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**Drones**

**Contention 1 is drone strikes.**

**The AUMF legally justifies excessive use of drone strikes. Only the plan can ensure responsible use.**

Masters 5/23/13 (Jonathon, deputy editor of the council on foreign relations, “Targeted Killings”, council on foreign relations, <http://www.cfr.org/counterterrorism/targeted-killings/p9627#p3>, August 16, 2013, clarson clarson)

**The George W. Bush and Obama administrations have sought to justify targeted killings under both domestic and international law. The domestic legal underpinning for U.S. counterterrorism operations and the targeted killing of members of the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and its affiliates across the globe is the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF),** which the U.S. Congress passed just days after 9/11. **The statute empowers the president "to use all necessary and appropriate force" in pursuit of those responsible for the terrorist attacks**. Peacetime assassinations, which are sometimes conflated with targeted killings, have been officially banned by the United States since 1976.

**The Obama administration asserts the United States remains in a state of armed conflict with al-Qaeda and associated forces, and has laid out its justification for targeted killings over several major policy speeches**. These include those given by Harold Koh, legal adviser of the U.S. Department of State, in 2010; White House Chief Counterterrorism Adviser John Brennan in 2011; Defense Department General Counsel Jeh Johnson in 2012; Attorney General Eric Holder in 2012, and Brennan, once more, in 2012.

The White House maintains that the U.S. right to self-defense, as laid out in Article 51 of the UN charter, may include the targeted killing of persons such as high-level al-Qaeda leaders who are planning attacks, both in and out of declared theaters of war. **The administration's posture includes the prerogative to unilaterally pursue targets in states without their prior consent if that country is unwilling or unable to deal effectively with the threat**--exemplified by the Navy SEAL raid that killed Osama bin Laden.

Speaking at Northwestern University in March 2012, Attorney General Holder elaborated on the targeting of U.S. citizens abroad (i.e., Anwar al-Awlaki), stating that such individuals may be killed by U.S. forces, but are still protected under the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause--albeit a consideration that "takes into account the realities of combat." Holder noted specifically that it would be lawful to target a U.S. citizen if the individual poses an imminent threat, capture is not feasible, and the operation would be executed in observance of applicable laws of war.

In yet another major policy speech one month later, White House Chief Counterterrorism Adviser Brennan specifically addressed the standards by which the administration authorizes lethal strikes on al-Qaeda outside Afghanistan. Steps in the process include: deciding if the target is a significant threat to U.S. interests; being cognizant of state sovereignty issues; having high confidence in the target's identity and that innocent civilians will not be harmed; and, finally, engaging in an additional review process if the individual is a U.S. citizen.

A white paper leaked by the Department of Justice in February 2013 provided a detailed account of the legal framework for the targeted killing of U.S. citizens--although these strikes were not publicly acknoweldged until months later.

In May 2013, President Obama delivered a major address on U.S. counterterrorism policy at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., where he announced new policy guidance for U.S. targeted killings off the conventional battlefield. Notably, he said that the same "high threshold" the administration has set for targeting U.S. citizens will be extended to non-U.S. threats--a policy that "respects the inherent dignity of every human life." While the president's speech largely defended U.S. drone policy, he also called for a refinement and eventual repeal of the AUMF--"to determine how we can continue to fight terrorists without keeping America on a perpetual war-time footing."

**"If other states were to claim the broad-based authority that the United States does--to kill people anywhere, anytime--the result would be chaos**." --Philip Alston, former UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions

**CFR's Matthew C. Waxman says the ongoing challenge for the Obama administration has been to balance several opposing imperatives: asserting broad war powers, while assuring critics that they are limited; justifying actions that remain covert; and promoting government transparency, while protecting sensitive intelligence programs.**

**Philip Alston, the former UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, condemns the U.S. claims of self-defense as overly expansive, stating that "if other states were to claim the broad-based authority that the United States does, to kill people anywhere, anytime, the result would be chaos.**" Waxman says that while the strike on bin Laden would normally be a violation of state sovereignty, the U.S. government "is well within its rights" to use force on foreign soil without consent if there is an overriding necessity of self-defense.

CFR national security expert John B. Bellinger says the law is in need of a significant update. "The 2001 AUMF is more than ten years old now and getting a little long in the tooth--still tied to the use of force against the people who planned, committed, and or aided those involved in 9/11," he says. "The farther we get from [targeting] al-Qaeda [e.g., al-Shabaab in Somalia], the harder it is to squeeze [those operations] into the AUMF."

**The first impact is terrorism**

**Drone attacks increase terrorist recruiting capabilities**

**Gerges ’10** [Fawaz A. Gerges, professor of middle-eastern politics and international relations at the University of London, May 30th, 2010, Newsweek, “The truth about Drones”, http://www.newsweek.com/2010/05/30/the-truth-about-drones.html]

**In the first four months this year, the Predators fired nearly 60 missiles** in Pakistan, about the same number as in **Afghanistan**, the recognized war theater. In Pakistan, the pace of drone strikes has increased to two or three a week, up roughly fourfold from the Bush years. Although drone strikes have killed more than a dozen Qaeda and Taliban leaders, they have incinerated hundreds of civilians, including women and children.

**Predator strikes have inflamed anti-American rage among Afghans and Pakistanis, including first or second generation immigrants in the west, as well as elite members of the security services. The Pakistani Taliban and other militants are moving to exploit this anger, vowing to carry out suicide bombings in major U.S. cities. Drone attacks have become a rallying cry for Taliban militants, feeding the flow of volunteers into a small, loose network that is harder to trace even than shadowy Al Qaeda. Jeffrey Addicott, former legal adviser to Army Special Operations, says the strategy is “creating more enemies than we’re killing or capturing.”** The Obama administration needs to at least acknowledge the dangers of military escalation and to welcome a real debate about the costs of the drone war. Because clearly, its fallout is reaching home.

**There is a linear relationship—each drone attack increases the odds of an attack on the U.S.**

**McGrath 10**

 LIEUTENANT COLONEL SHAUN R. MCGRATH United States Air Force

 STRATEGIC MISSTEP: “IMMORTAL” ROBOTIC WARFARE, INVITING COMBAT TO SUBURBAN AMERICA March 18, 2010 <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA521822&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf> d.a. 7-27-10

Today one solution to the vexing problem of engaging in continued retribution and pro-active strikes against terrorists or insurgents creates a growing strategic peril with every ostensible tactical success. The **strategic peril** **stems from the expanded use of remotely piloted aircraft** (RPA) **strikes that target individuals.** The peril primarily emanates from strikes against high value targets (HVT) or high value individuals (HVI) outside of direct force-on-force engagements. 3 When used in a complimentary role for force-on-force actions, **an RPA’s persistent over-watch ability and targeted firepower enhances tactical success**. Extrapolating this tactical success to a broader strategic campaign without the full consideration for second and third order effects induces potential strategic missteps. Key **counter-terrorism experts** already **argue that the second order effect of anti-U.S. sentiment continues to grow with each one of these strikes.**4 Today, **however, few experts appear to connect the dots to the postulated third order effect of an increased risk of enduring enemy attacks on U.S. soil**.

**The US will retaliate to a terror attack, causing extinction**

**Speice 06** [Patrick F., Jr. "Negligence and nuclear nonproliferation: eliminating the current liability barrier to bilateral U.S.-Russian nonproliferation assistance programs." William and Mary Law Review 47.4 (Feb 2006): 1427(59). Expanded Academic ASAP]

The potential consequences of the unchecked spread of nuclear knowledge and material to terrorist groups that seek to cause mass destruction in the United States are truly horrifying**. A terrorist attack with a nuclear weapon would be devastating in terms of immediate human and economic losses**. (49) Moreover, **there would be immense political pressure in the United States to discover the perpetrators and retaliate with nuclear weapons**, massively increasing the number of casualties and potentially triggering **a full-scale nuclear conflict.** (50) In addition to the threat posed by terrorists, leakage of nuclear knowledge and material from Russia will reduce the barriers that states with nuclear ambitions face and may trigger widespread proliferation of nuclear weapons. (51) This proliferation will increase the risk of nuclear attacks against the United States or its allies by hostile states, (52) as well as increase the likelihood that regional conflicts will draw in the United States and escalate to the use of nuclear weapons. (53)

**Second is proliferation**

**U.S. drone attacks will incite international, uncontrolled drone use and risks the spread of new weapons tech—**

**Savage ’10** [Charlie, columnist for the New York Times, New York Times, “U.N. Report Highly Critical of American Drone Attacks, Warning of Use by Others”, June 6th, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/03/world/ 03drones.html, Academic Search Premier]

**A senior United Nations official said** on Wednesday that **the growing use of** armed **drones by the United States to kill terrorism suspects was undermining global constraints on the use of military force. He warned that the American example would lead to a chaotic world as the new weapons technology inevitably spread.** In a 29-page report to the United Nations Human Rights Council, the official, Philip Alston, the United Nations special representative on extrajudicial executions, called on the United States to exercise greater restraint in its use of drones in places like Pakistan and Yemen, outside the war zones in Afghanistan and Iraq. The report -- the most extensive effort by the United Nations to grapple with the legal implications of armed drones -- also proposed a summit meeting of ''key military powers'' to clarify legal limits on such killings. In an interview, Mr. Alston said **the United States appeared to think that it was ''facing a unique threat from transnational terrorist networks'' that justified its effort to put forward legal justifications that would make the rules ''as flexible as possible.'' But that example, he said, could quickly lead to a situation in which dozens of countries carry out ''competing drone attacks'' outside their borders against people ''labeled as terrorists by one group or another.'' ''I'm particularly concerned that the United States seems oblivious to this fact when it asserts an ever-expanding entitlement for itself to target individuals across the globe,'**' Mr. Alston said in an accompanying statement**. ''But this strongly asserted but ill-defined license to kill without accountability is not an entitlement which the United States or other states can have without doing grave damage to the rules designed to protect the right to life and prevent extrajudicial executions.''**

**We are at a critical moment--Unless the U.S. restrains the use of weaponized drones there will be a global proliferation of militarized drone technology leading to the globalization of death**

**Engelhardt 10**

[Tom Engelhardt](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-engelhardt) Tom Engelhardt is a graduate of Yale University and one of the country's most eminent book editorsEditor of TomDispatch.com http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-engelhardt/america-detached-from-war\_b\_624155.html d.a. 7-25-10

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[America Detached from War: Bush's Pilotless Dream, Smoking Drones, and Other Strange Tales From the Crypt](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-engelhardt/america-detached-from-war_b_624155.html)

Smoking Drones, not a single smoking drone is in sight. **Now it's the United States whose UAVs are ever more powerfully weaponized**.  It's the U.S. which is [developing](http://amconmag.com/article/2010/apr/01/00030/) a 22-ton tail-less drone 20 times larger than a Predator that can fly at Mach 7 and ([theoretically](http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/11/can-killer-drones-land-on-carriers-like-human-top-guns/)) land on the pitching deck of an aircraft carrier.  It's the Pentagon which is planning to increase the funding of drone development by [700%](http://amconmag.com/article/2010/apr/01/00030/) over the next decade. Admittedly, there is a modest counter-narrative to all this enthusiasm for our robotic prowess, “precision,” and “valor.”  It involves legal types like Philip **Alston, the United Nations special representative on extrajudicial executions**.  He recently [issued](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/03/world/03drones.html) a 29-page report criticizing Washington’s “ever-expanding entitlement for itself to target individuals across the globe.”  **Unless limits are put on** such claims, and especially on **the** CIA’s **drone war** over Pakistan, he suggests, **soon enough a plethora of states will follow in America’s footprints, attacking people in other lands** “labeled as terrorists by one group or another.” **Such mechanized, long-distance warfare**, he also suggests, **will** **breach what respect remains for the laws of war.  “**Because operators are based thousands of miles away from the battlefield,” he wrote, “and undertake operations entirely through computer screens and remote audio-feed, there is a risk of developing a 'PlayStation' mentality to killing.” Similarly, the ACLU has [filed](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/03/24/drone-wars-without-any-ru_n_511056.html) a freedom of information lawsuit against the U.S. government, demanding that it “disclose the legal basis for its use of unmanned drones to conduct targeted killings overseas, as well as the ground rules regarding when, where, and against whom drone strikes can be authorized, and the number of civilian casualties they have caused.” But pay no mind to all this.  The arguments may be legally compelling, but not in Washington, which has mounted a half-hearted [claim](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303450704575159864237752180.html) of legitimate [“self-defense,”](http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2010/03/drone-attacks-legit-self-defense-says-administration-lawyer/#more-23429) but senses that it’s already well past the point where legalities matter.  The die is cast, the money committed.  The momentum for drone war and yet more drone war is overwhelming.  It’s a done deal.  Drone war is, and will be, us. A Pilotless Military If there are zeitgeist moments for products, movie stars, and even politicians, then such moments can exist for weaponry as well.  The robotic drone is the Lady Gaga of this Pentagon moment.  It’s a moment that could, of course, [be presented](http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175056/tom_engelhardt_terminator_planet) as an apocalyptic nightmare in the style of the Terminator movies (with the U.S. as the soul-crushing Skynet), or as a remarkable tale of how “networking technology is expanding a homefront that is increasingly relevant to day-to-day warfare” (as Christopher Drew [recently put it](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/08/technology/08homefront.html) in the New York Times).  It could be described as the arrival of a dystopian fantasy world of one-way slaughter verging on entertainment, or as the coming of a generation of homegrown video warriors who work “in camouflage uniforms, complete with combat boots, on open floors, with four computer monitors on each desk... and coffee and Red Bull help[ing] them get through the 12-hour shifts.” It could be presented as the ultimate in cowardice -- the killing of people in a world you know nothing about from thousands of miles away -- or (as Col. Mathewson would prefer) a new form of valor. The drones -- their use expanding exponentially, with ever newer generations on the drawing boards, and the planes even [heading for](http://www.theatlanticwire.com/opinions/view/opinion/Should-Drones-Be-Allowed-Across-US-Skies-3990) “the homeland” -- could certainly be considered a demon spawn of modern warfare, or (as is generally the case in the U.S.) a remarkable example of American technological ingenuity, a problem-solver of the first order at a time when [few American problems](http://www.commondreams.org/view/2010/06/21) seem capable of solution.  Thanks to our technological prowess, it’s claimed that we can now kill them, wherever they may be lurking, at absolutely no cost to ourselves, other than the odd [malfunctioning drone](http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/blogs/defense/index.jsp?plckController=Blog&plckBlogPage=BlogViewPost&newspaperUserId=27ec4a53-dcc8-42d0-bd3a-01329aef79a7&plckPostId=Blog%3a27ec4a53-dcc8-42d0-bd3a-01329aef79a7Post%3a32530e23-3fa1-4379-8f67-3f785feb01fd&plck).  Not that even all [CIA operatives](http://blogs.alternet.org/skeeterbitesreport/2010/06/08/cias-drone-attacks-in-pakistan-drawing-new-round-of-opposition-from-inside-cia/) involved in the drone wars agree with that one.  Some of them understand perfectly well that there’s a price to be paid. As it happens, the enthusiasm for drones is as much a fever dream as the one President Bush and his associates offered back in 2002, but it’s also distinctly us.  In fact, drone warfare fits the America of 2010 tighter than a glove.  With its consoles, [chat rooms](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/08/technology/08homefront.html), and “single shooter” death machines, it certainly fits the skills of a generation raised on the computer, Facebook, and video games.  That our valorous warriors, their day of battle done, can increasingly leave war behind and head home [to the barbecue](http://www.latimes.com/news/nation-and-world/la-fg-drone-crews21-2010feb21%2C0%2C2614633.story) (or, given American life, the foreclosure) also fits an American mood of the moment. **The Air Force** [**“detachments”**](http://www.nellis.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123075622) **that “manage” the drone war** from places like Creech Air Force Base in Nevada **are “detached” from war in a way that even an artillery unit significantly behind the battle lines or an American pilot in an F-16 over Afghanistan** (who could, at least, experience engine failure) **isn’t.** If **the drone presents the most extreme version thus far of the detachment of human beings from the battlefield** (on only one side, of course) and so launches a basic redefinition of what war is all about, it also catches something important about the American way of war. After all, while this country garrisons the world, invests its wealth in its military, and fights [unending, unwinnable frontier wars](http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/175261/tomgram%3A_engelhardt%2C_washington_drunk_on_war/) and skirmishes, most Americans are remarkably detached from all this.  If anything, since Vietnam when an increasingly rebellious citizens’ army proved disastrous for Washington’s global aims, such detachment has been the goal of American war-making. As a start, with no draft and so no citizen’s army, war and the toll it takes is now the professional business of a tiny percentage of Americans (and their families).  It occurs thousands of miles away and, in the Bush years, also became a heavily privatized, for-profit activity.  As Pratap Chatterjee [reported](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/LF18Ak01.html) recently, “[E]very US soldier deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq is matched by at least one civilian working for a private company. All told, about 239,451 contractors work for the Pentagon in battle zones around the world.”  And a majority of those contractors aren’t even U.S. citizens. If drones have entered our world as media celebrities, they have done so largely without debate among that detached populace.  In a sense, our wars abroad could be thought of as the equivalent of so many drones.  We send our troops off and then go home for dinner and put them out of mind.  The question is: Have we redefined our detachment as a new version of citizenly valor (and covered it over by a constant drumbeat of “support for our troops”)? Under these circumstances, it’s hardly surprising that **a “pilotless” force should**, in turn, **develop** **the** sort of **contempt for civilians that** [**can be seen**](http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/17390/119236?RS_show_page=0) **in the** [recent flap](http://www.juancole.com/2010/06/obamas-macarthur-moment-mcchrystal-disses-biden.html) over the derogatory comments of **Afghan war** commander General Stanley McChrystal and his aides about Obama administration officials. The Globalization of Death Maybe what we need is the return of George W. Bush’s fever dream from the American oblivion in which it’s now interred.  He was beyond wrong, of course, when it came to Saddam Hussein and Iraqi drones, but he wasn’t completely wrong about the dystopian Drone World to come.  There are now reportedly more than [40 countries](http://www.nuvo.net/nuvo/indiana-connections-to-drone-warfare-technology/Content?oid=1343970) developing versions of those pilot-less planes.  Earlier this year, the Iranians [announced](http://www.sfexaminer.com/world/83787472.html) that they were starting up production lines for both armed and unarmed drones.  Hezbollah [used them](http://www.noahshachtman.com/blog/archives/2828.html) against Israel in the 2006 summer war, years after Israel began [pioneering](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/feb/21/new-israeli-drone-can-reach-iran/) their use in [targeted killings](http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2009/06/30/precisely-wrong-0) of Palestinians. **Right now**, in what still remains largely a post-Cold War arms race of one**, the U.S. is racing to produce ever more advanced drones to fight our wars, with few competitors in sight.** In the process, we’re also obliterating classic ideas of national sovereignty, and of who can be killed by whom under what circumstances.  **In the process, we may not just be obliterating enemies, but creating them wherever our drones buzz overhead** and our missiles strike. **We are also creating the (il)legal framework for future war on a frontier where we won’t long be flying solo.  And when the first Iranian, or Russian, or Chinese missile-armed drones start knocking off their chosen sets of "terrorists," we won’t like it one bit.**  When the first “suicide drones” appear, we’ll like it even less.  And if drones with the ability to spray chemical or biological weapons finally do make the scene, we’ll be truly unnerved. In the 1990s, we were said to be in an era of “globalization” which was widely hailed as good news.  Now, **the U.S. and its detached populace are pioneering a new era of killing that** respects no boundaries, relies on the self-definitions of whoever owns the nearest drone, and **establishes planetary free-fire zones.  It’s a nasty combination, this globalization of death**.

**In a world of proliferating drones every international crisis is likely to lead to war**

**Singer 09**

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Winter 2009 Robots at War: The New Battlefield

<http://www.wilsonquarterly.com/article.cfm?aid=1313>. D.a. 7-25-10

James **Der Derian** is an expert at Brown University on new modes of war. He **believes that** the combination of these factors means that **robotics will “lower the threshold for violence**.” The result is a dangerous mixture: leaders unchecked by a public veto now gone missing, combined with technologies that seem to offer spectacular results with few lives lost. It’s a brew that could prove very seductive to decision makers. “If one can argue that such new technologies will offer less harm to us and them, then **it is more likely that we’ll reach for them early, rather than spending weeks and months slogging at diplomacy.**”

**When faced with a** dispute or **crisis, policymakers have typically regarded the use of force as the “option of last resort.” Unmanned systems might now help that option move up the list, with each upward step making war more likely**. That returns us to Korb’s scenario of “more Kosovos, less Iraqs.”

While avoiding the mistakes of Iraq certainly sounds like a positive result, the other side of the tradeoff would not be without problems. The 1990s were not the halcyon days some recall. **Lowering the bar to allow for more unmanned strikes from afar would lead to** an approach resembling the “**cruise missile diplomacy**” of that period. Such a strategy may leave fewer troops stuck on the ground, but, as shown by the strikes against Al Qaeda camps in Sudan and Afghanistan in 1998, the Kosovo war in 1999, and perhaps now the drone strikes in Pakistan, it produces military action without any true sense of a commitment,lash-outs that yield incomplete victories at best. As one U.S. Army report notes, such operations “feel good for a time, but accomplish little.” They involve the country in a problem, but do not resolveit.

Even worse, Korb may be wrong, and the dynamic may yield not fewer Iraqs but more of them. It was the lure of an easy preemptive action that helped get the United States into such trouble in Iraq in the first place. As one robotics scientist says of the new technology he is building, “The military thinks that it will allow them to nip things in the bud, deal with the bad guys earlier and easier, rather than having to get into a big-ass war. But the most likely thing that will happen is that we’ll be throwing a bunch of high tech against the usual urban guerillas. . . . It will stem the tide [of U.S. casualties], but it won’t give us some asymmetric advantage.”

Thus, robots may entail a dark irony. **By appearing to lower the human costs of war, they may seduce us into more wars**.

Overreliance on technology undermines all military strategies and causes extinction via great power wars

**Henriksen ‘2k**

**[Thomas. Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford. Orbis, 2000. Ebsco//GBS-JV]**

Lord Acton's famous maxim about the corruptive influence of power is just as true with regard to "absolute" military force as it is with regard to power in the domestic political realm. He might even have added that **command of un-matched technological prowess can blind policymakers to lower-profile, lower-cost ways to achieve their nation's goals**. Some security problems can be solved with a sledgehammer or only with a sledgehammer. But **far more common are those foreign policy challenges that can be solved—or prevented altogether—by measures short of violent conflict, even where routine diplomatic instruments prove ineffective**. As the reigning superpower, the United States must not eschew forceful diplomacy or violence in extremis when its strategic interests are at stake. But Washington's current **overreliance on aerial bombardment** as the weapon of second (if not first) resort **diminishes America's prestige, sullies its espousal of a liberal-democratic new world order, and endangers its strategic relations with other major powers. Less-confrontational options can achieve U.S. goals without the harmful side effects that include a strained Western alliance and strained relations with China and Russia, not to mention civilian deaths and material destruction. That less-confrontational option is covert or indirect action abroad, and it offers** today, no less than during the Cold War, **an effective alternative to the unacceptable risks and costs of military operations**.

**Syria**

**Contention 2 is Syria:**

**The AUMF allows US involvement in Syria**

**McAuliff 6/17/13** (Michael, covers Congress and politics for The Huffington Post, “Obama War Powers Under 2001 Law 'Astoundingly Disturbing,' Senators Say”, Huffington Post, june 17, 2013, July 17, 2013, clarson clarson)

WASHINGTON -- **The war authorization that Congress passed after 9/11 will be needed for at least 10 to 20 more years, and can be used to put the United States military on the ground anywhere, from Syria to the Congo to Boston, military officials argued Thursday.**

**The revelations came during a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee and surprised even experts in America's use of force stemming from the terrorist attacks in 2001.**

**"This is the most astounding and most astoundingly disturbing hearing that I've been to since I've been here. You guys have essentially rewritten the Constitution today," Sen. Angus King (I-Maine) told four senior U.S. military officials who testified about the 2001 Authorization to Use Military Force and what it allows the White House to do.**

King and others were stunned by answers to specific questions about where President Barack Obama could use force [under the key provision of the AUMF](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/107/sjres23/text)-- a 60-word paragraph that targeted those responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

**"I learned more in this hearing about the scope of the AUMF than in all of my study in the last four or five years**," said Harvard Law professor Jack Goldsmith, who was called by the committee to offer independent comments on the issue. "I thought I knew what the application [of the AUMF] meant, but I'm less confident now," he added later.

**Concerns emerged largely from questions by senators who approve of an aggressive strategy to combat terrorism, including Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), who asked if the AUMF gave Obama the authority to put "boots on the ground" in Yemen or the Congo.**

**Robert Taylor, the acting general counsel for the Department of Defense said** **yes**, as long as the purpose was targeting a group associated with al Qaeda that intended to harm the United States or its coalition partners.

"Would you agree with me, the battlefield is anywhere the enemy chooses to make it?" asked Graham.

"Yes sir, from Boston to FATA [Pakistan's federally administered tribal areas]," answered Michael Sheehan, the assistant secretary of defense who oversees special operations.

**Sen. Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.) later raised the specter of the AUMF being used to intervene in Syria, where the group Al Nusra, believed to be affiliated with Al Qaeda, is active. Al Nusra has not been linked to 9/11.**

Sheehan said yes, if defense officials determined the group was becoming a threat. The same criteria applied to other groups, even if they were locally focused and operating in other nations. Taylor confirmed that AUMF also would cover individuals, even those who had not been born by 9/11, if, as Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) asked, they someday were to "become associated with a group that associates with Al Qaeda."

When asked about an expiration date for the war authorization, Sheehan said it would be when al Qaeda had been consigned to the "ash heap of history." "I think it's at least 10 to 20 years."

While none of the senators suggested dialing back efforts to stop terrorists, they were clearly disturbed at the power being asserted by the military.

"I'm just a little old lawyer from Brunswick, Maine, but I don't see how you can possibly read this to be in comport with the Constitution," King said, arguing that the defense officials' interpretation of the AUMF makes the war power of Congress "a nullity." "Under your reading, we've granted unbelievable powers to the president and it's a very dangerous precedent."

**Kaine found the suggestion that the AUMF could be used to go into Syria especially disturbing**. "**The testimony I hear today suggests the administration believes that they would have the authority to do that**," Kaine said. "But I don't want us to walk out of the room leaving an impression that members of Congress also share the understanding that that would be acceptable."

The DOD officials repeatedly defended the authority they've claimed, noting that al Qaeda is not a traditional enemy, and that it shifts locations and changes its tactics. The broad interpretation of the AUMF, they argued, gives them the flexibility to deal with the changing threat in a lawful, effective manner.

But even Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), who generally agrees with Graham in pursuing a vigorous war on terror, said the AUMF has been stretched past the breaking point.

"This authority ... has grown way out of proportion and is no longer applicable to the conditions that prevailed, that motivated the United States Congress to pass the authorization for the use of military force that we did in 2001," McCain said.

"For you to come here and say we don't need to change it or revise or update it, I think is, well, disturbing," McCain said, noting that the AUMF also is used to justify things like drone strikes that were never contemplated by Congress. "I don't blame you because basically you've got carte blanche as to what you are doing around the world."

No one suggested specific solutions, but did say the Senate will deal with the problem later this year when the committee takes on the National Defense Authorization Act for 2014.

The broad assertion of authority by the military is likely to disturb civil libertarians on the left and right who have complained that the AUMF and a previous version of the NDAA give the military power to indefinitely detain U.S. citizens. Obama has issued orders banning such practices, but DOD officials apparently believe the law grants them the power to act anywhere.

**Obama’s further involvement in Syria is inevitable and causes escalation. Only the plan can prevent this.**

**Gordon 7/15/13** (Evelyn, has worked as a journalist and commentator in Israel since 1990 for the Jerusalem Post and several other papers, “Is Obama Trying to Start Israel-Syria War?”, commentarymagazine.com, <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/2013/07/15/is-obama-trying-to-start-israel-syria-war/>, July 17, 2013, clarson clarson)

**Is the Obama administration trying to start a war between Israel and Syria? Because intentionally or not, it’s certainly doing its darnedest to provoke one**.

This weekend, three anonymous American officials [told](http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/US-officials-Israel-is-responsible-for-Syrian-missile-depot-attack-319688) CNN that Israel was behind an explosion in the Syrian port of Latakia on July 5. The explosion, they said, resulted from an airstrike targeting Russian-made Yakhont anti-ship missiles. If this report is true, this is the second time U.S. officials have blown Israel’s cover in Syria: They also told the media that a mysterious explosion in Syria this April was Israel’s work, even as Israel was scrupulously keeping mum–just as it did about the Latakia incident.

This isn’t a minor issue, as anyone who knows anything about the Middle East knows: In a region where preserving face is considered crucial, publicly humiliating Syrian President Bashar Assad is the surest way to make him feel he has no choice but to respond, even though war with Israel is the last thing he needs while embroiled in a civil war at home.

This truth was amply demonstrated in April, after three airstrikes attributed to Israel hit Syria within a few weeks. After the first two, Israel kept mum while Assad blamed the rebels; face was preserved, and everyone was happy. But then, the Obama administration [told](http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/scenario-the-night-israel-decides-to-attack-syria-again.premium-1.528959) the media that Israel was behind the second strike–and when the third strike hit two days later, Assad could no longer ignore it: He vociferously threatened retaliation should Israel dare strike again.

The Latakia attack also initially adhered to Israel’s time-tested method for avoiding retaliation: Israel kept mum, Assad blamed the rebels, face was preserved, and everyone was happy. But the Obama administration apparently couldn’t stand it–and a week later, it once again leaked claims of Israeli responsibility to the media.

At best, this means the administration simply didn’t understand the potential consequences, demonstrating an appalling ignorance of Middle East realities. A worse possibility is that it deliberately placed its own political advantage above the safety of Israeli citizens: **Facing increasing criticism for its inaction in Syria, but reluctant to significantly increase its own involvement and**[**unable**](http://www.jpost.com/International/White-House-plan-to-arm-Syrian-rebels-stalled-as-Congress-doubts-Obamas-strategy-319714)**even to secure congressional approval for the limited steps it has approved, perhaps it hoped revealing that at least an American ally was doing something would ease the political heat–even at the cost of provoking a Syrian retaliation that claims Israeli lives.**

The worst possibility of all, however, is that the administration knows exactly what it’s doing, and is deliberately trying to spark an Israeli-Syrian war as a way out of its own dilemma: It wants Assad gone, but doesn’t want to do the work itself. Starting an Israeli-Syrian war would force Israel to destroy Assad’s air force, thereby greatly increasing the chances of a rebel victory.

Whatever the truth, these leaks damage American as well as Israeli interests, because one of Washington’s consistent demands of its ally is that Israel not surprise it with military action. Hitherto, Israel has honored that request: Though it doesn’t seek America’s permission for action it deems essential, it does scrupulously provide advance notice. **But if Obama administration officials can’t be trusted to keep their mouths shut, Israel will have to rethink this policy: It can’t risk getting embroiled in a war with Syria just to ease Obama’s political problems.**

**Syrian intervention causes chemical weapon attacks, middle east instability, Iran prolif, and US- Russia proxy wars- all escalate to nuclear conflict**

**Strauss, 12** (Steve, Advanced leadership fellow Harvard University, “Ten Reasons We Should Be Cautious About Military Intervention in Syria“¨, 6-9-12, , http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steven-strauss/nine-reasons-we-should-be-cautious\_b\_1583732.html=

Reason 2: **Syria has one of the world's largest chemical weapons programs** (an estimated fifty storage and production facilities), and some of these facilities are in heavily populated areas. The U.S. Military has estimated that it could take 75,000 U.S. ground troops to secure all of Syria's chemical weapons **facilities. During the time it would take to secure these facilities, Assad could use these chemical weapons: against Israel** (to **trigger a regional war), against the mainland U.S., against Turkey**, against his own civilian population or that of other countries. In the confusion of regime change (even in the best scenario, there will be some breakdown in controls), **chemical weapons could fall into the hands of Hezbollah, Hamas, al Qaeda or other terrorist groups**. Or, an American air attack might strike a secret chemical weapons storage area, accidentally killing large numbers of people. Reason 3: **United States intervention in Syria will be viewed as occupation** -- not liberation, vastly complicating resolution of post-Assad issues. Obama's critics believe the Middle East wants U.S. intervention in Syria. **The United States isn't viewed favorably in the Arab world**. Opinion polls in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan show a consistently unfavorable view of our intervention in Iraq. If the United States intervenes in Syria, Assad will position himself as a Syrian nationalist fighting American-Zionist occupation (it worked for Saddam and his supporters). Reason 4: Syria is large, with a population at least three times the size of Libya. Libya is a small country (population 6.7 million); Syria's population is about 23 million, closer in size to Iraq. Reason 5: **Syria is a cauldron of sectarian communities**. Libya is 97 percent Sunni, but Syria's population (like Iraq's) is heterogeneous: Sunni Muslim 74 percent, other Muslim (including Alawite, Druze) 16 percent, and Christian (various denominations) 10 percent. **Intervention (such as, arming Syrian rebels) has a significant probability of igniting a sectarian conflict** (as we experienced in Iraq), with differing religious groups engaging in ethnic cleansing to create 'pure' neighborhoods (which happened in Baghdad). The **resulting civilian death toll could vastly exceed the current carnage.** Reason 6: **The Syrian military is well-armed and loyal to Assad.** Unlike Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya -- the Syrian military is trained and armed with modern weapons. Further, **Assad has been improving its capabilities** (this spring, Syria received a major new anti-aircraft system). The ruling Assad family is Alawite, and the military appears loyal to the regime (career military, 70% Alawite). A significant portion of Syria's population would remain loyal to Assad for fear of living under a Sunni-dominated government. Reason 7: Unlike Libya, **the Assad regime is receiving outside support. Assad already receives support from Iran and Russia. American intervention in Syria could trigger increased Iranian and Russian aid to Assad**. **The Iranian government would welcome trapping the United States in a proxy war in Syria, further draining our resources and distracting America from Iran's nuclear ambitions. Intervention in Syria could result in a prolonged** war. Reason 8: Assad's successors could be worse for Syria and the United States. Our intervention in Iraq left the Iraqis and the United States in worse shape. The new Iraqi government is not particularly friendly to the United States, is friendly with Iran, and 65percent of Iraqis believe conditions were better (or the same) under Saddam. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff emphasized, we know almost nothing about the Syrian rebels. Reason 9: **A civil war could spill over into the countries that border Syria: Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. Potentially, this could turn into a major regional war involving Iran.**

**Unstable states and Middle East war cause extinction**

James A. **Russell**, Senior Lecturer, National Security Affairs, Naval Postgraduate School**, ‘9** (Spring) “Strategic Stability Reconsidered: Prospects for Escalation and Nuclear War in the Middle East” IFRI, Proliferation Papers, #26, http://www.ifri.org/downloads/PP26\_Russell\_2009.pdf

**Strategic stability in the region is** thus **undermined by** various factors: (1) asymmetric interests in the bargaining framework that can introduce unpredictable behavior from actors; (2) **the presence of non-state actors that introduce unpredictability into relationships between the antagonists**; (3) **incompatible assumptions about** the structure of **the deterrent relationship that makes** the **bargaining** framework strategically **unstable;** (4) **perceptions by Israel and the United States that its window of opportunity** for military **action is closing, which could prompt a preventive attack**; (5) the prospect that Iran’s response to pre-emptive attacks could involve unconventional weapons, which could prompt escalation by Israel and/or the United States; (6) **the lack of a communications framework to build trust and cooperation among framework participants**. These systemic weaknesses in the coercive bargaining framework all suggest that escalation by any the parties could happen either on purpose or as a result of miscalculation or the pressures of wartime circumstance. Given these factors**, it is disturbinglyeasy to imagine scenarios under which a conflict could quickly escalate in which the regional antagonists would consider the use ofchemical, biological, or nuclear weapons**. **It would be a mistake to believe the nuclear taboo can somehow magically keep nuclear weapons from being usedin the context of an unstable strategic framework.Systemic asymmetries** between actors in fact s**uggest** a certain **increase** in **the probability of war** – a war in which escalation could happen quickly and from a variety of participants. **Once such a war starts, events would likely develop a momentum all their own** and decision-making would consequently be shaped in unpredictable ways. The international community must take this possibility seriously, and muster every tool at its disposal to prevent **such an outcom**e, which **would be an unprecedented disaster for the** peoples of the **region, with substantial risk for the entire world**.

**Iran prolif causes nuclear war**

Jeffrey **Goldberg, 2012**, Bloomberg View columnist and a national correspondent for the Atlantic, January 23, 2012, “How Iran Could Trigger Accidental Armageddon,” online: http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-01-24/how-iran-may-trigger-accidental-armageddon-commentary-by-jeffrey-goldberg.html

The **experts** who study this depressing issue seem to **agree** that **a Middle East in which Iran has** four or five **nuclear weapons would be** **dangerously unstable** **and prone to** **warp-speed escalation**.¶ Here’s one possible scenario for the not-so-distant future: Hezbollah, Iran’s Lebanese proxy, launches a cross-border attack into Israel, or kills a sizable number of Israeli civilians with conventional rockets. Israel responds by invading southern Lebanon, and promises, as it has in the past, to destroy Hezbollah. Iran, coming to the defense of its proxy, warns Israel to cease hostilities, and leaves open the question of what it will do if Israel refuses to heed its demand.¶ Dennis Ross, who until recently served as President Barack Obama’s Iran point man on the National Security Council, notes Hezbollah’s political importance to Tehran. “The only place to which the Iranian government successfully exported the revolution is to Hezbollah in Lebanon,” Ross told me. “If it looks as if the Israelis are going to destroy Hezbollah, you can see Iran threatening Israel, and they begin to change the readiness of their forces. This could set in motion a chain of events that would be like ‘Guns of August’ on steroids.”¶ Imagine that Israel detects a mobilization of Iran’s rocket force or the sudden movement of mobile missile launchers. Does Israel assume the Iranians are bluffing, or that they are not? And would Israel have time to figure this out? Or imagine the opposite: Might Iran, which will have no second-strike capability for many years -- that is, no reserve of nuclear weapons to respond with in an exchange -- feel compelled to attack Israel first, knowing that it has no second chance?¶ Bruce **Blair**, the co-founder of the nuclear disarmament group Global Zero and **an expert on nuclear strategy,** **told me** that **in a sudden crisis** **Iran and Israel might** each **abandon traditional peacetime safeguards**, **making an accidental exchange more likely**.¶ “**A confrontation** that brings the two nuclear-armed states to a boiling point **would** likely **lead them to raise the launch- readiness of their forces** -- mating warheads to delivery vehicles and preparing to fire on short notice,” he said. “**Missiles** put **on hair-trigger alert** also obviously **increase the danger of** their **launch** and release **on false warning** of attack -- false indications that the other side has initiated an attack.”¶ **Then comes the problem of misinterpreted data**, Blair said. “Intelligence failures in the midst of a nuclear crisis could readily lead to a false impression that the other side has decided to attack, and induce the other side to launch a preemptive strike.”¶ ‘Cognitive Bias’¶ Blair notes that **in a crisis it isn’t irrational to expect an attack,** and **this** expectation **makes it more likely** that **a leader will** **read the worst** into incomplete intelligence. “**This** predisposition **is a** **cognitive bias** **that increases the danger** that **one side will** **jump the gun** on the basis of incorrect information,” he said.¶ Ross told me that **Iran’s** relative **proximity to Israel and the** **total absence of ties** between the two countries -- the thought of Iran agreeing to maintain a hot line with a country whose existence it doesn’t recognize is far-fetched -- **make the situation** **even more hazardous.** “This is not the Cold War,” he said. “In this situation **we don’t have** **any communications channels**. Iran and Israel have zero communications. And even in the Cold War we nearly had a nuclear war. We were much closer than we realized.”¶ **The answer** to this predicament **is to** **deny Iran nuclear weapons**, but **not through an attack** on its nuclear facilities, at least not now. “The liabilities of preemptive attack on Iran’s nuclear program vastly outweigh the benefits,” Blair said. “But certainly Iran’s program must be stopped before it reaches fruition with a nuclear weapons delivery capability.”

**Russia war leads to a laundry list of impacts**

**Nyquist ‘6** [JR “Refusing to Face Reality.” [www.financialsense.com](http://www.financialsense.com). 2006//GBS-JV]

Behind Washington’s infighting there exists a deeper, more dangerous truth. The problem lies in the sociological realities of daily American life and the way Americans think, the way Americans evade reality, and the stubborn refusal of the world’s greatest power to adapt. **It doesn’t matter how far off the WMD threat actually is** (two years or ten years), **because** the final detonation will remake the world in the blinking of an eye. **The use of the weapon is inevitable**, and that is the point. America must be ready, though America resists making ready. In World War II the United States mobilized and everyone sacrificed for the nation’s future existence. But today one sees a government afraid to ask for sacrifices, and a people quick to grumble about the least security-related inconvenience. This speaks to a psychological unwillingness to take things as they are. Americans want to live comfortably in the face of eventual disaster, right up to the last moment. And this has a financial side, and a cultural side as well. In short, **we face an economic and social crisis that coincides with our national security** (WMD-proliferation) **crisis. The root cause of each crisis is the same**. No country can afford to bury its head in the sand; especially given the kind of disaster America’s enemies have in mind. Americans have not taken the threat seriously as a people. We are not saving our paper money  (perhaps sensing its ultimate worthlessness). We are cooperating in the economic expansion of the Chinese, treading guilty-like through Latin America’s turn to the revolutionary left. As a society the United States does not correct, let alone consider, the insanity of its own financial, international, and anti-nationalist policies. Considering the country’s march from a Christian agricultural society to a hedonistic shopping mall regime, there is no ground on which to hope for a non-catastrophic outcome. In terms of its command system regarding terrorist operations against the United States, al Qaeda seems to be led by Zawahiri instead of bin Laden. **We must not forget that a Russian intelligence defector has fingered Zawahiri as a longtime agent of Moscow. What is being planned and who is nudging the plan is something the American side fails to consider**. I don’t think we know the full story because the intelligence services of the Western countries are unable to see through the thick haze of their own conceits. Of course, there are those with killer instincts on the American side, and we would do well to heed the darker suggestion of [Vice President Cheney’s](http://www.breitbart.com/news/2006/06/19/D8IBFKU05.html) recent statement that**the biggest threat** now “**is the possibility of an al Qaeda cell armed with a nuclear weapon or a biological agent**in the middle of one of our own cities.” Al Qaeda’s plan is to bring down the United States. Whoever is with al Qaeda, or behind al Qaeda, shares this objective. The idea is to wreck the U.S. economy, break up its military potential and leave it for the dogs. It must be emphasized that Islamic fanatics aren’t the only people on the planet who hate Americans and cheer the thought of America’s destruction.**I receive emails every week from people who dream of America’s defeat.** If these sentiments are the least indication, **imagine** the private sentiments of North Korean or Chinese or **Russian leaders – who already possess untold numbers of WMDs**.

**Extinction – Fastest timeframe**

**Helfand and Pastore ‘9** [John, Ira – Physicians for Social Responsibility. ”US-Russia Nuclear War is Still a Threat” [www.projo.com](http://www.projo.com), 3/31/9 //GBS-JV]

President Obama and Russian President Dimitri Medvedev are scheduled to Wednesday in London during the G-20 summit. They must not let the current economic crisis keep them from focusing on one of the greatest threats confronting humanity: the danger of nuclear war. Since the end of the Cold War, many have acted as though the danger of nuclear war has ended. It has not. There remain in the world more than 20,000 nuclear weapons. Alarmingly, more than **2,000 of these weapons in the U.S. and Russian arsenals remain on** ready-alert status, commonly known as **hair-trigger alert.** They can be fired within five minutes and reach targets in the other country 30 minutes later**. Just one of these weapons can destroy a city**. A war involving a substantial number would cause devastation on a scale unprecedented in human history. A study conducted by Physicians for Social Responsibility in 2002 showed that **if only 500 of the Russian weapons on high alert exploded over our cities, 100 million Americans would die in the first 30 minutes**. **An attack of this magnitude also would destroy the entire economic, communications and transportation infrastructure on which we all depend**. Those who survived the initial attack would inhabit a nightmare landscape with huge swaths of the country blanketed with radioactive fallout and epidemic diseases rampant. They would have no food, no fuel, no electricity, no medicine, and certainly no organized health care. In the following months it is likely the vast majority of the U.S. population would die. Recent studies by the eminent climatologists Toon and Robock have shown that such a war would have a huge and immediate impact on climate world wide. If all of the warheads in the U.S. and Russian strategic arsenals were drawn into the conflict, the firestorms they caused would loft 180 million tons of soot and debris into the upper atmosphere — blotting out the sun. **Temperatures across the globe would fall an average of 18 degrees Fahrenheit to levels not seen on earth since the depth of the last ice age**, 18,000 years ago. **Agriculture would stop, eco-systems would collapse, and many species, including perhaps our own, would become extinct**. It is common to discuss nuclear war as a low-probabillity event. But is this true? We know of five occcasions during the last 30 years when either the U.S. or Russia believed it was under attack and prepared a counter-attack. The most recent of these near misses occurred after the end of the Cold War on Jan. 25, 1995, when the Russians mistook a U.S. weather rocket launched from Norway for a possible attack. Jan. 25, 1995, was an ordinary day with no major crisis involving the U.S. and Russia. But, unknown to almost every inhabitant on the planet, a misunderstanding led to the potential for a nuclear war. The ready alert status of nuclear weapons that existed in 1995 remains in place today.

**Russia war is the most probable**

**Umland ‘9** [Andreas. Russia Prof – Shevchenko. “The Unpopular Prospect of WWIII – The 20th Century is not Over Yet” **History News Network**, 17 Jan 09 //GBS-JV]

That is because **the darkness of a future scenario that one comes to regard as possible should be no hindrance for its full assessment and public outline**. Arguably, one of the reasons that societies afford themselves the employment of social scientists at universities and research institutes is the provision of information and interpretation that goes beyond what journalists, publicists or politicians – often, more dependent on current mainstream opinion and reigning political correctness than academics – may be able to say or write. **A plain extrapolation of recent political developments in Russia into the future should lead one to regard outright war with NATO as a** still improbable, yet again **possible scenario. It is not unlikely that Russian public discourse will**, during the coming years, **continue to move in the same direction in, and with the same speed with, which it has been evolving** since 2000. **What is, in this case, in store for the world is not only a new “cold,” but also the possibility of a “hot” and, perhaps even, nuclear war.** This assessment sounds not only apocalyptic, but also “unmodern,” if not anachronistic. Aren’t the real challenges of the 21st century global warming, financial regulation, the North-South divide, international migration etc.? Isn’t that enough to worry about, and should we distract ourselves from solving these real problems? Hasn’t the age of the East-West confrontation been over for several years now? Do we really want to go back to the nightmarish visions of the horrible 20th century? **A sober look on Russia advises that we better do: Carefulness may decrease the probability that a worst-case scenario ever materializes.**

**No turns- US involvement in Syria won’t solve anything**

Fisher 6/17, Max, the Post's foreign affairs blogger. He has a master's degree in security studies from Johns Hopkins, “Fareed Zakaria’s case against U.S. involvement in Syria” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/06/17/fareed-zakarias-case-against-u-s-involvement-in-syria/>, June 17, 2013, clarson clarson)

About two weeks ago, Washington Post columnist and CNN anchor Fareed Zakaria[recorded a video](http://dish.andrewsullivan.com/2013/06/07/ask-fareed-zakaria-anything-stay-out-of-syria/) for **blogger Andrew Sullivan explaining why he believes the United States is right to practice “strategic restraint” on Syria; to not get involved**. Now, as the Obama administration says it will respond to Syria’s use of chemical weapons by providing some arms to rebels, but not by intervening, the video is especially worth watching.

**In sum, his argument is that the Syrian war will either be like Lebanon’s civil war, from 1975 to 1990, or Iraq’s, from 2003 up until who knows when. Neither choice is anywhere near a good one**, he says, but the latter model is preferable for the United States. **“The idea that we could prevent all these terrible things from happening in Syria is belied by the fact we intervened in Iraq, and all those things happened anyway**,” he says. **“Why did they happen? Because it’s a bloody civil war, competition is fierce, the losers in these civil wars know that they’re going to get massacred so they fight to the end.”**

Zakaria begins with colonialism, which divided the Middle East along ahistorical lines, establishing Syria and other Middle Eastern countries as we know them today. Those somewhat artificial national borders, along with their dictatorial regimes, left the countries precariously balanced between competing religious and/or ethnic groups. In some cases – he cites Lebanon, Syria and Iraq – that left minorities ruling over everyone else. When those countries collapse into war, the conflict becomes a very bloody process by which that society rebalances itself toward majority rule.

**He compares Syria’s war to the 15-year civil war in Lebanon and the war that erupted in Iraq after the U.S.-led invasion toppled Saddam Hussein. In both cases, the wars were as much about vicious competition between sectarian groups as they were about the decisions of military and political leaders. In both cases, power ended up shifting from minority to majority sects. In both cases, civilians were massacred, and minorities suffered terribly. The difference, perhaps, is that the United States took heavy losses in Iraq but stayed out of Lebanon.**

**His case, then, is that Syria’s war is not something that the United Stated can stop or alter.** Zakaria has no illusions about the pain and terror of Lebanon’s civil war but says that the United States was right not to involve itself. (He also points out that Reagan’s decision to bow out in 1984 did not exactly destroy American credibility in the region.) He points to the war in Iraq; **even though the United States toppled Iraq’s minority dictator and quickly moved power over to a government that represented the broader population, that did not prevent hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths, the formation of many civilian militias that did terrible things and the infiltration by al-Qaeda and affiliated groups. In this thinking, intervening in Syria will not stop the war’s violence, which is after all more about competing sects than it is about the decisions of one leader.**

Wars are difficult to predict, though, and one might reasonably disagree with Zakaria. The world of 2013 is very different from that of 1984, when the Reagan administration withdrew from Lebanon; international Islamist terrorist groups did not have the strength or reach they have today, thanks to technology and other factors. An Islamist extremist victory in Syria might well be more likely than it was in Lebanon 30 years ago; the potential ramifications for the United States might also be more severe.

Also, Zakaria’s argument makes the most sense if he limits his comparisons to other sectarian conflicts in the post-colonial Middle East. Those are for sure the most apt comparisons, but there aren’t very many of them; such a limited data set makes it tough to argue with total certainty how the war will turn out. Why not compare it to, for example, the war in Kosovo, where a U.S.-led intervention helped to [halt much of the sectarian bloodshed](http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2013/0107/To-deter-extremists-in-Syria-Obama-must-heed-lessons-of-Kosovo-intervention) before it reached Lebanese extremes and gave the now-independent country space to establish what appears to be a much stabler society. There’s also Cyprus; with peace-keepers dividing Turkish and Greek communities for now 30 years, it’s hardly a success story, but the United Nations intervention did halt what could otherwise have been a horrific sectarian civil war and allowed for relative peace.

Whether you agree with Zakaria’s position or not, it’s good to at least bring some history into the discussion.

**Thus the plan: The United States Federal Government should repeal the Authorization to Use Military Force against terrorism. We reserve the right to clarify our intent.**

**Solvency**

Contention 3 is Solvency

**The ethical commitment of the plan would constrain weaponization of drones**

**McGrath 10**

 LIEUTENANT COLONEL SHAUN R. MCGRATH United States Air Force

 STRATEGIC MISSTEP: “IMMORTAL” ROBOTIC WARFARE, INVITING COMBAT TO SUBURBAN AMERICA March 18, 2010 <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA521822&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf> d.a. 7-27-10

The concept of “at risk” must be weighed now and with future warfare advances. While not advocating the U.S. secede its overwhelming advantage in the field of battle, knowingly expanding the battlefield to U.S. soil transfers an additional enduring risk to the civilian populace similar to nuclear warfare retaliation and is unacceptable. The U.S. Air Force also advocates evaluating strategic risks before moving forward, “**Ethical discussions and policy decisions must take place in the near term in order to guide the development of future UAS capabilities, rather than allowing the development to take its own path apart from this critical guidance.**”113 Unfortunately those words were not put into a doctrinal document until less than a year ago…over seven years after the first time death was delivered from nearly 7,500 miles away. **To retain** true world superpower **legitimacy, the U.S. must lead the effort to limit the use of “distant warfare” and lead meaningful legal, moral, and ethical debates. The world is watching to follow the lead of the U.S. as robotic warfare rapidly advances forward.** Hopefully the guiding voice of General Robert E. Lee who witnessed great death on the battlefield is heard, “It is good that we find war so horrible, or else we would become found of it.”114

**Obama has a specific plan ready for the release of those detained at Guantanamo**

**Hirschkorn 5/23**/13 [Phil, CBS News, “Obama announces steps toward Guantanamo closure”, <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250_162-57585978/obama-announces-steps-toward-guantanamo-closure/>, JCook.] Accessed 5/24/13.

President **Obama outlined specific actions he plans to take to reduce the prisoner population at the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and move it toward closure,** a goal stated in his 2008 campaign, when he took office in 2009, and in a news conference three weeks ago.¶ **In a comprehensive counterterrorism speech** Thursday at the National Defense University at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C., Mr. Obama said, "**There is no justification beyond politics for Congress to prevent us from closing a facility that should never have been opened**."¶ At this point in his remarks, the audience applauded audibly, and the president was interrupted by a heckler demanding the closure of Guantanamo "today."¶ On Guantanamo, **the president pledged he would:**¶ **Call on Congress to lift restrictions on detainee transfers.**¶ **Appoint new envoys at both the State and Defense Departments to work on detainee transfers.**¶ **Lift a moratorium he imposed three years ago on detainee transfers to Yemen**, where a majority of the remaining Guantanamo detainees are from.¶ Ask the Defense Department to identify a location on the U.S. mainland where military commissions that substitute for federal trials in the island could he held.