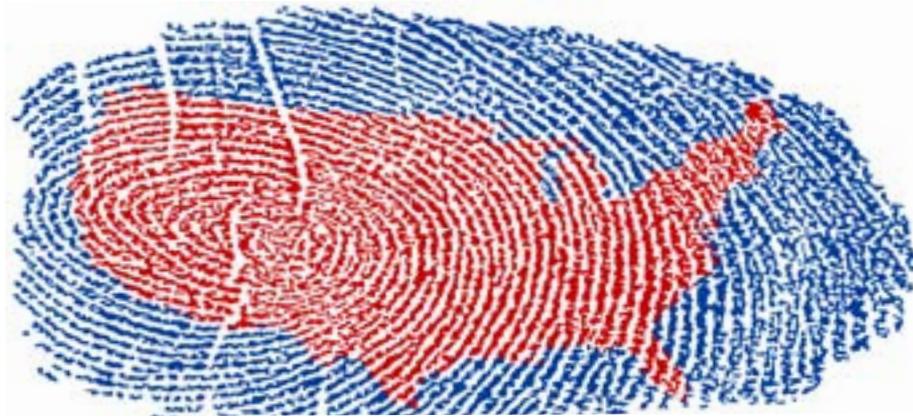


# American Security Quarterly

Vision, Strategy, Dialogue

January 2012



## **Norm Augustine: THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GAP**

**John Adams & Chris Courtney:**  
**ADD CARROTS TO IRAN POLICY MENU**

**Andrew Holland: FUSION FOR THE FUTURE**

**Stephen A. Cheney: HOW TO BREAK THE CHOKE  
HOLD OIL HAS ON OUR NATIONAL SECURITY**

**Joshua Foust: THE BRILLIANT, UNWORKABLE NEW SILK  
ROAD**

**and  
Matthew Wallin: FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES FOR THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL  
ELECTION**

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first edition of American Security Quarterly !

This new e-magazine is a collection of our board members, fellows and members of the Consensus for American Security writings over the last quarter. In the following editions we will be publishing original content as well as a round up from our other key work.

This edition of the American Security Quarterly shows that the last quarter of 2011 was packed full with the key issues that are facing our nation.

We have a signature article by our board member **Norm Augustine** on the growing research and development gap facing America. As a percentage of GDP, the U.S. ranks eighth, behind Japan, South Korea, and even Iceland. He notes: “China is investing in science, engineering, manufacturing, energy and transportation.... It now dominates the United States in the manufacture of clean energy technologies. China has leaped over its global competitors, both in the United States and in Europe, in the making of wind turbines and solar panels.”

Consensus members - **Brig. Gen. John Adams** and **Lt. Col. Chris Courtney** – discuss the need to have a full strategic plan in dealing with Iran. They state: “We must choose policy options likely to prevent both a nuclear-armed Iran and the outbreak of regional war.” This will be a key issue for 2012. We need to make sure we work to achieve both these aims, and not walk blindly into military action.

On the energy front we have articles on the potential for fusion power, the need for international emissions reductions, and how we can break the choke hold of oil. ASP Senior Fellow **Andrew Holland** noted: “America faces a series of significant challenges regarding how we produce energy over the next several decades. Our current energy system undermines our national security, is economically unstable, and environmentally unsustainable.”

The last quarter also marked the 10-year anniversary of action in Afghanistan. We published a major report from ASP Fellow, **Joshua Foust**, discussing the need to properly define strategy and metrics in the conflict there. In an accompanying piece, he argues: “The real challenge in Afghanistan is that the American effort (as measured by money, people and attention) has focused almost exclusively on the military, while the Taliban has focused on politics...The Taliban is winning the war for hearts and minds.”

As we saw the year out, The Atlantic, in conjunction with ASP published a 12 essay series on the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Soviet Union. In the introduction piece, ASP Chairman, **Sen. Gary Hart**, wrote: “We spent a half-century army-to-army and missile- to-missile. The time will come, and none too soon, when it will be beneficial to both of us to stand shoulder- to- shoulder.”

We hope you will continue to read and follow our work throughout 2012 and following years. We believe that is only with sustained non-partisan engagement, setting out the national security issues, explaining the challenges, and offering strategic advice can we spur real constructive action.

**BGen Stephen A. Cheney USMC (Ret.)**

CEO American Security Project

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## **NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY**

## Russia and the United States in the 21st Century

Gary Hart

THE ATLANTIC

December 12, 2011

*20 years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the U.S. and Russia are far from the trusting partners that we perhaps should be.*

In October 2011, the Institute for World History in Moscow held an unprecedented conference concerning President Thomas Jefferson and Czar Alexander I. Leading American historians Gordon Wood, Peter Onuf, and others, as well as leading Russian historians, including Academician Alexei Chubarian and Professor Vladimir Sorgin, participated. Some of the presentations and discussions focused on the correspondence between the two heads of government between 1804 and 1808, on Napoleon's invasion of Russia and the British invasion of the U.S., both of which occurred in 1812, and on the consequent torching of the two capitols, Moscow and Washington, thereafter.

Alexis de Toqueville's famous prediction in 1835 that America and Russia, two great continental powers, would someday play leading roles in the world was predated by Russian exploration of the Western American continent as far south as today's California and thereafter qualified by the landing of a small U.S. expeditionary force in Siberia during the Russian Revolution. But throughout the Cold War, de Toqueville seemed prescient indeed.

The shared global leadership between America and Russia ended two decades ago. The 74 year Russian detour into communism can be viewed only as if rapidly retreating in a rear-view mirror. But the end of the Cold War revealed a curious anomaly in U.S. foreign policy thought. Much to the surprise of Russians and many Americans, including myself, instead of rushing to embrace Russia and drawing it closely into Western economic, political, and security circles, we have resorted to reliance on personal relationships between American and Russian presidents as the basis for our bilateral relationships. And we continue to hold Russia suspiciously at arm's length.

There has been little, if any, explanation of this suspicion toward Russia and its roots in the American mind, or at least in the minds of certain foreign policy experts. Arguably, we have better relations with China than Russia and spend a great deal more effort in tending to that relationship. In gauging how close or how distant to remain regarding another nation or power, the measure ought to be whether there are more interests in common than in opposition. By that measure, our relationship to Russia ought to be among our closest.

We both are committed to reduction of weapons of mass destruction. We both have immediate interests in combating terrorism. Russia stands on the border of five significant Islamic republics and shares concerns with us regarding stability in the Balkans and the Black Sea region. Russia possesses immense natural resources (especially energy), supplies many of our allies in Europe, and offers an alternative source to precarious Persian Gulf supplies. Russia has world-class scientists, physicist, and mathematicians. We use Russian rocket propulsion systems to launch space missions and cooperate on manned space missions. Russia offers a vast market for American and Western products and services, an opportunity more appreciated by European enterprises than American ones.

Further, Russia can be of considerable help to us and our allies in venues as disparate as Iran, North Korea, and the Middle East. In each of these cases, they stand to lose at least as much as we do, if not more, from war in these regions. We should treat the Russians as partners, not subordinates, and appeal to these and other common interests.

The American Security Project offers a series of essays concerning the U.S.-Russian relationship post-Cold War and post-Soviet empire. It is timed to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Soviet Union, which formally dissolved on December 25, 1991. We consider here Russia's energy picture, our mutual arms control efforts, our role in NATO and NATO's relationship to Russia, and a number of other topics addressed by qualified experts some of whom have studied these issues for years. Efforts such as this very much characterize the charter and purpose of the American Security Project -- to explore new and productive ways of pursuing American interests, especially those that increasingly coincide with old and new allies, that will enhance the security of Americans and others.

For myself, it is sufficient to prophesy, even with little tangible evidence, that sometime in this century, sooner rather than later, the United States and Russia will identify a common destiny that requires a degree of mutual understanding and cooperation seen only by de Toqueville almost two centuries ago. We spent a half-century army-to-army and missile-to-missile. The time will come, and none too soon, when it will be beneficial to both of us to stand shoulder to shoulder.

*You can find other essays in this series at: [www.americansecurityproject.org](http://www.americansecurityproject.org)*

## Defining Victory in Afghanistan

Joshua Foust

PBS: NEED TO KNOW

November 9, 2011

On Monday, a roadside bomb exploded in northwestern Afghanistan, killing 11 people. The incident was unremarkable in most aspects: insurgents hid among civilians, targeted Afghans instead of the international troops nearby and managed to cause a shocking amount of bloodshed.

Areas like Baghdis province, where that bomb exploded, fly under the radar of many pundits and pop-analysts of the war. Part of the supposedly safe northern regions of the country, Baghdis has never benefitted from the largesse slathered on more problematic provinces like Kandahar or Helmand.

Nevertheless, northern Afghanistan has undergone possibly the most drastic change of fortune over the last two years or so. It has gone from being a relatively quiet, unremarkable place to the scene of increasingly violent bloodshed. Despite this transformation, much of the popular discussion of the war focuses on the southern region, where a massive influx of troops and an even more massive influx of money have supposedly reduced violence.

Max Boot is one of the most visible of these boosters. In a cover story for the *Weekly Standard*, he argues that if only the troops are given enough time and money, they can turn the change in southern Afghanistan into victory for the war. The only thing between the troops and victory, he argues, are naysayers in Washington, D.C., who think things are hopeless.

It's an enticing argument: The country blames Washington for everything else that is going wrong in the country, so why not blame Washington for the war as well? But in reality, Boot misdiagnoses the problem, and thus misassigns blame.

Looking at Afghanistan only through the prism of Kandahar and Helmand would leave one with the impression that the war is winnable, because blanketing a region with Marines and lots of cash actually will dramatically affect the environment. But the current method of "pacifying" the south is unsustainable: According to *The Washington*

Post, over the course of one year the military spent \$1.3 billion on a single district of 80,000 people in Helmand province. That's \$16,250 per person in that district, well above Afghanistan's per capita GDP of \$900 (and above that of most other countries on the planet). Worse still, a Senate Foreign Relations Committee report noted that 97 percent of Afghanistan's GDP comes from foreign aid. The current path is too expensive and too unlikely to work to keep up for much longer.

Realistically, the United States cannot spend that much money forever, in the hopes that somehow along the way Afghanistan will fix itself. This is the weakness of the case that war boosters like Boot put forward: they assume that if only the military is given enough time to do whatever the military does – killing bad guys and handing out unfathomable sums of money to impoverished farmers – then victory, however nebulously defined, will happen.

The sad reality of Afghanistan is that victory is not achievable with our current strategy and policies. Last month, I released a report with my think tank, The American Security Project, which tried to assess President Obama's goals for the war. The current strategy boils down to three broad goals: deny al Qaeda safe haven, prevent the Taliban from overthrowing the government and build up the Afghan government so it can function on its own.

From these goals, we can derive what the victory analysts like Boot don't define might look like. The challenge is that this victory is defined mostly by absence – things that must not happen, like al Qaeda not returning. But a big part of the strategy is actually political: preventing a Taliban takeover, building up a sustainable and functional government, creating the rule of law, and so on.

A political conflict does not necessarily require a huge number of troops. But when pundits talk about "victory" in Afghanistan, the discussion invariably centers on arbitrary troop numbers and not on the politics of the conflict. There is no sense of allowing Afghans to chart their own course, make their own decisions, and yes, even disagree with American policymakers along the way.

The real challenge in Afghanistan is that the American effort (as measured by money, people and attention) has focused almost exclusively on the military, while the Taliban has focused on politics. That is why they target the Afghan police with their IEDs – they are sowing uncertainty, trying to show the people of Afghanistan that their government is worthless, and that international forces are toothless to stop them. The Taliban is winning the war for

hearts and minds.

Looked at this way, the war in Afghanistan doesn't need a bunch of troops lumbering across the countryside. It needs a political strategy that might have a military component but would be primarily focused on Afghanistan's politics: balancing local needs with national needs, establishing a collaborative relationship between Kabul and the further-flung regions of the country, and cutting deals with local power brokers to establish peace and a measure of economic activity.

Unlike the seemingly endless number of troops and aid money needed to execute our current military strategy in Afghanistan, a politically oriented strategy would be achievable at a low cost, and would not require 65,000 troops to make it work. Rather, a political strategy requires patience, savvy and the understanding that politics are difficult and messy – sometimes almost as messy (if not as bloody) as warfare itself.

Afghanistan is not a lost cause if we change our strategy. But debating how many troops should stay on a certain date, which still dominates the discussion in Washington, misses the point. The number of troops doesn't matter; the strategy does. And the strategy is not working. It's time for change.

# Foreign Policy Issues for the 2012 Presidential Election

Matthew Wallin

THE HILL

November 7, 2011

One year before the 2012 General Election, Americans should keep an eye out for some of the key issues characterizing the debate over foreign policy. Recognizing the various challenges the United States faces overseas, here is a list of 8 issues that require careful consideration by the 2012 presidential candidates:

- The defense budget is extraordinarily large, and has nearly doubled since 2001. There are a number of challenges in reducing the budget, including personnel costs, equipment repair and replacement, and the development of new weapons systems to replace the aging US inventory. Congress and the Department of Defense will have to seriously consider which of our assets are most important for 21st Century defense, both conventional and nuclear, and allocate reduced funding appropriately.

- The wars the United States has been engaged in over the last decade have been expensive in terms of blood, equipment, and treasure. As the US withdraws from Iraq and plans ahead for withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014, it must focus on preparing for the consequences of these actions. These include the very real possibility that the current Afghan government may collapse or that the successes of the Arab Spring may not flourish. While the U.S. should assist in the development of political processes in these countries, there must also be back-up plans should the situations fail to be resolved favorably.

- The reset with Russia got off to a rocky start from the moment Secretary of State Clinton presented Foreign Minister Lavrov with a “reset button” that mistakenly read “overload” in Russian. It’s time the US got serious about engaging Russia. From missile defense to oil pipelines, there is a lot to be gained by engaging Russia as a partner rather than as an adversary. And don’t forget, 2012 is a presidential election year in Russia as well.

- Iran’s nuclear program has been the subject of much international scrutiny. Before employing a military option to prevent Iran’s potential acquisition of a nuclear weapon, the US must engage in a serious cost-benefit analysis. A military strike is extremely unlikely to significantly delay or prevent Iran from developing a nuclear capability if they chose to do so, and runs the extreme risk of exploding into a much larger, protracted conflict. Instead, the US should focus on working with the international community to achieve an acceptable outcome.

- Climate change is a settled scientific consensus based on overwhelming evidence. The goal now should be reducing our environmental impact by investing in green technology, reducing waste, and working with partners worldwide to create innovative solutions that are better for the environment while still serving people’s needs.

- Energy security is a collective challenge that faces not only the US, but the world as a whole. It requires both brainpower and financial resources to manage. One promising technology still under development is nuclear fusion, a clean and safe type of energy utilizing the same principle that powers the sun. Despite the recent accident at Fukushima, the prospect of eliminating fission-based nuclear power is unviable, and will remain an important part of energy production for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, the US should continue working to alleviate dependence on vulnerable energy sources by taking steps such as increasing fuel-economy standards and incorporating next generation biofuels.

- The Southern Border has been receiving a lot of attention over issues ranging from immigration to drug wars and arms trafficking. The United States must get serious about addressing some of these issues, including immigration reform that comprehensively addresses abuses of the law while simplifying and augmenting the visa system. Though the border itself has seen relative calm in recent years, violence south of the border and the fallout over the Fast and Furious fiasco further emphasize the need to develop enforceable policy.

- China is not as big of a threat as some have made it out to be. Rather than worrying about China’s fledgling force-projection capabilities such as its refurbished Russian-built aircraft carrier, the US

should look for ways to engage the Chinese in ways that create areas of cooperation rather than confrontation. Economic interdependence between the two countries fosters a situation in which the cost of conflict far outweighs its benefit, increasing the likelihood that both countries will seek peaceful resolutions to current and future disputes.

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## **CLIMATE AND ENERGY SECURITY**

## Fusion For The Future

Andrew Holland

AOL ENERGY

September 20, 2011

America faces a series of significant challenges regarding how we produce and use energy over the next several decades. Our current energy system undermines our national security, is economically unstable, and environmentally unsustainable.

Although the recession has reduced energy demand, in the longer term the US is expected to see a 20% increase in total energy demand and a 30% increase in electricity demand by 2035.

Meanwhile, our existing infrastructure is aging. Of the approximately 1400 coal-fired generators, 104 nuclear reactors, and over 5000 natural gas power plants, almost all will have to be replaced or substantially retrofitted over the next 40 years.

These challenges will require our politicians, scientists, and business leaders to make a series of choices about what we want our energy system to look like in 2030 and 2050.

Fundamentally, this represents a choice: either business as usual or a new course that firmly establishes American leadership in clean, sustainable energy production.

Renewable power, like wind and solar, together with increased efficiency and conservation measures, must be a part of the new energy paradigm. But, when you look beyond the medium term, there are real questions about whether a modern grid can support the intermittency and unpredictability of a grid that is more than half-powered by renewables.

Electricity from fusion could provide the baseload power necessary to overcome this.

Fusion energy is obtained by forcing together atomic nuclei from deuterium, a form of hydrogen easily separated from ordinary seawater, and tritium (another form of hydrogen).

A single gram of fuel can yield 90,000-kilowatt hours

of energy. Put another way, it would take 10 million pounds of coal to yield as much energy as one pound of fusion fuel. This energy will become heat to make steam running a conventional electric generator.

Fusion is clean, safe, and sustainable. The supply of fuel (extracted from seawater and lithium) is essentially limitless, due to the small amounts of fuel required. Unlike traditional nuclear power, there is no chain reaction and there is no possibility of a meltdown. A fusion reaction releases no pollutants or greenhouse gases and leaves no dangerous spent fuel.

Fusion is happening in laboratories in America and around the world. But, achieving a commercially viable fusion reaction remains a great engineering challenge. The problem is that initiating fusion requires bringing the fuel to extremes of heat or pressure. Initiating and containing that reaction – commonly done with either magnets or lasers – has always required putting more energy in than comes out.

However, experiments planned for this year and next within the National Ignition Facility at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory are expected to yield pulses of fusion energy greater than that used by the huge laser array to trigger them. Achieving this “ignition” will be an important milestone on the way to commercialized power from fusion.

The leaders of the main US national labs say they are now ready to start building pilot plants to test how to progress toward commercialization. For the first time, we can foresee a road to commercial fusion power plants.

Even though fusion energy can provide ultimate energy security for America, a lack of leadership, political will, and strategic planning by the US government could allow China or others to be the first to successfully commercialize this new industry. Only a few weeks ago the Chinese announced that they are planning to train 2,000 scientists to pursue research and development into fusion. We could choose to sit back and let other countries lead – but that would cede the world’s next great industry to foreign companies and foreign workers.

Fusion is not a panacea, and it is not without cost. But, we know that our aging energy infrastructure will require America’s utility companies to replace the

current generation of power plants with something. Why not a true energy of the future?

This is not some far-away dream; the choices we make today will shape the energy system of tomorrow.

*Andrew Holland is the Senior Fellow for Energy and Climate at the American Security Project, a bi-partisan think-tank examining the big strategic choices facing the United States.*

## Why We Can't Let Solyndra Failure Kill Support for Solar

Andrew Holland

THE ATLANTIC

September 15, 2011

*Yes, one Obama-backed solar energy company that got a huge government loan went belly-up. But the sector still needs support or it will wither.*

The solar firm Solyndra filed for bankruptcy two weeks ago -- two years after it received a \$535 million loan from the U.S. government. Immediately, the firm's Chapter 11 filing became the major story in the clean energy community, and it continues to dominate talk this week. On Wednesday, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing, "Solyndra and the DOE Loan Guarantee Program," where a number of members of Congress questioned whether the U.S. government should be subsidizing such "speculative ventures" at all.

Solyndra had raised nearly \$1 billion in private capital, but the reason that everyone in Washington is following its collapse so closely is because the \$535 million loan was given with stimulus funds through the Treasury's Federal Financing Bank -- and then guaranteed by an increasingly controversial program to support green technology run by the Department of Energy (DOE).

It appears that the process for approving and vetting this loan may have been short-changed due to pressure from the White House. Whether this makes the loan "shady," as some have said, will be determined by the investigations ongoing through the FBI and Congress.

Either way, policymakers should be careful not to besmirch the entire concept of clean energy subsidies because of this one bad experience.

The DOE's loan guarantee program is the most important of the government's clean energy subsidies. It was the centerpiece of Title XVII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. This was the section of the bill devoted to creating incentives for new technologies that re-

duced greenhouse gas emissions. It was offered as an amendment in the Senate, supported by both Republicans and Democrats, as the consensus method for mitigating climate change. The argument at the time, put forth by Republican senators like Chuck Hagel and Pete Domenici, was that we should fight climate change by investing in new technology, not by government mandates or a carbon price.

It shows how far the debate on climate has fallen that these arguments -- and voices -- are seldom heard anymore. Whereas six years ago it was a question of "how" government policy should address climate change and support the development of clean technology, today those who question the science dominate the climate debate in Congress. That means that the question has become "if" the government should create incentives for clean technology or not.

In this new context, the argument has taken hold that any spending and subsidies for clean energy are a "boondoggle" or just throwing money down a rathole. There is a real danger that the short cuts that may have been taken on the Solyndra loan will poison this important subsidy program.

The solar industry is in a period of rapid flux right now. It is seeing drastically reduced prices; they have dropped from about \$2 per watt in 2009 to about \$1.40 today and are moving toward \$1 per watt in 2012. This rapid drop in prices will soon make installing new solar competitive with traditional electricity generation, like coal or natural gas. Firms such as Solyndra, whose business models required a high price, will have a hard time staying in business under such intense competition.

An important comparison for the solar industry today is the auto industry a century ago. Have you ever heard of the Lexington Motor Company, the Kissel Kar, or the Liberty Motor Car? These were all auto manufacturers that ceased to exist over the course of the Ford Model T's 19-year production run, between 1908 through 1927. They went bankrupt because they could not compete on price, quality, or capacity with the standard set by the Model T. You may, however, have heard of Pontiac, Cadillac, Oldsmobile, and Chevrolet -- they were all independent companies that were acquired by General Motors in this period. As an industry matures, we should expect to see a shakeout through bankruptcies and mergers that leads to fewer, but bigger and stronger, companies.

Today, we are seeing this consolidation in the solar industry. The U.S. Solar Energy Industries Association lists over 1000 member companies in the U.S. Around the world there are thousands more. That is surely far too many for an efficient industry. Already, the solar equipment industry has seen \$3.3 billion in mergers and acquisitions activity this year. Solyndra is the most high-profile American solar bankruptcy this year, but not the only one: Evergreen Solar and SpectraWatt have also filed for bankruptcy this year.

This consolidation should lead to a more mature industry. As companies go bankrupt, their competitors will secure their factories and equipment. Production, management, and design will be standardized across the industry. Solar photovoltaic cells will become a commodity, where the only competition is based on price. All of this benefits consumers around the world.

And where American politicians are threatening to discontinue solar subsidies over the mispending of one loan, our competitors around the world are putting their thumbs on the scale to ensure that their businesses are the ones that survive the solar shakeout. The Chinese have announced plans to install 10 gigawatts of solar capacity by 2015, supported by a feed-in tariff and government mandates; this is five times the U.S.'s current installed capacity. Japan and European countries, too, are promoting domestic solar companies.

American consumers could still benefit -- by simply letting foreign governments subsidize their solar companies, who will then export the solar cells to the U.S. But if that is the choice that members of Congress make, then they shouldn't complain in five years that there are no American companies competing in the global solar energy marketplace.

If America wants a globally competitive solar industry, our government must make the choice to support innovative new technologies developed by American companies here in America. The solar industry has proved over the last five years that it should be an important part of America's energy future. We should be careful that this argument over Solyndra does not harm our long-term energy future.

# U.S. Military's Efforts to Reduce Exposure to Energy Security Risks

Andrew Holland

ASP FLASHPOINT BLOG

October 4, 2011

Last week, there was an important article posted up on the Army's website, "Scientists bring energy solutions to the desert." The article discusses how the Army has set up a small (one megawatt) smart-grid at the Army's Camp Sabalu-Harrison in Afghanistan. The smart grid uses 4 large diesel generators to provide power for 66 structures. This 4 system is an example of a 'smart grid' because it is able to balance supply and demand throughout the day. This grid has replaced 20 separate generators that were required to be running all day regardless of demand. Whereas the old system required a fuel truck to refill each generator throughout the day, the new system has one centralized refueling point.

This article is an example of how the different branches of the military are innovating ways to reduce their exposure to energy security risks. I spent a few days down at Maxwell Air Force Base last week for a conference on the military's proposals to address energy security. At this conference (held under Chatham House rules – so I can't quote anything for attribution), it was clear that every branch of the military was moving to reduce their exposure to energy insecurity.

Mostly, this means that the military is trying to reduce their use of oil. There are two big reasons to do this. Strategically, military leadership understands that scarce resources, like oil, are a potential spark of conflict, and the military's dependence on oil from unstable regions is a major strategic vulnerability. At the tactical level, the long logistical tail left by convoys carrying fuel or water are the most vulnerable to attack, with some sources saying that one casualty is taken for every 24 convoys.

Reducing fuel use means means different things to each service. The Navy and the Air Force don't have to operate forward deployed bases, so they are less

concerned about the vulnerability of their supply lines. Instead, they are concerned that future shortages of oil could impact their effectiveness. The Air Force is testing biofuels in an effort to secure 'drop-in' replacements for jet fuel. Similarly, the Navy has the Green Hornet program for naval aviation to run on a 50/50 blend of biofuel and traditional jet fuel and just last year it launched the USS Makin Island (pictured), the first navy ship to run on a hybrid gas turbine with electric auxiliaries propulsion plant.

Like the Army, the Marines are concerned about reducing the logistics tail of forward-deployed units. However, they have also been getting a lot of press recently for their push to use solar on the battlefield to reduce the heavy load of batteries that each Marine is forced to carry into battle.

All of this has led some policy people to talk about "Green Soldiers" or some such term, but the military's push to reduce fuel use is not about being environmentally friendly, it is about helping the war fighters to more effectively fight and win wars. However, it is an important bonus that the technology they are developing could immediately be useful to American civilians. If a biofuel mix turns out to be a drop-in replacement for jet fuel, I am sure that civilian airlines will jump on. Similarly, the Army's microgrid could provide significant experience for implementing a larger 'smart grid' here at home. Here's hoping that innovations from the battlefield can help civilians as well as the military.

[WWW.AMERICANSECURITYPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.AMERICANSECURITYPROJECT.ORG)

## It's Time For International Emissions Reductions

Andrew Holland

AOL ENERGY

November 8, 2011

Last week, news from the Department of Energy's Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center announced that 2010 was a record year for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Not only did emissions reach a record high, but the annual amount of growth was unprecedented.

This is a worrying rise. It means that emissions are exceeding the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change's (IPCC's) worst-case scenario. It means that the world could be heading for dangerous, unprecedented, and irreversible climate change.

The AP's story on this noted that "extra pollution in China and the US account for more than half the increase in emissions last year." That statement is true, but misleading. China alone accounted for 41% of the world's emissions growth. Because of the size of the growth in Chinese emissions, the story could just as truthfully have said that China and India (9.5% of world growth) accounted for more than half of last year's increase in emissions.

This fact hints at a larger, and more important story that is buried within the numbers: the growth in emissions is no longer coming from the developed world. It is the developing world that is now the driver of emissions growth.

Emissions in the United States were still below their 2007 peak. Similarly, the EU is below 2008 levels, as are Russia, Japan, and Australia.

The reductions in emissions in these developed countries have been driven by the economic downturn stemming from the financial crisis, felt more strongly in the developed world than the developing world. However, their emissions reductions have their roots in longstanding governmental policies, like the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme or Japan's efficiency efforts. In addition, governmental policies to develop and deploy clean energy generating technology mean that these reductions could prove durable.

On the other hand, a return to energy-intensive economic growth, in large developing countries like China, India, Brazil, and Egypt--whose emissions went up by 10%, 9%, 12%, and 5%, respectively--make it much less likely that the world can stabilize emissions at a level that the IPCC says would preclude dangerous climate change.

The world needs an effective global mechanism for reducing emissions. Unfortunately, the Kyoto Protocol has not proved effective.

Kyoto's greatest fault was that it divided the world into developed and developing countries. Under the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the negotiating body for reducing emissions, the world is divided between "Annex 1" (developed) and "Non-Annex 1" (developing) countries. At a historic meeting in Berlin in 1995, two years before Kyoto, the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" was agreed to that separated the world into two. The idea was that developed countries were principally responsible for the historic emissions, so they should be principally responsible for reducing their emissions. In practice, though, this has meant that developed country signatories are responsible for reductions, while developing countries face no such constraints. The divide between developed and developing countries was the reason that the United States Senate never ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

In 1994, the year before the principle was put into place, non-annex 1 countries accounted for 40% of the world's emissions from energy use. Since then, however, the developing world, and China in particular, have gone on a growth spurt. Today, the ratio has almost flipped, with Non-Annex 1 countries accounting for 56% of emissions, and growing fast. Of the growth in emissions measured in 2010, 68% came from non-annex 1 countries.

As the world prepares to gather in Durban, South Africa in December for another round of UNFCCC negotiations, negotiators should work towards an agreement that provides a realistic and effective way to reduce dangerous climate emissions. The current approach, embodied in the Kyoto Protocol, is clearly ineffective.

The Copenhagen Accord, agreed two years ago at the Copenhagen conference, was a step in the right direction. It asked, for the first time, that all countries sub-

mit targets for controlling emissions that would be verifiable by the UN. However, it has never been fully embraced by negotiators: European countries want a strict legally binding treaty, no matter the cost, while major developing countries continue to adhere to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

This report shows that if a new approach--one that promises to actually reduce total global emissions, not just the slowest growing subset--is not reached, the world could be in for dangerous levels of climate change.

We need an approach that shares technology and best-practices around the world, while asking all but the Least Developed Countries to take some form of measurable, reportable, and verifiable limits on their emissions. Only then will the world be able stabilize emissions. But- we must hurry; it could soon be too late.

*Andrew Holland is the Senior Fellow for Energy and Climate at the American Security Project, a bi-partisan think-tank examining the big strategic choices facing the United States. His previous articles on AOL Energy include Fusion For The Future.*

## How To Break The Chokehold Oil Has On Our National Security

Stephen A. Cheney

AOL ENERGY

November 30, 2011

Oil is a global commodity--it is easy and cheap to ship it around the world. That means that the security of its distribution network is just as important as the security of its supply. This distribution network--including port terminals, huge oil supertankers, and lengthy pipelines--is vast and costly. It is also vulnerable to conflict, piracy and terrorism.

About one fifth of America's oil imports come from the Persian Gulf, passing through the Strait of Hormuz as it is shipped to our shores. Over 15 million barrels of oil per day pass through the Strait, a 21 mile-wide body of water vulnerable to Iranian anti-ship missiles. Iran has repeated its threats to close the Strait and is well positioned to carry out attacks on oil tankers in transit. The very threat of closing the Strait of Hormuz to shipping is enough to give the Iranian regime more leverage in the region than they are due.

Further along oil's journey from Arabian oil wells to the gasoline pump is either the Strait of Bab el-Mandab or the Strait of Malacca, both of which have a recent history of piracy. These chokepoints between the horn of Africa and the Middle East and the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea, respectively, are vulnerable to regional powers and to piracy. In 2009 the International Maritime Bureau's Piracy Reporting Centre in Malaysia recorded 42 attacks on oil tankers around the world, a 40% increase from 2008. The majority of pirate attacks occurred off the coast of Somalia and the Arabian Peninsula.

Terrorist attacks on energy infrastructure have also been on the rise. Saudi Arabia's Abqaiq oil processing facility--where two-thirds of the country's output is refined--was the target of a suicide bomb attack in February 2006. In early October 2010, the Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for attacks on oil tankers en route to Afghanistan, vowing to attack again.

Information seized during the May 2 raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan revealed Al Qaeda's continued interest in targeting oil tankers and commercial oil infrastructure at sea.

Piracy and terrorism are of greatest concern at these geostrategic chokepoints far from home, but America's own oil infrastructure provides similar threats. Over 40% of total US petroleum refining capacity lies along the Gulf Coast, an area extremely susceptible to natural disasters. In 2004, Hurricane Ivan destroyed seven platforms in the Gulf of Mexico, significantly damaged 24 others, and hurt over 100 pipelines.

The following year, Hurricane Katrina wreaked havoc in the Gulf, destroying more than 100 platforms and damaging 558 pipelines. Of the approximately 20 refineries and production facilities along the Gulf Coast in 2005, Katrina temporarily closed nine facilities and shut down two completely. As a result, US oil supplies saw a reduction of up to 1.4 million barrels a day - 8 percent of total US production. In January of this year, below-freezing temperatures in Alaska forced BP, ConocoPhillips and Exxon Mobil to suspend 95% of production from the North Slope area.

The tempting solution is to say that it is necessarily to drill for more oil in the US - but a "Drill, Baby, Drill" strategy would not protect us. Even if the US imported no oil from the Persian Gulf, a closure of the Strait of Hormuz to shipping would devastate our economy by driving up global oil prices to record highs. Instead, the solution must be to reduce oil consumption by working with the automotive industry to bring forward more fuel-efficient vehicles while simultaneously expanding our use of alternative energy.

So, to prevent our dependency on oil from distorting the decisions we make, both abroad and at home, we must aim to reduce our need for all oil.

The Administration's proposal, announced on November 16 to bring Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards up to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025 comes from an agreement between the Automakers (including Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, Toyota, and others), the United Auto Workers and the Administration. This new standard will reduce America's oil dependence and will significantly in-

crease our national security.

The United States is the greatest nation in the world. Its national security should not be beholden to the whims of unstable regimes that happen to control faraway sea-lanes. It is time for America to wrest its national security back from the chokehold that oil has on our economy and our national security. These standards will increase America's national security and reduce the threat that oil poses to our way of life.

*Brigadier General Stephen A. Cheney USMC (Ret.) is the CEO of the American Security Project a non-partisan think-tank. During his over 30 years within the US military he has held numerous leadership positions, including Inspector General of the Marine Corp and Commanding General of Parris Island.*

## A Bigger Bang for our Buck? A Look at the Naval Research Lab's Laser Fusion Program

Veronique Lee

ASP FLASHPOINT BLOG

November 11, 2011

Most international fusion research to date has followed the tokamak model, which uses magnetic fields to heat and squeeze the hydrogen plasma: the United Kingdom's Joint European Torus (JET), Japan's JT-60, and the world's largest tokamak, ITER, currently being assembled in France, are among the most well-known—and most expensive—fusion projects.

Some scientists in the U.S. have taken the inertial confinement fusion (ICF) route, using lasers to initiate a reaction like the fusion that takes place inside the sun or a hydrogen bomb. An ICF experiment is underway at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's National Ignition Facility (NIF). But another laser fusion facility exists, and it's located right here in Washington.

Steve Obenschain's team of researchers and developers at the Naval Research Lab's (NRL) Laser Fusion Program are spearheading a directly driven target approach to inertial fusion energy using an intense array of krypton fluoride (KrF) lasers. KrF has the deepest UV light of all high energy ICF lasers and can provide the most uniform target illumination, qualities that could substantially help towards obtaining high target gains needed for future fusion power plants.

The direct drive approach directs laser beams straight to the tiny fuel pellet (usually made from a blend of two Hydrogen isotopes, deuterium and tritium), which the NRL team says is simpler and more efficient than indirect drive, in which the pellet is placed inside a cylindrical container, called a hohlraum, that converts the driver laser beams into x-rays to compress the fuel. The main disadvantage of indirect drive is that the hohlraum uses a considerable amount of energy to heat itself, significantly reducing the overall efficiency of laser-to-target energy transfer.

Completed in 1995, NRL's Nike is the largest KrF laser facility being used for direct drive target experiments. NRL is using the adjoining Electra KrF laser facility to develop

efficient and durable high-repetition rate technologies. Already capable of producing 90,000 continuous shots in a span of 10 hours (about 2.5 Hz), the Electra laser is expected to achieve the 5 Hz rate needed for fusion energy in the coming years.

The NRL team has made impressive progress in the development of direct drive IFE on relatively modest funds; NRL has requested \$5 million for fiscal year 2012 to continue its experiments, compared to the University of Rochester's \$62.5 million request for its Omega facility and the \$48 million Sandia National Laboratory's Z facility has requested. NIF has cost more than \$3.5 billion, and the US contributed nearly \$80 million to ITER in fiscal year 2011, just a small fraction of its \$7 billion total budget.

It's clear that the technologies for clean energy don't come cheap. But it's important to continue funding R&D for these fusion projects, which are steadily making progress every day; if all goes well for the team at NRL, they could be just eight years away from using a full-scale KrF laser beam in a fusion test facility.

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## AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS

# The Research and Development Gap

Norm Augustine

THE HILL

September 2, 2011

America is in grave danger of losing its edge. For over one hundred years, American leadership in science, technology, engineering, and manufacturing has been unrivaled. It has created for us not only one of the highest standards of living any civilization has ever achieved, but also brought American preeminence in the world and a strong national defense.

Now, unfortunately, this is all at risk due to the lack of long-term planning, little political will, and slowing investment in science and engineering research.

As every business leader knows, prosperity tomorrow requires investment today. This is true whether the economy is in a period of boom or bust. The United States will not simply “grow” its way out of economic malaise. We need a rebirth of innovation: new products, new ways of doing things, new scientific achievements.

Let's look at the facts about research and development (R&D). As a percentage of GDP, the U.S. ranks eighth, behind countries like Japan, South Korea, and even Iceland. In one of the most important areas—energy—in 2010 the Department of Energy invested just \$2.27 billion on applied R&D, or just slightly more than 1/100th of one percent of GDP. As a point of comparison, that's nearly \$1 billion less than the amount (\$3.1 billion) we'll spend in 2011 providing a tax benefit for employee parking.

R&D is not the only area where we are falling behind. Over the past two decades there has been an 18 percent decline in the number of students graduating with bachelor degrees in engineering, math, physics and geosciences in the United States.

In 1986, the United States had 52 percent of the global doctorates in science and engineering. By 2003, that number dropped to a staggering 22 percent. The U.S. ranks 17th among developed nations in the proportion of college students receiving degrees in science or

engineering. It was 3rd just three decades ago.

To give a real-time example of why this matters, in the fourth quarter of 2010, 20 percent of our trade deficit was created by advanced technology, making it the largest deficit contributor. In that year, the advanced technology trade deficit worsened by \$82 billion.

While our investment in our future falls, other nations have learned from the American way, and drastically increased their R&D.

China is investing in science, engineering, manufacturing, energy and transportation. China plans to spend \$1.5 trillion in seven strategic sectors, including alternative energy, alternative fuel cars, and high-end equipment manufacturing (including high-speed rail and aviation). It now dominates the United States in the manufacture of clean energy technologies. China has leaped over its global competitors, both in the United States and in Europe, in the making of wind turbines and solar panels.

China invested \$34.6 billion in clean energy in 2009; in the U.S. it was just \$18.6 billion. Why do we wonder why China's economy is growing so fast?

Fortunately, this isn't how the story has to end. America can control its own destiny. But to do so, we must increase our investment – both public and private – in R&D.

America has done this before. It put a man on the moon within a decade of the challenge to do so; it built the atomic bomb to help win the Second World War; and it built a waterway to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

This new investment should be centered on our transportation networks and next-generation energy technology.

Today, there are scientists working on fusion power in many nations. Fusion power would be a safe, affordable, clean, and sustainable energy.

Many scientists believe that an investment of \$35 billion over 10 years would build two pilot plants to move forward with commercialization of fusion power over the next 30 years.

Other nations – China and South Korea – are eager to win the race for commercialization of fusion. If we

don't set a national priority ourselves, we are in danger of loosing this race, too.

If we recommit ourselves to science, technology, engineering, and manufacturing, we will lay the foundations to future growth and a secure American future. The alternative is not one that is pleasant to contemplate.

*Norm Augustine is a board member of the American Security Project. He was chairman of the Council of the National Academy of Engineering, president and chairman of the Association of the United States Army, chairman of the Aerospace Industries Association, and chairman of the Defense Science Board.*



## **TERRORISM AND ASYMMETRIC WARFARE**

## The Brilliant, Unworkable New Silk Road

Joshua Foust

THE ATLANTIC

October 11, 2011

*Tying Central Asia together with trade is a great idea that needs a heavy dose of realism*

**I**STANBUL, Turkey -- Turkey seems as good a place as any to ponder the latest grand policy idea for Central Asia filtering out of the U.S. government. Parag Khanna ably sums up the current zeitgeist for the “New Silk Road,” as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute chairman Fred Starr, and others are calling it:

In many respects, New Silk Road is the obvious approach that should have been executed a decade ago: locally owned, private sector enabling and regionally focused. Afghanistan may remain the poorest country in Eurasia for many years to come, but it stands a better chance of prospering as the “Asian Roundabout” - a crossroads for Euro-Asian commerce - than as a permanent American protectorate. As Hillary Clinton recently said in Chennai, the New Silk Road would “not be a single thoroughfare, but an international web and network of economic and transit connections.” Substituting a self-sufficient economic model for military occupation is the only way to achieve the “transition dividend” the administration is hoping for.

This is actually an amazing idea ... or would be, if it were workable. The problems with it become apparent when you unpack the assumptions underlying it: that Afghanistan actually is well suited as a commercial hub, that any other country in Central Asia really wants to trade with any other country in Central Asia, that the local governments would actually support “locally owned, private sector” economic initiatives (however those words are defined) and so on.

As a brief example, let’s look at a frequent subject of debate on my other blog, [Registan.net](#), Uzbekistan. I warily support the policy of increasing U.S. Security Assistance to the country to expand the NDN so that policymakers will have alternates to relying on the far more toxic, abusive, and dangerous regime in Pakistan. It is a least bad option to me, which doesn’t mean

it’s a good choice (and that was very sloppy phrasing on my part). Still, people like our own Michael Hancock disagree with even that, and that’s okay -- this isn’t easy, not by a long shot.

In order to tie Uzbekistan into a New Silk Road, which is necessary if the goal of making Afghanistan a commercial crossroads to Eurasia is to become reality, several things must happen. The first thing that must happen is that Uzbek leader Islam Karimov would need to care, even a little bit, about Uzbekistan’s business community. He clearly does not. And he’s not alone: Turkmenistan also has a very business-hostile climate, and Kyrgyzstan is hardly a friendly place for investment and business creation (I’m actually on my way to Kyrgyzstan right now to investigate some issues relating to local business issues).

So, on a basic level, the good idea of tying together Central Asia based on locally driven economic development runs up against the hostile (and, for the past 20 years, unmovable) climate for business investment. Despite that reality, which is obvious to anyone who spends even a short amount of time actually examining the business climate in this region, the prospects of a New Silk Road driving regional prosperity already seems to be entrenched as official policy. Without a great deal of further thought, years of planning and diplomatic cajoling, and no expectations for real change in anything less than a decade, this is pretty terrible magical thinking.

To wit: last year, Parag Khanna was pushing this same idea, only for China. Like the new, U.S.-driven model, his Old New Silk Road Idea was plagued by magical thinking, and seemed hopelessly at odds with the history of economic and political development in the region. I mean, look at this:

Appropriately then, all of the anchor projects currently being funded and considered in the New Silk Road process involve regional resource corridors, meaning they are focused more on physically connecting oil, gas and minerals such as copper and lithium to markets irrespective of which political borders they lie within or across. The TAPI pipeline could carry natural gas from Turkmenistan’s Caspian Sea coast all the way through Afghanistan and Pakistan to India. A national railway system for Afghanistan, already supported by CENTCOM, is already under construction and would help transport Afghanistan’s abundant mineral wealth to the emerging markets around it.

And the CASA-1000 project will transfer electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan via Afghanistan to Pakistan. The New Silk Road, then, is both North-South as well as East-West.

TAPI (the The Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline) is not going to happen anytime soon. China already has a gas pipe running east; Russia controls the rest of them going west. Afghanistan is far too unstable -- and will remain far too unstable -- to support a massive, vulnerable infrastructure development like a pipeline for a very long time. And by then, the economics just wouldn't work out (just ask Unocal, who tried this in 1998). Same with the railway system. There is a good reason China has not yet build railways to cart away Afghanistan's gold from the mines it owns: the economics and security just don't support it. ISAF can barely keep its highways clear of IEDs.

And don't even get me started on the phantom regional electrical grid. Afghanistan's purchasing of electricity from Uzbekistan is tenuous enough; transmitting electricity from two electricity-poor countries to a much less electricity-poor country makes little sense.

These ideas, like most of the New Silk Road theories, sound feasible if you don't think about them too hard. It's the Unicorn School of Geopolitics: If only everything were awesome and everyone got along, we could totally build a new regional framework!

Recent meetings around D.C. to push this idea -- shepherded by Fred Starr, who's been all about it for several years now -- are great at pulling together the terminal countries: Afghanistan and Germany, as they did last September 29. What they have not yet succeeded in doing is drawing together any of the countries between, say, Afghanistan and Germany ... like Uzbekistan. Considering that this event was held literally up the road from the Uzbek embassy, this sort of omission is pretty glaring.

Besides which, China is already developing trans-regional transportation networks. And it ain't easy: though the ground route takes half as much time as it would to ship something from China to Europe by sea, it is far more expensive and difficult. I can see the urge to look at that and say "let's try to make this easier and cheaper." But until it really is cheaper to ship something 6,000 miles over land than it is to ship it 10,000 miles on a container ship, the whole

thing is just not going to work.

Central Asia desperately needs a development policy, and it wouldn't hurt from some U.S. leadership on the issue. But utopian dreams of a Central Asian Customs Union, or something, seem so far out into left field I'm surprised it has gained as much traction as it has. Central Asia needs logic and planning, but the New Silk Road isn't it.

## Foreign Aid Shouldn't be the First Thing on the Chopping Block

THE HILL

Matthew Wallin

October 20, 2011

In this fiscal climate, recent debates have brought a growing amount of attention and support to the notion that the U.S. foreign aid budget should be cut. Many Americans, concerned that the government is spending their hard-earned tax dollars abroad when there are so many pressing issues at home, argue that we need to take care of ourselves before we take care of others.

There is validity to the argument. After all, how can someone help others if they themselves are bed-ridden? Why should we as a country spend tens of billions on foreign aid when our infrastructure crumbles and the government is desperately seeking ways to reign in our spending?

The answer is: it is in our national interest to do so.

Foreign assistance creates long lasting partnerships with countries and foreign publics—partnerships that benefit the national security of the United States. By helping to educate, empower, employ, and befriend people in other countries, we decrease instability that we have ended up spending trillions to combat.

So what are we spending to do this? Relatively little. The entirety of non-military U.S. foreign assistance money for FY2011 is \$34.7 billion. That amounts to less than one percent of the Federal budget. Let me repeat that again: one percent. That's one percent we spend on the entire world. And as a percentage of GDP, the U.S. has ranked rather low on its government-sponsored foreign aid, giving only 1/5th the amount Sweden does. (However, it is important to note that in terms of private donations the U.S. ranks very high.)

Consistently, the average American greatly misperceives the amount of U.S. spending on foreign aid. In a 2010 poll, the median assumption was that the

Federal government spends 25 percent of its budget on foreign aid. In the same pole, the median recommendation by Americans for spending levels was 10 percent. That's far above the reality of the situation.

Ok, so we don't really spend much money on foreign aid. But why should we be spending any at all? What do we get out of it?

According to USAID, money spent on combating malaria has saved 1.1 million lives in sub-Saharan Africa. Maternal mortality has decreased from 546,000 in 1990 to 358,000 in 2008. In terms of financial benefits, in 2009, we exported more than \$500 billion in goods to developing countries. Aid helps create business, and that's good for the prosperity of the United States.

But there's more. In a recent publication by the Professional Services Council, it is noted that development and diplomacy spending is directly linked to 10 million American jobs. Every \$4 spent by the State Department in Iraq has saved \$45 in military spending. PSC also cites the example of South Korea, which despite the massive exploitation of WWII and the following devastation of the Korean War, has evolved into a democracy and important trade partner with the U.S.—and we all enjoy Korean goods today.

Let's also not forget that prominent members of the military community, including former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, have called for increased funding to the State Department. Institution building, reduction of poverty, and helping meet basic health needs all contribute to the establishment of more stable environments in which the American military is less likely to be called into action.

The U.S. also has a vested interest in remaining a global, competitive leader. We should not cede our ability to influence people worldwide through democracy promotion programs, education, healthcare, and supporting human rights, especially when it costs relatively little to make a big impact.

In the end, it is important to recognize our financial troubles and live within our means. We should require our foreign aid agencies to account for the money they spend and demonstrate its benefit. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has called for a "Third Way" between aid critics and proponents that places more responsibility on the leadership of for-

eign countries to ensure the best use of aid money. The goal, as Blair explains, is to “use aid to end aid” by creating the building blocks for prosperity. And maybe, like South Korea, these countries and people can be transformed from recipients into donors.

So rather than focusing on the one percent of spending on foreign aid, let’s get realistic and put our priorities in order.

*Matthew Wallin works for the American Security Project, a non-partisan think tank in D.C.*

## Are Private Contractors Undermining the Intelligence Community?

Joshua Foust

PBS: NEED TO KNOW

September 22, 2011

There is broad public agreement that the government must take measures to respond to the explosive growth of contracting in the intelligence community during the past decade. The government tends to contract out services when it does not have employees with the skill set to perform a function (like building a surveillance drone), or when it needs to rapidly fill personnel gaps in a new program area. In the ten years that have lapsed since the September 11 attacks, however, contractors have gone from filling gaps in the intelligence community to being a large percentage of the people working on behalf of the country’s intelligence agencies.

The biggest problem facing the intelligence community is not that some contractors abuse the system, but that the government has designed a system that encourages abuse. Ultimately, the government is responsible for the conduct of the companies it contracts to perform functions; while violations of the rules in place merit investigation and prosecution, contractor behavior labeled as “misconduct” is often perfectly legal and within the bounds of the contract agreements companies sign with their government clients.

The current state of IC contracting is incoherent. There is broad confusion about the nature of appropriate government and contractor roles, along with inconsistent accountability and poor resourcing for accountability mechanisms. Contracts are often worded vaguely or incompletely, and ever-changing requirements, deliverables and performance metrics (all of which are supposed to catalogue and record how a company fulfills a contract) create an environment rife for exploitation by companies seeking to extract revenue from the process.

Perhaps the most prominent example is the “blanket-purchase agreement” awarded by the Department of the Interior (DoI) to the contracting firm CACI

in 1998 to supply, among other services, inventory control for the U.S. Army. The contract was worded vaguely with poor government controls, and its structure — the contract was awarded by the DoI but administered by the Department of the Army — made accountability difficult if not impossible. By 2004, CACI contractors, hired under this inventory and logistics contract, had been assigned to the interrogation facility at Abu Ghraib in Iraq. While none of the contractors involved in prisoner interrogation were indicted for misconduct, the vaguely worded contract awarded by the government allowed for the contractors it hired to be used inappropriately.

Most contracts never approach that level of questionable conduct, however. Rather, through vague language, open-ended requirements and unclear performance metrics these contracts allow companies to send workers into government facilities without clear expectations for work output and job performance.

It is difficult in many cases for the government to keep track of all contractor activities on a given project.

Every contract the government issues for a company to perform work is defined by the Statement of Work (SOW). This defines the parameters of the work the contractor will perform, including a description of the project, expected duties the contractor must fulfill, and the outputs and metrics by which performance will be measured. These are often poorly written, kept intentionally vague, and wind up not actually addressing the stated intent of the contracts.

As one example, every SOW I've had to either administer, edit or write has stipulated the number of employees the contractor should hire. That is, one of the primary ways the government measures a contractor's performance is based first and foremost on the number of people hired to work on the contract. This has two serious consequences that affect the contracting environment: It fails to make a distinction between effective workers and their less effective counterparts; it also confuses head count with contract performance.

The SOW system is also unclear on what constitutes deliverables and contract outcomes. In the intelligence community, this is most often expressed as a certain number of reports required by each contractor. This, too, is a poor measurement of performance. It also misidentifies what an outcome is.

Requiring the production of a required number of re-

ports from a required number of contracted analysts is not a measurement of output. The reports the IC generates each year are not just outputs from the analytic process but inputs to the policy process. If the output being measured by the SOW is irrelevant or inconsequential to the decisions being made, then is it really measuring the effect of the contract, or merely the paper it generated? I have written dozens of reports that counted toward my employer's fulfillment of a contract, which had nothing to do with the government's preferences or needs for making a decision.

A basic sense of project design is absolutely necessary to properly balance contractors and government employees. For example, in response to the rising threat of terrorism from Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the Defense Intelligence Agency decided to dramatically expand the number of analysts working on Yemen last year. However, this expansion was not necessary, per se. Rather, the government decided that studying Yemen was a priority, so it assigned extra personnel billets to study Yemen — and because hiring government employees is a time-consuming process to begin with, but requires an intolerable amount of time for the intelligence community, it asked contractors to bid for the opportunity to staff this new priority research area. The government could only staff this new research area in a timely way with contractors. But the decision to increase the number of staff working on Yemen did not directly correlate to the value extra analysts would bring to the table.

Many of the problems that exist within the intelligence contracting community begin with the government lacking the knowledge and means to design and manage its contracts. Rather than focusing on the numbers and balance of the contracted workforce, it would be better to examine the broader systemic issues that require the use of contractors in the first place. By addressing the need for contractors, and by making the process of contracting both more transparent and more accountable, many, if not most, issues of balancing contractor with government employees will resolve themselves.

*Adapted from Joshua Foust's testimony on Tuesday before the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce and the District of Columbia.*

# Kyrgyzstan's Promising but Uncertain Political Future

Joshua Foust

THE ATLANTIC

December 2, 2011

*With a new President, the Central Asian country can claim the first peaceful transition of power in the region. But where does it go from here?*

Today Kyrgyzstan inaugurated Almazbek Atambaev as their new president. It was a momentous event, the first peaceful transition of power in Central Asia. Unfortunately, Atambaev is inheriting a country with a troubled recent past and an uncertain future, including how it will relate to the United States.

Outgoing President Roza Otunbaeva recently apologized for “failing to prevent” last year’s ethnic bloodshed, which killed hundreds of people, torched thousands of buildings, and left an ethnic minority dispossessed and marginalized. She is right to apologize: though understandably distracted by the on-going fallout of Kyrgyzstan’s April Revolution, less than two months before, the riots were the result of a buildup of ethnic tension and local government depredation that she was obligated, as president, to address. Her response was so impotent she publicly contemplated seeking Russian help in establishing the peace in Osh.

While Otunbaeva’s handling of the ethnic riots last year was disappointing, she did usher in a new constitution and spearhead the current orderly transition of power. This should not be downplayed. Despite October’s Presidential election’s obvious flaws, establishing a precedent for an orderly transition is a huge accomplishment and deserves praise.

But where Kyrgyzstan can go from here is uncertain. The ethnic divide that erupted last year remains, and despite Atambaev’s pledge for ethnic unity no one knows if he has the charisma and political capital to begin addressing those divides. Kyrgyzstan faces numerous other challenges as well: a stagnating economy, pervasive corruption, and an uncertain regional orientation -- from the lively debate over whether Bishkek is swinging toward Russia or China to the bigger questions about its trade arrangements, position along The New Silk Road, and its struggles with narcotics trafficking.

Despite the seeming promise of Kyrgyzstan’s election, the country’s political class seem undecided about its outcome. Azimbek Beknazarov, the former Prosecutor General, just rejected a prestigious medal awarded him by outgoing President Otunbaeva. Beknazarov’s act of protest is significant: he led the first round of protests in the northern city of Talas last April, sparking the revolution coup that toppled the government of Bakiev. It makes sense for revolutionaries to be disappointed that their ideals aren’t met, but nevertheless seeing such a high-profile defection from the cause is noteworthy.

So where does Kyrgyzstan go from here? For starters, President Atambaev has some basic hurdles to cross in making Kyrgyzstan a functioning country. The separation of powers need to be solidified and gain broad acceptance, including the proper roles and responsibilities not just of the Presidency, but of the Parliament and the Courts and local governments. Kyrgyzstan’s basic government functioning also needs to improve: in Transparency International’s 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index Kyrgyzstan ranked 162, nestled between Yemen and Guinea.

Lastly, President Atambaev needs to take some concrete steps to heal Kyrgyzstan deep regional and ethnic divisions. Some of these divisions have their roots in economic problems, and there has to be some kind of economic reform to simplify and formalize the process of property rights, business ownership, and taxation. The deep North-South divide in Kyrgyzstan needs to be defused, whether through proportional cabinet appointments, some form of reconciliation process, or some additional political development. There has to be a focus on seeking justice for the victims of depredation of all kinds. And President Atambaev has to reimpose central accountability for local governments, particularly in the southwest.

Not a single item on that wishlist is simple to do or easy to achieve (or even easy to plan). That is why Kyrgyzstan’s future is so uncertain -- there are far more questions than answers at this point about the survivability of both the government and Kyrgyz society as a whole. Added into this is the grinding political contentiousness of the U.S. airbase at Manas. It is politically unpopular, but some leaders think it may have long-term utility for national security.

In other words, Kyrgyzstan is a big question mark. It has taken some very promising steps on the path to normalcy, but, sadly, the country still has a long way to go.

## Hearts and Minds: Al-Qaeda's Visit to Somalia

Lara Getz

ASP FLASHPOINT BLOG

December 12, 2011

**A**l-Qaeda's recent appearance at the Ala-Yasir refugee camp in southern Somalia was certainly unexpected. While the camp is located in the large expanse of territory controlled by al-Shabaab, a militant group associated with al-Qaeda, this was not only the first time the organization had spoken publicly in Somalia, but that it had distributed aid in this particular country.

A man claiming to be an American, named Abu Abdullah Muhajir, led the small al-Qaeda unit that distributed rice, dates, flour, milk and clothes, in addition to Islamic books and approximately \$17,000 in Somali shillings to more than 4,000 refugees residing in the camp. Muhajir, who identified himself as al-Qaeda's official representative to Somalia, also arrived with a fully-staffed ambulance and a number of other foreigners, including some with English accents.

Somalia is no stranger to crisis and instability. It has been suffering from civil war and severe internal strife for two decades, and the "official" government is too weak and corrupt to extend its authority beyond the capital of Mogadishu. Although al-Shabaab controls the drought-stricken south of the country, even this semblance of order may soon disintegrate as clans and other militias, often backed by foreign governments, have begun a violent fight against al-Shabaab's control of the region. In the Ala-Yasir refugee camp, however, al-Shabaab still holds tight control, and with its dismissal of many aid organizations, sometimes as a result of their support for the government, al-Qaeda has evidently made the decision to fill the void.

It seems safe to say that not many are surprised by al-Shabaab's connections to al-Qaeda being confirmed with the appearance of a small al-Qaeda 'humanitarian' unit at Ala-Yasir. What is surprising is the very boldness and public nature of the visit. Announcing that he carried a message from Ayman al-Zawahiri himself, Abu Abdullah Muhajir conveyed the Muslim community's support for all those suffering from the drought in Somalia. In return, many children told the reporters present that

they hoped al-Qaeda would be victorious over all their enemies.

With as many as 4 million people suffering from the current drought, many of whom have been forced to move to refugee camps, a hearts and minds campaign by al-Qaeda is the last thing this already tumultuous and violent country needs. If al-Qaeda is seeking to use small humanitarian units, such as the one that visited Ala-Yasir, as a means to gather support and possible future recruits, this could be an extremely dangerous development for Somalia. Given the current environment in the country, al-Qaeda could very feasibly build up further support if it decides to use the drought to its advantage. While it already has a close ally in al-Shabaab and the foreign fighters supporting it within the country, adding yet another destabilizing element to the equation does not bode well for Somalia's future.

This unexpected and very public appearance of al-Qaeda in southern Somalia raises three important points that should be examined. First, it shows one of the ways in which al-Qaeda is morphing as a result of its weakening position in Afghanistan. Their appearance at the refugee camp proves once again the dynamic nature of this organization and its ability to spread its ideology among those who live in violent and uncertain environments. Al-Qaeda may have been crippled in South Asia, but it is by no means mortally wounded. There are many other turbulent environments, such as Somalia, that could potentially fall further under al-Qaeda's sway.

Secondly, al-Qaeda's visit to Ala-Yasir exemplifies how humanitarian aid runs the danger of becoming a politicized issue, particularly in volatile environments. As Jamal Osman with *The Guardian* reported, "In Somalia, word goes around quickly on which particular aid organizations are funding certain political groups or clans," and this often gives al-Shabaab and other militant groups the fuel to demonize some aid organizations while promoting others. As long as al-Shabaab controls southern Somalia, and with it many refugee camps, it and other militant groups have the ability to control which groups can and cannot distribute aid in their backyard. The more voids that are created by expelling aid organizations, however, the greater the likelihood that radical groups, such as al-Qaeda, can arrive to fill the vacuum.

Finally, the mixed nature of this single al-Qaeda unit once again demonstrates the group's ability to promote its ideology and recruit members from a wide range of countries – including Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Ye-

men, Europe, and even the United States. By the time the al-Qaeda representatives arrived at the Ala-Yasir refugee camp, the FBI had concluded that 30 U.S. nationals had joined al-Shabaab, which, as mentioned above, is a loyal and well-established supporter of al-Qaeda. The diversity apparent in groups such as al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda poses serious challenges when tracking and targeting terrorist organizations. The power of any ideology lies in its ability to transcend all boundaries. Al-Qaeda's ideology has proven that it is no exception, and is even more dangerous because of that.

It is certainly unreasonable to claim that Somalia will inevitably become a training ground for al-Qaeda following its public aid mission to the drought-stricken country. It is not foolish, however, to train our eyes on Somalia in order to make sure such a development doesn't happen. Over the years, it has become apparent that al-Qaeda has a strong base of support within the country, particularly within al-Shabaab. Somalia and its people suffer from violence and uncertainty every day, a tragedy which has only been enhanced by a severe and enduring drought, and al-Qaeda has now marked it as a viable market in which it can trade its aid for support. It is an organization in a period of transformation and an adversary with many different faces. What this most recent development simply proves is that we cannot let our guard down because al-Qaeda has proven more than once that it is quick to adapt in order to survive.

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## NUCLEAR SECURITY

## Time to Add Carrots to Iran Policy Menu

Brig. Gen. John Adams and Lt. Col. Chris Courtney

POLITICO

December 6, 2011

**T**alk of bombing Iran is again proliferating as a talking point among politicians who want to sound tough on national security. This happens every election season. It will no doubt be among the most repeated foreign policy themes in the 2012 campaign. But sounding tough should not be mistaken for smart policy.

We have to keep in mind that Iran's development of a nuclear-weapon capability has been motivated by its sense of vulnerability and the regime's fear for survival. The best way to motivate Iran to develop nuclear weapons is to keep threatening.

There's been a dearth of discussion about rational policy options to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. Preventing a nuclear-armed Iran is part of preventing a regional war. A nuclear-armed Iran would tip the balance of power toward Tehran, reduce Israel's qualitative military superiority and destabilize the entire region. This risks a war that would engulf our regional allies — not to mention our own forward-deployed forces.

Let's be clear: A U.S. attack on Iran runs a great risk of starting a regional war — our fourth war in 10 years. Isn't that what we want to avoid in the first place?

Here are U.S. policy options to stop this from happening:

First, tougher sanctions. Though sanctions have inflicted great costs on the Iranian economy, they haven't stalled Iran's nuclear aspirations. We need to ratchet up sanctions by focusing sharply on the Iranian petrochemical industry, the Iranian Central Bank and Revolutionary Guard assets.

Washington last month announced economic sanctions targeting the petrochemical and financial entities, which represent a significant step in the right direction. But further expansion of sanctions should increase pressure on these key Iranian vulnerabilities.

This will most likely weaken the hard-liners intent on reaching the nuclear threshold and encourage Iran's moderate factions that oppose development of a nuclear-arms capability.

Second, Washington should demonstrate U.S. and allied air and naval capabilities in the region. This communicates directly to Tehran that its investment in the nuclear program creates clear risks, as well as increasing uncertainty about potential strikes against its nuclear infrastructure. U.S. military cooperation with Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council can also reassure our allies in the region.

This strategy is more effective than basing U.S. ground forces in the region. Our large military presence in the Gulf region has only heightened Iranian perceptions about U.S. threats. It may well have contributed to Iran's increased nuclear efforts.

In addition, U.S. ground force bases in the Middle East increase the vulnerability of our troops in the event of a regional war. Yet they also limit our use of these troops in the event of real crises.

Most important, and most difficult to achieve, Iran must not only be dissuaded from the bomb but perceive a positive stake in regional cooperation. We're good at brandishing "sticks" but should offer an array of "carrots" as well.

For starters, the U.S. should:

- Open new lines of communication. Our policymakers suffer from a lack of information about the situation in Iran. There is no routine contact with Iranian decision makers — much less opposition figures. It's time to change this foolish policy. Opening up routine diplomatic exchange — even at low levels — means a more informed policy, as well as the ability to react quickly in crises with a reduced risk of military conflict. Engagement does not equate to endorsement of Iranian actions. But it does provide a new way to influence Iran's decision making while better informing our own.
- Refrain from military threats against Iran, explicit or implicit — "all options are on the table," after all, is a threat. Our intent should be to deny hard-liners a rallying call and strengthen reformists in the internal political debate.
- Invite Iran to participate in Persian Gulf regional se-

curity activities. There's a lot of important groundwork to be laid before this. But combined with demonstration of U.S. and allied air and naval capabilities, even incremental steps in this direction would reduce the risk of regional conflict.

We must choose policy options likely to prevent both a nuclear-armed Iran and the outbreak of regional war.

Rather than hurling the chips off the table by going directly to the war option, we need to keep our eyes on the prize: Reducing the risk of regional conflict by a graduated series of policy options that encourage Tehran to change direction in its march to a nuclear weapons capability.

*Brig. Gen. John Adams and Lt. Col. Chris Courtney, both retired, served in the U.S. Army. They are members of the Consensus for American Security.*

## Defense Spending in an Age of Austerity

Joshua Foust

PBS: NEED TO KNOW

November 16, 2011

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has been raising eyebrows with his aggressive public defense of the Pentagon's budget. Last week, he told a group of National Guard officials that, should Congress slash his Department's budget, it would "invite aggression."

While some have rejected Secretary Panetta's stark language, he isn't necessarily wrong. The U.S. military is tasked with an extraordinary range of missions, and asking it to do so much with fewer resources would be a mistake. At the same time, should the supercommittee enact the full slate of proposed cuts of \$1 trillion over the next decade, the Pentagon's budget would in effect be capped at 2007 levels — and no one in 2007 thought the budget was so low as to "invite aggression."

The debate over the size of the Pentagon's budget largely misses the point. Discussing arbitrary budget numbers, or even specific programs to expand, keep, or cut is approaching the problem of defense spending backward. The real debate in Congress and in the public should be about America's role in the world — from that debate we can structure an appropriate national security budget to satisfy it.

In the last 20 years, American foreign policy has rarely faced serious limits. A succession of presidents has firmly rejected any nation-building exercises, only to undertake them as considered policies. Despite the defense reductions of the 1990s, the U.S. military spent almost the entire decade engaged in small little wars in Europe, East Africa and the Caribbean. In the 2000s, the U.S. initiated two big wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and remained peripherally involved in a series of smaller ones in the Philippines, Yemen, Somalia and elsewhere.

Indeed, Secretary Panetta is right that the U.S. will have a hard time fulfilling all the many commitments it has with a much smaller budget. But should the U.S. military be tasked with all these commitments? No one denies regional stability in, for example, the Arabian Peninsula is a good thing. But is the United States military the best way

to provide that? It's unclear that the U.S. has played a constructive role in reducing militancy in a place like Yemen – especially if you consider the strong correlation between increased U.S. counterterrorism operations and the growing Al Qaeda presence there. The same question can be asked of U.S. involvement in the recent interventions in Somalia and Libya.

The problem is whether you measure the national security budget by inputs or outputs. Looking at inputs – the overall budget, the expenditure of a specific program like the F-22, or the development of a counterterrorism training program in an unstable country – can lend the impression that Pentagon spending achieves amazing things. But looking at outputs – a smaller budget, the reduction of the U.S. fighter fleet from thousands of planes to hundreds, driving corruption and entrenching a hated tyrant – can lend an entirely different impression of that same spending.

By starting with the effects we want our foreign policy to accomplish, and from that working backward to see what programs and budgets are needed to accomplish it, we can develop a much sounder (and much smaller) Pentagon budget. There is no reason to assume the military is necessary for, say, economic development – there are other, far cheaper U.S. agencies that do that as well. Foreign aid represents less than 1 percent of the federal budget, but it has the potential to be as instrumental to America's foreign policy as the Pentagon, which has 20 times the budget. Effectiveness is not measured by budget, but by outcome.

The desire to be all things to all people – policeman, enforcer and peacemaker – is powerful, especially when resources seem to be unlimited. But resources are not, and neither is the Pentagon's budget.

On the other hand, the expansive presence of the U.S. military would be okay if there was a collective recognition of what that represents: a global, quasi-imperial peacemaking organization. That is a prospect that seems to discomfort many Americans, and so we should structure the public conversation first on what we want our country to be, and how we want to be positioned in the world, and only then to worry about what kind of money we need to spend to get there. The answer is almost certainly less than what we are today, and it will therefore be by design cost less.

The cliché that cutting the budget requires hard choices is true. But the choices we need to make go deeper than any arbitrary budget cap or program budget. We need to decide what kind of country we are: one that is closely involved in the affairs of other countries, or one that is

not (or somewhere in between, and if so under what circumstances). Without that debate, all the arguments and posturing over budgets won't mean much to the future of national security.

*Joshua Foust is a fellow at the American Security Project and a columnist at TheAtlantic.com.*

## Further Reading

# 20 Years After the Fall: The U.S. and Russia in the post-Soviet World

A collection of essays from our fellows, board members, and adjunct fellows analyzing the evolution of U.S. foreign policy in the 20 years after the collapse of the USSR. Published in partnership with The Atlantic Monthly. These essays examine the last two decades of change in nuclear security, energy policy, the defense industry, regional and bilateral politics, and U.S. posture and geostrategy.

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## **Building a New American Arsenal**

The American Security Project (ASP) is a nonpartisan initiative to educate the American public about the changing nature of national security in the 21st century.

Gone are the days when a nation's strength could be measured by bombers and battleships. Security in this new era requires a New American Arsenal harnessing all of America's strengths: the force of our diplomacy; the might of our military; the vigor of our economy; and the power of our ideals.

We believe that America must lead other nations in the pursuit of our common goals and shared security. We must confront international challenges with all the tools at our disposal. We must address emerging problems before they become security crises. And to do this, we must forge a new bipartisan consensus at home.

ASP brings together prominent American leaders, current and former members of Congress, retired military officers, and former government officials. Staff direct research on a broad range of issues and engages and empowers the American public by taking its findings directly to them.

We live in a time when the threats to our security are as complex and diverse as terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, climate change, failed and failing states, disease, and pandemics. The same-old solutions and partisan bickering won't do. America needs an honest dialogue about security that is as robust as it is realistic.

ASP exists to promote that dialogue, to forge consensus, and to spur constructive action so that America meets the challenges to its security while seizing the opportunities the new century offers.



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