency: Limited Presence More Effective in Afghanistan

A limited presence will stabilize the country and stop Al-Qaeda

Austin Long, assistant professor of international Affairs at Columbia University, 2010,
“Small is Beautiful: The Counterterrorism Option in Afghanistan”, Orbis, Volume 54, Issue 2, 2010,
Pages 199-214

Second, the President has directed an increase in force levels beginning this year. A counterterrorism strategy would have these additional forces concentrate on achieving the expansion of the Afghan security forces that Gen. McChrystal has called for. 2010 will be a time of feverish arming and training of Afghan forces while Coalition forces hold the line. President Obama has already directed that beginning in early 2011, the United States will begin to draw down its conventional forces as Afghan forces stand up. By the time of the 2012 presidential election or soon thereafter, the United States would shift fully to the posture described above (essentially a 20-24 month drawdown). The strategic goal of this transition is to ensure the survival of an Afghan state while acknowledging that probably 35-40 percent of the country (i.e. almost all of the Pashtun regions) will be under the de facto control of militants. At present, militants control, by fairly pessimistic estimates, perhaps 20-30 percent of the country (though they are able to conduct attacks in a larger area than that).³² Rather than seeking to reverse this control, the counterterrorism option seeks to contain it. This will limit al Qaeda's potential haven and ensure that the United States has continued access to the bases it needs through reassurances to the government and local allies.

Solvency: Plan Helps Stabilize Pakistan

More troops are counterproductive, a small military presence can secure the Afghan-Pakistani border more efficiently

Malou Innocent, Foreign Policy Analyst at the Cato Institute, 4/24/09,

“Withdrawing from Afghanistan”, <http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/2009/04/24/withdrawing-from-afghanistan/> |

I described the situation to my Cato colleague Chris Preble, for lack of a better analogy, the Afghanistan–Pakistan border is like a balloon: pushing down on one side forces elements to move to another — it doesn’t eliminate the threat. The fate of Pakistan — a nuclear-armed Muslim-majority country plagued by a powerful jihadist insurgency — will matter more to regional and global stability than economic and political developments in Afghanistan. But if our attempts to stabilize Afghanistan destabilize Pakistan, where does that leave us? Like A.I.G., is Afghanistan too big to fail? No. President Obama earlier this month issued a wide-ranging strategic review of the war and the region, and declared “the core goal of the U.S. must be to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and its safe havens in Pakistan, and to prevent their return to Pakistan or Afghanistan.” But al Qaeda, as we very well know, is a loosely connected and decentralized network with cells in over 60 countries. Amassing tens of thousands of U.S. and NATO troops in one country — or any country — is unnecessary. Until Pakistan’s intelligence agency, the ISI, changes priorities, this is a stalemate and we are throwing soldiers into a conflict because policymakers fear that, if we leave, it will get worse. Sound familiar? The only military role necessary in Afghanistan is trainers and assistance for the Afghan military, police, and special forces tasked with discrete operations against specific targets. The bulk of the combat forces can and should be withdrawn. As for Pakistan’s impulsive act of gallantry in Buner this week, that’s certainly welcome news. But Mukhtar Khan, a Pakistani freelance journalist whom I’ve talked to on numerous occasions, records here that last year in Buner, a lashkar (tribal militia) successfully beat back the Taliban’s incursions.

US military presence destabilizes Pakistan

Paul R. Pillar, 28-year veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency, a visiting professor at Georgetown University for security studies, 10/14/09,

“Counterterrorism and Stability in Afghanistan”,

http://cpass.georgetown.edu/documents/AfghanHASCPillarOct09_1.doc |

In the meantime, an expanded U.S.-led counterinsurgency in Afghanistan is more likely to complicate than to alleviate the task of Pakistani security forces, insofar as it pushes additional militants across the Durand line. A larger U.S. military presence in the immediate region also would make it politically more difficult for the Pakistani government to cooperate openly on security matters with the United States, in the face of widespread negative sentiment inside Pakistan regarding that presence.

AT: Afghan Military Unprepared

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[] **The Afghan military will be strong enough to defend the key regions in Afghanistan**

Austin Long, assistant professor of international Affairs at Columbia University, 2010,
 “Small is Beautiful: The Counterterrorism Option in Afghanistan”, Orbis, Volume 54, Issue 2, 2010,
 Pages 199-214

There are a few critical regions that will have to be defended, but this should not be too arduous. The first is Kabul and its surrounding area, for both symbolic reasons and to ensure the viability of Bagram airbase. The second is Jalalabad and the surrounding area, along with the road links east to the Khyber Pass and west to Kabul. The third is Kandahar City and the surrounding area, along with the road link to Kabul. This is a total of about 750 kilometers of highway along with the three cities. The 750 kilometers could probably be guarded reasonably effectively by about ten ANA kandaks (battalions) a total of about 6,000 personnel (less than 5 percent of the force goal for late 2010). This would yield one kandak for every seventy five kilometers. These forces could be replaced or supplemented by ANP along with local defense organizations such as Afghan Public Protection Program (AP3) or CDI. Similarly, each of the three cities could be allocated ten kandaks to secure it. This total of forty kandaks is less than the number deemed combat ready in 2007 (forty six according to the Afghan Ministry of Defense). Consequently, there should be plenty of Afghan security forces to accomplish this mission even if the expansion of security forces in 2009-2010 is not very successful.³³ These forces would retain the ability to call on U.S. air support if needed through the brigade level U.S. advisers and in extremis could be supported by the U.S. conventional forces stationed at the three air bases, giving high confidence that they can hold these cities. Both the central government and local allies will also continue to benefit from U.S. aid, greatly reducing their incentive to turn on the United States. The United States, via the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and special operations forces, very effectively paid off various groups when it toppled the Taliban in 2001-2002.³⁴ According to one report, the United States continues to pay the brother of President Hamid Karzai for his support, including providing individuals to serve in a paramilitary force.³⁵ If the largesse continues to flow, there seems little reason to believe support for the United States will not continue among the beneficiaries (i.e. key elites and their followers).

AT: Afghanistan Government is Ineffective / Corrupt

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[] The US will continue to support the local government even after withdrawal. Also, withdrawal increases leverage over the government, allowing it to reform.

Austin Long, assistant professor of international Affairs at Columbia University, 2010, “Small is Beautiful: The Counterterrorism Option in Afghanistan”, Orbis, Volume 54, Issue 2, 2010, Pages 199-214

During this transition, the United States will have to continue supporting the central government even as it builds up local allies. This balancing act is required to ensure the continued existence of a formal, if weak, central state, which will in turn simplify the negotiations for the U.S. counterterrorism posture. Tying the local allies to the central state in some way would help with this and an expanded CDI or the similar Afghan Public Protection Program provides a means to do this.³⁶ Some might argue that this increases the risk of warlordism, which may or may not be true but is also irrelevant to the strategic goal of disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al Qaeda.³⁷ The transition will also mitigate the moral hazard endemic to support to counterinsurgency. Put simply, the United States and its allies are more committed to a stable, democratic Afghanistan than the Afghan government. The McChrystal Report rightly notes the massive problems with corruption and poor governance in Afghanistan that hobble the counterinsurgency effort.³⁸ Yet as long as the United States and its allies are willing to pour ever more troops into the country, it has little leverage over the government.³⁹ In this circumstance, the threat to cut support, which Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has suggested, is not terribly credible.⁴⁰ With a transition to a small footprint and the development of local allies, a clearer signal will be sent that the Afghan government has to do more. The transition will not solve this problem, but it will at least be a step in the right direction.

AT: History Proves Affirmative Will Fail

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[] Past counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan were not a failure, they were just being judged by the wrong benchmarks

Austin Long, assistant professor of international Affairs at Columbia University, 2010,
 “Small is Beautiful: The Counterterrorism Option in Afghanistan”, Orbis, Volume 54, Issue 2, 2010,
 Pages 199-214

It will therefore take about three years to get to this posture. **But will it work?** First, this is clearly not the U.S. posture before September 11, 2001, so any comparisons to that period are inapt. Second, arguments that this was essentially the United States posture from 2002-2006 are much closer to the mark. However, here the argument is that this posture “failed” because the militants have made a comeback. Yet this misinterprets the strategic goal completely. If the strategic goal is a stable Afghanistan, then the strategy was a failure. If the strategic goal is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan, it was a success: there are, at present, few al Qaeda members in Afghanistan and certainly no senior leadership. In an interview on October 5, 2009 national security adviser James Jones noted of al Qaeda in Afghanistan that the “maximum estimate is less than 100 operating in the country, no bases, no ability to launch attacks on either us or our allies.”⁴¹ The counterterrorism option merely seeks to ensure that this minimal level of al Qaeda presence continues in the future. Alternately, this argument conflates all militants under the rubric al Qaeda. This is problematic: if any thug with a Kalashnikov is a threat to U.S. national security then readers should prepare for a rough future as there are millions of them spread across the globe. It is this conflating of the local fighter with the global terrorist that David Kilcullen's Accidental Guerilla rails against, so it would behoove the United States to avoid this error.⁴²

AT: Plan is a Total Withdrawal

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[] There is a difference between drawdown and complete withdrawal. Troops will remain, but abandon the current comprehensive strategy of counterinsurgency

Steven Simon and Jonathan Stevenson, Senior Fellow, Council of Foreign Relations and Professor of Strategic Studies at the US Naval War College, October 2009

[Survival Magazine, volume 51, issue 5, pp. 47-67

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/section?content=a915362559&fulltext=713240928>]

These factors suggest that the United States should limit its Afghanistan/Pakistan policy to counter-terrorism and disown country-wide counterinsurgency and state-building in Afghanistan. At the same time, Washington must remain highly sensitive to the dynamic whereby decreased military activity in Afghanistan combined with robust operations in Pakistan could induce al-Qaeda to return to Afghanistan and render it a main threat once again. In that light, any abrupt wholesale American military withdrawal from Afghanistan would be too risky. Instead, the United States should seek to facilitate a glide-path to a substantial drawdown - and with it fewer casualties and lower expenditures in Afghanistan - over the next few years.

AT: Topicality

“Military presence” refers to combat forces only.

Christopher Layne 2010, Prof. and Robert M Gates Chair in Intelligence and Nat'l Security at the Bush School of Gov't and Public Service @ Texas A&M U, May 12,
<http://abnormalmeans.com/2010/05/definition-of-military-presence/>

My interpretation would be that “military presence” means bases with combat forces (or bases that normally are maintained by skeleton units but are maintained to receive combat forces crisis/surge type circumstances). I do not think in the normal meaning of the term that the US has military bases in N. Korea.

Military presence in Afghanistan is troops

Michael Evians, Defesne Editor for The Times, 8/10/2009

“Another 45,000 US troops needed in Afghanistan, military advisor says”

If Mr Cordesman’s recommendation reflects the view of General McChrystal, who recently presented the findings of a 60-day review of Afghanistan strategy to Washington, it would mean sending another nine combat brigades, comprising 45,000 American troops, in addition to the 21,000 already approved by President Obama. This would bring the total American military presence in Afghanistan to about 100,000, considerably closer to the force that was deployed for the counter-insurgency campaign in Iraq.

AT: Allied Proliferation Disadvantage

Withdrawal won't affect US credibility or resolve. Instead, the US looks much worse fighting a war incorrectly

Robert Jervis, Adlai E. Stevenson Professor of International Affairs at Columbia University, September 14, 2009,

“Withdrawal without winning?”,

http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/09/14/withdrawal_without_winning

A third but subsidiary argument is that withdrawal would undermine American credibility around the world. Again, the fact that this is an echo of Vietnam does not make it wrong, but it does seem to me much less plausible than the other arguments. Who exactly is going to lose faith in us, and what are they going to do differently? Much could depend on the course of events in other countries, especially Iraq, which could yet descend into civil war. But if it does, would American appear more resolute -- and wiser -- for fighting in Afghanistan? Of course if we withdraw and then we or our allies suffer a major terrorist attack many people will blame Obama, and this is a political argument that must weigh more heavily with the White House than it does with policy analysts. It is worth noting that these issues are much less ideologically-charged than those surrounding the war in Iraq (or in Vietnam). This means that it should be easier for the concerned community to address them seriously, although not necessarily to come up with (correct) answers, and for people to change their minds. This makes it particularly unfortunate that we have not had a searching and thorough discussion. Although some deeply-rooted beliefs are involved, such as those involving the propensity for dominoes to fall and perhaps an estimate of how great a danger terrorism is, we are mostly in a more pragmatic realm. Of course Yogi Berra was right when he said that prediction is difficult, especially about the future. But once we move beyond the alluring but unsustainable claim that our inability to exclude the possibility that withdrawing would be very harmful means that we must fight, it becomes clear that we are building a large and risky war on predictions that call for closer examination.

AT: Allied Proliferation Disadvantage

The plan would not be a signal of weakness. A smaller force will signal that the US is still committed and force action from Afghanistan leaders, making the US look more successful

Marc Lynch, Associate Prof. Pol. Sci. and Int'l. Affairs at George Washington, 12/12/2009
International Herald Tribune, "A Time Limit is Essential", LexisNexis

President Obama 's critics argue that his plan to withdraw American troops from Afghanistan starting in July 2011 signals a fatal lack of resolve, inviting the Taliban to wait out a feckless America, or else has no credibility. In fact, the deadline is crucial to the strategy. Yes, there are many reasons to be skeptical of the prospects for the new plan, from the hopeless corruption in Kabul to the difficulties of state-building. But a clearly communicated timeline increases the odds of success. The July 2011 date should be understood as an inflection point, not as the end of the American military mission. There's no "mission accomplished" here. The American commitment to Afghanistan and Pakistan will continue. The pace and location of withdrawals will be dictated by conditions on the ground and, indeed, the date itself was carefully chosen based on the military's best calculations of improved security and political conditions. It was not drawn from a hat. The deadline is essential politically because it will provide the necessary urgency for Afghans to make the institutional reforms that will ensure their own survival. An open-ended commitment creates a terrible moral hazard in which Afghan leaders, assuming American troops will always be there to protect them, may make risky or counterproductive decisions. A limited, conditional commitment creates the leverage needed to generate the institutional transformation necessary to cement any gains made by the military. Just as in the Iraq debate, hawks who insist on an open-ended commitment to "victory" misunderstand the strategic incentives created by an unconditional military promise. Contrary to prevailing myths of the Iraq surge, Iraqi politicians began to make serious moves toward overcoming their political and sectarian divides only in mid-2008, when it became likely that an Obama electoral victory would lead to an end of the unconditional American commitment. President Obama's deadline will not compromise the military mission. The surge of troops is meant to blunt the momentum of the Taliban, establish security and provide space for the spread of governance and legitimacy. Should the Taliban choose to retreat and wait out the American mission, this would be a blessing, not a curse. It would allow America to establish control more easily and help build effective local and national governments. The greater problem for the Obama administration will be to make the commitment to the drawdown credible. Many expect that the military will come back in a year asking for more troops and time. The blizzard of conflicting messages coming from Washington this week did little to diminish the expectation. This is troubling, because the political logic of the deadline works only if Afghans on both sides believe in it. Skeptics among the public and in Congress can provide an essential service by carefully monitoring progress and supporting the strategy while making it clear that there will be no tolerance for future escalations or open-ended commitments.

AT: Readiness Disadvantage

A counterterrorism strategy with fewer troops would still demonstrate US strength

Fred Kaplan, Slate's "War Stories" columnist, 3/24/2009,

“CT or COIN?”, <http://slate.com/id/2214515>

A "targeted" CT campaign, its advocates say, would at least demonstrate the West's resolve in the war on terrorism and keep al-Qaida jihadists contained. It's a type of fighting that we know how to do, and its effects are measurable. One might also argue (I don't know if anyone on the inside is doing so) that it could serve as a holding action—a way of keeping Afghanistan from plunging deeper into chaos—while we focus more intently on diplomatic measures to stabilize neighboring Pakistan. If Pakistan blows up, curing Afghanistan of its problems will be irrelevant and, in any case, impossible.

Continuing the current Afghanistan strategy makes the US look weak

Malou Innocent, Foreign Policy Analyst at the Cato Institute, November/December 2009,

“Should the United States Withdraw from Afghanistan?”,

http://www.cato.org/pubs/policy_report/v31n6/cpr31n6-3.html

Second, whether we withdraw or whether we stay, al Qaeda can twist our choice into a victory. If we withdraw, we appear weak — even though America is responsible for almost half of the world's military spending, can project its power to the most inaccessible corners of the globe, and wields one of the planet's largest nuclear arsenals. But America also looks weak if it remains in the region too long. The military will appear bogged down, the strategy aimless, and, despite our best efforts, military operations will continue to kill Afghan civilians, eroding support for our presence among the population

AT: START Disadvantage

Democrats in Congress are strongly opposed to the War in Afghanistan

Adam Nagourney and Carl Hulse, writers for the New York Times, 12/3/2009

“Obama’s Afghanistan Decision Is Straining Ties With Democrats”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/04/us/politics/04dems.html>)

President Obama’s decision to send more troops to Afghanistan over the objections of fellow Democrats on Capitol Hill is straining a relationship already struggling under the weight of an administration agenda that some Democratic lawmakers fear is placing them in a politically vulnerable position. The result has been a subtle shift in which Democrats in Congress are becoming less deferential to the White House, making clear that Mr. Obama will not always be able to count on them to fall into line and highlighting how Mr. Obama’s expansive ambitions are running up against political realities. The troop buildup is stirring unease among Democrats at a time when they have been struggling to navigate crosscurrents of pressure from different constituencies. Democrats now face the prospect of enacting a health care bill that Republicans are using to paint them as fiscally irresponsible and intent on extending the government’s reach deeper into the economy and personal health decisions.

Polls show the public is against the war

Jennifer Agiesta and Jon Cohen, Washington Post Staff Writers 8/20/2009,

“Public Opinion in U.S. Turns Against Afghan War”, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/19/AR2009081903066.html>

A majority of Americans now see the war in Afghanistan as not worth fighting, and just a quarter say more U.S. troops should be sent to the country, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll. Most have confidence in the ability of the United States to meet its primary goals of defeating the Taliban, facilitating economic development, and molding an honest and effective Afghan government, but few say Thursday’s elections there are likely to produce such a government. When it comes to the baseline question, 42 percent of Americans say the United States is winning in Afghanistan; about as many, 36 percent, say it is losing. The new poll comes amid widespread speculation that Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, will request more troops for his stepped-up effort to remove the Taliban from Afghan towns and villages. That position gets the backing of 24 percent of those polled, while nearly twice as many, 45 percent, want to decrease the number of military forces there. (Most of the remainder want to keep the level about the same.) In January, before President Obama authorized sending an additional 17,000 troops to the country, public sentiment tilted more strongly toward a troop increase. Should Obama embrace his generals’ call for even more forces, he would risk alienating some of his staunchest supporters. Although 60 percent of Americans approve of how Obama has handled the situation in Afghanistan, his ratings among liberals have slipped, and majorities of liberals and Democrats alike now, for the first time, solidly oppose the war and are calling for a reduction in troop levels. Overall, seven in 10 Democrats say the war has not been worth its costs, and fewer than one in five support an increase in troop levels.



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Afghanistan Negative

Answers To: Inherency.....	1-2
Answers To: Harms - Regional War and Pakistan Instability Advantage.....	3-7
Answers To: Harms - Global War Advantage.....	8-10
Answers To: Solvency.....	11-15

Answers To: Inherency

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[] **Obama has committed to withdrawal in 2011, he is even breaking with the military to ensure it**

Sean Lengell, writer for the Washington Times, 6/20/2010,
"White House: Afghanistan withdrawal deadline firm",
<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/jun/20/white-house-afghanistan-withdrawal-deadline-firm/>]

The Obama administration has reaffirmed its promise to begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan by July 2011, distancing itself from recent Pentagon comments that the move could take longer. "There's a firm date," said White House Chief of State Rahm Emanuel on ABC's "This Week" on Sunday. "The July [2011] date, as stated by the president, that's not moving, that's not changing. Everybody agreed on that date." Mr. Emanuel's remarks were in contrast to comments by Gen. David H. Petraeus, who told a congressional committee last week that any withdrawal would be "based on conditions" and that "July 2011 is not the date where we race for the exits."

Answers To: Inherency

[___] **Withdrawal will happen in 2011, all the top officials conducting the war agree**

The Times of India 6/22/2010,

“US troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan is on track for next July”, the Times of India, June 22, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World-US/US-troops-withdrawal-from-Afghanistan-is-on-track-for-next-July/articleshow/6076602.cms>

The Obama administration reaffirmed that it will begin pulling US troops out of Afghanistan next summer, despite reservations among top generals that absolute deadlines are a mistake. President Barack Obama's chief of staff said on Sunday that an announced plan to begin bringing forces home in July 2011 still holds. “That's not changing. Everybody agreed on that date,” Rahm Emanuel said, adding by name the top three officials overseeing the policy girding the war: Gen David Petraeus, defense secretary Robert Gates and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, Adm Mike Mullen.

Answers To: Harms - Regional War and Pakistan Instability Advantage

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[] **The US strategy in Afghanistan is working and the country will soon be stabilized**

Michael O’Hanlon, Director of Research and Senior Fellow of Foreign Policy at the Brookings institute, 12/14/2009

“In Afghanistan, The Odds Are With Us,” Brookings, December 14th,

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/1214_afghanistan_ohanlon.aspx

Second, elements of the Afghan security forces are improving fast. This is most true for the army. With NATO’s International Security Assistance Force focused intently now on proper training and mentoring, the building of Afghan security forces that can protect their own people should accelerate. Third, life in Afghanistan has actually improved somewhat compared with the recent past. Yes, the progress is uneven, and the poor remain very badly off. But overall the economy, education, healthcare and similar indicators are moving more in the right direction than the wrong one. Material progress has contributed to a reservoir of goodwill among the Afghan people toward those in authority. President Karzai, the United States, and NATO all still enjoyed at least 60 percent support from the population as of summer 2009 — far better than the United States has enjoyed in Iraq. This popularity number is fragile, and uneven among different groups, but we do have some advantages in how the Afghan public views the situation nonetheless. Fourth, NATO in general and the United States in particular know how to carry out counterinsurgency missions better than ever before. Troops are experienced in the art of counterinsurgency and knowledgeable about Afghanistan. We also have excellent commanders, starting with Central Command Combatant Cmdr. Gen. David Petraeus and Gen. McChrystal, who directs both the NATO forces and the separate, U.S.-led counterterrorism force carrying out Operation Enduring Freedom there. Commanders at much lower levels of authority, the ones who execute the strategy day in and day out, are also seasoned and quite smart in the ways of this type of warfare. The importance of good leadership in counterinsurgency is very significant, and our strengths in this area are a major asset. Fifth, enough troops are now on the way. Until now, on the ground, troop shortages prevented combined Afghan and NATO forces from securing many districts, towns and villages. Worse, it left troops stalemated in dangerous situations over extended periods of time because they did not have the capacity to seize land and sustain control. It left NATO forces relying too heavily on air strikes with all their potential to cause accidental deaths of innocents (a policy that McChrystal has changed; air strikes are generally allowed now only if NATO troops are in direct peril). And it left Afghan citizens who cooperate with NATO and their government vulnerable to reprisal. Only in 2009 did these realities finally begin to change; only in 2010 will we achieve reasonable overall force ratios. To predict success outright would be to go too far. But I honestly believe that, setting our sights at a reasonable level, the odds are with us in this important mission.

Answers To: Harms - Regional War and Pakistan Instability Advantage

[] Withdrawal from Afghanistan will embolden the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan because they will see it as a signal of U.S. defeat

Lisa Curtis and James Phillips - Senior Research Fellow at The Heritage Foundation, and Senior Research Fellow for Middle Eastern Affairs at the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, 10/5/5/2009,

“Shortsighted U.S. Policies on Afghanistan to Bring Long-Term Problems”

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2009/10/shortsighted-us-policies-on-afghanistan-to-bring-long-term-problems>

There have been several positive developments in Pakistan over the last six months, such as the Pakistan military's thrust into the Swat Valley to evict pro-Taliban elements and significant improvement in U.S.-Pakistani joint operations along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border that led to the elimination of Baitullah Mehsud in August. Moreover, the Pakistani military is reportedly preparing for an offensive in South Waziristan, where al-Qaeda and other extremists have been deeply entrenched for the last few years. But this recent success in Pakistan should not mislead U.S. policymakers into thinking that the U.S. can turn its attention away from Afghanistan. In fact, now is the time to demonstrate military resolve in Afghanistan so that al-Qaeda and its affiliates will be squeezed on both sides of the border. If the U.S. scales back the mission in Afghanistan at a time when the Taliban views itself as winning the war there, it is possible that the recent gains in Pakistan will be squandered. Anti-extremist constituencies in Pakistan that are fighting for their lives and the future of Pakistan are begging the U.S. to "stay the course" in Afghanistan, with full knowledge that a U.S. retreat would embolden extremists region-wide. Washington should listen to these voices.

[] US troops are necessary to prevent the government of Afghanistan from being overthrown

James Dobbins, Director, International Security and Defense Policy Center, RAND National Security Research Division, B.S. in international affairs, Georgetown School of Foreign Service, '08

“Ending Afghanistan’s Civil War”, Rand Corporation,

http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2007/RAND_CT276.pdf

Yet if Pakistan is the central front in the war on terror, it is not one susceptible to a military response. We are not going to bomb Islamabad or invade Waziristan. An increase in US military manpower and money for Afghanistan may be needed to contain the renewed insurgency and prevent the Karzai government from being overthrown. But the US and NATO troops are likely to be required indefinitely as long as the Taliban and the other insurgent groups are able to recruit, train, raise funds and organize their operations in Pakistan. Afghanistan has never been a self sufficient state, and it probably never will be. It is simply too poor to be able to provide security and effective governance to its large and dispersed population. So unless the Pakistani government can be persuaded to abandon its relationship with extremist elements within its society, halt its support for terrorism, provide its youth an educational alternative to fundamentalist madrasas, extend effective governance into its border provinces, and curtail their use by insurgent movements, the United States and its allies are going to be forced to patrol Afghanistan's Southeast Frontier indefinitely, just as Great Britain was compelled to conduct a counterinsurgency campaign along the other side of that same frontier throughout the 19th century.

Answers To: Harms - Regional War and Pakistan Instability Advantage

[] Terrorism is at its lowest level since 2004. This proves that the counterterrorism strategy in Afghanistan is effective

American Security Project, 4/29/2010

“New ASP Report Shows Declining Levels of Islamist Terrorism since July 2009,” 4/29, <http://www.americansecurityproject.org/content/media/press-releases/2010/new-asp-report-shows-declining-levels-of-islamist-terrorism-since-july-2009/>

Today, the American Security Project released the mid-year update to their annual “Are We Winning?” Report, which showed a marked decrease in Islamist terrorism in the last two quarters of 2009 outside of the on-going conflict theaters of Iraq and Afghanistan. Even though Islamist terrorist incidents still remain at historically high levels, the decrease at the end of 2009 was the largest since 2004, when National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) started tracking Islamist terrorist incidents. The report, authored by ASP Senior Fellow Bernard Finel and Researcher Germain Difo measures America’s progress in the fight against terrorism according to metrics that are designed to be both reproducible and objective. According to the report, much of the decline in Islamic terrorist incidents is due to decreasing terror incidents in Pakistan. Though there have been several high profile attacks in Pakistan, Islamist terrorism in that country is down 60% from the first six months of 2009. This decline is likely due to increased military pressure by the Pakistani military on radicals within that country. In addition, the report found that Al Qaeda is increasingly marginal to the broader radical Islamist movement, and remains under significant pressure due to drone strikes and other forms of military pressure. This continues to demonstrate the tactical effectiveness of military counter-terrorism activities, though according to Senior Fellow and report author Bernard Finel, “it is unlikely that military pressure alone will provide a long-term solution to the terrorism challenge. We should be cautiously optimistic about the ability of military efforts in areas such as Pakistan and Afghanistan to dislodge some terrorist groups and keep them on the run. But there is still a significant chance that terror groups may rebound.”

[] Defeat in Afghanistan will make it a base for terrorists to launch attacks against the United States.

Kim R. Holmes, Vice President of Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, 6/23/10,

“Why Victory in Afghanistan is Crucial”, <http://blog.heritage.org/?p=36887>, DA: 7-19-10, AL)

And let’s make something completely clear: the stakes are high. A defeat such as this would be a tremendous tragedy for our nation. The sacrifice of our men and women in uniform would have been in vain. And the financial and geopolitical investments this nation made in establishing a stable regime capable of keeping out terrorists would be deemed a complete waste. What is even worse, defeat will inevitably return to power a Taliban regime that will make Afghanistan a safe haven for terrorists, just as it was prior to the attacks of September 11. We neglected Afghanistan in the 1990s and paid dearly for it in lives in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. Winning in Afghanistan is directly related to preventing another “9/11,” and it truly is the central front in the war on terrorists. Winning in Afghanistan means ensuring a stable nation that can govern and defend itself, and where the Taliban and other terrorists cannot thrive, continuing to pose a threat to the United States. To achieve victory — a word the President has admitted being averse to — he needs to get away from inflexible artificial timelines that are divorced from conditions on the ground. We don’t need Afghanistan to become our next Vietnam. History never repeats itself exactly, and, yes, there are differences both in circumstances and even outcomes. But if we fail in Afghanistan, this nation will pay a terrible price. We will not only see the threat of terrorism to our shores grow, but could even see the regime in nuclear-armed Pakistan fall either into terrorist hands or a military in league with them. And that is a danger far, far greater than what we now face on the battlefields of Afghanistan.

Answers To: Harms - Regional War and Pakistan Instability Advantage

[] Afghans don't hate the American occupation. Polls show that the majority still favor the US military presence

Michael O'Hanlon and Hassina Sherjan, Director of Research and Senior Fellow of Foreign Policy at Brookings and President of Aid Afghanistan for Education, 3/14/2010

"Five Myths About Afghanistan," Brookings,

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/0314_afghanistan_myths_ohanlon.aspx)

The war in Afghanistan is in its ninth year, and even officials supportive of the U.S. presence there acknowledge the challenges that remain. "People still need to understand there is some very hard fighting and very hard days ahead," Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said during his trip to Afghanistan this week. But the conflict is not hopeless, nor it is eternal. If we want to develop realistic expectations about the war -- how it might unfold from here and when it could begin to wind down -- it would help to dispel some of the popular mythologies that have emerged about the Afghans, the enemy we're fighting and the U.S. commitment. 1. Afghans always hate and defeat their invaders. The Afghans drove the British Empire out of their country in the 19th century and did the same to the Soviet Union in the 20th century. They do fight fiercely; many American troops who have been deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan in recent years have asserted that the Afghans are stronger natural fighters. Yet, the people of Afghanistan do not despise foreigners. Despite downward trends in recent years, Afghans are far more accepting of an international presence in their country than are Iraqis, for example, who typically gave the U.S. presence approval ratings of 15 to 30 percent in the early years of the war in that country. Average U.S. favorability ratings in recent polls in Afghanistan are around 50 percent, and according to polls from ABC, the BBC and the International Republican Institute, about two-thirds of Afghans recognize that they still need foreign help. And before we mythologize the Afghan insurgency, it is worth remembering some history. In the 1980s, the United States, Saudi Arabia and others gave enormous financial and military assistance to the Afghan resistance movement that eventually forced the Soviets out. That group grew to about 250,000 in strength in the mid-1980s. But today, the Taliban and other resistance groups receive substantial help only from some elements in Pakistan -- and diminishing help at that -- and collectively, they number about 25,000 fighters. Finally, though U.S.-backed Afghan forces overthrew the Taliban after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, today's international presence there does not amount to an invasion. Foreign forces are present at the invitation of the host government, which two-thirds of Afghans consider legitimate, if somewhat corrupt.

Answers To: Harms - Regional War and Pakistan Instability Advantage

[__] **Pakistan is stable and its nuclear weapons are secure. Pakistan has implemented advanced security measures to prevent the weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists**

**Imran Gardezi Minister for Press at the Embassy of Pakistan in Washington, D.C.,
July/August 2010**

“Pakistan’s Stabilizing Arsenal”, Published in Foreign Affairs,

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66476/imran-gardezi/pakistans-stabilizing-arsenal>

Contrary to Allison's claims, international regulatory authorities have acknowledged the efficacy of Pakistan's comprehensive command-and-control structure, which has made the country's nuclear assets impervious to any threat, internal or external. Over the past decade, the Pakistani government has instituted many advanced security mechanisms, from tightened physical safety to technical controls on the nuclear weapons themselves. After the Pakistani nuclear scientist A. Q. Khan was discredited for his illicit dealings, Pakistan introduced a multilayered, foolproof system of internal monitoring. The presence of militants on Pakistani soil, particularly on its western border, might raise alarms about nuclear safety. But even the most cursory knowledge of how nuclear states maintain their arsenals would make alarmists understand that extremists could not possibly come to possess a nuclear weapon, nor could nonstate actors acquire such a device or the requisite delivery system. Moreover, the Pakistani army has recently carried out successful operations in Malakand, the Swat Valley, and Waziristan, putting the most feared extremists on the run and destroying their safe havens. Pakistan stands committed to nonproliferation and disarmament and has taken effective measures to meet its international obligations. The government's wide-ranging regulatory instruments prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to any state -- including, contrary to Allison's implication, Saudi Arabia. In addition, Pakistan continues to cooperate voluntarily with the International Atomic Energy Agency regarding its civil nuclear program.

Answers To: Harms - Global War Advantage

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[] Afghanistan has no real strategic value. Wars over it will not escalate and abandoning it does not pose a threat to the United States

Bernard Finel, Atlantic Council contributing editor and a senior fellow at the American Security Project, 4/27/09

“Afghanistan is Irrelevant” http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/afghanistan-irrelevant

It is now a deeply entrenched conventional wisdom that the decision to “abandon” Afghanistan after the Cold War was a tragic mistake. In the oft-told story, our “abandonment” led to civil war, state collapse, the rise of the Taliban, and inevitably terrorist attacks on American soil. This narrative is now reinforced by dire warnings about the risks to Pakistan from instability in Afghanistan. Taken all together, critics of the Afghan commitment now find themselves facing a nearly unshakable consensus in continuing and deepen our involvement in Afghanistan. The problem with the consensus is that virtually every part of it is wrong. Abandonment did not cause the collapse of the state. Failed states are not always a threat to U.S. national security. And Pakistan’s problems have little to do with the situation across the border. First, the collapse of the Afghan state after the Soviet withdrawal had little to do with Western abandonment. Afghanistan has always been beset by powerful centrifugal forces. The country is poor, the terrain rough, the population divided into several ethnic groups. Because of this, the country has rarely been unified even nominally and has never really had a strong central government. The dominant historical political system in Afghan is warlordism. This is not a consequence of Western involvement or lack thereof. It is a function of geography, economics, and demography. Second, there is no straight-line between state failure and threats to the United States. Indeed, the problem with Afghanistan was not that it failed but rather that it “unfailed” and became ruled by the Taliban. Congo/Zaire is a failed state. Somalia is a failed state. There are many parts of the globe that are essentially ungoverned. Clearly criminality, human rights abuses, and other global ills flourish in these spaces. But the notion that any and all ungoverned space represents a core national security threat to the United States is simply unsustainable.

Answers To: Harms - Global War Advantage

[__] Central Asian war will be prevented by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which manages security threats

Ruslan Maksutov, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, August 2006

“The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: A Central Asian Perspective”,

<http://www.sipri.org/contents/worldsec/Ruslan.SCO.pdf/download>

As a starting point, it is fair to say that all Central Asian countries—as well as China and Russia—are interested in security cooperation within a multilateral framework, such as the SCO provides. For Central Asia this issue ranks in importance with that of economic development, given the explosive environment created locally by a mixture of external and internal threats. Central Asia is encircled by four of the world’s eight known nuclear weapon states (China, India, Russia and Pakistan), of which Pakistan has a poor nuclear non-proliferation profile and Afghanistan is a haven for terrorism and extremism. Socio-economic degradation in Central Asian states adds to the reasons for concern and makes obvious the interdependence between progress in security and in development. Some scholars argue that currently concealed tendencies evolving in various states of Central Asia—such as the wide-ranging social discontent with oppressive regimes in the region, and the growing risks of state collapse and economic decline—all conducive to the quick growth of radical religious movements, could have far-reaching implications for regional stability once they come more into the light. 41 At first sight, the instruments established by the SCO to fulfill its declared security- building objectives seem to match the needs that Central Asian states have defined against this background. While the existence of the SCO further reduces the already remote threat of conventional interstate war in the region, 42 it allows for a major and direct focus on the non-state, non-traditional and transnational threats that now loom so large by comparison.

SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The SCO is a regional security organization in Central Asia consisting of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It is designed to prevent conflicts from escalating in the Central Asia

[__] A war in the Middle East would not draw in more powerful countries, it would be contained

Gamal Elgoraish, Phd Candidate at the University of Kent, 1986,

“NUCLEARIZATION AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST”, PP. 409-410

In conclusion, it seems that the risks of nuclear war in a nuclear Middle East are essentially at three levels. The first level is concerned with the risks related in particular to the Middle East and other similar regions of the world. The second level of risks focuses on the possible responses of the major nuclear powers to nuclearization of the Middle East states. The third level is related to the risks of Superpower involvement in a Middle East nuclear conflict escalating to nuclear confrontation. Some of the risks at the first level are less worrisome than others such as a low level of rationality, weak conceptualization of use of weapons, accidental and catalytic war and nuclear terrorism. However, the risks of the vulnerability of command and control centers and weapons, difficulty of controlling escalation, miscalculation and pre-emptive and preventive strikes would remain major sources of concern. The possible responses of the major nuclear powers to the nuclearization of the Middle Eastern states are more likely to emerge in the form of strong protests, pressures and threats than in direct military intervention. The risks of a Middle East nuclear conflict escalating to a Superpower nuclear confrontation is a very real and serious risk but it would not necessarily lead to nuclear war between the two Superpowers. A nuclear exchange in the Middle East is more likely to be a regional tragedy and a very unpleasant contingency rather than a global holocaust. However, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in the Middle East would be a serious danger to regional and global security of unprecedented magnitude. We just do not know the rules of the nuclear game between local powers and between parts of a regional system, or between other regional systems and the global system.

Answers To: Harms - Global War Advantage

[] A Central Asian war wouldn't escalate. There are no great power interests in Central Asia anymore

Richard Weitz, senior fellow and associate director of the Center for Future Security Strategies at the Hudson Institute, Summer 2006.

The Washington Quarterly, Accessible Via LexisNexis

Central Asian security affairs have become much more complex than during the original nineteenth-century great game between czarist Russia and the United Kingdom. At that time, these two governments could largely dominate local affairs, but today a variety of influential actors are involved in the region. The early 1990s witnessed a vigorous competition between Turkey and Iran for influence in Central Asia. More recently, India and Pakistan have pursued a mixture of cooperative and competitive policies in the region that have influenced and been affected by their broader relationship. The now independent Central Asian countries also invariably affect the region's international relations as they seek to maneuver among the major powers without compromising their newfound autonomy. Although Russia, China, and the United States substantially affect regional security issues, they cannot dictate outcomes the way imperial governments frequently did a century ago. Concerns about a renewed great game are thus exaggerated. The contest for influence in the region does not directly challenge the vital national interests of China, Russia, or the United States, the most important extraregional countries in Central Asian security affairs. Unless restrained, however, competitive pressures risk impeding opportunities for beneficial cooperation among these countries. The three external great powers have incentives to compete for local allies, energy resources, and military advantage, but they also share substantial interests, especially in reducing terrorism and drug trafficking. If properly aligned, the major multilateral security organizations active in Central Asia could provide opportunities for cooperative diplomacy in a region where bilateral ties traditionally have predominated.

Answers To: Solvency

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[] **The plan cannot solve because the Afghan government is corrupt and not seen as legitimate**

Peter W. Galbraith, former UN Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan, 5/17/2010,

"The opposition's opening remarks," in the Economist Debates: Afghanistan, May 17,
<http://www.economist.com/debate/days/view/516>

America is pursuing a counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan and, as General Stanley McChrystal observes, the centre of gravity in counterinsurgency is the people. Although American forces can outfight the poorly equipped Taliban (when they can be found), America and its allies cannot defeat the insurgency without the support of the Afghan people. Thus the essential element of American strategy is an Afghan government that enjoys the loyalty of enough Afghans to turn the population against the insurgents. Such a government does not exist. President Hamid Karzai has been in office since 2002, when he was installed with the support of the Bush administration following the fall of the Taliban. In eight years, he has run a government so ineffective that Afghans deride him as being no more than the mayor of Kabul and so corrupt that his country ranks 179 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, just ahead of last-placed Somalia, which has no government at all. To make matters worse, Mr Karzai is now in office as a result of an election that he himself admits was massively fraudulent. In 2009, the Karzai-appointed Afghan Independent Election Commission (IEC) rigged the elections so that Mr Karzai ended up with at least 1m phony votes, or one-third of his total votes. (After a separate, independently appointed, Electoral Complaints Commission eventually rejected enough Karzai votes to force a second round, the IEC adopted procedures to produce an even more fraud-prone second round and the runner up, Abdullah Abdullah, chose not to participate.) Many Afghans do not see Mr Karzai as a democratically elected leader. Thus, in addition to being corrupt and ineffective, the government that is the keystone of American strategy also suffers from a legitimacy deficit.

Answers To: Solvency

[__] Past occupations of Afghanistan prove that a small occupation force will not be successful

Peter Bergen, senior fellow at the New America Foundation, 8/19/09

“How Realistic is Walt’s Realism?” 8/19,

http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/08/19/how_realistic_is_walt_s_realism

The implication of Walt's objection to the ramped-up Obama strategy in Afghanistan is that the U.S. should either do less in Afghanistan, or even just get out altogether. But America has already gone down this road. Twice. In 1989 the U.S. closed its embassy in Kabul and then effectively zeroed out aid to one of the poorest countries in the world; meanwhile Afghanistan was racked by a civil war, which spawned the Taliban who then gave safe haven to al Qaeda. Then in the winter of 2001 the Bush administration overthrew the Taliban, and because of its aversion to nation-building rebuilt the country on the cheap and quickly got distracted by the war in Iraq. Into the resulting vacuum stepped a resurgent Taliban. This time the movement of religious warriors was much more closely aligned with al Qaeda. So the U.S. has already tried the Do Nothing approach and the Do It Light approach in Afghanistan, the results of which are well known. The Obama administration is now attempting a Do It Seriously approach, which has a real chance of success.

[__] US military strategy is irrelevant. Conflict will spread from Pakistan regardless of what happens in Afghanistan.

Robert Fox, defense correspondent for the Evening Standard, 11/7/07,

http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/robert_fox/2007/11/the_talib_bomb.html

Since the crisis earlier this year, following the siege of the Red Mosque and the sacking of the chief justice, known Taliban organizations have been successful in proselytizing and recruiting in Punjab. The respected commentator Ahmed Rashid, author of the definitive Taliban and Jihad studies of Islamist movements in south-central Asia, considers this the major ingredient in the sense of incipient civil war in his country. And Benazir Bhutto, and whatever coalition of political forces she cobbles together, will be able to do little about it. Against the worsening tensions from the Euphrates to the Hindu Kush and into the Subcontinent, the posture of the US and NATO alliance seems depressingly incongruous, irrelevant even. The policies appear increasingly incompetent, the tactics on the ground increasingly inept. The activities of the British forces trying to defeat the Taliban, destroy dependence on the opium trade, and stabilize Helmand and its neighborhood, can have little effect on the spread of the battle to the north, and the Taliban resurgence to the south in Pakistan.

Answers To: Solvency

[__] The Afghan military force is not ready to take over. Troops must remain in order to fight the insurgency

Frederick W. Kagan, Professor of Military History at West Point, 5/7/2009

“Planning Victory in Afghanistan”, <http://www.aei.org/article/100020>, DA:07/19/’10,

The Afghan National Army consists of perhaps 70,000 troops (on paper). This number will rise gradually to 134,000--itself an arbitrary sum, based on assumptions about what the fifth-poorest country in the world can afford to pay for an army that is certainly too small to establish and maintain security. The Afghan National Police are ineffective when not actively part of the problem. Afghanistan is significantly larger than Iraq, its terrain is far more daunting, and its population is greater. The Iraqi Security Forces that defeated the insurgency (with our help) in 2007 and 2008 numbered over 500,000 by the end. There is simply no way that Afghan Security Forces can defeat the insurgents on their own, with or without large numbers of coalition advisers. Breaking the insurgency will have to be a real team effort. Coalition units must partner with Afghan army units to clear critical areas, and then work with local leaders to develop local security solutions that smaller numbers of residual U.S. and Afghan troops can support while other areas are cleared.

Answers To: Solvency

[__] **A smaller force would not be effective. We would not be able to separate the Taliban from the broader population and attack them.**

Michael Chertoff, former Secretary of Homeland Defense of the United States, 11/11/09,
“No time to ease up in Afghanistan ,” http://www.guluna.com/no-time-to-ease-up-in-afghanistan_3963.html

Some believe that we can tolerate a re-Talibanization of Afghanistan and blunt future attacks simply by engaging in "counterterrorism-lite" that is focused just on eliminating al-Qaeda operatives on the ground. But three fallacies underlie this position. Myth No. 1: Since current al-Qaeda safe havens are largely in Pakistan, we just need to continue our efforts there, rather than worrying about a sideshow in Afghanistan. But as the Obama administration recognized after its first comprehensive strategy review in the spring, Afghanistan and Pakistan are part of a single "Af-Pak" theater of conflict. Both countries are bookends for the Pashtun frontier areas that span the region between the two. When we applied military pressure in Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002, terrorists simply moved into Pakistan. Relieving that pressure in Afghanistan would undercut the Pakistani counterterrorism offensive by creating an escape route for al-Qaeda and the Taliban to move back into Afghanistan. Only continued pressure on both sides of the frontier will degrade the freedom of movement by these terrorists. Myth No. 2: Since our core enemy is al-Qaeda, we can separate it from the Taliban and other extremist groups, and restrict our focus to al-Qaeda alone. The distinction among these groups is not as clear as some believe. Recent reporting has confirmed that al-Qaeda, the Pakistani Taliban, and other groups such as Lashkar-e-Jhangavi plan and work in concert, especially in carrying out recent attacks in Pakistan. A dense web of relationships has arisen among a number of these groups. While some Taliban might be peeled away from cooperation with al-Qaeda, the latter will continue to be a source of training, operational and ideological support for many extremists in the tribal regions. Indeed, al-Qaeda's founding purpose and strategy was to serve not only as a stand-alone organization, but also as a financial and operational support base for like-minded groups. Myth No. 3: We can withdraw from securing Afghanistan because we will be able to kill terrorist leaders in training compounds by using drones or special forces teams operating with surgical precision. A re-Talibanized Afghanistan would present a different landscape from the one we face now. Al-Qaeda and other groups would not be confined to discrete compounds or camps. They would likely follow the precedent of Hamas, and embed themselves in the dwellings, schools, hospitals and other structures of the civilian population. Trying to kill or capture terrorists operating within the population would be messy, with a high civilian casualty rate. Not only would that inflame anti-American attitudes, but U.S. military officials would soon find themselves accused of the same international law violations that have been lodged against the Israelis who sought to eliminate Hamas operatives in Gaza.

Answers To: Solvency

[__] Iraq shows that we need a large force to fight the insurgency

Frederick W. Kagan, Professor of Military History at West Point, 5/7/2009

“Planning Victory in Afghanistan”, <http://www.aei.org/article/100020>, DA:07/19/’10,

Perhaps the most important lesson of Iraq that is transportable to Afghanistan is this: It is impossible to conduct effective counterterrorism operations (i.e., targeting terrorist networks with precise attacks on key leadership nodes) in a fragile state without conducting effective counterinsurgency operations (i.e., protecting the population and using economic and political programs to build support for the government and resistance to insurgents and terrorists). We will never have a better scenario in which to test the limitations of the counterterrorism model than we had in Iraq in 2006. U.S. Special Forces teams had complete freedom to act against al-Qaeda in Iraq, supported by around 150,000 regular U.S. troops, Iraqi military and police forces of several hundred thousand, and liberal airpower. We killed scores of key terrorist leaders, including the head of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al Zarqawi, in June 2006. But terrorist strength, violence, and control only increased over the course of that year. It was not until units already on the ground applied a new approach--a counterinsurgency approach--and received reinforcements that we were able to defeat al-Qaeda in Iraq (even without killing its new leader).

[__] Withdrawal from Afghanistan would cause the government to collapse, destabilize Pakistan, and revive Al-Qaeda

General James Jones, USMC (Ret.), President and CEO of the Institute for 21st Century Energy, United States Chamber of Commerce, and Ambassador Thomas Pickering, Vice Chairman, Hills & Company, 1/30/2008

“Afghanistan Study Group Report”, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/2067441/Afghan-Study-Group-final>

The U.S. and international coalition forces are at a critical moment. Afghanistan strategy and policy are currently under review in several national capitals and at NATO headquarters. The Study Group believes two possible courses of action would have dire consequences – either withdrawing forces from Afghanistan or adopting a minimal approach. If international forces are pulled from Afghanistan, the fragile Afghan government would likely fall apart, again becoming a failed state while the Taliban and other warlords would gain control of various areas and eventually fight each other. Development efforts and accomplishments heretofore would be rolled back as they cannot be maintained in insecure areas. Not only would failure to stabilize Afghanistan pave the way for a revival of an al-Qaeda safe haven in that country, it would also likely have a blowback effect in Pakistan, where local Taliban and other extremist groups would be inspired to step up their own efforts to destabilize the Pakistani regime, with the hope of one day installing fundamentalist, theocratic rule.