## Case 2AC - WOT

Terrorism causes extinction---hard-line responses are key

Nathan Myhrvold '13, Phd in theoretical and mathematical physics from Princeton, and founded Intellectual Ventures after retiring as chief strategist and chief technology officer of Microsoft Corporation , July 2013, "Stratgic Terrorism: A Call to Action," The Lawfare Research Paper Series No.2, <http://www.lawfareblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Strategic-Terrorism-Myhrvold-7-3-2013.pdf>

Several powerful trends have aligned to profoundly change the way that the world works. Technology ¶ now allows stateless groups to organize, recruit, and fund ¶ themselves in an unprecedented fashion. That, coupled ¶ with the extreme difficulty of finding and punishing a stateless group, means that stateless groups are positioned to be ¶ lead players on the world stage. They may act on their own, ¶ or they may act as proxies for nation-states that wish to ¶ duck responsibility. Either way, stateless groups are forces ¶ to be reckoned with.¶ At the same time, a different set of technology trends ¶ means that small numbers of people can obtain incredibly ¶ lethal power. Now, for the first time in human history, a ¶ small group can be as lethal as the largest superpower. Such ¶ a group could execute an attack that could kill millions of ¶ people. It is technically feasible for such a group to kill billions of people, to end modern civilization—perhaps even ¶ to drive the human race to extinction. Our defense establishment was shaped over decades to ¶ address what was, for a long time, the only strategic threat ¶ our nation faced: Soviet or Chinese missiles. More recently, ¶ it has started retooling to address tactical terror attacks like ¶ those launched on the morning of 9/11, but the reform ¶ process is incomplete and inconsistent. A real defense will ¶ require rebuilding our **military and intelligence capabilities** from the ground up. Yet, so far, strategic terrorism has ¶ received relatively little attention in defense agencies, and ¶ the efforts that have been launched to combat this existential threat seem fragmented.¶ History suggests what will happen. The only thing that shakes America out of complacency is a direct threat from a determined adversary that confronts us with our shortcomings by **repeatedly attacking** us or hectoring **us for decades**.

Risk of nuclear terrorism is real and high now

Matthew, et al, 10/2/13

 [ Bunn, Matthew, Valentin Kuznetsov, Martin B. Malin, Yuri Morozov, Simon Saradzhyan, William H. Tobey, Viktor I. Yesin, and Pavel S. Zolotarev. "Steps to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism." Paper, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, October 2, 2013, Matthew Bunn. Professor of the Practice of Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School andCo-Principal Investigator of Project on Managing the Atom at Harvard University’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. • Vice Admiral Valentin Kuznetsov (retired Russian Navy). Senior research fellow at the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Senior Military Representative of the Russian Ministry of Defense to NATO from 2002 to 2008. • Martin Malin. Executive Director of the Project on Managing the Atom at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. • Colonel Yuri Morozov (retired Russian Armed Forces). Professor of the Russian Academy of Military Sciences and senior research fellow at the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, chief of department at the Center for Military-Strategic Studies at the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces from 1995 to 2000. • Simon Saradzhyan. Fellow at Harvard University’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Moscow-based defense and security expert and writer from 1993 to 2008. • William Tobey. Senior fellow at Harvard University’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and director of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism, deputy administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation at the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration from 2006 to 2009. • Colonel General Viktor Yesin (retired Russian Armed Forces). Leading research fellow at the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences and advisor to commander of the Strategic Missile Forces of Russia, chief of staff of the Strategic Missile Forces from 1994 to 1996. • Major General Pavel Zolotarev (retired Russian Armed Forces). Deputy director of the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, head of the Information and Analysis Center of the Russian Ministry of Defense from1993 to 1997, section head - deputy chief of staff of the Defense Council of Russia from 1997 to 1998.<http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/23430/steps_to_prevent_nuclear_terrorism.html>]

I. Introduction In 2011, Harvard’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and the Russian Academy of Sciences’ Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies published “The U.S. – Russia Joint Threat Assessment on Nuclear Terrorism.” The assessment analyzed the means, motives, and access of would-be nuclear terrorists, and concluded that the threat of nuclear terrorism is urgent and real. The Washington and Seoul Nuclear Security Summits in 2010 and 2012 established and demonstrated a consensus among political leaders from around the world that nuclear terrorism poses a serious threat to the peace, security, and prosperity of our planet. For any country, a terrorist attack with a nuclear device would be an immediate and catastrophic disaster, and the negative effects would reverberate around the world far beyond the location and moment of the detonation. Preventing a nuclear terrorist attack requires international cooperation to secure nuclear materials, especially among those states producing nuclear materials and weapons. As the world’s two greatest nuclear powers, the United States and Russia have the greatest experience and capabilities in securing nuclear materials and plants and, therefore, share a special responsibility to lead international efforts to prevent terrorists from seizing such materials and plants. The depth of convergence between U.S. and Russian vital national interests on the issue of nuclear security is best illustrated by the fact that bilateral cooperation on this issue has continued uninterrupted for more than two decades, even when relations between the two countries occasionally became frosty, as in the aftermath of the August 2008 war in Georgia. Russia and the United States have strong incentives to forge a close and trusting partnership to prevent nuclear terrorism and have made enormous progress in securing fissile material both at home and in partnership with other countries. However, to meet the evolving threat posed by those individuals intent upon using nuclear weapons for terrorist purposes, the United States and Russia need to deepen and broaden their cooperation. The 2011 “U.S. - Russia Joint Threat Assessment” offered both specific conclusions about the nature of the threat and general observations about how it might be addressed. This report builds on that foundation and analyzes the existing framework for action, cites gaps and deficiencies, and makes specific recommendations for improvement. “The U.S. – Russia Joint Threat Assessment on Nuclear Terrorism” (The 2011 report executive summary): • Nuclear terrorism is a real and urgent threat. Urgent actions are required to reduce the risk. The risk is driven by the rise of terrorists who seek to inflict unlimited damage, many of whom have sought justification for their plans in **radical interpretations of Islam;** by the spread of information about the decades-old technology of nuclear weapons; by the increased availability of weapons-usable nuclear materials; and by globalization, which makes it easier to move people, technologies, and materials across the world. • Making a crude nuclear bomb would not be easy, but is potentially within the capabilities of a technically sophisticated terrorist group, as numerous government studies have confirmed

. Detonating a stolen nuclear weapon would likely be difficult for terrorists to accomplish, if the weapon was equipped with modern technical safeguards (such as the electronic locks known as Permissive Action Links, or PALs). Terrorists could, however, cut open a stolen nuclear weapon and make use of its nuclear material for a bomb of their own. • The nuclear material for a bomb is small and difficult to detect, making it a major challenge to stop nuclear smuggling or to recover nuclear material after it has been stolen. Hence, a primary focus in reducing the risk must be to keep nuclear material and nuclear weapons from being stolen by continually improving their security, as agreed at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April 2010. • Al-Qaeda has sought nuclear weapons for almost two decades. The group has repeatedly attempted to purchase stolen nuclear material or nuclear weapons, and has repeatedly attempted to recruit nuclear expertise. Al-Qaeda reportedly conducted tests of conventional explosives for its nuclear program in the desert in Afghanistan. The group’s nuclear ambitions continued after its dispersal following the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Recent writings from top al-Qaeda leadership are focused on justifying the mass slaughter of civilians, including the use of weapons of mass destruction, and are in all likelihood intended to provide a formal religious justification for nuclear use. While there are significant gaps in coverage of the group’s activities, al-Qaeda appears to have been frustrated thus far in acquiring a nuclear capability; it is unclear whether the the group has acquired weapons-usable nuclear material or the expertise needed to make such material into a bomb. Furthermore, pressure from a broad range of counter-terrorist actions probably has reduced the group’s ability to manage large, complex projects, but has not eliminated the danger. However, there is no sign the group has abandoned its nuclear ambitions. On the contrary, leadership statements as recently as 2008 indicate that the intention to acquire and use nuclear weapons is as strong as ever.

AQAP largest threat to US interests now

Coker, 8/3

[Margaret, Wall Street Journal, “Al Qaeda's Most Dangerous Affiliate”, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323997004578644172830824586.html>, BJM]

Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula officially came into being in January 2009, as a merger between branches of the organization based in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, after a yearslong counterterrorism battle by Saudi security to stamp out the organization that was responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorism attacks in the U.S.¶ Since then, U.S. and regional intelligence officials have considered the group the greatest terrorist threat to the U.S. due to its success in advancing bomb technology that has come close several times to evading Western counterterrorism and airport surveillance measures.¶ Yemenis have long played a key role in the formation and expansion of the al Qaeda franchise Osama bin Laden's ancestral home is in southeast Yemen and dozens of fighters from this small Arabian Peninsula country, as well as Saudi Arabia, went with him to fight in Afghanistan and then launch a global jihad against the U.S. as well as their governments back home.

## Case 2AC – Deference

#### Deference kills pres-powers in the long term.

**Margulies 2009**

[Peter, Professor of Law, Roger Williams University, THE WAGES OF PLAYING FOR TIME:¶ AVOIDANCE DOCTRINES AND INTERPRETIVE¶ METHOD IN NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS CASES]

The response to advocates of presidential power accepts their general thesis on the advantages of presidential action, but queries whether deference best preserves the president’s discretion over the long term. Although some advocates for deference acknowledge that the executive can act in haste, they view judicial intervention as a cure worse than the disease.341 Moreover, the most sophisticated presidential power advocates, who argue that emergency powers usually have no long-term impact on rights,342 discount the tendency of moral hazard to produce volatility in the form of a backlash against executive excesses. The presidential power advocates argue descriptively for a cycling thesis in which courts and public opinion curb emergency powers once the occasion for the emergency fades, thereby leading to new threats that eventually produce renewed deference.343 However, the presidential power advocates fail to consider whether moral hazard encourages a greater than optimal level of executive overreaching, thereby leading to cycling of greater than optimal amplitude. If the executive felt somewhat greater constraints from courts ab initio, overreaching might decrease along with unnecessary volatility. The result might be a higher overall level of both liberty and security.

Legitimacy’s the fundamental internal link to effective hegemony---power distributions perceived as illegitimate are the most likely causes of great power war

Martha Finnemore 9, professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University, January 2009, “Legitimacy, Hypocrisy, and the Social Structure of Unipolarity: Why Being a Unipole Isn’t All It’s Cracked Up to Be,” World Politics, Volume 61, Number 1

Legitimacy is, by its nature, a social and relational phenomenon. One’s position or power cannot be legitimate in a vacuum. The concept only has meaning in a particular social context. Actors, even unipoles, cannot create legitimacy unilaterally. Legitimacy can only be given by others. It is conferred either by peers, as when great powers accept or reject the actions of another power, or by those upon whom power is exercised. Reasons to confer legitimacy have varied throughout history. Tradition, blood, and claims of divine right have all provided reasons to confer legitimacy, although in contemporary politics conformity with [End Page 61] international norms and law is more influential in determining which actors and actions will be accepted as legitimate. 9¶ Recognizing the legitimacy of power does not mean these others necessarily like the powerful or their policies, but it implies at least tacit acceptance of the social structure in which power is exercised. One may not like the inequalities of global capitalism but still believe that markets are the only realistic or likely way to organize successful economic growth. One may not like the P5 vetoes of the Security Council but still understand that the United Nations cannot exist without this concession to power asymmetries. We can see the importance of legitimacy by thinking about its absence. Active rejection of social structures and the withdrawal of recognition of their legitimacy create a crisis. In domestic politics, regimes suffering legitimacy crises face resistance, whether passive or active and armed. Internationally, systems suffering legitimacy crises tend to be violent and noncooperative. Post-Reformation Europe might be an example of such a system. Without at least tacit acceptance of power’s legitimacy, the wheels of international social life get derailed. Material force alone remains to impose order, and order creation or maintenance by that means is difficult, even under unipolarity. Successful and stable orders require the grease of some legitimation structure to persist and prosper.10¶ The social and relational character of legitimacy thus strongly colors the nature of any unipolar order and the kinds of orders a unipole can construct. Yes, unipoles can impose their will, but only to an extent

. The willingness of others to recognize the legitimacy of a unipole’s actions and defer to its wishes or judgment shapes the character of the order that will emerge. Unipolar power without any underlying legitimacy will have a very particular character. The unipole’s policies will meet with resistance, either active or passive, at every turn. Cooperation will be induced only through material quid pro quo payoffs. Trust will be thin to nonexistent. This is obviously an expensive system to run and few unipoles have tried to do so.

## T- Restriction 2AC

#### 1. W/M – We limit the president’s authority to determine those responsible for 9/11 in the AUMF.

Bradley & Goldsmith 2005

[- Curtis & - Jack, Professors at University of Virginia and Harvard Law Schools Respectively, CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION AND THE

WAR ON TERRORISM, Harvard Law Review, Volume 118, May 2005]

The AUMF is arguably more restrictive in one respect, and argua-bly broader in another respect, than authorizations in declared wars. It is arguably more restrictive to the extent that it requires the Presi-dent to report to Congress on the status of hostilities. This difference from authorizations in declared wars, however, does not purport to af-fect the military authority that Congress has conferred on the Presi-dent. The AUMF is arguably broader than authorizations in declared wars in its description of the enemy against which force can be used. The AUMF authorizes the President to use force against those “na-tions, organizations, or persons he determines” have the requisite nexus with the September 11 attacks. This provision contrasts with authori-zations in declared wars in two related ways. First, it describes rather than names the enemies that are the objects of the use of force.144 Second, it expressly authorizes the President to determine which “nations, organizations, or persons” satisfy the statutory criteria for enemy status.145 One could argue that the effect of the “he determines” provision is to give the President broad, and possibly unreviewable, discretion to apply the nexus requirement to identify the covered enemy — at least to the extent that his determination does not implicate constitutional rights.146 Even if this argument is correct, this provision probably adds little to the President’s already-broad authority to de-termine the existence of facts related to the exercise of his authority under the AUMF.147

**Legal scholars agree it’s the most restrictive approach**

**Chesney, Goldsmith, Waxman, & Wittes, 2013**

[Robert, Professor in Law at The University of Texas School of Law, Jack, Henry L. Shattuck Professor of Law at Harvard University, Matthew, professor of law at Columbia Law School and an adjunct senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, & Benjamin, Senior fellow in governance studies at the Brookings Institution and codirector of the Harvard Law School–Brookings Project on Law and Security, “A Statutory Framework¶ for¶ Next-Generation¶ Terrorist¶ Threats”, Hoover Institution, Taskforce on National Security & Law, Stanford University, <http://media.hoover.org/sites/default/files/documents/Statutory-Framework-for-Next-Generation-Terrorist-Threats.pdf>, BJM]

Congress could instead authorize the president to use force against specified¶ terrorist groups and/or in specified countries or geographic areas. This would¶ resemble the more traditional approach by which Congress authorizes force¶ against state adversaries or for particular operations within foreign countries.¶ Recent news reports have suggested that some in the administration and the¶ military are deliberating about whether to ask Congress for just such a statute to¶ address Islamist terrorist threats in some North African countries.8 This “retail”¶ approach—in contrast to the “wholesale” approach laid out in the previous¶ section—is the one that, among our three options, most restricts presidential¶ discretion.

## Pacifism K – 2AC

**Criticizing US imperialism focuses only on the bad – undermining U.S faith in its operations**

**Hanson 3** (Victor Davis, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Professor Emeritus at California University, Fresno, Ph.D. from Stanford, “Loyalty, How Quaint.” National Review Online. Novem.ber 24. http://www.victorhanson.com/articles/hanson112403v55iss.html)

Critical to this cynicism is the reductio ad absurdum, where the extreme and rare case is cited first, not last-and as the primary, not the last-resort, reason to deprecate loyalty: "How can I support a country that promotes racism? A military that bombs children? A president that was not really elected?" And when deliberately targeting civilians in a time of peace is simplistically equated to injuring civilians while bombing enemy soldiers during war-death being the common denominator that trumps all considerations of circumstance, chance, intent, and result-**how can I pledge my support to America** in Afghanistan? The relativist further proclaims "Not in my name" to armed defense, but still expects that same government to ensure that hijacked airliners do not vaporize him at work. Yet loyalty demands confidence in some ability of the state to determine right and wrong, which is then the fountainhead for requisite action under difficult circumstances. It is always easier to slur unabashed loyalists as unthinking Neanderthals (conjuring up Vietnam-era slogans like "My country right or wrong") than to identify those who are sophisticated and disloyal as simple traitors.

Historical revision has done its part as well in destroying the old virtue of national loyalty,. If we teach our youth that World War II was mostly the Japanese internment camps (never mentioning the context of a liberal governor and president, hand-in-glove, panicking amid wartime hysteria) and Hiroshima (always apart from the fear of a blood-bath when hitting the shores of the Japanese mainland)-while ignoring the Rape of Nanking, Guadalcanal, or MacArthur's postbellum creation of a liberal Japanese society-then how can the citizen look to the past to galvanize his confidence in the present?

Yet to the classical mind it was never a question of whether an Athenian or Roman was free from error. Rather the only rub was whether his country was at least better than the alternative. For example, how often do American schools really discuss the debate over women's rights or integrating the military after World War II in the context of how much worse the world outside the United States was at the time? Do we remind our students of the horrendous and bloody landscape between 1930 and 1950 beyond our shores-the mass murdering of races and religions in fascist Europe and Japan, the millions butchered in the Soviet Union and China, the tribal butchery and mayhem in Africa and India, and the iron-clad rule of dictators in Latin America? If one is taught, instead, that the United States has been the prime historical nexus of gender, race, and class pathology, then why should one feel any loyalty to it in the here and now?

Finally, the most recent manifestation of internationalism has done its part to contribute to the demise of loyalty and patriotism. This idea of being a citizen not of the United States but "of the world" is, of course, age-old in the West-a common enough, even trite, line from Socrates to Kant. But recent developments have elevated the concept from philosophical speculation to a common tenet of our growing therapeutic culture, as unquestioned as UNICEF cards, Nobel Peace Prize-winning opportunists, and cuddly banalities from a Kofi Annan.

**Non-violent resistance fails – it’s too slow acting and only works under extremely specific circumstances – violence can solve these short-falls**

**Futterman** **95** (J.A.H., Researcher at Lawrence Libermore Lab, Obscenity and Peace : Mediations on the Bomb http://www.dogchurch.org/scriptorium/nuke.html AFM)

[[4]](http://www.dogchurch.org/scriptorium/nuke.html#b4) Gandhi's non-violence did not preclude his organizing an Indian Ambulance Corps to assist the British in the Boer War -- non-violence and pacifism are not necessarily identical.

Non-violence can amount to a kind of self-righteous passivity.

In other words, non-violence resistance alone would have been very slow to work against the Nazis, once they had consolidated their power. And while it slowly ground away at the evil in the Nazi soul, how many millions more would have died, and how much extra time would have been given to Nazi scientists trying to invent atomic bombs to go on those V-2 rockets? The evil of Nazism may well have expended itself, but perhaps after a real "thousand-year Reich," leaving a world populated only by blue-eyed blondes. In other words, if the world had used non-violence alone against the Nazis, the results may have been much worse those of the war.[[6]](http://www.dogchurch.org/scriptorium/nuke.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22%5B6%5D)

[[6]](http://www.dogchurch.org/scriptorium/nuke.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22b6) Perhaps Gandhi himself sensed something like this. Whatever the motives of this complex man, he refrained from demanding that Indians refuse to fight in WW II

. That said, non-violent confrontation may have worked against the Nazis if it had been used by the bulk of the German people before the Nazis had consolidated their power and diminished the possibility of such collective action. Even then there were at least three successful, but limited, instances of non-violent resistance in Germany itself -- protests by Catholics against the substitution of swastikas for crucifixes in local schools, protests by "Aryan" wives against the deportation of their Jewish husbands, and protests against the euthanasia of the "unfit." (See Nathan Stolzfus, "Dissent in Nazi Germany," *The Atlantic*, September 1992.) As I said earlier, the "right" people must use non-violence against the "right" opponent at the "right" time. In the case of the Nazis, the "right" people sold out to them, leaving war as the best alternative for the rest of the world. In fact, the need to preserve unity in support of the war effort was cited by Nazi officials as the principal reason for giving in to these protests.

[[7]](http://www.dogchurch.org/scriptorium/nuke.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22b7) A further exploration of the need for forceful confrontation in another context is given by Kenneth Haugck in *Antagonists in the Church*, Augsburg Publishing, Minneapolis, 1988. The subtitle is "How to identify and deal with destructive conflict." While Haugck does not advocate physical violence, he is dealing with churches rather than international relations. In international relations the use of Haugk's moral confrontation is sometimes meaningless unless backed up by a willingness to use force.

Even when non-violence does succeed, it does so by rallying the majority of the population toward whom it is directed to stop the direct perpetrators of injustice by force -- the force of law in the form of the police, the prisons, and the polls -- force that necessarily includes the threat of violence. In other words, non-violent resistance harnesses (or co-opts), rather than eliminates violence.

In fact, non-violence is sometimes even helped by the threat of violence to achieve its objectives. The non-violence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was complemented by the willingness to use "any means necessary" of Malcolm X. These two men were sending white America the same message concerning justice and racial equality. If whites failed to respond to the message stated gently, whites would be given the opportunity to respond to it stated violently. It took both statements to achieve the progress made thus far.

Zero risk of their impact---instrumental knowledge production doesn’t cause violence and discursive criticism could never solve it anyway

Ken Hirschkop 7, Professor of English and Rhetoric at the University of Waterloo, July 25, 2007, “On Being Difficult,” Electronic Book Review, online: <http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/criticalecologies/transitive>

This defect - not being art - is one that theory should prolong and celebrate, not remedy. For the most egregious error Chow makes is to imagine that obstructing instrumentalism is somehow a desirable and effective route for left-wing politics. The case against instrumentalism is made in depth in the opening chapter, which argues with reference to Hiroshima and Nagasaki that "[t]he dropping of the atomic bombs effected what Michel Foucault would call a major shift in epistemes, a fundamental change in the organization, production and circulation of knowledge" (33). It initiates the "age of the world target" in which war becomes virtualized and knowledge militarized, particularly under the aegis of so-called "area studies". It's hard not to see this as a Pacific version of the notorious argument that the Gulag and/or the Holocaust reveal the exhaustion of modernity. And the first thing one has to say is that this interpretation of war as no longer "the physical, mechanical struggles between combative oppositional groups" (33), as now transformed into a matter technology and vision, puts Chow in some uncomfortable intellectual company: like that of Donald Rumsfeld, whose recent humiliation is a timely reminder that wars continue to depend on the deployment of young men and women in fairly traditional forms of battle. Pace Chow, war can indeed be fought, and fought successfully, "without the skills of playing video games" (35) and this is proved, with grim results, every day. But it's the title of this new epoch - the title of the book as well - that truly gives the game away. Heidegger's "Age of the World Picture" claimed that the distinguishing phenomena of what we like to call modernity - science, machine technology, secularization, the autonomy of art and culture - depended, in the last instance, on a particular metaphysics, that of the "world conceived of and grasped as a picture", as something prepared, if you like, for the manipulations of the subject. Against this vision of "sweeping global instrumentalism" Heidegger set not Mallarmé, but Hölderlin, and not just Hölderlin, but also "reflection", i.e., Heidegger's own philosophy. It's a philosophical reprise of what Francis Mulhern has dubbed "metaculture", the discourse in which culture is invoked as a principle of social organization superior to the degraded machinations of "politics", degraded machinations which, at the time he was composing this essay, had led Heidegger to lower his expectations of what National Socialism might achieve. In the fog of metaphysics, every actually existing nation - America, the Soviet Union, Germany - looks just as grey, as does every conceivable form of politics. For the antithesis of the "world picture" is not a more just democratic politics, but no politics at all, and it is hard to see how this stance can serve as the starting point for a political critique. If Chow decides to pursue this unpromising path anyhow, it is probably because turning exploitation, military conquest and prejudice into so many epiphenomena of a metaphysical "instrumentalism" grants philosophy and poetry a force and a role in revolutionising the world that would otherwise seem extravagant. Or it would do, if "instrumentalism" was, as Chow claims a "demotion of language", if language was somehow more at home exulting in its own plenitude than merely referring to things. Poor old language. Apparently ignored for centuries, it only receives its due when poststructuralists force us to acknowledge it. In their hands, "language flexes its muscles and breaks the chains of its hitherto subordination to thought" and, as a consequence, "those who pursue poststructuralist theory in the critical writings find themselves permanently at war with those who expect, and insist on, the transparency - that is, the invisibility - of language as a tool of communication" (48). We have been down this road before and will no doubt go down it again. In fact, it's fair to say this particular journey has become more or less the daily commute of critical theory, though few have thought it ought to be described in such openly military terms. There is good reason, however, to think Chow's chosen route will lead not to the promised land of resistance and emancipation, but to more Sisyphean frustration. In fact, there are several good reasons.

Global war does not result from a Western desire for control---it results from lack of clearly defined strategic imperatives---the aff is necessary to reclaim the political

David Chandler 9, Professor of International Relations at the Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Westminster, War Without End(s): Grounding the Discourse of `Global War', Security Dialogue 2009; 40; 243

Western governments appear to portray some of the distinctive characteristics that Schmitt attributed to ‘motorized partisans’, in that the shift from narrowly strategic concepts of security to more abstract concerns reflects the fact that Western states have tended to fight free-floating and non-strategic wars of aggression without real enemies at the same time as professing to have the highest values and the absolute enmity that accompanies these. The government policy documents and critical frameworks of ‘global war’ have been so accepted that it is assumed that it is the strategic interests of Western actors that lie behind the often irrational policy responses, with ‘global war’ thereby being understood as merely the extension of instrumental struggles for control. This perspective seems unable to contemplate the possibility that it is the lack of a strategic desire for control that drives and defines ‘global’ war today. ¶ Very few studies of the ‘war on terror’ start from a study of the Western actors themselves rather than from their declarations of intent with regard to the international sphere itself. This methodological framing inevitably makes assumptions about strategic interactions and grounded interests of domestic or international regulation and control, which are then revealed to explain the proliferation of enemies and the abstract and metaphysical discourse of the ‘war on terror’ (Chandler, 2009a). For its radical critics, the abstract, global discourse merely reveals the global intent of the hegemonizing designs of biopower or neoliberal empire, as critiques of liberal projections of power are ‘scaled up’ from the international to the global.¶ Radical critics working within a broadly Foucauldian problematic have no problem grounding global war in the needs of neoliberal or biopolitical governance or US hegemonic designs. These critics have produced numerous frameworks, which seek to assert that global war is somehow inevitable, based on their view of the needs of late capitalism, late modernity, neoliberalism or biopolitical frameworks of rule or domination. From the declarations of global war and practices of military intervention, rationality, instrumentality and strategic interests are read in a variety of ways (Chandler, 2007). Global war is taken very much on its own terms, with the declarations of Western governments explaining and giving power to radical abstract theories of the global power and regulatory might of the new global order of domination, hegemony or empire¶ The alternative reading of ‘global war’ rendered here seeks to clarify that the declarations of global war are a sign of the lack of political stakes and strategic structuring of the international sphere rather than frameworks for asserting global domination. We increasingly see Western diplomatic and military interventions presented as justified on the basis of value-based declarations, rather than in traditional terms of interest-based outcomes. This was as apparent in the wars of humanitarian intervention in Bosnia, Somalia and Kosovo – where there was no clarity of objectives and therefore little possibility of strategic planning in terms of the military intervention or the post-conflict political outcomes – as it is in the ‘war on terror’ campaigns, still ongoing, in Afghanistan and Iraq. ¶ There would appear to be a direct relationship between the lack of strategic clarity shaping and structuring interventions and the lack of political stakes involved in their outcome. In fact, the globalization of security discourses seems to reflect the lack of political stakes rather than the urgency of the security threat or of the intervention. Since the end of the Cold War, the central problematic could well be grasped as one of withdrawal and the emptying of contestation from the international sphere rather than as intervention and the contestation for control. The disengagement of the USA and Russia from sub-Saharan Africa and the Balkans forms the backdrop to the policy debates about sharing responsibility for stability and the management of failed or failing states (see, for example, Deng et al., 1996). It is the lack of political stakes in the international sphere that has meant that the latter has become more open to ad hoc and arbitrary interventions as states and international institutions use the lack of strategic imperatives to construct their own meaning through intervention. As Zaki Laïdi (1998: 95) explains:¶ war is not waged necessarily to achieve predefined objectives, and it is in waging war that the motivation needed to continue it is found. In these cases – of which there are very many – war is no longer a continuation of politics by other means, as in Clausewitz’s classic model – but sometimes the initial expression of forms of activity or organization in search of meaning. . . . War becomes not the ultimate means to achieve an objective, but the most ‘efficient’ way of finding one. ¶ The lack of political stakes in the international sphere would appear to be the precondition for the globalization of security discourses and the ad hoc and often arbitrary decisions to go to ‘war’. In this sense, global wars reflect the fact that the international sphere has been reduced to little more than a vanity mirror for globalized actors who are freed from strategic necessities and whose concerns are no longer structured in the form of political struggles against ‘real enemies’. The mainstream critical approaches to global wars, with their heavy reliance on recycling the work of Foucault, Schmitt and Agamben, appear to invert this reality, portraying the use of military firepower and the implosion of international law as a product of the high stakes involved in global struggle, rather than the lack of clear contestation involving the strategic accommodation of diverse powers and interests.

#### Neo-positivism is good, much of the world is subjective but there ARE some patterns and focusing on those is best for policy.

**Houghton 8**

[David Patrick, \*Associate Professor of International Relations Theory at the University of Central Florida, 2008, Positivism ‘vs’ Postmodernism: Does Epistemology Make a Difference?, International Politics, pg 45]

As long ago as 1981, Yale Ferguson and Richard Mansbach effectively laid the influence of the dogmatic behaviouralism of the 1960s to rest in their book The Elusive Quest, signaling the profound disillusionment of mainstream IR with the idea that a cumulative science of IR would ever be possible (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1988). The popularity of the ‘naïve’ form of positivism, wed to a view of inexorable scientific progress and supposedly practiced by wide-eyed scholars during the 1960s, has long been a thing of the past. Postmodernists hence do the discipline a disservice when they continue to attack the overly optimistic and dogmatic form of positivism as if it still represented a dominant orthodoxy, which must somehow be overthrown. Equally, supporters of the contemporary or ‘neo-’ version of positivism perform a similar disservice when they fail to articulate their epistemological assumptions clearly or at all. Indeed, the first error is greatly encouraged by the second, since by failing to state what they stand for, neo-positivists have allowed postmodernists to fashion a **series of straw men** who burn rapidly at the slightest touch. Articulating a full list of these assumptions lies beyond the scope of this article, but contemporary neo-positivists are, I would suggest, committed to the following five assumptions, none of which are especially radical or hard to defend: (1) That explaining the social and political world ought to be our central objective, (2) That — subjective though our perceptions of the world may be — many features of the political world are at least potentially explainable. What remains is a conviction that there are at least some empirical propositions, which can be demonstrably shown to be ‘true’ or ‘false’, some **underlying regularities that clearly give shape to IR** (such as the proposition that democracies do not fight one another), (3) That careful use of appropriate methodological techniques can establish what patterns exist in the political world, (4) That positive and normative questions, though related, are ultimately separable, although both constitute valid and interesting forms of enquiry. There is also a general conviction (5) that careful use of research design may help researchers avoid logical pitfalls in their work. Doubtless, there are some who would not wish to use the term ‘positivism’ as an umbrella term for these five assumptions, in which case we probably require a new term to cover them. But to the extent that there exists an ‘orthodoxy’ in the field of IR today, this is surely it. Writing in 1989, Thomas Biersteker noted that ‘the vast majority of scholarship in international relations (and the social sciences for that matter) proceeds without conscious reflection on its philosophical bases or premises. In professional meetings, lectures, seminars and the design of curricula, we do not often engage in serious reflection on the philosophical bases or implications of our activity. Too often, consideration of these core issues is reserved for (and largely forgotten after) the introductory weeks of required concepts and methods courses, as we socialize students into the profession’ ([Biersteker, 1989](http://www.palgrave-journals.com/ip/journal/v45/n2/full/8800222a.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22bib2%22%20%5Cl%20%22bib2%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)). This observation — while accurate at the time — would surely be deemed incorrect were it to be made today. Even some scholars who profess regret at the philosophically self-regarding nature of contemporary of IR theory, nevertheless feel compelled to devote huge chunks of their work to epistemological issues before getting to more substantive matters (see for instance [Wendt, 1999](http://www.palgrave-journals.com/ip/journal/v45/n2/full/8800222a.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22bib21#bib21%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)). The recent emphasis on epistemology has helped to push IR as a discipline further and further away from the concerns of those who actually practice IR. The consequent decline in the policy relevance of what we do, and our retreat into philosophical self-doubt, is ironic given the roots of the field in very practical political concerns (most notably, how to avoid war). What I am suggesting is not that IR scholars should ignore philosophical questions, or that such ‘navel gazing’ is always unproductive, for questions of epistemology surely undergird every vision of IR that ever existed. Rather, I would suggest that the existing debate is sterile and unproductive in the sense that the various schools of thought have much more in common than they suppose; stated more specifically, postpositivists have much more in common than they would like to think with the positivists they seek to condemn. Consequently, to the extent that there is a meaningful dialogue going on with regard to epistemological questions, it has no real impact on what we do as scholars when we look at the world ‘out there’. Rather than focusing on epistemology, it is inevitably going to be more fruitful to subject the substantive claims made by positivists (of all metatheoretical stripes) and postpositivists to the cold light of day. My own view, as the reader may have gathered already, is that the empirical claims of scholars like Der Derian and Campbell will not often stand up to such harsh scrutiny given the **inattention to careful evidence gathering** betrayed by both, but this is a side issue here; the point is that substantive theoretical and empirical claims, rather than metatheoretical or epistemological ones, ought to be what divides the international relations scene today.

**A violent war on terror is the only way to solve—nonviolent solutions empirically fail**

Victor Davis **Hanson 10**, Senior Fellow, Hoover. Former visiting prof, classics, Stanford. PhD in classics, Stanford, The Tragic Truth of War, 19 February 2010, http://www.victorhanson.com/articles/hanson021910.html

Victory has usually been defined throughout the ages as forcing the enemy to accept certain political objectives. “Forcing” usually meant killing, capturing, or wounding men at arms. In today’s polite and politically correct society we seem to have forgotten that nasty but eternal truth in the confusing struggle to defeat radical Islamic terrorism. What stopped the imperial German army from absorbing France in World War I and eventually made the Kaiser abdicate was the destruction of a once magnificent army on the Western front — superb soldiers and expertise that could not easily be replaced. Saddam Hussein left Kuwait in 1991 when he realized that the U.S. military was destroying his very army. Even the North Vietnamese agreed to a peace settlement in 1973, given their past horrific losses on the ground and the promise that American air power could continue indefinitely inflicting its damage on the North. When an enemy finally gives up, it is for a combination of reasons — material losses, economic hardship, loss of territory, erosion of civilian morale, fright, mental exhaustion, internal strife. But we forget that **central to a concession of defeat is** often **the loss of** the nation’s **soldiers** — or even the threat of such deaths. A central theme in most of the memoirs of high-ranking officers of the Third Reich is the attrition of their best warriors. In other words, among all the multifarious reasons why Nazi Germany was defeated, perhaps the key was that hundreds of thousands of its best aviators, U-boaters, panzers, infantrymen, and officers, who swept to victory throughout 1939–41, simply perished in the fighting and were no longer around to stop the allies from doing pretty much what they wanted by 1944–45. After Stalingrad and Kursk, there were not enough good German soldiers to stop the Red Army. Even the introduction of jets could not save Hitler in 1945 — given that British and American airmen had killed thousands of Luftwaffe pilots between 1939 and 1943. After the near destruction of the Grand Army in Russia in 1812, even Napoleon’s genius could not restore his European empire. Serial and massive Communist offensives between November 1950 and April 1951 in Korea cost Red China hundreds of thousands of its crack infantry — and ensured that, for all its aggressive talk, it would never retake Seoul in 1952–53. But aren’t these cherry-picked examples from conventional wars of the past that have no relevance to the present age of limited conflict, terrorism, an

d insurgency where ideology reigns? Not really. We don’t quite know all the factors that contributed to the amazing success of the American “surge” in Iraq in 2007–08. Surely a number of considerations played a part: Iraqi anger at the brutish nature of al-Qaeda terrorists in their midst; increased oil prices that brought massive new revenues into the country; General Petraeus’s inspired counterinsurgency tactics that helped win over Iraqis to our side by providing them with jobs and security; much-improved American equipment; and the addition of 30,000 more American troops. But what is unspoken is also the sheer cumulative number of al Qaeda and other Islamic terrorists that the U.S. military killed or wounded between 2003 and 2008 in firefights from Fallujah to Basra. There has never been reported an approximate figure of such enemy dead — perhaps wisely, in the post-Vietnam age of repugnance at “body counts” and the need to create a positive media image. Nevertheless, in those combat operations, the marines and army not only proved that to meet them in battle was a near death sentence, but also killed thousands of low-level terrorists and hundreds of top-ranking operatives who otherwise would have continued to harm Iraqi civilians and American soldiers. Is Iraq relatively quiet today because many who made it so violent are no longer around? Contemporary conventional wisdom tries to persuade us that there is no such thing as a finite number of the enemy. Instead, killing them supposedly only incites others to step up from the shadows to take their places. Violence begets violence. It is counterproductive, and creates an endless succession of the enemy. Or so we are told. We may wish that were true. **But military history suggests it is not quite accurate.** In fact, there was a finite number of SS diehards and kamikaze suicide bombers even in fanatical Nazi Germany and imperial Japan. When they were attrited, not only were their acts of terror curtailed, but it turned out that far fewer than expected wanted to follow the dead to martyrdom. The Israeli war in Gaza is considered by the global community to be a terrible failure — even though the number of rocket attacks against Israeli border towns is way down. That reduction may be due to international pressure, diplomacy, and Israeli goodwill shipments of food and fuel to Gaza — or it may be due to the hundreds of Hamas killers and rocketeers who died, and the thousands who do not wish to follow them, despite their frequently loud rhetoric about a desire for martyrdom. Insurgencies, of course, are complex operations, but in general even they are not immune from eternal rules of war. Winning hearts and minds is essential; providing security for the populace is crucial; improving the economy is critical to securing the peace. But all that said, we cannot avoid the pesky truth that in war — any sort of war — killing enemy soldiers stops the violence. For all the much-celebrated counterinsurgency tactics in Afghanistan, note that we are currently in an offensive in Helmand province to “secure the area.” That means killing the Taliban and their supporters, and convincing others that they will meet a violent fate if they continue their opposition. Perhaps the most politically incorrect and Neanderthal of all thoughts would be that the American military’s long efforts in both Afghanistan and Iraq to kill or capture radical Islamists has contributed to the general safety inside the United States. Modern dogma insists that our presence in those two Muslim countries incited otherwise non-bellicose young Muslims to suddenly prefer violence and leave Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or Egypt to flock to kill the infidel invader. A more tragic view would counter that there was always a large (though largely finite) number of radical jihadists who, even before 9/11, wished to kill Americans. They went to those two theaters, fought, died, and were therefore not able to conduct as many terrorist operations as they otherwise would have, and also provided a clear example to would-be followers not to emulate their various short careers. That may explain why in global polls the popularity both of bin Laden and of the tactic of suicide bombing plummeted in the Middle Eastern street — at precisely the time America was being battered in the elite international press for the Iraq War. Even the most utopian and idealistic do not escape these tragic eternal laws of war. Barack Obama may think he can win over the radical Islamic world — or at least convince the more moderate Muslim community to reject jihadism — by means such as his Cairo speech, closing Guantanamo, trying Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in New York, or having General McChrystal emphatically assure the world that killing Taliban and al-Qaeda terrorists will not secure Afghanistan. Of course, such soft- and smart-power approaches have utility in a war so laden with symbolism in an age of globalized communications. But note that Obama has upped the number of combat troops in Afghanistan, and he vastly increased the frequency of Predator-drone assassination missions on the Pakistani border. Indeed, even as Obama damns Guantanamo and tribunals, he has massively increased the number of targeted assassinations of suspected terrorists — the rationale presumably being either that we are safer with fewer jihadists alive, or that we are warning would-be jihadists that they will end up buried amid the debris of a mud-brick compound, or that it is much easier to kill a suspected terrorist abroad than detain, question, and try a known one in the United States. In any case, the president — immune from criticism from the hard Left, which is angrier about conservative presidents waterboarding known terrorists than liberal ones executing suspected ones — has concluded that one way to win in Afghanistan is to kill as many terrorists and insurgents as possible. And while the global public will praise his kinder, gentler outreach, privately he evidently thinks that we will be safer the more the U.S. marines shoot Taliban terrorists and the more Hellfire missiles blow up al-Qaeda planners. Why otherwise would a Nobel Peace Prize laureate order such continued offensive missions? Victory is most easily obtained by ending the enemy’s ability to resist — and by offering him an alternative future that might appear better than the past. We may not like to think all of that entails killing those who wish to kill us, but it does, always has, and tragically always will — until the nature of man himself changes.

## Debt Ceiling 2AC

Won’t pass because of election fears and Obama’s approach prolongs Republican backlash- star this card

Kaplan 10-3-13 [Rebecca, serves as City Councilmember At-Large for Oakland, California, CBS News, “Why is it so difficult to end the government shutdown?” <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250_162-57605784/why-is-it-so-difficult-to-end-the-government-shutdown/>]

As the government shutdown enters its third day, Democrats and Republicans seem no closer to bridging their differences than they were when the shutdown began early Tuesday morning. It's difficult to say when the standoff will end. The two shutdowns that occurred in 1995 and 1996 lasted a total of 27 days. And back then, the conditions for getting to a deal were much better.¶ Republicans won the House and Senate in the 1994 midterm elections - the first time the party had a House majority in 40 years. That set up a showdown between House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who had run on a conservative platform, and then-President Bill Clinton. That dispute came in 1995, when Gingrich wanted to balance the budget in a short time frame and Clinton wanted money spent on Democratic priorities. After two separate shutdowns and several weeks, the pressure was too high on Republicans and they cut a deal with Clinton: he would get his priorities, but would have to balance the budget for 10 years.¶ "They were kind of testing each other," said former Rep. Tom Davis, R-Va., who was a freshman in Congress at the time. Afterward, Davis noted, Clinton and Gingrich would go on to work together on a host of issues including welfare reform. The economy boomed, helping to mitigate budget issues.¶ Republicans who were lawmakers or aides in Congress in 1995 cite a variety of reasons that the shutdown ended. For Davis, it was the mounting public pressure on Republicans and their rapidly dropping poll numbers that helped spur a compromise. "There was a revolt, and they simply couldn't hold their members after a while," he said of the Republican leadership. It didn't help that Republicans were afraid of losing the first majority they'd had in decades. Davis recalls going to former Rep. Dick Armey, then the Republican Majority leader from Texas, and saying, "We're getting our butts kicked."¶ But Bob Walker, then a Republican congressman from Pennsylvania, had a different take from the conventional narrative that Republicans had caved. "We stayed focused in 1995 on the fact that what the end result for us was to get a pathway to a balanced budget, and so in the end when we got an agreement to just begin the process of moving toward a balanced budget," he said. "We declared victory on that and we were prepared to then get the government back into action."¶ This time, it's not so easy for Republicans to achieve even a piece of their chief goal - to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. The law is President Obama's signature policy achievement, and its constitutional authority was affirmed by the Supreme Court. Democrats in the Senate and Mr. Obama himself have proven with the shutdown fight that they are determined to keep the law intact.¶ "We didn't get an immediate balanced budget obviously but what we got was a seven-year plan toward a balanced budget that then ended up being accomplished in there years," Walker said of the House Republicans in 1995. But nowadays, he said, "I'm not certain I see where the bottom lines are."¶ As shutdown continues, Obama says Wall Street "should be concerned"¶ Government shutdown: Is Congress acting selfishly?¶ Yet another explanation of why the 1995-1996 shutdown ended had to do with presidential politics. Former Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kansas, was eyeing a presidential bid against Clinton in 1996.¶ "He just got sick of it. I think he started seeing that this was directly impacting his ability to run for president," said John Feehery, a political strategist who was the communications director for then-House Majority Whip Tom DeLay during the shutdown. Dole was key to engineering an end to the shutdown, a fact that was apparent to everyone - even Democrats.¶ "It was a huge factor," said American University professor Patrick Griffin, who served as Clinton's assistant for legislative affairs from 1994 to 1996. "We could always sense that there was no love lost between him and [Gingrich] - on the [Contract with America], on the shutdown. It was just not Dole's style...he was wasting time, he was not being able to get his campaign."¶ If anything, presidential politics will lengthen the shutdown. Mr. Obama has no re-election campaign to worry about - like Clinton did at the time - and Republican presidential campaigns cannot be won without pleasing an active base that hates the healthcare law. It would be difficult for any Republican to help broker a compromise that preserved most of Obamacare and then woo Republican primary voters.¶ Not that many Republicans feel as if they can work with Mr. Obama. "Many people in Congress ...believe that the president treats them with contempt and so the atmosphere for negotiating is not very good. That's a big difference," said Walker.¶ House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, and Mr. Obama have tried and failed to negotiate big deals several times. Since the government shut down on Tuesday, they've barely talked aside from a meeting the president held with top congressional leaders Wednesday afternoon. And a recent Politico story that detailed how Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, R-Nev., worked together to preserve congressional subsidies for healthcare coverage will likely have poisoned the well between the leaders of the two chambers.¶ That wasn't the case with Gingrich and Clinton, despite their differences. "Both President Clinton and Speaker Gingrich had a pretty civil and reasonably good personal relationship," said Mack McLarty, Clinton's first chief of staff as president. Both hailed from the south, and had "very inquisitive minds" about the world around them.¶ Perhaps the biggest roadblock to a deal, however, is the increasingly partisan nature of Congress caused by congressional redistricting that puts many members into seats where fewer and fewer constituents are from the opposite party. In 1995, more than 34 percent of Republican representatives in the House were elected in districts that had voted for Clinton as president. Now, only seven percent of House members come from districts that voted for Mr. Obama.¶ There's a larger proportion of hardline conservatives in the House in 2013, and they have so far been more successful at driving the agenda than their more moderate counterparts. "The-rank-and-file members are sick and tired of the rebels running the thing but there's too many of them who vote with the rebels to protect their flank," Feehery said, referring to Republicans who are worried about receiving a primary challenge from the right.¶ With so many factors working against a deal, it's hard to see a way out of the crisis. The only thing that's guaranteed to inject some urgency into the debate is the looming deadline to raise the debt ceiling on Oct. 17. While a government shutdown can have minimal effects on the financial markets, the possibility of the U.S. defaulting is much more likely to cause financial panic that could push lawmakers into a deal.¶ Plus, if the spending and debt ceiling deals morph into one, there may be more issues on the table to discuss such as the sequester and the whole federal budget. That, Walker said, will give Republicans more areas where they can look for victory.

All their link args are non-unique

NPR 9/21, “Have Obama's Troubles Weakened Him For Fall's Fiscal Fights?” http://www.ideastream.org/news/npr/224494760

President Obama has had a tough year. He failed to pass gun legislation. Plans for an immigration overhaul have stalled in the House. He barely escaped what would have been a humiliating rejection by Congress on his plan to strike Syria.¶ Just this week, his own Democrats forced Larry Summers, the president's first choice to head the Federal Reserve, to withdraw.¶ Former Clinton White House aide Bill Galston says all these issues have weakened the unity of the president's coalition.¶ "It's not a breach, but there has been some real tension there," he says, "and that's something that neither the president nor congressional Democrats can afford as the budget battle intensifies."¶ Obama is now facing showdowns with the Republicans over a potential government shutdown and a default

on the nation's debt. On Friday, the House voted to fund government operations through mid-December, while also defunding the president's signature health care law — a position that's bound to fail in the Senate.¶ As these fiscal battles proceed, Republicans have been emboldened by the president's recent troubles, says former GOP leadership aide Ron Bonjean.

Fiat means the plan passes instantaneously and doesn’t cost capital

Shutdown crushes Obama’s agenda

O’Brien 10/1 (Michael O'Brien 10/1, "Winners and losers of the government shutdown", 2013, nbcpolitics.nbcnews.com/\_news/2013/10/01/20763839-winners-and-losers-of-the-government-shutdown?lite)

Obama¶ The fiscal fight is a double-edged sword for Obama.¶ Yes, the president won a short-term victory that revitalizes his pull within the Beltway after beating back Republicans and shifting blame primarily to them for a shutdown. But Obama is no less a symbol of Washington dysfunction than Ted Cruz or John Boehner.¶ It might be simplistic, but any president shares in some of the broader opinion toward D.C. just by the very nature of the job. Put another way: as president, Obama is the most visible political leader in the U.S., if not the world. If Americans are dissatisfied with Washington, Obama will have to shoulder some of that burden.¶ Obama's 2011 battles with Republicans over the debt ceiling saw his approval ratings sink to one of the lowest points of his presidency. There are signs this fight might be taking a similar toll: a CNN/ORC poll released Monday found that 53 percent of Americans disapprove of the way the president is handling his job, versus 44 percent who approve.¶ Moreover, after the time and political capital expended on this nasty political fight — and with midterm elections on the docket for 2014 — Obama's top second-term priorities, like comprehensive immigration reform, are on life support.

Political capital isn’t key and Obama isn’t spending it

Allen, 9/27/13- politics reporter for Politico (Jonathan, “President Obama’s distance diplomacy” <http://www.politico.com/story/2013/09/government-shutdown-barack-obama-house-gop-97483.html?hp=t3_3>)

The White House’s distance diplomacy with Republicans is an approach that tacitly acknowledges three inescapable realities: There’s no one to negotiate with on the GOP side; Obama’s direct involvement in a pact would poison it for many rank and file Republicans; and Democrats don’t trust him not to cut a lousy deal. Indeed, Democrats are urging Obama to stay at arm’s length from Congress so there’s no confusion over his message that he won’t negotiate on an increase in the debt limit, which the nation is expected to breach as early as Oct. 17 without legislative action. “I believe the president has made it very clear, as we have tried to make it clear: There are no negotiations. We’re through,” Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) told POLITICO. In past installments of the fiscal-failure soap opera, overheated rhetoric about government shutdowns and a default on the national debt has been matched by sober and direct deal-making behind the scenes — usually in the form of a virtual handshake between Vice President Joe Biden and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. In the winter 2010 debate over tax cuts, Biden and McConnell agreed to extend all of the Bush-era tax cuts for two years, infuriating the left. In 2011, Boehner and Obama secretly discussed for weeks a possible grand-bargain deal — but when the details were leaked, Democrats were furious and the negotiations fell apart. And in 2012, Biden and McConnell averted the so-called fiscal cliff — but that greatly upset Reid, who believed the White House gave away too much to Republicans whose backs were against the wall. Indeed, many Democrats had buyer’s remorse on aspects of those agreements, particularly a budget sequestration plan that has squeezed domestic and military spending, and the locking in of much of the Bush tax rates. When Chief of Staff Denis McDonough and other senior White House aides quietly discussed budget issues with a group of Senate Republicans earlier this year, top Democrats believed it made little sense to continue negotiations that appeared to be going nowhere and didn’t seem likely to help their party. So they’ve asked Obama himself to steer clear of this round of the debt fight and try to force Republicans to come to him. The Senate, on a party line 54-44 vote on Friday, sent a bill that would keep the government operating but dropped a House provision defunding Obamacare. Now the House is expected to load up the measure with more provisions that aren’t acceptable to Democrats — though it has been hard for House GOP leaders to herd their troops on a budget bill and a separate plan to raise the debt ceiling. “You first need the Republicans to have a position to negotiate – they don’t yet,” Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), who often advises the White House on strategy, said Friday when asked about Obama’s posture. “Until the House Republican Caucus figures out what it wants to do, nobody can deal with them.” Other than a terse phone call to Speaker John Boehner last Friday to reiterate that he won’t negotiate on the debt limit, Obama hasn’t talked to House Republicans — the key constituency in the fight. The White House has let Reid take the lead in the latest fights, even scrapping a potential meeting at the White House with Obama and the three other congressional leaders to allow the process to play out on Capitol Hill. With Republicans fighting with each other over Obamacare, Democrats believe it makes far more sense to keep the focus on the GOP intraparty warfare, rather than risk putting Obama middle of a politically sensitive negotiation. Republicans sourly note that Obama has been quicker to talk with Russian President Vladimir Putin — and now Iranian President Hassan Rouhani — than with House Speaker John Boehner. “Grandstanding from the president, who refuses to even be a part of the process, won’t bring Congress any closer to a resolution,” said Brendan Buck, a spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner. When McDonough went to the Hill this week for closed-door talks, it was to reassure fellow Democrats that the president wouldn’t fold early, as he’s been accused of doing in past budget battles. Obama isn’t expected to meet with congressional leaders until after the Tuesday deadline to stop a government shutdown. Asked if he believed that Obama would eventually have to engage directly in the fiscal fights, Reid said: “Not on the debt ceiling and not on the CR. Maybe on something else – but not these two. We have to fund the government and pay our bills.” Whether Obama can sustain his no-negotiatio

n position on the debt ceiling remains to be seen. Senate Republicans — even those who have balked at calls to use the threat of a government shutdown to defund Obamacare — say the president won’t get a clean debt ceiling increase. “It’s what’s wrong with the government right now,” said Sen. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), who voted to break a GOP-led filibuster blocking the continuing resolution. “I suppose the Congress might say we don’t want a negotiation on the debt ceiling either.” If Obama can’t get 60 votes in the Senate for a clean debt ceiling increase, he will very likely to have to engage in direct talks with Republicans, even Democrats privately concede. But for now, Democratic leaders say the president is doing what he has to: Making speeches to attack Republicans, and letting his allies on the Hill deal with the nitty-gritty of legislating and horse-trading. Republican Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Mich.), who has worked with the White House on national security issues, says the president’s always had a “laissez-faire” approach to Congress.

Obama’s PC is low and decreasing

Steinhauser, 9/26/13 **–** CNN Political Editor (Paul, “Obama's support slips; controversies, sluggish economy cited” <http://www.cnn.com/2013/09/26/politics/cnn-poll-of-polls-obama/?hpt=po_c2>)

As he battles with congressional Republicans over the budget and the debt ceiling, and as a key component of his health care law kicks in, new polling suggests that President Barack Obama's standing among Americans continues to deteriorate. The president's approval rating stands at 45%, according to a CNN average of four national polls conducted over the past week and a half. And a CNN Poll of Polls compiled and released Thursday also indicates that Obama's disapproval rating at 49%. In the afterglow of his re-election and second inauguration, the percentage of those approving of Obama's job performance hovered in the low 50s as the year began, according to CNN Poll of Poll averages. But his numbers slipped to the upper 40s by spring and now have edged down to the mid 40s. At the same time, his disapproval numbers have edged up from the low 40s to right around the 50% mark. Anxiety and skepticism over the Affordable Care Act, better known as Obamacare, continuing concerns over the sluggish economy, and a drop in the president's approval on foreign policy -- once his ace in the hole -- all appear to be contributing to the slide of Obama's general approval rating. "Not a precipitous drop, but more like a continued erosion in the president's numbers," says CNN Chief Political Correspondent Candy Crowley. "The Boston Marathon bombings, Edward Snowden's 'big brother' revelations, the 'non-coup' in Egypt, the 'now we bomb, now we don't' policy in Syria, an economic recovery that remains disappointing, the uncertainty of how/what will change under the new health care system, shall I go on?" "It all adds up to an awful lot of uncertainty and unfairly or not, uncertainty tends to breed lower poll numbers for the guy in charge," added Crowley, anchor of CNN's "State of the Union." Besides being the main indicator of a president's standing with the public, a presidential approval rating is a good gauge of his clout in dealing with Congress. The drop in his numbers comes as the president pushes back against attempts by congressional Republicans to use deadlines to keep the federal government funded and to extend the nation's debt ceiling to try and defund the health care law. A slew of national polls conducted this month indicate that a majority doesn't support shutting down the government in order to defund Obamacare. But if the fight shifts to the debt ceiling, public opinion appears to turn against the president, who reiterated on Thursday that he will not negotiate with the GOP in Congress over extending the debt ceiling.

Obama executive order solves

Weisenyhal 9/30 (Joe Weisenthal 9/30, Executive Editor for Business Insider, “It Increasingly Looks Like Obama Will Have To Raise The Debt Ceiling All By Himself,” <http://www.businessinsider.com/it-increasingly-looks-like-obama-will-have-to-raise-the-debt-ceiling-all-by-himself-2013-9>)

With no movement on either side and the debt ceiling fast approaching, there's increasing talk that the solution will be for Obama to issue an executive order and require the Treasury to continue paying U.S. debt holders even if the debt ceiling isn't raised.¶ Here's Greg Valliere at Potomac Research:¶ HOW DOES THIS END? What worries many clients we talk with is the absence of a clear end-game. We think three key elements will have to be part of the final outcome: First, a nasty signal from the stock market. Second, a daring move from Barack Obama to raise the debt ceiling by executive order if default appears to be imminent. Third, a capitulation by Boehner, ending the shut-down and debt crisis in an arrangement between a third of the House GOP and virtually all of the Democrats. ¶ Valliere isn't the only one seeing this outcome.¶ Here's David Kotok at Cumberland Advisors:¶ We expect this craziness to last into October and run up against the debt limit fight. In the final gasping throes of squabbling, we expect President Obama to use the President Clinton designed executive order strategy so that the US doesn’t default. There will then ensue a protracted court fight leading to a Supreme Court decision. The impasse may go that far. This is our American way. “Man Plans and God Laughs” says the Yiddish Proverb.¶ Indeed, back in 2011, Bill Clinton said he'd raise the debt ceiling by invoking the 14th Amendment rather than negotiate with the House GOP.¶ This time around, again, Clinton is advising Obama to call the GOP's bluff.

No Default – internal checks & balanced budget

Dorfman, 10/3 [Jeffrey, Forbes, “Don't Believe The Debt Ceiling Hype: The Federal Government Can Survive Without An Increase”, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffreydorfman/2013/10/03/dont-believe-the-debt-ceiling-hype-the-federal-government-can-survive-without-an-increase/>, BJM]

That’s right. As much as the politicians and news media have tried to convince you that the world will end without a debt ceiling increase, it is simply not true. The federal debt ceiling sets a legal limit for how much money the federal government can borrow. In other words, it places an upper limit on the national debt. It is like the credit limit on the government’s gold card. Reaching the debt ceiling does not mean that the government will default on the outstanding government debt. In fact, the U.S. Constitution forbids defaulting on the debt (14th Amendment, Section 4), so the government is not allowed to default even if it wanted to. In reality, if the debt ceiling is not raised in the next two weeks, the government will actually have to prioritize its expenses and keep its monthly, weekly, and daily spending under the revenue the government collects. In simple terms, the government would have to spend an amount less than or equal to what it earns. Just like ordinary Americans have to do in their everyday lives.

Fights now and McCain supports the plan.

Shapiro May 29th 2013

[-Ari, Why Obama Wants To Change The Key Law In The Terrorism Figh [www.npr.org/blogs/itsallpolitics/2013/05/29/187059276/why-obama-wants-to-change-the-key-law-in-the-terrorism-fight](http://www.npr.org/blogs/itsallpolitics/2013/05/29/187059276/why-obama-wants-to-change-the-key-law-in-the-terrorism-fight)]

The AUMF is one of the most unusual laws Congress has passed this century. It's less than a page long. The vote was nearly unanimous. And it went from concept to law in exactly one week. It authorizes the president to go after the groups that planned, authorized, committed or aided the Sept. 11 attacks, or any groups and countries that harbored them. In broad terms, it justified invading Afghanistan. But two presidents have applied it around the world. "It was vast in the powers that it gave," says Karen Greenberg, who runs the Center on National Security at Fordham Law School. "And it was somewhat vast in its definition of the enemy. However, in many ways, that definition has expanded in the interim years." Presidents Bush and Obama have used AUMF authority to kill terrorists in Somalia, Yemen and other places far from the Afghan battlefield. But last week at the National Defense University, Obama said the law needs to change. He explained that after 12 years, the Afghan war is ending, and al-Qaida's core is a shell of its former self. "Unless we discipline our thinking, our definitions, our actions, we may be drawn into more wars we don't need to fight," the president said, "or continue to grant presidents unbound powers more suited for traditional armed conflicts between nation-states." Obama promised to work with Congress to refine, and ultimately repeal, the AUMF's mandate. "And I will not sign laws designed to expand this mandate further," he said. According to a senior White House official, that threat was a specific reaction to lawmakers who have talked about expanding the law. Until now, presidents have interpreted a very vague law to give them very broad powers. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has expressed interest in making the law less vague, and making those broad powers explicit. "Wouldn't it be helpful to the Department of Defense and the American people if we updated the AUMF to make it more explicitly consistent with the realities today, which are dramatically different [than] they were on that fateful day in New York?" he said at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing earlier this month. But the White House is moving in the opposite direction. As a senior White House official put it: "The AUMF should apply to al-Qaida. As we defeat al-Qaida, we should ultimately repeal the law." As other terrorist groups become threats, the White House believes a president should ask Congress for permission to target those groups on a case-by-case basis. James Jeffrey, who was deputy national security adviser to Bush, worries about rolling back the law. "This law has served us well for over a decade," he says. "Much hangs from it, including the detention capability and the ability to use the U.S. military against clear and present dangers to the United States." That detention piece of the puzzle is key: The Guantanamo prison operates under the AUMF, so repealing this law is also part of the White House's effort to close the prison. Many in Congress want to keep the prison open. That's one reason this issue will not be easily resolved, says Thomas Kean, who co-chaired the 9/11 Commission. "I think it'll be a long debate, and it should be," Kean says. "[These are] very, very contentious issues, but the one thing you have to have, I think, in the United States, particularly for something lasting as long as this, is a framework of laws. We're a nation of laws. You can't just do ad hoc as we have in the past." It's pretty unusual for a president to ask Congress to take away some of his power. But Kate Martin of the Center for National Security Studies says if you look at it a different way, this situation doesn't seem so strange. "It's not unusual for presidents to end wars, right?" she says. "And if what we were talking about was ending military operations, that would not look like a president giving up power. It would look like a president ending wars."

McCain key to success in talks

Curry, 10/3 [Tom, NBC Politics, “McCain in the middle: Can Senate's GOP elders solve shutdown mess?”, <http://nbcpolitics.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/10/02/20790845-mccain-in-the-middle-can-senates-gop-elders-solve-shutdown-mess?lite>, BJM]

Arizona Sen. John McCain and other like-minded Republican senators could end up reprising roles as key deal-makers as the party seeks a final negotiated solution to the government shutdown. No clear path to ending the impasse over spending has emerged, but in one possible deal scenario -- a comprehensive agreement that also solves the problem of raising the debt limit -- McCain will likely play an essential role, just as he has been in past bipartisan agreements like the immigration bill that passed the Senate last June. With a core group of House Republicans sticking together in their chamber, and Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell taking a low public profile in the fight, that leaves McCain and similar-thinking GOP senators to look for a deal. It’s no secret and no surprise that the Republican Party’s 2008 presidential standard-bearer has been critical of the strategy of conservatives such as Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, of trying to use the spending bill and perhaps the debt limit as vehicles to force President Barack Obama to agree to defund or delay his signature achievement, the Affordable Care Act. McCain has argued over and over again that this is one battle that the Republicans simply cannot win. And most Republican senators seem to agree with him, but there is little evidence that their GOP counterparts in the House can be convinced, at least not yet. The lines have been drawn between Senate Republicans like McCain and House Tea Party members who are joined by a handful of sympathetic GOP senators like Cruz, who staged a 21-plus hour protest speech on the Senate floor against Obamacare last week. The impact of the first government shutdown in 17 years was felt across America as offices were shuttered and workers were sent home after lawmakers failed to come to a deal. Launch slideshow McCain, in turn, took to the floor to chastise Cruz for comparing those who opposed Obamacare delays to Nazi appeasers in the run up to World War II. "I resoundingly reject that allegation. That allegation, in my view, does a great disservice," McCain said on the Senate floor. "I do not agree with that comparison; I think it's wrong." The decisive vote that allowed Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to move ahead and pass his short-term spending bill last Friday was the vote on cloture, or ending debate. On that vote, 25 of the Senate’s 46 Republicans voted to end debate and thus opened the door that allowed the Senate to pass the spending bill. Among the 25 GOP senators voting to end debate were Minority Leader McConnell of Kentucky and every member of the Senate GOP leadership team. But over the past several days, McConnell has largely not been in the vanguard of the fight over defunding Obamacare and blocking a spending bill. He is faced with the pressure of a conservative primary challenger, Matt Bevin, the tenor of whose campaign is suggested by the tagline of one recent campaign e-mail: “Follower McConnell's Liberalism Catches Up to Him.” (McConnell’s lifetime voting rating from the American Conservative Union: 90 out of a perfect 100.) As McConnell receded from leading the public fight, Republicans like McCain have picked up the slack. “We have to understand that the only way we are going to repeal Obamacare is when we have 67 Republican votes in the United States Senate because that's what's required to override a presidential veto,” McCain told Bloomberg News on Monday. McCain noted that he’d campaigned against Obamacare during the 2012 campaign and that he’d fought to defeat it on the Senate floor in 2009. But he added, “In democracies, unfortunately sometimes the majority rules. That's why we (Republicans) are at a disadvantage in this fight that we're having.” He added that “by threatening to shut down the government we are kind of circumventing the results of elections” – an argument that Obama and administration spokesmen have also made. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., expresses concern over a comparison made by Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, on Tuesday between fighting Obamacare and standing up to Nazi Germany. The conservatives’ effort to defund or delay Obamacare risks alienating voters as the GOP heads into the 2014 mid-term elections, McCain has implied. “We're doing things that frankly are not rational in the view of our constituents,” he said Monday. Rather than simply being against Obamacare, he said, “We can present a positive agenda for the American people and win the elections in 2014. And I think if we do it right, we've got a great shot of getting a majority in the Senate.” But at least in the past two days, House Republicans have been following a playbook suggested by McCain: target the “most unpopular provisions such as the tax on medical devices and let's rifle shot amendments so that we force people to vote on those.”

## 1AR Debt Ceiling

Won’t pass---GOP spending cuts strategy

**Bloomberg 10-3** – Bloomberg News, 12:43PM ET, 10/3/13, “Republicans Said to Plan Debt-Limit Measure Amid Shutdown,” <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-03/republicans-said-to-plan-debt-limit-measure-amid-shutdown.html>

House Majority Leader Eric Cantor of Virginia indicated that Republicans and Democrats should negotiate their differences on government spending and increasing the nation’s borrowing authority at one time. Republicans want to “sit down and talk to resolve our differences” on both issues, Cantor told reporters today at the U.S. Capitol. House Republican leaders are weighing their next move in a standoff that has shut down the government and risks a U.S. default in two weeks. They plan to bring up a measure to raise the U.S. debt-limit as soon as next week as part of a new attempt to force President Barack Obama to negotiate on the budget, according to three people with knowledge of the strategy. The approach would merge the disputes over ending the partial government shutdown and raising the debt ceiling into one fiscal fight. “I’d like to get one agreement and be done,” House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy told reporters yesterday without offering details. Cantor didn’t provide details on when Republicans will introduce a measure to raise the debt ceiling. Leaders will meet with rank-and-file members behind closed doors tomorrow morning to discuss the next move. No Incentive Republican leaders are attempting to pair their party’s priorities with a debt-limit increase, a plan they shelved last month to focus on a stopgap measure to fund the government in the new fiscal year. The goal is to have a bill ready in the coming days, even without resolving the partial government shutdown, according to a Republican lawmaker and two leadership aides who asked not to be identified to discuss the strategy. There’s no incentive for the Republican-controlled House to take up a Senate-passed short-term measure without add-ons because many lawmakers don’t yet feel the effects of the government shutdown now in its third day, the people said.

Obama’s already negotiating and the GOP demanded new cuts---markets already perceive default as likely which means they’ve factored in their impacts

Peter **Schroeder 10-3**, The Hill, “GOP puts new price on debt hike (Video),” <http://thehill.com/homenews/news/326271-gop-puts-new-price-on-debt-hike#ixzz2gh1fRpw7>

GOP puts new price on debt hike (Video) Rank-and-file members want Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) to return to the so-called “Boehner Rule,” which they say means any debt limit hike must be matched by an equal amount of spending cuts. An earlier GOP measure to raise the debt ceiling included a host of GOP priorities, including defunding ObamaCare and constructing the Keystone XL pipeline, but not dollar-for-dollar spending cuts. Now, as it looks increasingly like the government shutdown fight will be paired with raising the debt ceiling, Republicans are pushing hard for a strong opening bid and are adamant that changes to entitlement programs be included in any final deal. “The American people are realizing that spending has got to be brought under control,” said Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.). “I want three dollars’ worth of cuts for any dollar [of debt limit increase.]” Washington is struggling to find a way out of the standoff over the government shutdown with the Oct. 17 deadline for raising the debt ceiling fast approaching. The earlier GOP plan has been shelved, but a spokesman for Boehner on Wednesday said it technically met the Boehner Rule when taking into account both cuts and economic growth. Rep. Kevin Brady (R-Texas), who released an economic report touting the benefits of the earlier plan, told The Hill on Wednesday that his colleagues are looking for more “meaningful” cuts, particularly on entitlements. “It’s very much in play,” he said of the dollar-for-dollar approach. “Discretionary savings were modest but important, but really to get a handle on our finances, we’ve got to really start to save the entitlements.” Asked what he wants on the debt ceiling deal, Rep. Marlin Stutzman (R-Ind.) quickly replied, “dollar-for-dollar cuts.” “We’ve got to start getting control of our spending,” he added. “I’d like to see us even address entitlement programs.” In private, many in the financial industry are growing increasingly concerned about a possible default, given the broad gap between the two parties and the shrinking timeline for action. President Obama has repeatedly said he will not negotiate over raising the debt limit even as he called congressional leaders to the White House on Wednesday to discuss both the shutdown and debt ceiling. Some speculate stocks must crash to get the sides to compromise. “People are willing to risk it all, the credibility of the country … for political reasons,” said one banking lobbyist. “You let the market fall by 400 or 500 points and watch the constituent calls start to come in.” The president huddled Wednesday with the heads of the nation’s largest financial institutions, who reiterated their concern over using the debt limit as a political tool. “Individual members of our group represent every point on the political spectrum,” Goldman Sachs head Lloyd Blankfein told reporters after the private meeting. “You can litigate these policy issues, you can re-litigate these policy issues in a public forum, but they shouldn’t use the threat of causing the U.S. to fail on its obligation to repay debt as a cudgel.” Republicans have long argued they have public opinion on their side in the debt fight, but a new poll released Wednesday by CNN/ORC International found that a majority of the public believe failing to raise the debt limit would be a bad thing for the nation. Only 38 percent said it would be a positive. A Quinnipiac University poll released one day earlier found 64 percent opposed blocking a debt-limit boost, while 27 percent favored it. Those results suggest a significant shift from earlier polling, which typically found a large number of Americans opposed to hiking the borrowing limit. A Sept. 13 poll from NBC News and The Wall Street Journal found twice as many Americans opposed a debt limit boost than supported it. Republicans insist they will have leverage in the debt-ceiling talks with the White House.

Obama will act unilaterally to auction Treasury bonds to protect the economy

Drum, 9/25/13– blogger for Mother Jones (Kevin, “If We Reach the Debt Limit, Obama Will Probably Just Break Through It Anyway” <http://www.motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2013/09/obama-debt-ceiling-bond-auction>)

We have various laws that require the federal government to disburse money. However, if we reach our statutory debt limit without Congress raising it, we'll have another law that says the government can't borrow any more money. Matt Yglesias comments: So we're headed straight for a legal and constitutional crisis that could also become a financial crisis. What laws does the executive branch follow and which does it break? What litigation will result from any decision, and who will prevail? I think the conventional wisdom actually somewhat overstates the odds of this leading to a total financial meltdown. Worst comes to worst, you pay people with IOUs for a week and then organize an "illegal" debt auction where bonds will sell at a modest premium to currently prevailing rates and ultimately the courts legitimize the option. But that will definitely be a kind of constitutional meltdown that will permanently shake confidence in the American financial and political system. I don't know if this is exactly how things will unfold, but it's in the right ballpark. I realize that a lot of people are still pushing the platinum coin thing, but keep in mind that even if you don't buy any of the arguments for why it's illegal, it only works if you can deposit the coin at the Fed. And the Fed has already said it wouldn't accept it. So it's not a live option no matter how passionately you believe it's legal. But if the debt ceiling showdown lasts more than a couple of weeks, it's likely that President Obama will simply order the Treasury to start auctioning bonds regardless. Maybe under the authority of the 14th Amendment, maybe under his authority as commander-in-chief. Maybe he'll declare a state of emergency of some kind. Who knows? But eventually this is how things will work out, with Obama acting because he has to, and because he knows that courts will be loathe to intervene in a political dispute between the executive and legislative branches. In any case, it would be a helluva mess. Republicans really need to grow up and stop treating the livelihoods of millions of workers and the good faith of the United States as mere partisan chew toys. It's long past time for the business community to stage an intervention.