# Round 1

## 2AC

### Special Forces PIC

#### Targeted killing is only drone strikes

Bachman, 2013

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Operation ‘Neptune Spear’ as well as the alleged Israeli Mossad Operation to kill the Hamas official Mahmud al-Mabhuh in Dubai in 201122 involved the use of Special Forces on the ground, or intelligence operatives/assets respectively, constitute commando operations as well targeting operations in the wider sense. Such tactical capture and kill operations executed by Special Forces assets are not the focus of this short contribution: its focus is solely on targeted killing, as a means of warfare which is executed by using remotely piloted aircraft, UAVs or drones respectively, as weapons platform.

#### Turn- Judicial review key to maximize effectiveness of SOF

Robinson 12

[Linda Robinson, Adjunct Senior Fellow for U.S. National Security and Foreign Policy Council on Foreign Relations, “Testimony on Special Operations Forces”, July 11, 2012, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&ved=0CDsQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fi.cfr.org%2Fcontent%2Fpublications%2Fattachments%2FL.RobinsonTestimony070912.pdf&ei=SoBHUpTkHcfwyAHj5IG4Aw&usg=AFQjCNGNooyZRk\_a8DY47epbIKzmoUe8\_A&sig2=c-FTY\_VYboUfeP\_yLiJU0g&bvm=bv.53217764,d.aWc, \\wyo-bb]

There is no more important issue to national security than making sure that special operations forces are developed¶ and employed in a way that maximizes their full potential because they will very likely continue to play a¶ disproportionately large role relative to their size in ensuring U.S. national security in the years ahead. First, we are in¶ a highly resource-constrained environment and security solutions employing small, scalable and highly skilled units¶ such as SOF are cost effective. Second, the small footprint solution – if employed correctly – is often much more¶ acceptable to friends and allies around the world than large-scale military operations. Third, SOF are designed to¶ address many of the threats that will dominate the landscape, to include terrorists, insurgents, transnational criminal¶ networks and other nonstate actors empowered by technology and other forces of globalization. They also play¶ important niche roles in conventional conflicts, countering weapons of mass destruction and against adversaries that¶ employ unconventional tactics. Indeed, one of the key challenges for the employment of SOF is to prioritize their use¶ and develop innovative ways to extend their impact.¶ In the past decade, a great deal of attention and resources has been devoted to developing a world-class direct action or¶ surgical strike capability as part of the special operations’ suite of capabilities. In particular, the national SOF or¶ national mission force is highly optimized in terms of its organization and the enablers provided to it. I see two areas¶ in regard to the direct approach that may warrant further development. One is a policy issue: I believe that an¶ established standard procedure for systematically weighing the costs and benefits of employing unilateral raids or¶ strikes via unmanned drones could improve the viability of this tactic over the longer run. This procedure and as much¶ of the evidence or justification for such strikes as possible should be shared widely. It may also be advisable to institute¶ a congressional or judicial review mechanism. Finally, outside theaters of war the use of the direct approach should be¶ applied to imminent and dire threats to U.S. citizens, soil or vital interests. Measures such as these could shore up the¶ long-term viability of the direct approach and ensure that potential second and third order consequences are¶ deliberately included in each assessment. At a policy level this would help ensure that the right balance between the¶ direct and indirect approach is struck. As both the current and former commanders of U.S. Special Operations¶ Command have said repeatedly in testimony before Congress and elsewhere, the direct approach only buys time for¶ the indirect approach to work, and such a process would help guard against overreliance on the short-term expedient¶ that may be counterproductive over the longer term.

#### No Solvency--

#### Can’t solve blowback—Special forces targeted killings cause civilian casualties

Mackenzie, 2011

[Jean, 5-13-11, Afghanistan War: Are Special Forces and targeted killings the answer?, http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/asia-pacific/afghanistan/110513/afghanistan-war-are-special-forces-and-targete] /Wyo-MB

KABUL, Afghanistan — Still riding the wave of euphoria over the Abbottabad strike that took down America’s most-wanted enemy, some in the U.S. policy establishment are advocating for an increased use of Special Forces and the strategic operations they conduct.¶ Night raids, or “intelligence-driven” attacks on specific individuals or compounds, already represent a much larger part of the Afghanistan war strategy than they did before Gen. David Petraeus assumed command of U.S. and NATO troops here last summer.¶ The attacks are credited with decimating the mid-level Taliban leadership, and many see them as the way forward if U.S. President Barack Obama makes good on his promise to begin a significant drawdown of American troops in Afghanistan beginning in July.¶ But a string of botched strikes over the past years demonstrates what happens when things go wrong. Disastrous public relations fallout from the deaths of innocent civilians may well outweigh the gains made by successful operations in a population-centric conflict whose outcome will ultimately depend on whom the Afghan people choose as their best guarantor of safety and prosperity.¶ The most recent “mistake” occurred just a few nights ago in Nangarhar province.¶ The press release by the media office for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) bore the fairly innocuous headline: “One armed individual, one local national killed during security operation.”¶ Closer reading revealed that the “armed individual” was a member of the Afghan National Police, and the “local national” was a twelve-year-old girl, later identified as the police officer’s niece, Nilofar.¶ The U.S. forces had the wrong house. NATO apologized.¶ “We understand any civilian loss of life is detrimental to our cause and to our efforts to secure the population,” said Rear Admiral Hal Pittman, ISAF deputy chief of staff for communication. We are working with our Afghan security force counterparts to understand what happened and take steps to prevent this from happening in the future.”¶ As heartbreaking as the deaths in Nangarhar might be to the family and friends of those involved, they are at least publicly acknowledged to have been military errors.¶ Not so the death of a former mujaheddin commander killed by a NATO strike in September 2010, along with nine others. He was publicly but erroneously identified as Mohammad Amin, the Taliban shadow deputy governor of Takhar province.¶ A report recently released by the Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN) found that the target of the strike, Zabet Amanullah, was a civilian who was working on the parliamentary election campaign of his nephew. With him in his convoy were election officials and other civilians.¶ The author, Kate Clark, gives a detailed account of the strike, along with biographies of both Amanullah and Amin. She also includes an interview with Amin, alive and well and living in Pakistan, conducted months after the raid by Michael Semple, a renowned expert on the Taliban.¶ Still, up to the present, NATO insists that it got the right man.¶ The nine others were also targeted because of their proximity to a “known terrorist,” according to the report.¶ Figures released by the Unite Nations indicate that the numbers of civilians killed or injured by the international troops is going down, but the effect of those operations that do go wrong is all out of proportion to their numbers.¶ The deaths of nine young boys in Kunar province in March at the hands of NATO attack helicopters sent Afghan President Hamid Karzai into tears, and provoked an angry reaction in the Afghan Parliament.¶ In Paktia last year, three young women, two of them pregnant, were killed in a bungled raid. It took determined media pressure to force an acknowledgement and an apology from the military.¶ But these are the attacks that NATO accepts, and whose victims are counted among those killed. There are many more where the military has denied the accounts of the Afghan government and locals, refused to accept responsibility, and whose casualties are never included in the ranks of dead civilians.¶ The 10 killed in Takhar last year are just the tip of the iceberg.¶ Take a raid in Ghazi Abad, Kunar province, in February, in which NATO insists it targeted and killed more than 30 insurgents.

#### Can’t solve cred or international norms without inclusion of special forces—regulation of all targeted killing is key

Bachman, 2013

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This article concludes with the prediction that the use of UCAS as a method of warfare (together with Special Forces capture and kill operations) will increase in the future. The overall potential military benefit of using drones as a method of warfare on the battlefield of the future is not disputed and with the USA having become a key player in the use of this form of warfare, other nations are set to follow its lead. The use of drones and targeted killing operations will remain a means of warfare of first choice to counter Asymmetric and Hybrid Threats. It seems certain that targeted killing will continue to be an important element of future US long-term counterterrorism and security strategies. It also seems likely that in light of defence budget cuts, troop reductions as well as a growing unwillingness to scarify the lives of soldiers of Western countries, more states will consider turning utilizing armed drones as a means of show of force in the future. Combat capabilities can be significantly enhanced when the use of UAVs are available: this reflects directly on the dual use nature of such airborne systems, which allow for an unarmed use for reconnaissance as well as armed for combat.140 The recent call by the UN Secretary General to deploy UAVs to Congo to support the African peacekeeping forces of MONUSCO in their attempt to fight rebels in the east of the country highlights the potential use of UAVs outside targeted killing operations.141 This ‘dual use nature’ of UAVs, unarmed versus armed, has been recognized for the use in policing and monitoring roles with the potential of further proliferation and use.¶ The use of drones for executing targeted killing in Afghanistan and Pakistan might well increase in the next years, a forecast which is partly founded in the fact that the USA is moving already now in a transitional role in Afghanistan and plans to end major combat operations there this spring. The withdrawal of combat troops will necessitate the increased use of targeted killing in future, executed by both drones and special forces, in order to close existing combat capability gaps during and after the transition of operational control to the Afghan National Army. In addition, Obama’s decision to appoint John Brennan, his former Security Advisor and key promoter of the use of drones for targeted killing, to the top job of CIA director may likely result in an increase reliance on this means of warfare by the USA.142¶ The future use of drones will not only affect national security strategies and policies, but eventually also impact on how we perceive interstate war within its legal contexts of the jus ad bellum as well as the law of conflict, the jus in bello. These future developments will challenge the international legal fraternity for some time to come: it will be a key responsibility for the international lawyer to discuss and scrutinize these developments within their wider political, legal and military context, and to shape this process. This article concludes with a sobering warning that while targeted killing operations may be an effective means of achieving short-term tactical goals within the scope of a wider operational objective, the unregulated and increased use of targeting killings by the USA (and others) in the ‘war on terror’ may be both immoral as well as illegal in the long run.

#### The counterplan links just as much—Special forces use drone strikes

Kitfield, 2-3-13

[James, Senior correspondent national journal, Targeted Killings: Obama’s Endless War, http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/targeted-killings-obama-s-endless-war-20130131] /Wyo-MB

For a president whose foreign policy is defined in large part by his determination to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it was a signature expression of hope for a more peaceful era to come. Yet even as Obama spoke, his administration was laying a more solid foundation for a largely undeclared and seemingly endless war that rages on. In fact, after a period of relative quiet on the counterterrorism front, the United States rang in the new year with a deadly display of firepower, as drone aircraft operated by the CIA and special-operations forces unleashed a fusillade of Hellfire missiles on suspected terrorists and insurgents in multiple countries.¶ In Pakistan, CIA drones struck seven times within a 10-day span in 2013, marking a major escalation in the pace of the controversial attacks. In North Waziristan, Pakistan, where residents complain of hearing a constant buzz of unseen drones circling overhead, anti-American street protests are frequent in some areas. Likewise in Yemen, after a lull in activity, U.S. counterterrorism forces have reportedly conducted five drone strikes since Christmas, equaling in a matter of days half the total strikes in that country in all of 2011. Coincidentally, that was also the year cleric Anwar al-Awlaki and two other U.S.-born citizens associated with al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula became the first Americans to find themselves in the bull’s-eye. By adding them to the target list, the program that has come to define the Obama administration’s counterterrorism policies crossed a Rubicon.

### Executive Reform CP

#### And, Executive reform fails

not neutral decision-maker, secrecy and speed undermine effective decision making

Chebab, 2012

[Ahmad, Georgetown University Law Center, Retrieving the Role of Accountability in the Targeted Killings Context: A Proposal for Judicial Review, 3-30-12, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=2031572] /Wyo-MB

U.S. citizens, there must be a degree of inter-branch process when such individuals are targeted by the government to ensure that (1) these individuals truly pose a direct and imminent threat to the United States and (2) targeting is truly the last resort.¶ The preceding case law suggests that domestic legal protections for U.S. citizens necessitate a higher procedural threshold.102 Justice O’Connor acknowledged the danger inherent in exclusively intra-branch process in Hamdi when she asserted that the Executive is not a neutral decision-maker as the “even purportedly fair adjudicators are disqualified by their interest in the controversy.”103 In rejecting the government’s argument that a “separation of powers” analysis mandates a heavily circumscribed role for the courts in these circumstances, Justice O’Connor concluded that in times of conflict, the Constitution “most assuredly envisions a role¶ for all three branches when individual liberties are at stake.”104 Applying this reasoning to the entirely intra-executive process currently being afforded to American citizens like al-Awlaki would suggest that in the realm of targeted killing, where the deprivation is one’s life, the absence of any “neutral decision-maker” outside the executive branch is a clear violation of due process guaranteed by the Constitution. On a policy level, the danger of intra-executive process is similarly alarming. As Judge James Baker, in describing the nature of covert actions put it:¶ Because this process is internal to the executive branch, it is subject to executive-branch exception or amendment, with general or case-specific approval by the president. This is risky because in this area, as in other areas of national security practice, the twin necessities of secrecy and speed may pull as they do against the competing interests of deliberate review, dissent, and accountable decision-making.105

#### Only congress can ensure sufficient clarity

Mark David Maxwell, Colonel, Judge Advocate with the U.S. Army, Winter 2012, TARGETED KILLING, THE LAW, AND TERRORISTS, Joint Force Quarterly, http://www.ndu.edu/press/targeted-killing.html

The weakness of this theory is that it is not codified in U.S. law; it is merely the extrapolation of international theorists and organizations. The only entity under the Constitution that can frame and settle Presidential power regarding the enforcement of international norms is Congress. As the check on executive power, Congress must amend the AUMF to give the executive a statutory roadmap that articulates when force is appropriate and under what circumstances the President can use targeted killing. This would be the needed endorsement from Congress, the other political branch of government, to clarify the U.S. position on its use of force regarding targeted killing. For example, it would spell out the limits of American lethality once an individual takes the status of being a member of an organized group. Additionally, statutory clarification will give other states a roadmap for the contours of what constitutes anticipatory self-defense and the proper conduct of the military under the law of war. Congress should also require that the President brief it on the decision matrix of articulated guidelines before a targeted killing mission is ordered. As Kenneth Anderson notes, “[t]he point about briefings to Congress is partly to allow it to exercise its democratic role as the people’s representative.”74 The desire to feel safe is understandable. The consumers who buy SUVs are not buying them to be less safe. Likewise, the champions of targeted killings want the feeling of safety achieved by the elimination of those who would do the United States harm. But allowing the President to order targeted killing without congressional limits means the President can manipulate force in the name of national security without tethering it to the law advanced by international norms. The potential consequence of such unilateral executive action is that it gives other states, such as North Korea and Iran, the customary precedent to do the same. Targeted killing might be required in certain circumstances, but if the guidelines are debated and understood, the decision can be executed with the full faith of the people’s representative, Congress. When the decision is made without Congress, the result might make the United States feel safer, but the process eschews what gives a state its greatest safety: the rule of law.

#### 2nd, Perm do both

#### Perm—Shields the Link to politics—Congress purposefully doesn’t act on legislation or waits for executive action so that they can blame the president

[Neil Buchanan, Law Professor, February 21, 2013, Spending Priorities, the Separation of Powers, and the Rule of Law, http://www.dorfonlaw.org/2013/02/spending-priorities-separation-of.html, uwyo//amp]

The debt ceiling is keeping us busy, here at Dorf on Law. Later today, both Professor Dorf and I will be speaking at Columbia Law School, at the invitation of the Law Review editors who worked on our two articles in 2012. Over the weekend, we also finalized a new article, which Professor Dorf briefly described here yesterday. In it, we extend our ongoing analysis of the constitutional issues surrounding the debt ceiling. The short-hand versions of the two main sections of the article are: (1) Yes, there really is a trilemma, and (2) No, the debt ceiling is still not binding, even if everyone knows that they are creating a trilemma when they pass the spending and taxing laws. The latter point is important because already-existing trilemmas (such as the one that Congress and the President faced last month, before the Republicans capitulated by passing their "Debt Ceiling Amnesia Act") do not exist when there are no appropriated funds for the President to spend. (Strictly speaking, there would be a trilemma if even the minimal level of emergency spending required by law during a government shutdown could only be financed by borrowing in excess of the debt ceiling. But given that most of the tax code is enacted on a continuing basis -- that is, unlike spending, tax provisions generally do not expire on a particular date -- there will generally be enough money coming in to finance emergency operations without having to borrow.) Every spending/taxing agreement, therefore, potentially necessitates issuing enough net new debt to require an increase in the debt ceiling. When that happens, one could invoke something like the "last in time" rule, but we conclude that the problem should not be resolved by relying upon a legal canon that is generally used for rationalizing inconsistent laws. Rather, the more fundamental question is how to preserve the separation of powers. As we point out, Congress might actually want to give away its legislative powers, thus putting the political blame on the President for unpopular cuts (a point that Professor Scott Bauries at the University of Kentucky College of Law calls "learned legislative helplessness") -- but their desire to pass the buck is actually all the more reason not to let them do so. With great power comes great responsibility.

#### 3rd, counterplan links to politics

Schier 9

[Steven, Professor of Poliitcal Science at Carleton,"Understanding the Obama Presidency," The Forum: Vol. 7: Iss. 1, Berkely Electronic Press, http://www.bepress.com/forum/vol7/iss1/art10]

In additional to formal powers, a president’s informal power is situationally derived and highly variable. Informal power is a function of the “political capital” presidents amass and deplete as they operate in office. Paul Light defines several components of political capital: party support of the president in Congress, public approval of the presidential conduct of his job, the President’s electoral margin and patronage appointments (Light 1983, 15). Richard Neustadt’s concept of a president’s “professional reputation” likewise figures into his political capital. Neustadt defines this as the “impressions in the Washington community about the skill and will with which he puts [his formal powers] to use” (Neustadt 1990, 185). In the wake of 9/11, George W. Bush’s political capital surged, and both the public and Washington elites granted him a broad ability to prosecute the war on terror. By the later stages of Bush’s troubled second term, beset by a lengthy and unpopular occupation of Iraq and an aggressive Democratic Congress, he found that his political capital had shrunk. Obama’s informal powers will prove variable, not stable, as is always the case for presidents. Nevertheless, he entered office with a formidable store of political capital. His solid electoral victory means he initially will receive high public support and strong backing from fellow Congressional partisans, a combination that will allow him much leeway in his presidential appointments and with his policy agenda. Obama probably enjoys the prospect of a happier honeymoon during his first year than did George W. Bush, who entered office amidst continuing controversy over the 2000 election outcome. Presidents usually employ power to disrupt the political order they inherit in order to reshape it according to their own agendas. Stephen Skowronek argues that “presidents disrupt systems, reshape political landscapes, and pass to successors leadership challenges that are different from the ones just faced” (Skowronek 1997, 6). Given their limited time in office and the hostile political alignments often present in Washington policymaking networks and among the electorate, presidents must force political change if they are to enact their agendas. In recent decades, Washington power structures have become more entrenched and elaborate (Drucker 1995) while presidential powers – through increased use of executive orders and legislative delegation (Howell 2003) –have also grown. The presidency has more powers in the early 21st century but also faces more entrenched coalitions of interests, lawmakers, and bureaucrats whose agendas often differ from that of the president. This is an invitation for an energetic president – and that seems to describe Barack Obama – to engage in major ongoing battles to impose his preferences.

### Obama CP

#### Transparency without reform doesn’t solve precedent---investigating wrongful deaths is key

Naureen Shah 13, August 17th, 2013, "Obama has not delivered on May's promise of transparency on drones," The Guardian, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/aug/17/obama-promise-transparency-drone-killing

Even more damning is that, in the absence of any commitment to investigating credible allegations of unlawful deaths, the United States appears indifferent to the question of who is actually dying in drone strikes. President Obama admitted in May that four US citizens had been killed, three of whom – including 16-year-old Abdulrahman Aal-Awlaki – he admitted were not intended targets. But the president did not define the identities of the more than 4,000 other people killed, or specifically address reports that a significant number of the dead – in assessments varying between 400 and nearly 1,000, according to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism – were civilians.¶ When the president acknowledges four deaths of US citizens, but not 4,000 deaths of non-Americans, he signals to the world a callous and discriminatory disregard for human life. Perhaps only a fraction of these 4,000 deaths were unlawful. But acknowledging and investigating these deaths is a matter of dignity and justice – for the survivors of strikes, their communities and their countrymen.¶ When deaths are found to be unlawful, victims' families and survivors have a right to reparation. Refusing to investigate deaths is a matter of disrespect both for international law and for the public's right to know the full truth.¶ Many critics, before President Obama's May address, feared that foreign governments would follow the US to lead and conduct secret drone strikes without regard for international law. They should still be concerned about the precedent the US government is setting: refusing to investigate or be held accountable for wrongful deaths.¶ The risk now is not just that the late May reforms on drone strikes were half-measures, but that they were calibrated to merely reassure the public, defuse criticism, and avert longer, harder scrutiny of whether the government's actions are lawful and right. A token dose of transparency may remove the sting of government secrecy, but it does not cure the disease.

#### Congressional involvement is key – internal executive review sets a precedent for future administrations to destroy due process that’s key to rule of law

Feldman 13 (Noah, Professor of Constitutional and International Law – Harvard University, “Obama’s Drone Attack on Your Due Process,” Bloomberg, 2-8, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-02-08/obama-s-drone-attack-on-your-due-process.html>)

The cases cited by the white paper provide no precedent for the idea that due process could be satisfied by some secret, internal process within the executive branch -- not that any such process is even mentioned. The reason they don’t is obvious: There is no such precedent. Never, to my knowledge, in the history of due process jurisprudence, has a court said that a neutral decision maker wasn’t necessary. And as Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote in language cited in the Mathews case, “the essence of due process is the requirement that a person in jeopardy of serious loss [be given] notice of the case against him and opportunity to meet it.” Although the white paper doesn’t say so, Awlaki even tried to get a hearing before he was killed. His father asked a federal court to find that he wasn’t a terrorist. But the court never heard his claim, because the Obama administration persuaded it not to consider the case. When Paul Clement, solicitor general under George W. Bush, told the Supreme Court in the Hamdi oral argument that Hamdi had been given the opportunity to be heard during his interrogation, a notable gasp went through the courtroom. Justice Sandra Day O’Connor later singled out this outrageous claim for special criticism. The Obama administration’s apparent belief that due process can be satisfied in secret inside the executive branch is arguably a greater departure from precedent. It ß Marked 09:39 ß is a travesty of the very notion of due process. And to borrow a phrase from Justice Robert Jackson, it will now lie about like a loaded weapon ready for the hand of any administration that needs it. The white paper should have said that due process doesn’t apply on the battlefield. By instead making due process into a rubber stamp, the administration is ignoring precedent and subverting the idea of the rule of law. When is some law worse than none? When that law is so watered down that it loses the meaning it has had for 800 years.

#### Strong rule of law key to solve extinction

Tehranian and Clements 05

(Majid and Kevin P., America & The World: The Double Bind, Pgs. 18-19) /wyo-mm

In this globalized world closed societies are in rapid decline. No country can act in isolation. The actions of the world’s most powerful country will have lasting consequences on people all over the world. At one time the foremost proponent of the rule of law and the leading creator of multilateral institutions the United States has now decided to assert US exceptionalism to the very institutions it helped create. By these actions it is working to undermine the international rule of law. The United States is setting a dangerous precedent for other states by retreating from commitments under treaties. These treaties and the regimes that implement them provide the legal and institutional basis for ensuring minimal compliance with international norms and standards. Furthermore, refusal to enter into treaties that are designed to build global security will ultimately work to the detriment of the United States. Current global challenges will require stronger, not weaker, frameworks for cooperation. If states assert a right to act pre-emptively and without legitimation from the United Nations the challenges to international institutions and the rule of law will be very great indeed. Instead of prudence governing decisions, strike thresholds will be lowered and the margins of error increased. For example, the perceived threat from Iraq’s production and use of weapons of mass destruction turned out to be erroneous. . Since nuclear weapons are now part of the national security strategy of the United States there would have been even more damage had the United States used nuclear weapons. The use of force of any kind, let alone the use of weapons of mass destruction that do not make any distinctions between combatant and civilian, cannot be decided unilaterally. The United States’ unique role as the world’s only country with unsurpassed military might makes it a particularly fearsome and feared country. When it begins to adopt policies that allow it to be the sole arbiter of how it will behave for the benefit of 280 million people in a world of over 6 billon people, its minority status will quickly make it not only a feared, but also a despised country. The United States is dependent upon other countries to detect and prevent acts of terrorism. It must move within a framework of agreed upon norms and standards. This ensures that the safeguards which the rule of law brings to protect human rights, secure justice, and seek peaceful solutions to conflict will lead to a stable and sustainable future for the whole human family

### Prez Powers

#### 1st, Obama weakened by his behavior internationally, acts inconsistently and leads from behind

Pipes 11-13

[Daniel, president of the Middle East Forum, “The Silver Lining of Obama’s Weak America”, *National Review Online*, 11-13-2013 <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/363790/silver-lining-obamas-weak-america-daniel-pipes//wyo> CTL]

American foreign policy is in unprecedented free fall, with a feckless and distracted White House barely paying attention to the outside world, and when it does, acting in an inconsistent, weak, and fantastical manner. If one were to discern something so grand as an Obama Doctrine, it would read: “Snub friends, coddle opponents, devalue American interests, seek consensus, and act unpredictably.” Along with many other critics, I rue this state of affairs. But the French action demonstrates that it does have a silver lining. From World War II until Obama waltzed in, the U.S. government had established a pattern of taking the lead in international affairs and then getting criticized for doing so. Three examples: In Vietnam, Americans felt the need to convince their South Vietnamese ally to resist North Vietnam and the Vietcong. During much of the Cold War, they pressured allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to resist Soviet pressure. During the 1990s, they urged Middle Eastern states to contain and punish Saddam Hussein. In each case, Americans rushed ahead on their own, then beseeched allies to work together against a common enemy — a completely illogical pattern. The nearby and weak Vietnamese, Europeans, and Arabs should have feared Hanoi, Moscow, and Baghdad more than the distant and strong Americans. The locals should have been begging the Yankees to protect them. Why was this persistently not the case? Because the U.S. government, persuaded of its superior vision and greater morality, repeated the same mistake: Seeing allies as slow-moving and confused hindrances more than as full-fledged partners, it brushed them aside and assumed main responsibilities. With rare exceptions (Israel, and France to a lesser extent), a paternalistic America effectively infantilized its smaller allies. This had the untoward consequence of leaving those allies with an awareness of their own irrelevance. Sensing that their actions hardly mattered, they indulged in political immaturity. Not responsible for their own destinies, they felt free to engage in anti-Americanism as well as other dysfunctional behaviors — corruption in Vietnam, passivity in NATO, and greed in the Middle East. Mogens Glistrup, a Danish politician, embodied this problem, proposing in 1972 that Danes save both taxes and lives by disbanding their military and replacing it with an answering machine in the Ministry of Defense that would play a single message in Russian: “We capitulate!” Under Barack Obama, the United States is no longer the adult in the room, having taken a seat at the kids’ table. Responding to crises on a case-by-case basis and preferring to act in consultation with other governments, he prefers “leading from behind” and to be just one of the pack, as though he were prime minister of Belgium rather than president of the United States. Ironically, this weakness has the salutary effect of a hard slap across the face, forcing our allies to realize that Washington has too long coddled them. Jaundiced allies like Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Japan are waking to the reality that they cannot take pot shots at Uncle Sam, assured in the knowledge that he will save them from themselves. They now see that their actions count, a sobering new experience. For example, Turkish leaders are trying to light a fire under the administration to get it to intervene in the Syrian civil war. Thus does Obama’s ineptitude have the potential to turn reluctant, self-absorbed partners into more serious, mature actors. At the same time, his incompetence promises to change the U.S.’s reputation from overbearing nanny to much-appreciated colleague, along the way reducing ire directed at Americans.

#### 4th, Restrictions inevitable---only a question of whether they are deliberate or haphazard

Benjamin Wittes 9, senior fellow and research director in public law at the Brookings Institution, is the author of Law and the Long War: The Future of Justice in the Age of Terror and is also a member of the Hoover Institution's Task Force on National Security and Law, “Legislating the War on Terror: An Agenda for Reform”, November 3, Book, p. 17

A new administration now confronts the same hard problems that plagued its ideologically opposite predecessor, and its very efforts to turn the page on the past make acute the problems of institutionalization. For while the new administration can promise to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and can talk about its desire to prosecute suspects criminally, for example, it cannot so easily forswear noncriminal detention. While it can eschew the term "global war on terror," it cannot forswear those uses of force—Predator strikes, for example—that law enforcement powers would never countenance. Nor is it hastening to give back the surveillance powers that Congress finally gave the Bush administration. In other words, its very efforts to avoid the Bush administrations vocabulary have only emphasized the conflicts hybrid nature—indeed- emphasized that the United States is building something new here, not merely applying something old.¶ That point should not provoke controversy. The evidence that the United States is fumbling toward the creation of hybrid institutions to handle terrorism cases is everywhere around us. U.S. law, for example, now contemplates extensive- probing judicial review of detentions under the laws of war—a naked marriage of criminal justice and wartime traditions. It also contemplates warrantless wiretapping with judicial oversight of surveillance targeting procedures—thereby mingling the traditional judicial role in reviewing domestic surveillance with the vacuum cleaner-type acquisition of intelligence typical of overseas intelligence gathering. Slowly but surely, through an unpredictable combination of litigation, legislation, and evolutionary developments within executive branch policy, the nation is creating novel institutional arrangements to authorize and regulate the war on terror. The real question is not whether institutionalization will take place but whether it will take place deliberately or haphazardly, whether the United States will create through legislation the institutions with which it wishes to govern itself or whether it will allow an endless sequence of common law adjudications to shape them.¶ The authors of the chapters in this book disagree about a great many things. They span a considerable swath of the U.S. political spectrum, and they would no doubt object to some of one another's policy prescriptions. Indeed, some of the proposals are arguably inconsistent with one another, and it will be the very rare reader who reads this entire volume and wishes to see all of its ideas implemented in legislation. What binds these authors together is not the programmatic aspects of their policy prescriptions but the belief in the value of legislative action to help shape the contours of the continuing U.S. confrontation with terrorism. That is, the authors all believe that Congress has a significant role to play in the process of institutionalization—and they have all attempted to describe that role with reference to one of the policy areas over which Americans have sparred these past several years and will likely continue sparring over the next several years.

#### 7th, Political power is not zero sum—no trade off

Read, 3-1-12

[James, College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, jread@csbsju.edu, Is Power Zero-Sum or Variable-Sum? Old Arguments and New Beginnings, Political Science Faculty Publications.Paper 4, http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=polsci\_pubs] /Wyo-MB

The specific question with which this essay is concerned is whether power – and ¶ especially political power – should be regarded as inherently zero-sum, one‟s agent‟s gain ¶ entailing by definition an equivalent loss for another or others; or variable-sum, whereby it is ¶ possible to have mutual gains of power not offset by equivalent losses somewhere else (positivesum), and mutual losses of power not offset by equivalent gains somewhere else (negative-sum). ¶ This essay is part of a larger book-length project that will systematically examine zero-sum and ¶ variable-sum understandings of power; and argue that a variable-sum understanding of power is ¶ at least as fruitful in describing actual power relations – including relations characterized by ¶ significant conflict – as the zero-sum view (see Read 2009a; 2010).

#### 8th, We solve the Impact- specialized courts are fast- wouldn’t compromise operations

Somin, 13 [April 23rd, HEARING ON “DRONE WARS: THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND COUNTERTERRORISM IMPLICATIONS OF TARGETED KILLING” TESTIMONY BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SENATE JUDICIARY SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS April 23, 2013, Illya, Professor of Law]

B. Possible Institutional Safeguards. One partial solution to the problem of target selection would be to require officials to get advance authorization for targeting a United States citizen from a specialized court, similar to the FISA Court, which authorizes intelligence surveillance warrants for spying on suspected foreign agents in the United States. The specialized court could act faster than ordinary courts do and without warning the potential target, yet still serve as a check on unilateral executive power. In the present conflict, there are relatively few terrorist leaders who are American citizens. Given that reality, we might even be able to have more extensive judicial process than exists under FISA. Professor Amos Guiora of the University of Utah, a leading expert on legal regulation of counterterrorism operations with extensive experience in the Israeli military, has developed a proposal for a FISA-like oversight court that deserves serious consideration by this subcommittee, and Congress more generally.22 The idea of a drone strike oversight court has also been endorsed by former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who served in that position in both the Obama and George W. Bush administrations. Gates emphasizes that “some check on the president’s ability to do this has merit as we look to the long-term future,” so that the president would not have the unilateral power of “being able to execute” an American citizen.23 We might even consider developing a system of judicial approval for targeted strikes aimed at non-citizens. The latter process might have to be more streamlined than that for citizens, given the larger number of targets it would have to consider. But it is possible that it could act quickly enough to avoid compromising operations, while simultaneously acting as a check on abusive or reckless targeting. However, the issue of judicial review for strikes against non-citizens is necessarily more difficult than a court that only covers relatively rare cases directed at Americans.

### Politics

#### Support is snow balling for additional sanctions

Rubin 1-7

(Jennifer, Washington Post. “Iran sanctions opponents desperate” 1-7-14 http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/wp/2014/01/07/iran-sanctions-opponents-desperate///wyoccd)

Forty-nine senators have signed on to the Iran sanctions bill, and more will. Traditionally pro-Israel Democrats Tim Kaine (Va.), Chris Murphy (Conn.), Debbie Stabenow (Mich.) and Bill Nelson (Fla.) have yet to sign on. Among Republicans, Sen. Rand Paul (Ky.), who once tried to ingratiate himself with pro-Israel Christian conservatives, has not signed on. (Continuing his pattern of separating himself from Paul’s reflexive isolationism, Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas has signed on.)¶ The bipartisan roster exerts pressure on Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.) to make good on his promise to bring the bill to the floor.¶ The anti-sanctions crowd remains a gaggle made up of far-left activists, State Department sycophants and reluctant Democratic chairmen dragooned into opposing the measure by the White House. As to the first group, you know when the hit squad and consistently anti-Israel gang at Think Progress starts sending out hysterical e-mails citing the far-left Ploughshares Fund and the Obama-dominated Center for American Progress that sanctions are going to start a war that the anti-sanctions effort is scraping the bottom of the barrel. It’s a scurrilous charge (identical to the one the mullahs are using) to make about senators — including Democrats Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Kirsten Gillibrand (N.Y.), Ben Cardin (Md.) and Robert Menendez (N.J.) — who are actually sticking with the administration’s own words that sanctions are useful to pressure Iran to dismantle its illegal nuclear weapons program.¶ Just as before lopsided votes in favor of sanctions, a small cadre of ex-State Department and intelligence community hacks (including Thomas Pickering of the Benghazi review board) sent yet another letter urging the Democratic Senate Foreign Affairs chairman, Menendez, to back off. Former Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton dubbed this “the very essence of the State Department’s dominant culture on display.” (More colorfully, an ex-State Department official critical of Obama’s Iran policy wise-cracked, “If there is one thing they do not know how to do it’s negotiate. Listen, when the UAW goes in to wrestle concessions out of Ford, do you think they say, ‘I know, what we need is a retired ambassador to negotiate for us!’?) Menendez reminded viewers on MSNBC that this gang opposed sanctions consistently but it was Menendez and others’ fortitude on sanctions that brought the Iranians to the table.

#### Restrictions on targeted killing coming now—debates on transparency and oversight thump the disad

Stangler, 9-16-13

[Cole, In These Times staff writer based in northeast D.C., covering Congress, corruption and politics in Washington. His reporting has appeared in The Huffington Post and The American Prospect, Will Syria Re-Energize the Anti-Drone Movement?, http://inthesetimes.com/article/15627/will\_syria\_re\_energize\_the\_anti\_drone\_movement/] /Wyo-MB

“It can be enough to have champions in Congress who are going to really push these issues with the administration, especially if they’re on key committees,” Benjamin says. “We’re having a Drone Summit November 16 and 17, and before these issues around Syria, I was saying, ‘Oh, it’s not even worth it to try and get Congress people to come; they’re not going to want to be seen as speaking out against the administration’s policies.’ And now I feel totally differently. Now I feel like, ‘Yes, let’s push them to come to the drone summit. Let’s get them to be our champions.’ ”¶ One of those champions, at least on the issue of targeted killings, could very well be Grayson, who sits on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. In These Times asked the congress member if he was interested in addressing and reining in the administration’s use of drones.¶ “Yes, that’s up for debate,” Grayson answered. ”It’s clear now that we’ve killed over 100 children in these drone attacks. It’s difficult to characterize these children as, in any sense, Al-Qaeda members. And the problem with drone attacks is that it makes warfare almost invisible to everyone except the victims. The Obama administration has used drones according to published reports over 100 times in Pakistan and in Yemen. And what they’ve created was the same sort of secret war that we ended up condemning Nixon for in Cambodia. This is a war that kills, this is a war that maims, this is a war that has its collateral damage and its victims in spades—even the occasional American citizen who ends up being killed in these attacks without due process.”¶ Congressional oversight over the administration’s use of drones is restricted to the House and Senate Intelligence Committees, and even committee members receive only limited classified information. For the most part, Congress has shown little interest in drones, holding its first-ever hearings on the topic this year—although the U.S. government adopted drones for targeted killings over a decade ago, shortly after 9/11. The Senate Judiciary Committee held the first two hearings—one in March on the coming introduction of drones into domestic airspace, while the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights held another in April devoted to targeted killings (which the administration notably skipped out on). In May, the Congressional Progressive Caucus organized a separate hearing on drones. These hearings generated calls for greater transparency and federal oversight.

#### 3rd, plan popular in congress

Jakes 13

(Laura Jakes, writer for the Associate Press. “Congress Considers Putting Limits on Drone Strikes” 2-6-13 http://www.military.com/daily-news/2013/02/06/congress-considers-putting-limits-on-drone-strikes.html//wyoccd)

WASHINGTON -- Uncomfortable with the Obama administration's use of deadly drones, a growing number in Congress is looking to limit America's authority to kill suspected terrorists, even U.S. citizens. The Democratic-led outcry was emboldened by the revelation in a newly surfaced Justice Department memo that shows drones can strike against a wider range of threats, with less evidence, than previously believed.¶ The drone program, which has been used from Pakistan across the Middle East and into North Africa to find and kill an unknown number of suspected terrorists, is expected to be a top topic of debate when the Senate Intelligence Committee grills John Brennan, the White House's pick for CIA chief, at a hearing Thursday.¶ The White House on Tuesday defended its lethal drone program by citing the very laws that some in Congress once believed were appropriate in the years immediately after the Sept. 11 attacks but now think may be too broad.¶ "It has to be in the agenda of this Congress to reconsider the scope of action of drones and use of deadly force by the United States around the world because the original authorization of use of force, I think, is being strained to its limits," Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., said in a recent interview.¶ Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland, the No. 2 Democrat in the House, said Tuesday that "it deserves a serious look at how we make the decisions in government to take out, kill, eliminate, whatever word you want to use, not just American citizens but other citizens as well."¶ Hoyer added: "We ought to carefully review our policies as a country."¶ The Senate Foreign Relations Committee likely will hold hearings on U.S. drone policy, an aide said Tuesday, and Chairman Robert Menendez, D-N.J., and the panel's top Republican, Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee, both have quietly expressed concerns about the deadly operations. And earlier this week, a group of 11 Democratic and Republican senators urged President Barack Obama to release a classified Justice Department legal opinion justifying when U.S. counterterror missions, including drone strikes, can be used to kill American citizens abroad.¶ Without those documents, it's impossible for Congress and the public to decide "whether this authority has been properly defined, and whether the president's power to deliberately kill Americans is subject to appropriate limitations and safeguards," the senators wrote.

#### Iran prolif won’t spread

**Oswald, Global Security Newswire, 2013**

(Rachel, “Saudi Arabia Unlikely to Pursue Nuke: Experts”, 2-21, <http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/saudi-arabia-unlikely-pursue-nuke-should-iran-first-acquire-capability-experts/>, ldg)

Saudi Arabia is not likely to respond to a nuclear-armed Iran by pursuing a corresponding deterrent, but would instead look to boost its conventional military capabilities and acquire an outside nuclear defense guarantee, according to a new report by the Center for a New American Security. The United States and partner nations have warned that Tehran's suspected aim to develop a nuclear-weapon capability could lead to an atomic "domino effect" in the Middle East. A rich Persian Gulf nation with a long-running rivalry with Iran, Saudi Arabia is often cited as the Arab state most likely to pursue a nuclear arsenal. “The Saudis fear that Iran’s acquisition of nuclear weapons would tip the balance of regional leadership decisively in Tehran’s favor,” states the report, whose lead author, CNAS senior fellow Colin Kahl, served as deputy assistant Defense secretary for the Middle East from 2009 to 2011. “Saudi leaders also worry that a nuclear deterrent would enable Iran’s coercive diplomacy, allowing Tehran to run higher risks and more effectively push Arab states to accommodate Iranian interests.” The other two countries most frequently cited as likely to pursue domestic nuclear deterrents to counter Iran -- Egypt and Turkey -- are even less likely to do so than Saudi Arabia, the report says. Egypt lacks the resources to initiate a weapons program and is much less focused on the Iranian nuclear threat than Riyadh, the analysts found. Turkey, meanwhile, is already covered by the NATO nuclear guarantee. Senior Saudi officials have for years dropped hints that their kingdom might pursue a nuclear deterrent. Former Saudi intelligence chief and royal family member Turki al-Faisal early last year warned Riyadh would have to “study carefully all the options, including the option of acquiring weapons of mass destruction” in order to maintain balance with a nuclear-armed Iran. Tehran says its nuclear program has no military aspect. The 49-page report does not discount entirely the possibility that Riyadh might open a nuclear weapons production program or alternatively purchase a ready-made capability from Pakistan. It concludes, though, that the famously deliberative House of Saud would ultimately be steered away from these two scenarios for a number of reasons including not wanting to face punitive international sanctions and the possibility of coming under a neutralizing pre-emptive attack by Israel, which in past years has carried out airstrikes on known or suspected nuclear reactors in Iraq and Syria. There is also the fear of causing critical harm to Riyadh’s decades-long security relationship with Washington. “ß Marked 09:42 ß If Riyadh were to seek nuclear weapons, Saudi leaders would have to expect that U.S. security assistance would be dramatically curtailed. …Because the kingdom relies heavily on U.S. contracts for maintenance and spare parts, this would severely undermine the Saudi military’s ability to function and protect the kingdom from internal and external threats. The effect on core Saudi security interests would be immediate and severe,” concludes the report. Saudi Arabia at present does not have much in the way of nuclear capabilities though it is aggressively pursuing an atomic energy program with support from a number of foreign nations. The oil-rich state is in early talks with the Obama administration on a civilian atomic collaboration agreement that would allow Riyadh to gain access to U.S. nuclear materials and technology “for use in medicine, industry and power generation.” Kahl, and report co-authors Melissa Dalton and Matthew Irvine, indicated they do not think much of Saudi Arabia’s chances of acquiring an indigenous nuclear weapons capability in anything less than a decade, if at all. “Even if the kingdom’s technical prowess grows over time, any Saudi attempt to develop nuclear weapons would be complicated by significant bureaucratic and managerial challenges. Put bluntly, the Saudi bureaucracy lacks the human capital, managerial expertise, safety culture and regulatory, technical and legal structures

### K

#### Preventing extinction is the highest ethical priority – we should take action to prevent the Other from dying FIRST, only THEN can we consider questions of value to life

Paul Wapner, associate professor and director of the Global Environmental Policy Program at American University, Winter 2003, Dissent, online: http://www.dissentmagazine.org/menutest/archives/2003/wi03/wapner.htm

All attempts to listen to nature are social constructions-except one. Even the most radical postmodernist must acknowledge the distinction between physical existence and non-existence. As I have said, postmodernists accept that there is a physical substratum to the phenomenal world even if they argue about the different meanings we ascribe to it. This acknowledgment of physical existence is crucial. We can't ascribe meaning to that which doesn't appear. What doesn't exist can manifest no character. Put differently, yes, the postmodernist should rightly worry about interpreting nature's expressions. And all of us should be wary of those who claim to speak on nature's behalf (including environmentalists who do that). But we need not doubt the simple idea that a prerequisite of expression is existence. This in turn suggests that preserving the nonhuman world-in all its diverse embodiments-must be seen by eco-critics as a fundamental good. Eco-critics must be supporters, in some fashion, of environmental preservation. Postmodernists reject the idea of a universal good. They rightly acknowledge the difficulty of identifying a common value given the multiple contexts of our value-producing activity. In fact, if there is one thing they vehemently scorn, it is the idea that there can be a value that stands above the individual contexts of human experience. Such a value would present itself as a metanarrative and, as Jean-François Lyotard has explained, postmodernism is characterized fundamentally by its "incredulity toward meta-narratives." Nonetheless, I can't see how postmodern critics can do otherwise than accept the value of preserving the nonhuman world. The nonhuman is the extreme "other"; it stands in contradistinction to humans as a species. In understanding the constructed quality of human experience and the dangers of reification, postmodernism inherently advances an ethic of respecting the "other." At the very least, respect must involve ensuring that the "other" actually continues to exist. In our day and age, this requires us to take responsibility for protecting the actuality of the nonhuman. Instead, however, we are running roughshod over the earth's diversity of plants, animals, and ecosystems. Postmodern critics should find this particularly disturbing. If they don't, they deny their own intellectual insights and compromise their fundamental moral commitment.

#### The prioritization of method over all else, trades off with real world change and creates a vicious cycle that prevents concrete solutions to problems

Owen 02, Reader in Political Theory at the University of Southampton (David, “Reorienting International Relations: On Pragmatism, Pluralism and Practical Reasoning”, Millennium: Journal of International Studies, Vol. 31, No. 3, <http://mil.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/31/3/653>)

Commenting on the ‘philosophical turn’ in IR, Wæver remarks that ‘[a] frenzy for words like “epistemology” and “ontology” often signals this philosophical turn’, although he goes on to comment that these terms are often used loosely.4 However, loosely deployed or not, it is clear that debates concerning ontology and epistemology play a central role in the contemporary IR theory wars. In one respect, this is unsurprising since it is a characteristic feature of the social sciences that periods of disciplinary disorientation involve recourse to reflection on the philosophical commitments of different theoretical approaches, and there is no doubt that such reflection can play a valuable role in making explicit the commitments that characterise (and help individuate) diverse theoretical positions. Yet, such a philosophical turn is not without its dangers and I will briefly mention three before turning to consider a confusion that has, I will suggest, helped to promote the IR theory wars by motivating this philosophical turn. The first danger with the philosophical turn is that it has an inbuilt tendency to prioritise issues of ontology and epistemology over explanatory and/or interpretive power as if the latter two were merely a simple function of the former. But while the explanatory and/or interpretive power of a theoretical account is not wholly independent of its ontological and/or epistemological commitments (otherwise criticism of these features would not be a criticism that had any value), it is by no means clear that it is, in contrast, wholly dependent on these philosophical commitments. Thus, for example, one need not be sympathetic to rational choice theory to recognise that it can provide powerful accounts of certain kinds of problems, such as the tragedy of the commons in which dilemmas of collective action are foregrounded. It may, of course, be the case that the advocates of rational choice theory cannot give a good account of why this type of theory is powerful in accounting for this class of problems (i.e., how it is that the relevant actors come to exhibit features in these circumstances that approximate the assumptions of rational choice theory) and, if this is the case, it is a philosophical weakness—but this does not undermine the point that, for a certain class of problems, rational choice theory may provide the best account available to us. In other words, while the critical judgement of theoretical accounts in terms of their ontological and/or epistemological sophistication is one kind of critical judgement, it is not the only or even necessarily the most important kind. The second danger run by the philosophical turn is that because prioritisation of ontology and epistemology promotes theory-construction from philosophical first principles, it cultivates a theory-driven rather than problem-driven approach to IR. Paraphrasing Ian Shapiro, the point can be put like this: since it is the case that there is always a plurality of possible true descriptions of a given action, event or phenomenon, the challenge is to decide which is the most apt in terms of getting a perspicuous grip on the action, event or phenomenon in question given the purposes of the inquiry; yet, from this standpoint, ‘theory-driven work is part of a reductionist program’ in that it ‘dictates always opting for the description that calls for the explanation that flows from the preferred model or theory’.5 The justification offered for this strategy rests on the mistaken belief that it is necessary for social science because general explanations are required to characterise the classes of phenomena studied in similar terms. However, as Shapiro points out, this is to misunderstand the enterprise of science since ‘whether there are general explanations for classes of phenomena is a question for social-scientific inquiry, not to be prejudged before conducting that inquiry’.6 Moreover, this strategy easily slips into the promotion of the pursuit of generality over that of empirical validity. The third danger is that the preceding two combine to encourage the formation of a particular image of disciplinary debate in IR—what might be called (only slightly tongue in cheek) ‘the Highlander view’—namely, an image of warring theoretical approaches with each, despite occasional temporary tactical alliances, dedicated to the strategic achievement of sovereignty over the disciplinary field. It encourages this view because the turn to, and prioritisation of, ontology and epistemology stimulates the idea that there can only be one theoretical approach which gets things right, namely, the theoretical approach that gets its ontology and epistemology right. This image feeds back into IR exacerbating the first and second dangers, and so a potentially vicious circle arises.

#### Realism is inevitable—states will always seek to maximize power

John Mearsheimer, Professor, University of Chicago, THE TRAGEDY OF GREAT POWER POLITICS, 2001, p. 2.

The sad fact is that international politics has always been a ruthless and dangerous business, and it is likely to remain that way. Although the intensity of their competition waxes and wanes, great powers fear each other and always compete with each other for power. The overriding goal of each state is to maximize its share of world power, which means gaining power at the expense of other states. But great powers do not merely strive to be the strongest of all the great powers, although that is a welcome outcome. Their ultimate aim is to be the hegemon-that is, the only great power in the system.

#### Fourth, Alt fails to create a sustainable model for our species- Using crisis driven politics is the only way to mobilize people in a way necessary to interrogate actions that threaten extinction

Schatz 12

(JL, Binghampton University, The Journal of Ecocentrism, “The Importance of Apocalypse: The Value of End-Of-The-World Politics While Advancing Ecocriticism,” 2012, <http://ojs.unbc.ca/index.php/joe/article/view/394/382>) /wyo-mm

Third, and most importantly, ecocritics must adopt tactics that can most effectively influence other ¶ people without proscribing end goals. By this I mean that ecocritics must use those tools that can ¶ appeal to the masses while simultaneously making their appeals in such a way as not to force a choice ¶ upon them. Apocalyptic imagery is ideal for this task. It appeals to notions of shared planetary concerns¶ that serve as motivation for others to act, even without fully knowing how the apocalypse can truly be ¶ averted. By creating a compelling urge to do something that arises out of the image of planetary ¶ annihilation ecocriticism can influence a variety of people to take up arms through a multitude of ¶ techniques. Society as a whole will never mobilize to halt the very practices that threaten life without ¶ such compelling inspiration. When ecocriticism helps other people see how certain actions risk their¶ very survival it will enable our planet to evolve differently. So long as ecocriticism never gives up on the struggle, even if this different direction may bring new scenarios of apocalypse, humanity as a species ¶ can continually evolve its patterns and behaviors to advert extinction. This is not to say we will live ¶ forever. Rather it is to say that as a species we can continue to exist in harmony with the lives all around ¶ us and give our deaths meaning. Ultimately, it is through imagining the end of the world that we will be ¶ able to envision how to save it.

## 1AR

#### And the plan functionally erases signature strikes

Cohen 13

(Adam, Program assistant, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Huffington Post, “One Step Closer to Meaningful Oversight of International Targeted Killing,” March 30, 2013, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/adam-cohen/drone-killings-hearing_b_3180495.html>) /wyo-mm

We also learned from this hearing that there is near-unanimous consent for a constructive review of these policies. From Rosa Brooks, law professor at Georgetown University, fellow at the New America Foundation and former Counselor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, to Colonel Martha McSally of the U.S. Air Force, all of the witnesses highlighted their willingness to examine the legal and procedural rules surrounding targeted killing. All of them highlighted their belief that it is critical to increase oversight, to thoroughly vet those being targeted, and to reduce civilian casualties as much as possible. Even those witnesses who supported and spoke to the virtues of drones favored the codification of a better review process, a larger oversight role for Congress and a court for reviewing the legality of conducted attacks and for appropriately compensating the families of victims. While these measures would not end U.S. targeted killings abroad altogether, they could rein in some of the program's worst offenses, more accurately define and protect civilians, and reduce the total number of strikes -- particularly signature strikes based on observed behavior rather than intelligence reviews. This groundbreaking hearing could be the first step in maturing the national dialogue on drones. In recent months, members of Congress have made public statements, held hearings, introduced and sponsored legislation and written letters to the administration challenging the federal government's right to deploy drones to infringe upon the rights of U.S. citizens at home or abroad. Finally, the scrutiny is shifting to the administration's opaque counterterrorism policies across the world. Congress should use this eye-opening discussion as the starting point to further question the drones program: hold another hearing; introduce legislation; and let the administration (whose decisions to neither provide a witness at the hearing nor make public the remaining Department of Justice memos was well noted) know that it is just as concerned about the ethical and strategic implications of targeted killing. With this hearing we are one step closer to meaningful transparency and accountability. We must move quickly to take the next.

#### No prolif impact

Colin H. Kahl 13, Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security and an associate professor in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University’s Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Melissa G. Dalton, Visiting Fellow at the Center for a New American Security, Matthew Irvine, Research Associate at the Center for a New American Security, February, “If Iran Builds the Bomb, Will Saudi Arabia Be Next?” <http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_AtomicKingdom_Kahl.pdf>

\*cites Jacques Hymans, USC Associate Professor of IR\*\*\*

I I I . LESSONS FROM HISTOR Y Concerns over “regional proliferation chains,” “falling nuclear dominos” and “nuclear tipping points” are nothing new; indeed, reactive proliferation fears date back to the dawn of the nuclear age.14 Warnings of an inevitable deluge of proliferation were commonplace from the 1950s to the 1970s, resurfaced during the discussion of “rogue states” in the 1990s and became even more ominous after 9/11.15 In 2004, for example, Mitchell Reiss warned that “in ways both fast and slow, we may very soon be approaching a nuclear ‘tipping point,’ where many countries may decide to acquire nuclear arsenals on short notice, thereby triggering a proliferation epidemic.” Given the presumed fragility of the nuclear nonproliferation regime and the ready supply of nuclear expertise, technology and material, Reiss argued, “a single new entrant into the nuclear club could catalyze similar responses by others in the region, with the Middle East and Northeast Asia the most likely candidates.”16 Nevertheless, predictions of inevitable proliferation cascades have historically proven false (see The Proliferation Cascade Myth text box). In the six decades since atomic weapons were first developed, nuclear restraint has proven far more common than nuclear proliferation, and cases of reactive proliferation have been exceedingly rare. Moreover, most countries that have started down the nuclear path have found the road more difficult than imagined, both technologically and bureaucratically, leading the majority of nuclear-weapons aspirants to reverse course. Thus, despite frequent warnings of an unstoppable “nuclear express,”17 William Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova astutely note that the “train to date has been slow to pick up steam, has made fewer stops than anticipated, and usually has arrived much later than expected.”18 None of this means that additional proliferation in response to Iran’s nuclear ambitions is inconceivable, but the empirical record does suggest that regional chain reactions are not inevitable. Instead, only certain countries are candidates for reactive proliferation. Determining the risk that any given country in the Middle East will proliferate in response to Iranian nuclearization requires an assessment of the incentives and disincentives for acquiring a nuclear deterrent, the technical and bureaucratic constraints and the available strategic alternatives. Incentives and Disincentives to Proliferate Security considerations, status and reputational concerns and the prospect of sanctions combine to shape the incentives and disincentives for states to pursue nuclear weapons. Analysts predicting proliferation cascades tend to emphasize the incentives for reactive proliferation while ignoring or downplaying the disincentives. Yet, as it turns out, instances of nuclear proliferation (including reactive proliferation) have been so rare because going down this road often risks insecurity, reputational damage and economic costs that outweigh the potential benefits.19 Security and regime survival are especially important motivations driving state decisions to proliferate. All else being equal, if a state’s leadership believes that a nuclear deterrent is required to address an acute security challenge, proliferation is more likely.20 Countries in conflict-prone neighborhoods facing an “enduring rival”– especially countries with inferior conventional military capabilities vis-à-vis their opponents or those that face an adversary that possesses or is seeking nuclear weapons – may be particularly prone to seeking a nuclear deterrent to avert aggression.21 A recent quantitative study by Philipp Bleek, for example, found that security threats, as measured by the frequency and intensity of conventional militarized disputes, were highly correlated with decisions to launch nuclear weapons programs and eventually acquire the bomb.22 The Proliferation Cascade Myth Despite repeated warnings since the dawn of the nuclear age of an inevitable deluge of nuclear proliferation, such fears have thus far proven largely unfounded. Historically, nuclear restraint is the rule, not the exception – and the degree of restraint has actually increased over time. In the first two decades of the nuclear age, five nuclear-weapons states emerged: the United States (1945), the Soviet Union (1949), the United Kingdom (1952), France (1960) and China (1964). However, in the nearly 50 years since China developed nuclear weapons, only four additional countries have entered (and remained in) the nuclear club: Israel (allegedly in 1967), India (“peaceful” nuclear test in 1974, acquisition in late-1980s, test in 1998), Pakistan (acquisition in late-1980s, test in 1998) and North Korea (test in 2006).23 This significant slowdown in the pace of proliferation occurred despite the widespread dissemination of nuclear know-how and the fact that the number of states with the technical and industrial capability to pursue nuclear weapons programs has significantly increased over time.24 Moreover, in the past 20 years, several states have either given up their nuclear weapons (South Africa and the Soviet successor states Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine) or ended their highly developed nuclear weapons programs (e.g., Argentina, Brazil and Libya).25 Indeed, by one estimate, 37 countries have pursued nuclear programs with possible weaponsrelated dimensions since 1945, yet the overwhelming number chose to abandon these activities before they produced a bomb. Over time, the number of nuclear reversals has grown while the number of states initiating programs with possible military dimensions has markedly declined.26 Furthermore – especially since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) went into force in 1970 – reactive proliferation has been exceedingly rare. The NPT has near-universal membership among the community of nations; only India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea currently stand outside the treaty. Yet the actual and suspected acquisition of nuclear weapons by these outliers has not triggered widespread reactive proliferation in their respective neighborhoods. Pakistan followed India into the nuclear club, and the two have engaged in a vigorous arms race, but Pakistani nuclearization did not spark additional South Asian states to acquire nuclear weapons. Similarly, the North Korean bomb did not lead South Korea, Japan or other regional states to follow suit.27 In the Middle East, no country has successfully built a nuclear weapon in the four decades since Israel allegedly built its first nuclear weapons. Egypt took initial steps toward nuclearization in the 1950s and then expanded these efforts in the late 1960s and 1970s in response to Israel’s presumed capabilities. However, Cairo then ratified the NPT in 1981 and abandoned its program.28 Libya, Iraq and Iran all pursued nuclear weapons capabilities, but only Iran’s program persists and none of these states initiated their efforts primarily as a defensive response to Israel’s presumed arsenal.29 Sometime in the 2000s, Syria also appears to have initiated nuclear activities with possible military dimensions, including construction of a covert nuclear reactor near al-Kibar, likely enabled by North Korean assistance.30 (An Israeli airstrike destroyed the facility in 2007.31) The motivations for Syria’s activities remain murky, but the nearly 40-year lag between Israel’s alleged development of the bomb and Syria’s actions suggests that reactive proliferation was not the most likely cause. Finally, even countries that start on the nuclear path have found it very difficult, and exceedingly time consuming, to reach the end. Of the 10 countries that launched nuclear weapons projects after 1970, only three (Pakistan, North Korea and South Africa) succeeded; one (Iran) remains in progress, and the rest failed or were reversed.32 The successful projects have also generally needed much more time than expected to finish. According to Jacques Hymans, the average time required to complete a nuclear weapons program has increased from seven years prior to 1970 to about 17 years after 1970, even as the hardware, knowledge and industrial base required for proliferation has expanded to more and more countries.33 Yet throughout the nuclear age, many states with potential security incentives to develop nuclear weapons have nevertheless abstained from doing so.34 Moreover, contrary to common expectations, recent statistical research shows that states with an enduring rival that possesses or is pursuing nuclear weapons are not more likely than other states to launch nuclear weapons programs or go all the way to acquiring the bomb, although they do seem more likely to explore nuclear weapons options.35 This suggests that a rival’s acquisition of nuclear weapons does not inevitably drive proliferation decisions. One reason that reactive proliferation is not an automatic response to a rival’s acquisition of nuclear arms is the fact that security calculations can cut in both directions. Nuclear weapons might deter outside threats, but leaders have to weigh these potential gains against the possibility that seeking nuclear weapons would make the country or regime less secure by triggering a regional arms race or a preventive attack by outside powers. Countries also have to consider the possibility that pursuing nuclear weapons will produce strains in strategic relationships with key allies and security patrons. If a state’s leaders conclude that their overall security would decrease by building a bomb, they are not likely to do so.36 Moreover, although security considerations are often central, they are rarely sufficient to motivate states to develop nuclear weapons. Scholars have noted the importance of other factors, most notably the perceived effects of nuclear weapons on a country’s relative status and influence.37 Empirically, the most highly motivated states seem to be those with leaders that simultaneously believe a nuclear deterrent is essential to counter an existential threat and view nuclear weapons as crucial for maintaining or enhancing their international status and influence. Leaders that see their country as naturally at odds with, and naturally equal or superior to, a threatening external foe appear to be especially prone to pursuing nuclear weapons.38 Thus, as Jacques Hymans argues, extreme levels of fear and pride often “combine to produce a very strong tendency to reach for the bomb.”39 Yet here too, leaders contemplating acquiring nuclear weapons have to balance the possible increase to their prestige and influence against the normative and reputational costs associated with violating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). If a country’s leaders fully embrace the principles and norms embodied in the NPT, highly value positive diplomatic relations with Western countries and see membership in the “community of nations” as central to their national interests and identity, they are likely to worry that developing nuclear weapons would damage (rather than bolster) their reputation and influence, and thus they will be less likely to go for the bomb.40 In contrast, countries with regimes or ruling coalitions that embrace an ideology that rejects the Western dominated international order and prioritizes national self-reliance and autonomy from outside interference seem more inclined toward proliferation regardless of whether they are signatories to the NPT.41 Most countries appear to fall in the former category, whereas only a small number of “rogue” states fit the latter. According to one count, before the NPT went into effect, more than 40 percent of states with the economic resources to pursue nuclear programs with potential military applications did so, and very few renounced those programs. Since the inception of the nonproliferation norm in 1970, however, only 15 percent of economically capable states have started such programs, and nearly 70 percent of all states that had engaged in such activities gave them up.42 The prospect of being targeted with economic sanctions by powerful states is also likely to factor into the decisions of would-be proliferators. Although sanctions alone proved insufficient to dissuade Iraq, North Korea and (thus far) Iran from violating their nonproliferation obligations under the NPT, this does not necessarily indicate that sanctions are irrelevant. A potential proliferator’s vulnerability to sanctions must be considered. All else being equal, the more vulnerable a state’s economy is to external pressure, the less likely it is to pursue nuclear weapons. A comparison of states in East Asia and the Middle East that have pursued nuclear weapons with those that have not done so suggests that countries with economies that are highly integrated into the international economic system – especially those dominated by ruling coalitions that seek further integration – have historically been less inclined to pursue nuclear weapons than those with inward-oriented economies and ruling coalitions.43 A state’s vulnerability to sanctions matters, but so too does the leadership’s assessment regarding the probability that outside powers would actually be willing to impose sanctions. Some would-be proliferators can be easily sanctioned because their exclusion from international economic transactions creates few downsides for sanctioning states. In other instances, however, a state may be so vital to outside powers – economically or geopolitically – that it is unlikely to be sanctioned regardless of NPT violations. Technical and Bureaucratic Constraints In addition to motivation to pursue the bomb, a state must have the technical and bureaucratic wherewithal to do so. This capability is partly a function of wealth. Richer and more industrialized states can develop nuclear weapons more easily than poorer and less industrial ones can; although as Pakistan and North Korea demonstrate, cash-strapped states can sometimes succeed in developing nuclear weapons if they are willing to make enormous sacrifices.44 A country’s technical know-how and the sophistication of its civilian nuclear program also help determine the ease and speed with which it can potentially pursue the bomb. The existence of uranium deposits and related mining activity, civilian nuclear power plants, nuclear research reactors and laboratories and a large cadre of scientists and engineers trained in relevant areas of chemistry and nuclear physics may give a country some “latent” capability to eventually produce nuclear weapons. Mastery of the fuel-cycle – the ability to enrich uranium or produce, separate and reprocess plutonium – is particularly important because this is the essential pathway whereby states can indigenously produce the fissile material required to make a nuclear explosive device.45 States must also possess the bureaucratic capacity and managerial culture to successfully complete a nuclear weapons program. Hymans convincingly argues that many recent would-be proliferators have weak state institutions that permit, or even encourage, rulers to take a coercive, authoritarian management approach to their nuclear programs. This approach, in turn, politicizes and ultimately undermines nuclear projects by gutting the autonomy and professionalism of the very scientists, experts and organizations needed to successfully build the bomb.46 Alternative Sources of Nuclear Deterrence Historically, the availability of credible security guarantees by outside nuclear powers has provided a potential alternative means for acquiring a nuclear deterrent without many of the risks and costs associated with developing an indigenous nuclear weapons capability. As Bruno Tertrais argues, nearly all the states that developed nuclear weapons since 1949 either lacked a strong guarantee from a superpower (India, Pakistan and South Africa) or did not consider the superpower’s protection to be credible (China, France, Israel and North Korea). Many other countries known to have pursued nuclear weapons programs also lacked security guarantees (e.g., Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Libya, Switzerland and Yugoslavia) or thought they were unreliable at the time they embarked on their programs (e.g., Taiwan). In contrast, several potential proliferation candidates appear to have abstained from developing the bomb at least partly because of formal or informal extended deterrence guarantees from the United States (e.g., Australia, Germany, Japan, Norway, South Korea and Sweden).47 All told, a recent quantitative assessment by Bleek finds that security assurances have empirically significantly reduced proliferation proclivity among recipient countries.48 Therefore, if a country perceives that a security guarantee by the United States or another nuclear power is both available and credible, it is less likely to pursue nuclear weapons in reaction to a rival developing them. This option is likely to be particularly attractive to states that lack the indigenous capability to develop nuclear weapons, as well as states that are primarily motivated to acquire a nuclear deterrent by security factors (as opposed to status-related motivations) but are wary of the negative consequences of proliferation.

#### Sanctions coming now-widespread support and Obama PC fails

Klapper 1-9

(Bradley, Associated Press. “Obama, Congress Locked in Iran Sanctions Dispute” 1-9-14 http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/obama-congress-locked-iran-sanctions-dispute-21471744//wyoccd)

The Obama administration enters the year locked in a battle with Congress over whether to plow ahead with new economic sanctions against Iran or cautiously wait to see if last year's breakthrough nuclear agreement holds.¶ The new sanctions, widely endorsed by both Republican and Democratic lawmakers, would blacklist several Iranian industrial sectors and threaten banks and companies around the world with being banned from the U.S. market if they help Iran export any more oil. The provisions would only take effect if Tehran violates the interim nuclear deal or lets it expire without a follow-up accord.¶ The House already approved similar legislation last July by a 400-20 vote and would likely pass the new sanctions by an overwhelming margin. But the Obama administration, fearful of squandering a historic diplomatic opportunity to end the nuclear crisis, has succeeded so far in holding off a Senate vote.¶ The standoff has prompted sharp barbs from both sides.¶ The Nov. 24 agreement "makes a nuclear Iran more likely," argued Sen. Marco Rubio. Fellow Republican Sen. John Cornyn called it an attempt to distract attention from President Barack Obama's health care rollout. "We really haven't gained anything," Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham said. The deal "falls short of what is necessary for security and stability in the region," added Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu.¶ White House press secretary Jay Carney has accused lawmakers of trying to spoil negotiations in Geneva as part of a "march to war." Before breaking for winter vacation, Obama suggested the sanctions push from members of Congress reflected the "politics of trying to look tough on Iran."¶ The rhetoric has exacerbated what is essentially a debate over tactics, not substance. All want to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.¶ But the prevention strategies differ strikingly over the role additional sanctions might play as negotiators try to end the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran.

#### Support is there for additional sanctions- will be veto proof

Johnson 1-8

(Bridget Johnson is a career journalist whose news articles and opinion columns have run in dozens of news outlets across the globe. “Veto-Proof Majority on Iran Sanctions Bill Looking More Likely” 1-8-14 http://pjmedia.com/tatler/2014/01/08/veto-proof-majority-on-iran-sanctions-bill-looking-more-likely//wyoccd)

The number of co-sponsors backing the Iran sanctions bill introduced before the holiday by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) and Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) has now reached 50, according to the Jerusalem Post.¶ The last recorded number in the Library of Congress database is 47 co-sponsors. The most recent bump shows that not only would the bill that angers the White House pass on a bipartisan basis, but would likely hit a veto-proof majority on a bipartisan basis.¶ At least 14 Democrats have signed on board the bill, including Sens. Mark Begich (D-Alaska), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Bob Casey (D-Pa.), Chris Coons (D-Del.), Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Kay Hagan (D-N.C.), Mary Landrieu (D-La.), Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.), Mark Pryor (D-Ark.), Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Mark Warner (D-Va.).¶ Supporters need 67 votes for a veto-proof majority. Assuming all Republicans vote for the bill, that leaves 22 Democrats needed come voting time.¶ Both Colorado senators –Mark Udall (D) and Michael Bennet — have previously supported sanctions legislation. Other potential votes could include Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Tim Kaine (D-Va.), Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), Jon Tester (D-Mont.), Tom Udall (D-N.M.), Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), Clarie McCaskill (D-Mo.), Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) and Bill Nelson (D-Fla.).¶ The Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act was introduced Dec. 19 by more than a quarter of the Senate. The bipartisan legislation proposes prospective sanctions against Iran’s petroleum, engineering, mining and construction sectors should the regime violate the interim Joint Plan of Action agreed to in Geneva or should Iran fail to reach a final agreement with the P5+1.¶ “With regards to this particular measure, we don’t think it will be enacted. We certainly don’t think it should be enacted,” White House press secretary Jay Carney said at the time, promising a presidential veto. “And the reason why it should not and does not need to be enacted is because if Iran does not comply with its obligations under the Joint Plan of Action, the preliminary agreement, or if Iran fails to reach agreement with the P5-plus-1 on the more comprehensive agreement over the course of six months, we are very confident that we can work with Congress to very quickly pass new, effective sanctions against Iran. And it is our view that it is very important to refrain from taking an action that would potentially disrupt the opportunity here for a diplomatic resolution of this challenge.”¶ The Menendez-Kirk effort already has high-ranking support from House leadership, with a similar resolution offered by Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) and Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.).¶ Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has warned that “the entire deal is dead” if new sanctions are enacted.¶ “We do not like to negotiate under duress. And if Congress adopts sanctions, it shows lack of seriousness and lack of a desire to achieve a resolution on the part of the United States,” Zarif said.¶ However, the deal forged by the Obama administration and the European Union hasn’t even been implemented yet.

#### Republicans will use Obamacare as a distraction to literally everything, clearly thumps the DA

Millbank 1-7

(Dana Milbank writes a regular column on politics. “It’s Obamacare all the time for Republicans” 1-7-14 http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/dana-milbank-its-obamacare-all-the-time-for-republicans/2014/01/07/60d72f26-77de-11e3-af7f-13bf0e9965f6\_story.html//wyoccd)

¶ Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus on Tuesday outlined his party’s priorities for 2014. They are, in ascending order of importance:¶ ¶ ●Obamacare.¶ ●Obamacare! Obamacare!¶ ●OBAMACARE! OBAMACARE! OBAMACARE! OBAMACARE! OBAMACARE!!!¶ “We’ve promised that in 2014 we’d continue to pound away at Democrats and Obamacare and that’s how we’re starting the year,” the chairman told reporters on a conference call. “Democrats are eager to change the subject, but Republicans aren’t going to let that happen,” he added. “That’s why, I guess, we’re starting up the year in this fashion talking about Obamacare.”¶ A reporter from the Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Gazette asked Priebus if “Obamacare is going to be the Johnny-one-note campaign for Republicans” in which “every issue that comes up, you’re going to respond with Obamacare.” Or, he inquired, “is there more to what Republicans want in 2014?”¶ “The answer is Obamacare,” Priebus said, before adding a “just kidding.” But he wasn’t really kidding. He went on to say that “it’s not possible for this not to be the No. 1 issue going into the 2014 elections. It’s just not. . . . So the answer to your question is, it is going to be the No. 1 issue in 2014.”¶ The American public has a different view. A Gallup poll last month found that 47 percent cited economic issues as their top concern, including 31 percent who listed the overall economy and jobs. After that, 21 percent named dissatisfaction with government, followed by 17 percent who ranked health care. A CBS News poll a month earlier found much the same: Thirty-one percent cited the economy or jobs, compared to 15 percent listing health care.¶ But Priebus does seem to be in sync with Republicans in Congress. At the end of the House’s long holiday recess, Majority Leader Eric Cantor (Va.) wrote to Republicans on Thursday to once again take up — you guessed it — Obamacare in the new session of Congress. This time he’s seeking to raise doubts about the privacy protections on HealthCare.gov. “American families have enough to worry about as we enter the new year without having to wonder if they can trust the government to inform them when their personal information — entered into a government mandated website — has been compromised,” he wrote.¶ Indeed, Americans do have enough things to worry about, but now they have the additional worry that one of the two major political parties is collectively suffering from obsessive-compulsive disorder. Immigration? Iraq? Unemployment benefits? The Republicans, following a year that included dozens of repeal attempts and a government shutdown over Obamacare, are prepared to respond to all with Obamacare, Obamacare and Obamacare.¶ On Tuesday morning, the Senate held a procedural vote on a topic that actually is related to Americans’ top priority: extending unemployment benefits for the long-term jobless. Such benefits, which have never been cut off before when long-term joblessness was this high, expired just after Christmas. Only six Senate Republicans voted to take up the legislation; 37 voted to block consideration.¶ Before the vote, the GOP leader, Mitch McConnell (Ky.), unsuccessfully tried to amend the legislation so that the unemployment benefits were funded by canceling part of Obamacare.¶ On his conference call, Priebus said the RNC was targeting a dozen Democrats in key races for repeating President Obama’s claim that if you like your health insurance you can keep it. “In this time of New Year’s resolutions, I guess we’re asking people to make it their resolution to hold these Democrats accountable for the lies they told the American people,” he said. Holding them accountable “is how we’re starting the year and it’s probably what you’re going to see more of in the months to come.”

#### Winners Win

Jonathan Singer, J.D. University of California @ Berkeley and editor of MyDD, 3-3-2009, “By Expending Capital, Obama Grows His Capital,” MyDD, http://mydd.com/story/2009/3/3/191825/0428

"What is amazing here is how much political capital Obama has spent in the first six weeks," said Democratic pollster Peter D. Hart, who conducted this survey with Republican pollster Bill McInturff. "And against that, he stands at the end of this six weeks with as much or more capital in the bank." Peter Hart gets at a key point. Some believe that political capital is finite, that it can be used up. To an extent that's true. But it's important to note, too, that political capital can be regenerated -- and, specifically, that when a President expends a great deal of capital on a measure that was difficult to enact and then succeeds, he can build up more capital. Indeed, that appears to be what is happening with Barack Obama, who went to the mat to pass the stimulus package out of the gate, got it passed despite near-unanimous opposition of the Republicans on Capitol Hill, and is being rewarded by the American public as a result. Take a look at the numbers. President Obama now has a 68 percent favorable rating in the NBC-WSJ poll, his highest ever showing in the survey. Nearly half of those surveyed (47 percent) view him very positively. Obama's Democratic Party earns a respectable 49 percent favorable rating. The Republican Party, however, is in the toilet, with its worst ever showing in the history of the NBC-WSJ poll, 26 percent favorable. On the question of blame for the partisanship in Washington, 56 percent place the onus on the Bush administration and another 41 percent place it on Congressional Republicans. Yet just 24 percent blame Congressional Democrats, and a mere 11 percent blame the Obama administration. So at this point, with President Obama seemingly benefiting from his ambitious actions and the Republicans sinking further and further as a result of their knee-jerked opposition to that agenda, there appears to be no reason not to push forward on anything from universal healthcare to energy reform to ending the war in Iraq.