Surge Good

[Surge Good 1](#_Toc267759026)

[Surge Good – Generic 2](#_Toc267759027)

[Surge Good – Surge Solves 3](#_Toc267759028)

[Surge Good – Prevents Insurgency [1/2] 4](#_Toc267759029)

[Surge Good – Prevents Insurgency [2/2] 5](#_Toc267759030)

[Surge Good – Withdrawal Bad 6](#_Toc267759031)

[Surge Good – Withdrawal Bad 7](#_Toc267759032)

[Surge Good – Wins War [1/2] 8](#_Toc267759033)

[Surge Good – Wins War [2/2] 9](#_Toc267759034)

Surge Good – Generic

Turn: Withdraw leads to a resurgent Taliban – spills over to Pakistan and causes governmental collapse, civil war, humanitarian crisis, and refugee exodus

Phillips ‘09

James Phillips, December 2, Senior Research Fellow for Middle Eastern Affairs in the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign Policy Studies, a division of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies, at The Heritage Foundation. <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/opinion-obama-risks-failure-in-afghanistan-by-not-sending-more/19262353>

This downsizing of urgently requested troop reinforcements could lead to a dangerous and tragic outcome. If Obama retreats to a "McChrystal Light" option that shortchanges his own hand-picked commander, it will greatly increase the risk of failure, not only in Afghanistan but in the struggle against Islamist radicals in neighboring Pakistan. It could result in a downward spiral of security in Afghanistan: a resurgent Taliban, eventual collapse of the Afghan government, an even bloodier civil war, renewed humanitarian crisis and a refugee exodus. Moreover, the Taliban will bring back not just their ally al-Qaida, but a rogues' gallery of almost every major Islamist insurgent movement in the world today. Resorting to half-measures would be courting disaster. Like it or not, Obama is a wartime president who must make timely decisions on difficult issues, sometimes with no guarantee of success. The United States needs a decisive commander in chief, not a professorial hair-splitter trying to transcend the differences of opinion of his staff. The basic concept of the McChrystal strategy is sound. U.S. troops must increase the focus on protecting Afghan civilians to reduce the space in which the Taliban can operate freely. **A major part of this** effort **must be a "civilian surge" to help build the capacity of the Afghans to govern, fight corruption, restore the rule of law and revitalize the Afghan economy**. **But security must come first**. There must be additional American "boots on the ground" to defend civilians -- and the sooner, the better.

Turn: Without an Afghanistan Surge, security will deteriorate, ending in instability.

Downey et al. ‘08

Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Downey, Lieutenant Colonel Lee K. Grubbs, Commander Brian J. Malloy and Lieutenant Colonel Craig R. Wonson, Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Downey, USAF. Lt Col Downey is currently assigned to USTRANSCOM where he serves as the J5/4-SC Branch Chief for Distribution Process Owner Change Management and Joint Logistician Professional Development. He was commissioned through the United States Air Force Academy in 1992, an earned a M.S. in Management from Troy State University in 2000. Lt Col Downey served as the 455 AEW Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron Commander in 2004 and with CJTF-76 as a Joint Logistician in 2006. Small Wars Journal, November 15

As the situation in Iraq continues to improve and indigenous forces assume greater responsibility for providing security in that country, the U.S. must redirect its attention and resources toward addressing the crisis that continues to build in Afghanistan. The rapidly deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan can be attributed directly to the lack of persistent presence amongst the rural Pashtun population, the failure to prevent Taliban freedom of movement along the border, and the inability to train sufficient numbers of capable ANA and ANP personnel. By surging an additional eight brigades into Afghanistan, however, U.S. and NATO forces can quickly regain the initiative from the Taliban and improve the security situation dramatically. A surge would establish and maintain a continuous presence in areas currently dominated by the Taliban, allow security forces to relentlessly pursue the enemy, and support the training of additional Afghan army and police units to augment, and eventually replace, the surge forces. If the U.S. does not surge these additional forces into Afghanistan, security will continue to deteriorate, the Taliban will assume control over much of the country, political instability will follow, and the U.S. will face strategic failure.

Surge Good – Surge Solves

The Surge worked in Iraq, and will work in Afghanistan

Downey et al. ‘08

Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Downey, Lieutenant Colonel Lee K. Grubbs, Commander Brian J. Malloy and Lieutenant Colonel Craig R. Wonson, Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Downey, USAF. Lt Col Downey is currently assigned to USTRANSCOM where he serves as the J5/4-SC Branch Chief for Distribution Process Owner Change Management and Joint Logistician Professional Development. He was commissioned through the United States Air Force Academy in 1992, an earned a M.S. in Management from Troy State University in 2000. Lt Col Downey served as the 455 AEW Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron Commander in 2004 and with CJTF-76 as a Joint Logistician in 2006. Small Wars Journal, November 15

U.S. military commanders concluded that the best way to improve the security situation in Iraq was to adopt a more proactive “clear-hold-build” strategy supported by a significant increase in the number of ground combat units. This increase in forces, often referred to simply as “the surge”, introduced five additional combat brigades into Iraq that provided the means to wrest the initiative from the enemy. It allowed U.S. forces to simultaneously conduct large-scale operations to clear enemy safe havens, train Iraqi security forces, and disrupt insurgent lines of communication without having to leave key urban areas unprotected. In less than a year, the surge helped reduce the number of enemy attacks, increased the support of the Iraqi people, improved the security situation throughout the country, and all but defeated the insurgency. The security situation in Afghanistan has steadily deteriorated since 2006 largely due to the lack of forces required to execute an effective counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy.

The Surge was an undeniable success

USA Today ‘08

USA TODAY, July 24, 2008, <http://www.pointblanknews.com/os1069.html>

But the extra U.S. troops, brilliantly deployed by Gen. David Petraeus, have made a huge difference in calming the chaos. In doing so, it also contributed to the other developments. Why then can't Obama bring himself to acknowledge the surge worked better than he and other skeptics, including this page, thought it would? What does that stubbornness say about the kind of president he'd be? In recent comments, the Democratic presidential candidate has grudgingly conceded that the troops helped lessen the violence, but he has insisted that the surge was a dubious policy because it allowed the situation in Afghanistan to deteriorate and failed to produce political breakthroughs in Iraq. Even knowing the outcome, he told CBS News Tuesday, he still wouldn't have supported the idea. That's hard to fathom. Even if you believe that the invasion of Iraq was a grievous error -- and it was -- the U.S. should still make every effort to leave behind a stable situation. Obama "seems stuck in the first part of that thought process, repeatedly proclaiming that he was right to oppose the war and " AND disparaging worthwhile efforts to fix the mess it created. Hence, his dismissal of the surge as "a tactical victory imposed upon "a huge strategic blunder.""

Surge Good – Prevents Insurgency [1/2]

Afghanistan Surging disrupts insurgent action

Downey et al. ‘08

Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Downey, Lieutenant Colonel Lee K. Grubbs, Commander Brian J. Malloy and Lieutenant Colonel Craig R. Wonson, Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Downey, USAF. Lt Col Downey is currently assigned to USTRANSCOM where he serves as the J5/4-SC Branch Chief for Distribution Process Owner Change Management and Joint Logistician Professional Development. He was commissioned through the United States Air Force Academy in 1992, an earned a M.S. in Management from Troy State University in 2000. Lt Col Downey served as the 455 AEW Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron Commander in 2004 and with CJTF-76 as a Joint Logistician in 2006. Small Wars Journal, November 15

The U.S. will not be able to achieve a 20:1,000 security force density ratio for an Afghan population well over 32 million, even with the help of NATO and Afghan National Security Forces. However, a surge could establish at least a 10:1,000 ratio in key parts of the critical Pashtun-dominated south and east regions until more ANA and ANP units could be fielded in sufficient numbers. Surging the equivalent of an additional eight brigades (approximately 25,000-40,000 personnel) over a one-year period would help disrupt insurgent freedom of movement, improve border security, expedite the fielding of indigenous security forces, and restore the confidence of people living in these key areas. The positive effects resulting from the improved security situation in those regions would be felt throughout the country.

Surge prevents Taliban and al Qaeda insurgency

Carroll ‘09

Conn, Assistant Director for The Heritage Foundation's Strategic Communications, September 28, Editor of The Foundry, <http://blog.heritage.org/tag/iraq/>

On March 27th, President Barack Obama followed through on one of his core campaign promises and announced a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan that included sending an additional 21,000 troops to the region. Speaking from the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Obama explained: “Multiple intelligence estimates have warned that al Qaeda is actively planning attacks on the United States homeland from its safe haven in Pakistan. And if the Afghan government falls to the Taliban — or allows al Qaeda to go unchallenged — that country will again be a base for terrorists who want to kill as many of our people as they possibly can. …But this is not simply an American problem — far from it. It is, instead, an international security challenge of the highest order. Terrorist attacks in London and Bali were tied to al Qaeda and its allies in Pakistan, as were attacks in North Africa and the Middle East, in Islamabad and in Kabul. If there is a major attack on an Asian, European, or African city, it, too, is likely to have ties to al Qaeda’s leadership in Pakistan. The safety of people around the world is at stake.”

A lack of ground forces gives rise to violent resurgence

Carroll ‘09

Conn, Assistant Director for The Heritage Foundation's Strategic Communications, September 28, Editor of The Foundry, <http://blog.heritage.org/tag/iraq/>

The war in Afghanistan cannot be effectively waged merely with air power, predator drones, and special forces. In the late 1990s, the Clinton Administration hurled cruise missiles at easily replaceable al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan, but this “chuck and duck” strategy failed to blunt the al-Qaeda threat. The Bush Administration’s minimalist approach to Afghanistan in 2001 was a contributing factor that allowed Osama bin Laden to escape from his mountain redoubt at Tora Bora. Afterwards, Washington opted to focus narrowly on counterterrorism goals in Afghanistan–rather than counterinsurgency operations–in order to free up military assets for the war in Iraq. This allowed the Taliban to regroup across the border in Pakistan and make a violent resurgence. The “small footprint” strategy also failed in Iraq, before it was abandoned in favor of General Petraeus’s counterinsurgency strategy, backed by the surge of American troops, in early 2007. Despite this record of failure, some stubbornly continue to support an “offshore” strategy for landlocked Afghanistan today. But half-measures–the hallmark of the “small footprint” strategy–will not work. Precise intelligence is needed to use smart bombs smartly. Yet few Afghans would risk their lives to provide such intelligence unless they are assured of protection against the Taliban’s ruthless retaliation.

Surge Good – Prevents Insurgency [2/2]

We must maintain troops in Afghanistan until the insurgency is defeated; anything short emboldens terrorists

Cole ‘09

Rep. Tom Cole, Oklahoma’s Fourth Congressional District, 2009, became the Representative for Oklahoma's Fourth Congressional District on November 6th, 2002., December 17

By telegraphing our intention to abandon the battlefield based on the calendar rather than the progress of our mission, we simply embolden the terrorists to wait us out. Not only does this put our soldiers at greater risk, it also undermines the long term authority of the legitimate Afghan government. The bottom line is this: the terrorists must be defeated and if that takes longer than 18 months, and I strongly suspect it will, then we have to stay until the job is done. The American public deserves political leadership that is as committed to winning this war as our soldiers are. After committing an additional 30,000 troops, the President has a responsibility to fully embrace his role as the Commander in Chief. This will entail rallying the public to support our troops, and building a genuine bi-partisan coalition in Congress to continue the hard work that lies ahead. There is no doubt that the President has committed our nation more deeply to Afghanistan. It is my belief that we must move forward with determination and a will to win by dismissing arbitrary timelines that undermine the efforts of our forces and our allies. Our soldiers have shown both these qualities on the battlefield and now the President needs to follow their example.

New troops are eroding insurgency in Afghanistan

Lubold ‘10

Gordon Lubold, Reporter for POLITICO, 2010 Christian Science Monitor, “*Afghanistan war: surge on cusp of bringing 'real change'”,* April 28

But the trends will favor the US and NATO in coming months as the number of American troops Mr. Obama ordered to Afghanistan arrive there and more of the population centers can be protected, defense officials say. At the same time, the strength of the Afghan national security forces, including the army and police, will improve over time. Insurgent groups are so decentralized, and command-and-control sometimes so difficult, that they are often less effective than they can be, according to the report. And, few groups are on the same page: “Persistent fissures among insurgent leadership persist at the local levels,” the report says. Pakistani officials have made a series of high-profile, recent arrests of top Taliban and other insurgent leaders in Pakistan. That has triggered “concerned chatter” among intelligence sources about the future of the insurgency. But it has as not yet translated to an insurgency that is significantly degraded, the defense official said.

Troop increase key to Afghanistan stability and training Afghani Scecurity Forces

Outlook Daily ‘09

Outlook Daily, “*Obama to decide surge in Afghanistan”* Daily Outlook Afghanistan, Novemeber 25 2009 <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/LNacademic/>

President Obama is going to announce his much-awaited reviewed Afghan policy next week by December 01, 2009. The top US Commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley McChrystal Stanley McChrystal had demanded about 44,000 extra troops earlier in August. Contrary to the officials in Pentagon, Obama Administration  was reluctant to troops surge.It took the president too long to decide. The more awaiting, the more his Administration seemed indecisive and dithering on Afghanistan issue. There was a confused situation particularly during the controversial Presidential elections in Afghanistan. President Obama might announce increase of 30,000 to 35,000 troops. The surge lacks the number of troops demanded by Gen. McChrystal. White House expects other NATO nations to contribute the troops' surge. UK might take the lead in doing so. On the other hand, Gen. McChrystal is traveling to Washington to brief Congress about his plans for the increasing troops. Finally, the much carefully-decided troops surge to suppress the sophisticated Taliban insurgency will officially be announced next week. It would set the objectives clear in all minds. The US besides troops surge, should also rapidly increase the number and capacity of Afghan National Security Forces in order to enable them take command of security across the country. Without strong and capable Afghan Forces, the war would never be won in Afghanistan. Other than the military options against Taliban, talks with insurgents should also be given a serious try this time. Several top American officials have been admitting that military option alone would not win the war in Afghanistan. President Karzai has already set negotiation with insurgents as an important agenda of his second term. The international community should keep in mind that an irresponsible withdrawal strategy made in hasty would lead Afghanistan to fall into the hands of extremists that hosted and encouraged Al-Qaeda to destroy world security. The Afghans cannot bear another severe mistake, made by the US after withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. International community needs to stay involved in Afghanistan for long-term objectives of instability in the region. Only surge in troops and negotiations with insurgents would not provide sustainable solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. The international allies should engage regional powers and work out a regional solution for Afghanistan.

Surge Good – Withdrawal Bad

U.S. Should not pull out of Afghanistan until four conditions are met: No corruption, Afghan Security, limited drug trade, and a robust economy

Olson ‘09

Rep. Pete Olson, R-TX, 2009 congressman, December 9th, Heritage, The Foundry, <http://ethiopedia.com/world/80424>

As I see it, there are four key areas that must improve to ensure victory. First, the corruption that is rampant throughout Afghanistan must be stopped. The influence of corrupt officials in the Afghan government is a troubling problem that will have long-term impacts on stability. Secondly, while our troops are doing a remarkable job of training Afghanistan forces, the Afghans are nowhere near ready to take over security yet. This is a concern, which must be addressed before our troops return home. The well-known illicit drug trade is also a core impediment to the U.S. mission in Afghanistan, generating what is estimated to be about $70 million – $100 million per year for the Taliban. Afghanistan is the source for roughly 93% of the world’s opium supply. While steps are being taken to reduce this problem, more must be done. Finally, long-term success is also dependent upon a robust economy in Afghanistan. Afghanistan residents need to know they have a working government and a stable economy so they do not feel compelled to ally with the Taliban for survival. And progress must be made in Pakistan. They must take an aggressive stand against the militants on their side of the border. Testifying before Congress last week, Defense Secretary Robert Gates called the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan the “epicenter of extremist jihadism.” The players in Pakistan must step up and instill a zero tolerance policy on harboring terrorists to maintain control of the region.

Afghanistan timeline gives the perception of withdrawal, weakening U.S. resolve in the region

McNamara and Curtis ‘10

Sally, Lisa, July 16, Sally McNamara is Senior Policy Analyst in European Affairs in the Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom, a division of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies, and Lisa Curtis is Senior Research Fellow for South Asia in the Asian Studies Center, at The Heritage Foundation. <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/07/The-Cameron-Obama-White-House-Meeting>

The circumstances surrounding the recent departure of General McChrystal from command of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan reflect the lack of unity among U.S. civilian and military leaders regarding U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. Obama should discard the artificial deadline for beginning U.S. troop withdrawals, which has contributed to the tensions between U.S. civilian and military leaders by placing commanders under enormous pressure to achieve results in an unrealistic timeframe. The highly accomplished General Petraeus—credited with developing and implementing the counterinsurgency strategy that helped turn the Iraq war around—has repeatedly said that any U.S. troop withdrawals from Afghanistan should be driven by conditions on the ground. The Obama Administration should actively counter the perception that the U.S. is war-weary and ready to strike a grand bargain with the Taliban. Such perceptions weaken the U.S. position in the region and dampen prospects for the overall success of NATO’s new counterinsurgency strategy.

Surge Good – Withdrawal Bad

Obama is sending mixed signals about Afghanistan, which makes the war unwinnable

Elder ‘10

Larry, July 1, “President Obama, Make the Case for Afghanistan -- or Get Out”, July 1, Creators Syndicate Inc. <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2010/07/01/president_obama_make_the_case_for_afghanistan_--_or_get_out_106158.html>

The "war of necessity" became the schizophrenic war. What happens if we leave before the Afghan government can maintain security? Will it again become a base of operation for al-Qaida and other terrorist groups? Will they step up their efforts in neighboring Pakistan, a country that possesses nuclear bombs? Will a defeat in Afghanistan confirm the enemy's assumption that we cannot and will not make the necessary commitment to defeat them? Obama now seems to speak of Summer 2011 less as a fixed date for withdrawal and more as one based on conditions. But it's hard to say what the President believes. In any event, the mixed signals give comfort to the enemy. Without American public support, the war in Afghanistan cannot be won. Without a commander in chief committed to winning, the war in Afghanistan cannot be won. A commitment requires the President to repeatedly and persuasively explain why we are at war and, if we leave too soon, the consequences to national security. Does Obama believe this war must be fought? Candidate Obama called a nuclear Iran "unacceptable." Yet CIA Director Leon Panetta admits that the recently announced "tough" sanctions will not stop Iran's nuclear program. So the Obama administration accepts the eventuality of a nuclear Iran and has shifted to a policy of management and containment - the opposite of what Obama promised during his campaign for president. If Obama believes Iran can be managed, why would he not accept whatever consequences follow from a complete withdrawal from Afghanistan? Why assume Obama was any more sincere about the "unacceptability" of a nuclear Iran than he was when he called Afghanistan a "war of necessity"?

Surge Good – Wins War [1/2]

The New Troop Surge in Afghanistan makes winning the war on terror possible

Scott ‘10

Scott, Lucas, Journalist for Enduring America, “Afghanistan: A Winnable War? (Kagan & Kagan)”Enduring America, June 29 , 2010, <http://enduringamerica.com/2010/06/29/afghanistan-a-winnable-war-kagan-kagan/>

Success in Afghanistan is possible. The policy that President Obama announced in December and firmly reiterated last week is sound. So is the strategy that General Stanley McChrystal devised last summer and has been implementing this year. There have been setbacks and disappointments during this campaign, and adjustments will likely be necessary. These are inescapable in war. Success is not by any means inevitable. Enemies adapt and spoilers spoil. But both panic and despair are premature. The coalition has made significant military progress against the Taliban, and will make more progress as the last surge forces arrive in August. Although military progress is insufficient by itself to resolve the conflict, it is a vital precondition. As *The New York Times* editors recently noted, “Until the insurgents are genuinely bloodied, they will keep insisting on a full restoration of their repressive power.” General David Petraeus knows how to bloody insurgents—and he also knows how to support and encourage political development and conflict resolution. He takes over the mission with the renewed support of the White House.Neither the recent setbacks nor the manner of McChrystal’s departure should be allowed to obscure the enormous progress he has made in setting conditions for successful campaigns over the next two years. The internal, structural changes he made have revolutionized the ability of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to conduct counterinsurgency operations. He oversaw the establishment of a three-star NATO training command that has accelerated both the expansion and the qualitative improvement of the Afghan National Security Forces in less than a year. He introduced a program of partnering ISAF units and headquarters with Afghan forces that had worked wonders in Iraq—and he improved on it. He oversaw the introduction of a three-star operational headquarters to develop and coordinate countrywide campaign plans. He has managed the massive planning and logistical burden of receiving the influx of surge forces and putting them immediately to use in a country with little infrastructure. While undertaking these enormous tasks of internal reorganization, he has also taken the fight to the enemy. The controversies about his restrictions on the operations of Special Forces and rules of engagement that limit the use of destructive force in inhabited areas have obscured the fact that both Special Forces and conventional forces have been fighting harder than ever before and disrupting and seriously damaging enemy networks and strongholds

New troop surge key to fighting terror – and maintaining security

BBC ‘09

“US Envoy to Afghanistan welcomes fresh deployment of troops” BBC Monitoring South Asia, BBC Worldwide Monitoring, June 10 2009 <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/LNacademic/>

[Presenter] The British ambassador to Afghanistan has said in an exclusive interview that foreign troops surge will help defeat terrorism in this country. The British ambassador welcomes the fresh deployment of American troops to Helmand Province, saying security must improve in Helmand with the foreign troop surge. Pervez Shamal has the report.  [Correspondent] The deployment of extra American troops to Afghanistan is under way, and the British ambassador to Afghanistan is welcoming deployment of extra American forces to Afghanistan, especially in Helmand Province.  [British ambassador in Kabul, Mark Phillip Sedwill, in English superimposed with Dari translation] We very much welcome the deployment of extra American forces to Afghanistan, and we are optimistic about the arrival of more troops in Afghanistan, especially in Helmand Province. The troop surge will help us gain victory over terrorism. The American and British forces will cooperate with the Afghan forces in the war. We should help expand security in Helmand Province, while at the moment, we are unable to improve security in some parts of the province.  [Correspondent] America earlier announced it would send 17,000 extra troops to Afghanistan most of whom would be stationed in the south of the country, especially in Helmand and Farah.  [Sidan Stryker, spokesman for American forces in Afghanistan, in English superimposed with Dari translation] As part of the decision on troop increase, 17,000 new American troops are due to arrive in Afghanistan by the end of this year's summer 7,000 of whom have arrived in Afghanistan so far, bringing the total number of American forces in Afghanistan to 54,000. The total number of American forces will reach to 64,000 by the end of this year's summer.  [Correspondent] The spokesman is saying the new troops will help train Afghan forces, but the Ministry of National Defence is saying foreign troops surge alone is not enough to restore peace in Afghanistan, calling for more support and aid for the Afghan national army.

Surge Good – Wins War [2/2]

Surge Key to quashing the Taliban spilling over into Pakistan

Boot and Kagan ‘09

Boot and Kagan, New York Times, 2009, “How to Surge the Taliban”, March 12, Max Boot is a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. Frederick Kagan is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. Kimberly Kagan is the president of the Institute for the Study of War. <http://www.cfr.org/publication/18762/how_to_surge_the_taliban.html>

There are many who claim that a large-scale commitment isn’t necessary. Some say we have no interest in making Afghanistan a functioning state — all that matters is preventing Al Qaeda from re-establishing safe havens, and we can do that by killing terrorist leaders with precision air strikes or covert raids. The key question for those who advocate pulling back is this: Where will we get the intelligence to direct the raids? If we have few troops on the ground, we will have to rely on intercepted communications. But seven years into the fight, the terrorists have learned a thing or two about keeping their communications secret. The only way to get the intelligence we need is from the residents, and they won’t provide it unless our troops stay in their villages to provide protection from Taliban retribution. This struggle is not just about Afghanistan. It is also about tracking and effecting what is going on in Pakistan’s tribal areas. That is where the global Qaeda leadership is. It is the nexus of terrorist groups including the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which is implicated in the Mumbai, India, attacks last November; the Tehreek Nifaz-e-Shariat Mohammadi, which now has control of the Swat region in Pakistan; and Baitullah Mehsud’s Pakistani Taliban, which are said to have plotted the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the former Pakistani prime minister. From their positions across the border in Afghanistan, American forces can literally see these areas. They can also gather invaluable intelligence from, and spread our influence to, the tribes that straddle the frontier. But we get that vantage point only as long as we have something to offer the Afghans — security, improved quality of life, hope for a better government. If we abandon them, we will become blind to one of the most dangerous threats to our security, and also hand our most determined enemies an enormous propaganda victory — their biggest since 9/11. Make no mistake: there is hard, costly fighting ahead in Afghanistan. But the fight is worth pursuing, and the odds of success are much better than they were in Iraq when we launched the forlorn hope known as the surge.