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Obama Good 1NC

Obama winning now

Aaron David Miller, APRIL 25, 2012, www.foreignpolicy.com ,“5 Reasons Obama Will Win in November”, <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/25/5_reasons_obama_will_win_in_november?page=full>

Clearly, much will depend on how voters perceive their economic reality closer to the election. Obama really isn't running against Romney -- he's running against the economy. By the fall, it's likely that about the best he'll have to show is a weak recovery. Indeed, the New York Times reported last week that when it comes to the economy, the all-important Ohio voters see Romney vs. Obama as an unpalatable choice between liver and Brussels sprouts. Still, when Americans vote for a president, they ask themselves two questions: To what degree is the guy in the White House responsible for my misery? And if I vote for the other guy, can he really make it better? Barring another economic meltdown, I'm betting that enough Americans will conclude that things are getting better, albeit slowly; that Obama is doing the best job he can under tough circumstances; that the president is much more attuned to those who are suffering; and that the Republicans have neither better answers on the economy nor a compelling-enough candidate worth giving the benefit of the doubt.

More deficit spending would swing the election to Romney

Kraushaar, ’12(Josh, National Journal writer, 5/14/12, <http://decoded.nationaljournal.com/2012/05/romneys-targeted-deficit-messa.php>)

If unemployment was the only factor driving this presidential election, Mitt Romney would not be spending much time campaigning in Iowa, where the state's agricultural economy is relatively healthy, and the state boasts a 5.2 percent unemployment rate, the lowest for any battleground state. But spending and debt are big issues in the American heartland, too. And that's why Romney spent time on the trail in Des Moines Tuesday, with a speech decrying excessive government spending. Concern over federal spending is what drove the tea party movement into existence in 2009, and it's an issue that hasn't gone away in 2012. It's what's driving Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's momentum in next month's gubernatorial recall, with a deficit-conscious GOP base showing high levels of enthusiasm. (It's also an effective message with independents: Check out this new ad from Republican New Mexico Senate candidate Heather Wilson that's focused squarely on the debt, deficit and spending -- in a Democratic-leaning state.) When pollsters ask voters what their most important issue is, the catch-all "jobs and the economy" comes first. But the number of voters naming the deficit rose in 2010 and has remained largely constant, and it's an issue that's driving conservatives to the polls. It's also a way for Romney to criticize the president on the economy in states that haven't suffered the brunt of the downturn. New Hampshire is another state with a solid economy, but one receptive to Romney's small-government messaging. Indeed, the RNC held a conference call today, featuring former New Hampshire Gov. John Sununu and former New Hampshire Rep. Jeb Bradley, decrying Obama's record on debt and deficits. Obama may be leading in early Granite State polls, but the Romney campaign is optimistic about their chances there, hoping to take advantage of the state's "live free or die" sentiment. If Obama needs high levels of youth and minority turnout to win a second term, Romney needs a restive base anxious about the fiscal future of the country to show up in big numbers. That's the ticket to a Romney victory in states like Iowa, New Hampshire, and Virginia -- where the economy is pretty good but voter dissatisfaction still runs high.

Romney will green light Israel to strike – Obama key to stop war

Swaine 2011 (Jon Swaine is a staff writer for the Daily Telegraph. “Republican hopefuls would go to war with Iran”. 2011. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/republicans/8887247/Republican-hopefuls-would-go-to-war-with-Iran.html)

Mitt Romney, the favourite to clinch the party's candidacy, said that he would direct US forces to pre-emptively strike Iran's nuclear facilities if "crippling sanctions" failed to block their ambitions. "If all else fails, if after all of the work we've done, there's nothing else we could do besides take military action," Mr Romney said at a debate on foreign policy in South Carolina on Saturday night. The former Massachusetts governor's pledge was echoed by Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the House of Representatives, who over the weekend rose to second place in some national opinion polls. "You have to take whatever steps are necessary to break its capacity to have a nuclear weapon," said Mr Gingrich, who also proposed covert actions such as "taking out their scientists," to applause. Rick Santorum, a former Senator for Pennsylvania, said the US should support an Israeli intervention. Their remarks came at the end of a week of heightened tensions following the UN nuclear watchdog's confirmation that Iran had acquired the expertise and material required to build its first nuclear weapon. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also acknowledged for the first time that Tehran was conducting secret experiments whose only purpose could be the development of weaponry. As his potential Republican rivals spoke, Mr Obama was being rebuffed by Presidents Hu Jintao of China and Dmitry Medvedev of Russia as he sought international support for sanctions against Tehran. After meetings at an Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit in Hawaii, Mr Obama said that Russia had agreed to "work to shape a common response" to Iran's threatening manoeuvres, and that China wanted Tehran to obey "international rules and norms". However, neither foreign leader publicly echoed Mr Obama's comments or signalled that they might withhold their veto on the UN Security Council if sanctions against Iran were proposed by the US. Iran insists its nuclear programme is limited to the peaceful production of energy. Dismissing the IAEA report as "absurd", President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad last week said he would not retreat "one iota". Mr Obama's Iran problem was pounced upon by Republicans as evidence that despite overseeing the killing of Osama bin Laden and endorsing Nato intervention in Libya, his foreign policy is weak. Calling the situation the president's "greatest failure," Mr Romney said: "If we re-elect Barack Obama, Iran will have a nuclear weapon. If you elect Mitt Romney, Iran will not have a nuclear weapon".

Iran strikes causes multiple scenarios for extinction.

Chossudovsky -06 (Michel Chossudovsky, The Next Phase of the Middle East War, Global Research, http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=3147)

The Bush Administration has embarked upon a military adventure which threatens the future of humanity. This is not an overstatement. If aerial bombardments were to be launched against Iran, they would trigger a ground war and the escalation of the conflict to a much broader region. Even in the case of aerial and missile attacks using conventional warheads, the bombings would unleash a "Chernobyl type" nuclear nightmare resulting from the spread of nuclear radiation following the destruction of Iran's nuclear energy facilities. Throughout history, the structure of military alliances has played a crucial role in triggering major military conflicts. In contrast to the situation prevailing prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, America's ongoing military adventure is now firmly supported by the Franco-German alliance. Moreover, Israel is slated to play a direct role in this military operation. NATO is firmly aligned with the Anglo-American-Israeli military axis, which also includes Australia and Canada. In 2005, NATO signed a military cooperation agreement with Israel, and Israel has a longstanding bilateral military agreement with Turkey. Iran has observer status in The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and is slated to become a full member of SCO. China and Russia have far-reaching military cooperation agreements with Iran. China and Russia are firmly opposed to a US-led military operation in the diplomatic arena. While the US sponsored military plan threatens Russian and Chinese interests in Central Asia and the Caspian sea basin, it is unlikely that they would intervene militarily on the side of Iran or Syria. The planned attack on Iran must be understood in relation to the existing active war theaters in the Middle East, namely Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon-Palestine. The conflict could easily spread from the Middle East to the Caspian sea basin. It could also involve the participation of Azerbaijan and Georgia, where US troops are stationed. Military action against Iran and Syria would directly involve Israel's participation, which in turn would trigger a broader war throughout the Middle East, not to mention the further implosion in the Palestinian occupied territories. Turkey is closely associated with the proposed aerial attacks. If the US-UK-Israeli war plans were to proceed, the broader Middle East- Central Asian region would flare up, from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Afghan-Chinese border. At present, there are three distinct war theaters: Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine-Lebanon. An attack directed against Iran would serve to integrate these war theaters transforming the broader Middle East Central Asian region into an integrated war zone. (see map above) In turn the US sponsored aerial bombardments directed against Iran could contribute to triggering a ground war characterized by Iranian attacks directed against coalition troops in Iraq. In turn, Israeli forces would enter into Syria. An attack on Iran would have a direct impact on the resistance movement inside Iraq. It would also put pressure on America's overstretched military capabilities and resources in both the Iraqi and Afghan war theaters. In other words, the shaky geopolitics of the Central Asia- Middle East region, the three existing war theaters in which America is currently, involved, the direct participation of Israel and Turkey, the structure of US sponsored military alliances, etc. raises the specter of a broader conflict. The war against Iran is part of a longer term US military agenda which seeks to militarize the entire Caspian sea basin, eventually leading to the destabilization and conquest of the Russian Federation.

\*Obama Winning Now\*

Generic

Obama will win 2012 election-sitting president

Aaron David Miller, APRIL 25, 2012, www.foreignpolicy.com ,“5 Reasons Obama Will Win in November”, <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/25/5_reasons_obama_will_win_in_november?page=full>

Since 1980, only one U.S. president has failed to gain a second term. That was George H.W. Bush, who defied the odds by succeeding a two-term president of the same party. Since FDR, this has happened only once. It's a tough hill to climb. Americans generally tire of too much single-party dominance. Indeed, that's why Hillary Clinton should take a very hard look at her chances in 2016 -- should Obama be reelected. A set of three presidents -- Clinton, Bush 43, and perhaps Obama -- is hardly a valid statistical sample, but it does tell you something about the power of the incumbent. It's hard to defeat a sitting president. Although a bad economy offsets some of the incumbent's advantage, Americans tend to get comfortable with their presidents. Presidents are also able to act presidential right up to Election Day. The presidency has a great many bells and whistles, including the White House, which Aaron Sorkin's West Wing president once described as the world's greatest home-court advantage. There's also the issue of continuity. These days, U.S. state and congressional politics have gotten pretty combustible and polarized. The media circus at the national level only makes things seem more out of control. As Americans watch their politics implode, they seem to be seeking a measure of stability in the one institution that they all have responsibility for shaping -- the presidency. In these turbulent times, Americans tend to stay with their guys, flawed as those guys may be. Should Obama be reelected, it will only be the second time in U.S. history that America has had three two-term presidents in a row. The last time? Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. "Throw the bums out" doesn't seem to be as compelling a line these days.

Obama more public support than the Republican party

Frank Schaeffer, 2011, Huff Post, “President Obama Will Win In An Overwhelming Landslide in 2012 and Will Deserve the Victory”, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/frank-schaeffer/president-obama-will-win-_b_906104.html>

That is what, not whom, President Obama will run against in 2012. He will be running against the "party" that in the matter of the debt crisis is happy to take the whole county with them over the cliff of loony and contradictory Bible-based/Ayn Rand-inspired, ideology into economic chaos. None of which any former Republicans, let alone any actual Christians -- i.e., those who try to follow the teachings of Christ -- would recognize. This folly will not be forgotten. Nor will the insanity of the Rick Perry prayer meeting sponsored by a list of homophobic fanatics. No matter what the president has to do to resolve this manufactured debt limit crisis, he will do something effective. And he will -- once again -- succeed in confounding his insane far right/religious right critics, and also once again prove his left wing critics wrong. President Obama towers over his political rivals, left and right. While the country and many of its leaders seem to feed on hysteria, the president takes the long view, and consistently wins.

Minority Vote

Minorities vote to Obama’s side

Paul West, [www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com), June 29, 2012, 11:35 a.m. “Analysis: Romney-Obama race dividing U.S. along fault lines”, Los Angeles Times, <http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-romney-obama-dividing-us-along-fault-lines-20120629,0,546981.story>

President Obama’s reelection depends increasingly on a coalition of minorities and younger voters, the same groups that helped put him in office. Their overall numbers are increasing, but the president’s ability to turn them out this year at anywhere close to 2008 levels remains in doubt (at least among Latinos and younger whites; the black vote is virtually certain to be there again for Obama). Their potential explains why Democrats have sought to portray the election as the future against the past.

Minorities key to 2012 election

William H. Frey, Senior Fellow, Metropolitan Policy Program, May, 1, 2012, Brookings Mountain West Publications, “Why Minorities Will Decide the 2012 U.S. Election”, <http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=brookings_pubs&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.com%2Fscholar%3Fas_ylo%3D2012%26q%3Dobama%2Bre%2Belection%26hl%3Den%26as_sdt%3D0%2C30#search=%22obama%20re%20election%22>

Whatever scenario comes to pass, minorities are going to matter in November. The new demography of the electorate guarantees it. Their significance lies not just in racially diverse battleground states on the coasts, Southeast, and Mountain West. If the white Republican base turns out in full force, the votes of African Americans and growing Hispanic populations will be necessary for Democratic wins in a slew of interior states with largely white electorates. The 2012 election will most assuredly be a battle of turnout and its outcome will greatly depend on the enthusiasm of minority voting blocs.

Swing States

Obama ahead in the swing states right now

RTT News, 6/27/12, “Obama Lead In Three Swing States Could 'Assure Re-election: Poll ”, <http://www.rttnews.com/1913396/obama-lead-in-three-swing-states-could-assure-re-election-poll.aspx?type=pn&Node=B1>

President Barack Obama leads Republican candidate Mitt Romney in the three vital swing states of Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, a new Quinnipac poll released Wednesday says. Every president ever elected has won at least two of these three states in the general election, making this poll a closely watched forecast of a possible outcome in November. "President Barack Obama has decent margins over Gov. Mitt Romney in Ohio and Pennsylvania and a smaller advantage in Florida," Peter A. Brown, Assistant Director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute in a press release. "If he can keep those leads in all three of these key swing states through election day he would be virtually assured of re-election."

Econ

Public votes Obama despite economy

Aaron David Miller, APRIL 25, 2012, www.foreignpolicy.com ,“5 Reasons Obama Will Win in November”, <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/25/5_reasons_obama_will_win_in_november?page=full>

Clearly, much will depend on how voters perceive their economic reality closer to the election. Obama really isn't running against Romney -- he's running against the economy. By the fall, it's likely that about the best he'll have to show is a weak recovery. Indeed, the New York Times reported last week that when it comes to the economy, the all-important Ohio voters see Romney vs. Obama as an unpalatable choice between liver and Brussels sprouts. Still, when Americans vote for a president, they ask themselves two questions: To what degree is the guy in the White House responsible for my misery? And if I vote for the other guy, can he really make it better? Barring another economic meltdown, I'm betting that enough Americans will conclude that things are getting better, albeit slowly; that Obama is doing the best job he can under tough circumstances; that the president is much more attuned to those who are suffering; and that the Republicans have neither better answers on the economy nor a compelling-enough candidate worth giving the benefit of the doubt.

Public still blames Bush for the economy

Frank Cannon & Jeffrey Bell, (Frank Cannon and Jeffrey Bell are president and policy director of the American Principles Project, a Washington-based advocacy group) June 28, 2012, NPR, “Weekly Standard: Obama's Victory Plan”, <http://www.npr.org/2012/06/28/155894520/weekly-standard-obamas-victory-plan>

Today, of course, the elephant in the room is the mediocre economy. Obama's allusion to the private sector doing "fine" — and his quick retraction of it — was the last time in the campaign we're likely to hear any disagreement about the state of the national economy. From now until November 6, Democrats and Republicans will be in agreement about what the electorate already knows: The economy is badly underperforming. What we haven't heard the last of is the blame game. After three-and-a-half Obama years, blaming George W. Bush for the financial crisis, the 2007-09 recession, and the subsequent stagnation infuriates Republican elites (particularly Bush alumni). But as a line of attack, it is far more in accord with the views of American voters than the (now abandoned) contention that under Obama the national economy has made a decent comeback .

Republican Divide

Republicans too divided win election

Aaron David Miller, APRIL 25, 2012, www.foreignpolicy.com ,“5 Reasons Obama Will Win in November”, <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/25/5_reasons_obama_will_win_in_november?page=full>

You can't beat something with nothing. That old saw in politics wins out most every time. The Republican Party has never gotten over its love affair with Reagan. Look at the parade of Republican hopefuls who rose and fell during primary season. Had Reagan been around, he'd have been frustrated with the divisions in Republican ranks. And the Gipper might have described the primaries as an audition in which the last guy standing got the part only because the producers were exhausted and needed to get the play into rehearsals before the opening. I know the main counterpoint: Republicans will come together because they need to defeat Obama. But the gaps between the Republican base and the centrists are huge; the obsession with social issues risks alienating independents; there are real doubts that Romney is conservative enough; and there's not much enthusiasm for his stiff style on the campaign trail. All this is creating real trouble for a party that seems to have lost its way. Add to that Republican difficulties in making inroads with women and Hispanics, and you might conclude that the election is Obama's to lose.

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Health Care

Upheld Obamacare boosts Obama’s re-election bid

TIM DICKINSON, JUNE 28, 2012, [www.rollingstone.com](http://www.rollingstone.com), “How the Supreme Court's Healthcare Ruling Boosts Obama's Reelection Bid”, <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/blogs/national-affairs/how-the-supreme-courts-healthcare-ruling-boosts-obamas-reelection-bid-20120628>

The president can now run on the popular forward progress already brought by Obamacare: Millions of young adults insured on their parents' plans; millions of seniors benefitting from reduced prescription drug costs; the end of lifetime caps on insurance coverage. He can also campaign on the progress yet to come, starting with the millions who will be receiving a rebate check this summer from their insurers for excessive administrative costs, as well as the "Big Fucking Deal" provisions that would kick in during Obama's second term: An end to insurance denials based on preexisting conditions; new health care markets for individual purchasers; and generous premium supports for those buying policies.

\*Public Links\*

Generic Unpopular Links

More deficit spending would swing the election to Romney

Kraushaar, ’12(Josh, National Journal writer, 5/14/12, <http://decoded.nationaljournal.com/2012/05/romneys-targeted-deficit-messa.php>)

If unemployment was the only factor driving this presidential election, Mitt Romney would not be spending much time campaigning in Iowa, where the state's agricultural economy is relatively healthy, and the state boasts a 5.2 percent unemployment rate, the lowest for any battleground state. But spending and debt are big issues in the American heartland, too. And that's why Romney spent time on the trail in Des Moines Tuesday, with a speech decrying excessive government spending. Concern over federal spending is what drove the tea party movement into existence in 2009, and it's an issue that hasn't gone away in 2012. It's what's driving Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's momentum in next month's gubernatorial recall, with a deficit-conscious GOP base showing high levels of enthusiasm. (It's also an effective message with independents: Check out this new ad from Republican New Mexico Senate candidate Heather Wilson that's focused squarely on the debt, deficit and spending -- in a Democratic-leaning state.) When pollsters ask voters what their most important issue is, the catch-all "jobs and the economy" comes first. But the number of voters naming the deficit rose in 2010 and has remained largely constant, and it's an issue that's driving conservatives to the polls. It's also a way for Romney to criticize the president on the economy in states that haven't suffered the brunt of the downturn. New Hampshire is another state with a solid economy, but one receptive to Romney's small-government messaging. Indeed, the RNC held a conference call today, featuring former New Hampshire Gov. John Sununu and former New Hampshire Rep. Jeb Bradley, decrying Obama's record on debt and deficits. Obama may be leading in early Granite State polls, but the Romney campaign is optimistic about their chances there, hoping to take advantage of the state's "live free or die" sentiment. If Obama needs high levels of youth and minority turnout to win a second term, Romney needs a restive base anxious about the fiscal future of the country to show up in big numbers. That's the ticket to a Romney victory in states like Iowa, New Hampshire, and Virginia -- where the economy is pretty good but voter dissatisfaction still runs high.

Public distrusts federal spending on transportation infrastructure

Ken Orski, 02/05/2012, newsgeopgraphy, “WHY PLEAS TO INCREASE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FALL ON DEAF EARS”, http://www.newgeography.com/content/002662-why-pleas-increase-infrastructure-funding-fall-deaf-ears

There are various theories why appeals to increase infrastructure spending do not resonate with the public. One widely held view is that people simply do not trust the federal government to spend their tax dollars wisely. As proof, evidence is cited that a great majority of state and local transportation ballot measures do get passed, because voters know precisely where their tax money is going. No doubt there is much truth to that. Indeed, thanks to local funding initiatives and the use of tolling, state transportation agencies are becoming increasingly more self-reliant and less dependent on federal funding

Public support for spending on transportation infrastructure has declined

STEVEN KULL et al, 2005, The PIP/Knowledge Networks Poll The American Public on International Issues,   
“THE FEDERAL BUDGET: THE PUBLIC’S PRIORITIES”, http://www.pipa.org/OnlineReports/DefenseSpending/FedBudget\_Mar05/FedBudget\_Mar05\_rpt.pdf

Willingness to spend on transportation relative to other needs has shown a long-term decline. In 1996 it was increased 40% on average; in 2000, it was kept nearly flat (2% increase); and in 2005, it was cut by 18%

Military Unpopular

Military Spending Unpopular with Public (RORO’s)

Smith 12

R. Jeffrey Smith[managing editor for national security at the Center for Public Integrity, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to producing original investigative journalism]/On Defense Cuts, Both Parties Are Far Out of Step With Voters/May 10, 2012  
http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/05/on-defense-cuts-both-parties-are-far-out-of-step-with-voters/256960/

While politicians, insiders and experts may be divided over how much the government should spend on the nation's defense , there's a surprising consensus among the public about what should be done: They want to cut spending far more deeply than either the Obama administration or the Republicans. That's according to the results of an innovative, new, nationwide survey by three nonprofit groups, the Center for Public integrity , the Program for Public Consultation and the Stimson Center. Not only does the public want deep cuts , it wants those cuts to encompass spending in virtually every military domain -- air power, sea power, ground forces, nuclear weapons , and missile defenses. According to the survey, in which respondents were told about the size of the budget as well as shown expert arguments for and against spending cuts, two-thirds of Republicans and nine in 10 Democrats supported making immediate cuts -- a position at odds with the leaderships of both political parties. The average total cut was around $103 billion, a substantial portion of the current $562 billion base defense budget , while the majority supported cutting it at least $83 billion. These amounts both exceed a threatened cut of $55 billion at the end of this year under so-called "sequestration" legislation passed in 2011, which Pentagon officials and lawmakers alike have claimed would be devastating. "When Americans look at the amount of defense spending compared to spending on other programs , they see defense as the one that should take a substantial hit to reduce the deficit," said Steven Kull, director of the Program for Public Consultation (PPC), and the lead developer of the survey. "Clearly the polarization that you are seeing on the floor of the Congress is not reflective of the American people. " A broad disagreement with the Obama administration's current spending approach -- keeping the defense budget mostly level -- was shared by 75 percent of men and 78 percent of women, all of whom instead backed immediate cuts. That view was also shared by at least 69 percent of every one of four age groups from 18 to 60 and older, although those aged 29 and below expressed much higher support, at 92 percent. Disagreement with the Obama administration's continued spending on the war in Afghanistan was particularly intense, with 85 percent of respondents expressing support for a statement that said in part, "it is time for the Afghan people to manage their own country and for us to bring our troops home. " A majority of respondents backed an immediate cut, on average, of $38 billion in the war's existing $88 billion budget, or around 43 percent. Despite the public's distance from Obama's defense budget, the survey disclosed an even larger gap between majority views and proposals by House Republicans this week to add $3 billion for an extra naval destroyer, a new submarine, more missile defenses, and some weapons systems the Pentagon has proposed to cancel. Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney has similarly endorsed a significant rise in defense spending. When it comes to military forces, respondents on average favored at least a 27 percent cut in spending on nuclear arms -- the largest proportional cut of any in the survey. They also supported, on average, a 23 percent cut for ground forces, a 17 percent cut for air power and a 14 percent cut for missile defenses. Modest majorities also said they favored dumping some major individual weapons programs, including the costly F-35 jet fighter, a new long-range strategic bomber, and construction of a new aircraft carrier. "Surveyed Americans cut to considerably deeper levels than policymakers are willing to support in an election season," said Matthew Leatherman, an analyst with the Budgeting for Foreign Affairs and Defense Project at the Stimson Center, a nonprofit research and policy analysis organization that helped develop the survey. While Republicans generally favored smaller cuts , they overwhelmingly agreed with both independents and Democrats that current military budgets are too large . A majority of Republicans diverged only on cutting spending for special forces, missile defenses, and new ground force capabilities. The survey, which was conducted in April, was designed differently than many polls on defense spending , which have asked respondents only if they support a cut . Its aim was instead to probe public attitudes more comprehensively, and so it supplied respondents with neutral information about how funds are currently being spent while exposing them to carefully-drafted, representative arguments made by advocates in the contemporary debate. The respondents then said what they wished to spend in key areas. The survey's methodology and the number of respondents -- 665 people randomly selected to represent the national population -- render its conclusions statistically reliable to within 5 percent, according to the Program on Public Consultation, which conducted it. Somewhat surprisingly, all of the pro and con arguments about cutting defense spending attracted majority support , suggesting that respondents found many elements in the positions of each side that they considered reasonable. It also suggests that the survey fairly summarized contrasting viewpoints. Sixty-one percent agreed, for example, with a statement that the U. S. has special defense responsibilities because it is an exceptional nation, while 72 percent said the country is "playing the role of military policeman too much. " Fifty-four percent agreed that cutting defense spending is problematic because it will cause job losses, while 81 percent -- in one of the largest points of consensus -- agreed with a statement that the budget had "a lot of waste" and that members of Congress regularly approve unneeded spending just to benefit their own supporters. The survey suggested, in short, that most people do not see the issue in starkly black or white terms, but instead hold complex views about the appropriate relationship between defense spending and America's role in the world.

Public wants to cut military spending

Robert J. Blendon, Sc.D., & John M. Benson, M.A., The New England Journal of Medicine, “The Public's Views about Medicare and the Budget Deficit”, http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1107184

Faced with such lists, the public expresses much greater support for several other ways of dealing with the budget deficit than it does for reducing Medicare spending. Majorities favor raising taxes on people with annual incomes above $250,000 (66 to 72%; WP–ABC, April 2011; Pew), reducing U.S. assistance to foreign countries (72%), reducing military commitments overseas (65%), and limiting tax deductions for large corporations (62%; Pew). Between 42 and 49% favor reducing military spending (WP–ABC, April 2011; Quinnipiac; CBS, March 2011). When people are asked about cutting or slowing the growth of Medicare spending alone, without other possible ways of reducing the federal deficit, the public is more evenly divided (48 to 52% in favor) (CBS–NYT; KFF, April 2011).

Hydrogen Cars Unpopular

Hydrogen fueling faces public skepticism

Inga Schulte, David Hart, Rita van der Vorst, 2003, International Journal of Hydrogen Energy, “Issues affecting the acceptance of hydrogen fuel”, Imperial College Centre for Energy Policy and Technology, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360319903002428

These basic rules of acceptance of course also apply to hydrogen. Like any other product/technology it will only be able to penetrate the market if it is accepted by the public[5]. Often, however, new developments face skepticism [5], [9] and [13], which can limit economic success. While cost benefit analyses and scientific risk assessments are important tools, it is necessary to perform acceptance studies, in order to get a true indication of how likely it is that a product will be successful. Experience shows that the public often view a product differently from scientists. While the latter see no or a low risk, the former may be skeptical, or vice versa.

Alt Energy Unpopular

Public opposes major changed in energy use

Rob Flynna, Paul Bellabya, & Miriam Ricci, 06 Nov 2008, Taylor Francis, “Environmental citizenship and public attitudes to hydrogen energy technologies”, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09644010802421539

In contemporary advanced industrial societies, political concern about the impact of global warming and climate change has begun to intensify. Despite some evidence that the general public is aware of environmental problems and a crisis over fossil fuels, evidence that this is resulting in major changes in behaviour (for example, in energy use) is not compelling. Some commentators have optimistically suggested that the conditions of modern citizenship can be extended to incorporate ecological rights and responsibilities, in the form of environmental citizenship. Here we first briefly review concepts of ‘environmental citizenship’ and the linkages between citizenship, environmental risks and sustainability. We then examine qualitative evidence about public perceptions of the energy crisis, hydrogen technologies and sustainability. Hydrogen has been identified as potentially providing a radically new and environment-friendly energy system. Findings from focus groups are presented about: awareness of global warming, environmental problems and energy; responsibility for behaviour change; and attitudes towards hydrogen. It is argued that while the level of public awareness of environmental (and specifically energy) issues is generally high, there is little sign of a substantive commitment to the solidaristic values ascribed to environmental citizenship. In relation to hydrogen energy, environmental citizenship is only latent and provisional, and certainly falls short of ‘ecological citizenship’.

HSR Unpopular

Cost of HSR faces public opposition

ERIC CARPENTER, June 27, 2012, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER, “KFI's John and Ken rally in O.C. against high-speed rail”, http://www.ocregister.com/news/speed-360979-high-rail.html

"This is the worst idea for a public-works project in the history of the United States," Ken Chiampou declared at the start of the show, sitting next to partner John Kobylt. The pair repeatedly called it a $98 billion boondoggle – and often a "Brown-doggle" referring to Gov. Jerry Brown. Their criticism often elicited laughter and, sometimes, wild cheering from a rotating audience of 50 people inside a hotel ballroom. "I'm so glad they are taking on this issue; the kind of money they are talking about – it is just ridiculous and it needs to be stopped," said Fran Walters, 61, who drove down from Los Angeles County to sign the petition and see the hosts.

Public votes against the building the of HSR

Michael B. Marois, Jun 4, 2012 12:01 AM ET, Bloomberg, “California High-Speed Rail Losing Support, Poll Shows”, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-03/california-high-speed-rail-losing-support-poll-shows.html

A majority of voters no longer support building a $68 billion high-speed passenger rail system connecting California’s population centers, a new poll shows, even as Governor Jerry Brown is pushing the project forward. While 53 percent of voters approved a bond issue for the project in 2008, a USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times poll published in yesterday’s edition of the newspaper, found that 59 percent would oppose it if given another chance to vote. Enlarge image California Governor Jerry Brown California Gov. Jerry Brown at a news conference on May 14, 2012 in Los Angeles. Photographer: Kevork Djansezian/Getty Images Brown, a 74-year-old Democrat, allocated some of the $9.95 billion of bonds for the system in his budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1, even though a deficit in the spending plan has ballooned to $15.7 billion. He wants voters to increase sales and income taxes or slash 3 weeks off the school year while still spending money on the rail line. “California voters have clearly reconsidered their support for high-speed rail,” said Dan Schnur, director of the USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times Poll and director of the Unruh Institute of Politics at University of Southern California. “They want the chance to vote again -— and they want to vote no. The growing budget deficit is making Californians hesitant about spending so much money on a project like this one when they’re seeing cuts to public education and law enforcement.”

FAA Unpopular

Cost overruns and delays in FAA management causes loss of public support

Robert W. Poole, Jr. & Chris Edwards, Cato Institute, “Airports and Air Traffic Control

Print”, http://www.downsizinggovernment.org/transportation/airports-atc/

While organized labor has created management challenges for the FAA, so has the implementation of new technologies. Delays and cost overruns on major technology projects have been common. For example, the Advanced Automation System project was launched in the early 1980s and was originally expected to cost $2.5 billion and be completed by 1996. But by 1994, estimated project costs had soared to $7.6 billion and the project was seven years behind schedule.7 The FAA terminated some parts of the AAS program and restructured others, but $1.5 billion of spending ended up being completely wasted. More recently, a 2005 study by the Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General looked at 16 major air traffic control upgrade projects and found that the combined costs had risen from $8.9 billion to $14.5 billion.8 The cost of the Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System project had jumped 194 percent to $2.7 billion and was seven years behind schedule. The OIG said that the STARS project was "facing obsolescence" even before it was completed.9 Meanwhile, the cost of the Wide Area Augmentation System project had jumped 274 percent to $3.3 billion and was 12 years behind schedule. A Government Accountability Office analysis in 2005 found similar cost overruns and delays in these projects.10 Delays and cost overruns have not been uncommon in federally subsidized airport projects either. For example, Denver's new international airport finally opened in 1995 after many delays and huge cost overruns. The project was originally supposed to cost $1.7 billion but ended up costing almost three times as much at $4.9 billion, with $685 million coming from federal taxpayers.

Mass Transit Unpopular

Public resists a transition to mass transit

Ching-Fu & Wei-Hsiang Chao, 18 August 2010, Science Direct, “Habitual or reasoned? Using the theory of planned behavior, technology acceptance model, and habit to examine switching intentions toward public transit”, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1369847810000884

How to reduce private vehicle use and to encourage public transit have always been the fundamental policy goals of transportation authorities. Whether mode choice behaviors are reasoned action or habit has also been debated, resulting in mixed arguments. This study proposes an integrated model combining the theory of planned behavior (TPB), the technology acceptance model (TAM), and habit to examine the switching intentions toward public transit by private vehicle users (both car and motorcycle users). The results reveal that through a comparison with the TPB variables, the habitual behavior of private vehicle use hinders an individual’s intention to switch from a car or motorcycle to public transit. Furthermore, motorcycle commuters are more likely than car commuters to resist their habitual mode use behavior in switching to public transit through their reasoned evaluation process. Implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.

\*Obama Good/Romney Bad\*

Iran Strikes

Obama stopping Iran Strike now

Foster 2012 (Daniel Foster is a staff write for the National Review, 3/8/12, [http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/292970/obama-casually-offers-israel-goodies-bomb-iran-iafteri-election-daniel-foster#](http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/292970/obama-casually-offers-israel-goodies-bomb-iran-iafteri-election-daniel-foster))

The president, who in a recent press conference admonished Republicans for their “casual” discussion of possible war with Iran, has apparently offered Israel sweeteners for delaying any strike against Tehran’s nuclear facilities until after the election.

Romney will green light Israel to strike – Obama key to stop war

Swaine 2011 (Jon Swaine is a staff writer for the Daily Telegraph. “Republican hopefuls would go to war with Iran”. 2011. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/republicans/8887247/Republican-hopefuls-would-go-to-war-with-Iran.html)

Mitt Romney, the favourite to clinch the party's candidacy, said that he would direct US forces to pre-emptively strike Iran's nuclear facilities if "crippling sanctions" failed to block their ambitions. "If all else fails, if after all of the work we've done, there's nothing else we could do besides take military action," Mr Romney said at a debate on foreign policy in South Carolina on Saturday night. The former Massachusetts governor's pledge was echoed by Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the House of Representatives, who over the weekend rose to second place in some national opinion polls. "You have to take whatever steps are necessary to break its capacity to have a nuclear weapon," said Mr Gingrich, who also proposed covert actions such as "taking out their scientists," to applause. Rick Santorum, a former Senator for Pennsylvania, said the US should support an Israeli intervention. Their remarks came at the end of a week of heightened tensions following the UN nuclear watchdog's confirmation that Iran had acquired the expertise and material required to build its first nuclear weapon. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also acknowledged for the first time that Tehran was conducting secret experiments whose only purpose could be the development of weaponry. As his potential Republican rivals spoke, Mr Obama was being rebuffed by Presidents Hu Jintao of China and Dmitry Medvedev of Russia as he sought international support for sanctions against Tehran. After meetings at an Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit in Hawaii, Mr Obama said that Russia had agreed to "work to shape a common response" to Iran's threatening manoeuvres, and that China wanted Tehran to obey "international rules and norms". However, neither foreign leader publicly echoed Mr Obama's comments or signalled that they might withhold their veto on the UN Security Council if sanctions against Iran were proposed by the US. Iran insists its nuclear programme is limited to the peaceful production of energy. Dismissing the IAEA report as "absurd", President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad last week said he would not retreat "one iota". Mr Obama's Iran problem was pounced upon by Republicans as evidence that despite overseeing the killing of Osama bin Laden and endorsing Nato intervention in Libya, his foreign policy is weak. Calling the situation the president's "greatest failure," Mr Romney said: "If we re-elect Barack Obama, Iran will have a nuclear weapon. If you elect Mitt Romney, Iran will not have a nuclear weapon".

Obama key to stop Iran strikes

Pillar 2012 **(Paul R. Pillar, in his 28 years at the Central Intelligence Agency, rose to be one of the agency’s top analysts. He is now a visiting professor at Georgetown University for security studies. March 7, 2012. http://consortiumnews.com/2012/03/07/an-israeli-october-surprise-on-obama/)**

The greatest danger the United States (and any peace-loving person in the Middle East) currently faces is that Barak and Prime Minister Netanyahu will spring an October surprise (or a surprise in any month between now and the first Tuesday of November) in the form of an armed attack on Iran. [For more on a historical precedent, see Consortiumnews.com’s “The CIA/Likud Sinking of Jimmy Carter.”] A key consideration for them is the possibly different reactions of a U.S. president facing a fight for reelection (while also facing that political muscle represented at the convention center) and a newly reelected president who knows he never would be running for anything again. Because Netanyahu and his government probably prefer that President Obama not be reelected, any of the aftereffects of their surprise — such as a big spike in gasoline prices and maybe even a slide of the U.S. economy back into recession — that would hurt Mr. Obama’s reelection chances would be a bonus for them. The welfare of American consumers and workers is not high on their list of decision-making criteria. What is billed as an Iran problem is thus mainly an Israel problem. If the United States were to be sucked, or pushed, into a new war in the Middle East, the Israel dimension would be significantly greater than it was even with the Iraq War, despite the many disturbing similarities between the run-up to that conflict and the current situation regarding Iran. Shared perspectives of the Israeli Right and some American neocons did figure into promotion of the war against Iraq, but Israel was only a contributing factor to a desire for a war that was based on an ideology that had a life of its own. If there is a war with Iran, Israel will be not just a contributing factor but instead the prime mover. President Obama’s attempt to handle this problem was reflected in his speech on Sunday to the AIPAC conference. He and his speechwriters pushed back as much as it was politically safe to do. In addition to recounting the ample evidence that “when the chips are down, I have Israel’s back” and recalling how his administration has mustered far more international pressure on Iran than his predecessor did, Mr. Obama spoke favorably and optimistically about diplomacy, rightly observed that there is “too much loose talk of war,” and talked about nuclear weapons as distinct from mere nuclear-weapons capability.

Obama will resist military options on Iran

Gause and Lustick, 2012 (http://www.mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/america-and-regional-powers-transforming-middle-east,

F. Gregory Gause, III, and Ian S. Lustick, Dr. Gause is a professor of political science at the University of Vermont and the author of The International Relations of the Persian Gulf (Cambridge University Press, 2010). Dr. Lustick is the Bess W. Heyman Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and the author of Trapped in the War on Terror (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).,)

We think it is. Despite this being an election year, when the leverage of Israeli governments over U.S. foreign policy is greatest, the United States will not attack Iran. The Obama administration is proving to be less susceptible to manipulation by its local allies than past administrations were, recognizing that its broader interests in a changing Middle East cannot be secured by military adventures. If such an attack does occur, it will be carried out by Israel against an American red light, not encouraged by an American green or yellow light. The administration's quiet but determined diplomacy has restrained Israel, while simultaneously implementing what is perhaps the most sophisticated and effective array of economic sanctions ever imposed on a country as large and important as Iran. It has organized a broad international front against Iranian proliferation and increased the pressure on Tehran at every level. It might not succeed, in the end, in preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear-weapons capability. But its approach has a much greater chance of success in preventing a nuclearized military confrontation in the region than a military strike that would unite Iranians (at least temporarily) behind their government, end domestic differences over nuclear strategy and, at best, set back its program a few years. In a broader context, the Iran case signifies that the United States is finding it easier to adapt to the disappearance of the old order in the Middle East than are local allies whose fundamental political logics are contradicted by twenty-first-century winds of change. Under this president, the United States is neither paralyzed against action out of fear of error, nor misled into a simplistic and dangerously uniform "doctrine." For evidence of the agility of American policy in the Middle East under the Obama administration, consider the degree to which policies in Iraq, Libya, Egypt and Syria have been specifically tailored to the challenges, opportunities and constraints those very different settings present, much as the administration's approach to the Iranian nuclear issue has been.

Obama will push non-military options

New York Times March 12, 2012 (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/13/world/middleeast/britain-to-join-obama-in-discouraging-israeli-strike-on-iran.html)

Mr. Cameron, in his talks with Mr. Obama, is expected to press for tighter diplomatic and economic sanctions, said a senior British official in London. “There’s a lot more to be done to turn up the pressure, to turn up the dial,” said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the talks with the White House. Speaking to reporters on Monday, Mr. Cameron said, “The Iranian situation is vital, in terms of trying to demonstrate to the world, and in particular to the Iranians, our continued road of sanctions, the pressure that’s got further to run, and that we’re going to push that as hard as we can.” Mr. Cameron is to arrive in the United States on Tuesday, a week after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel traveled to Washington to rally American support for a potential military confrontation with Iran. While Mr. Netanyahu told Mr. Obama that Israel had not decided to carry out an attack, administration officials said, he expressed fears that the window for diplomacy and sanctions was closing. Mr. Obama urged Mr. Netanyahu not to give up on nonmilitary options, though he reaffirmed Israel’s sovereign right to defend itself, and he explicitly renounced a policy of containing a nuclear-armed Iran. Prime Minister Cameron, Mr. Westmacott said, agreed with that policy.

Warming

Obama looking to solve warming now

Samuelsohn 11 (Darren Samuelsohn is a senior energy & environment reporter for POLITICO Pro. 2011. “Obama signals to greens for 2012”. <http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Minority.Blogs&ContentRecord_id=b75cfcfc-802a-23ad-4095-a6d19dce8fa3>)

President Barack Obama is offering his beleaguered green base some titillating morsels for what he hopes to deliver on energy policy if he wins a second term. Don't get Obama wrong; these are not campaign promises - yet. But over the past month, the president has made it clear in West Wing meetings and fundraisers that he wants to rally environmentally minded voters who, thanks in large part to last year's big global warming legislative failure, still feel like his second pick for the prom. "We've had some setbacks, and some things haven't happened as fast as people wanted them to happen," Obama said at a recent New York fundraiser. "I know. I know the conversations you guys have. ‘Oh, you didn't get the public option - and, gosh, I wish that energy bill had passed.' I understand the frustrations. I feel them too." Obama's team knows about the consequences of an environmental exodus. In the 2000 presidential election, Democrats blamed some greens with helping George W. Bush narrowly win the White House by supporting Ralph Nader over Al Gore. Last week in Chicago, Obama 2012 campaign adviser David Axelrod and Mayor-elect Rahm Emanuel tried to do their part to buck up the green base during private meetings with about 80 major environmental philanthropists. Attendees told POLITICO that the former White House officials heard a number of complaints about last year's climate bill loss but responded by pointing to the president's commitment to their issues via EPA climate rules and tens of billions in spending on renewable energy through the 2009 stimulus package. "We had a back and forth about getting to first base versus swinging for the fences," said Betsy Taylor, co-founder and board president of 1Sky, one of the environmental groups pushing for federal policies to curb greenhouse gases. With his day job, Obama must be careful not to give the appearance he's resting on his laurels until a second term. The president pounced last week on House Speaker John Boehner's ABC News interview expressing an openness to end some of the oil industry's biggest tax breaks. And his Cabinet fanned out around the country to unveil a long-awaited policy defining what waters are subject to federal pollution rules - answering pleas by greens to clarify conflicting Supreme Court opinions.

Obama could improve the environment policies in his second term

Samuelsohn 11 (Darren Samuelsohn is a senior energy & environment reporter for POLITICO Pro. 2011. “Obama signals to greens for 2012”. <http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Minority.Blogs&ContentRecord_id=b75cfcfc-802a-23ad-4095-a6d19dce8fa3>)

During the Power Shift youth conference on energy issues last month in Washington, organizers dubbed one of their sessions "What to Do When the President's Just Not That Into You." "I just want to see him draw a line in the sand," said Hight, who helped organize the White House meeting that included deputy chief of staff Nancy-Ann DeParle, top energy and climate adviser Heather Zichal, Council on Environmental Quality Associate Director Amy Salzman, Office of Public Engagement Director Jon Carson and his associate director, Kal Penn. "I think we shook them a little bit," Hight said. "It was the first time they were thinking young people aren't a sure thing." During the meeting, Obama didn't make any promises on energy or environmental legislation. But Hight said he urged the activists to "keep pushing me," adding, "It's your job to push the envelope. It's my job to govern." Daniel Weiss, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress Action Fund, said Obama's campaign rhetoric on energy could serve a purpose as Republicans attack him on the issue. "If the president wins a comfortable reelection, one could argue he's won the debate and therefore creates the space for enough Republicans to say ‘we've got to address this, that a deal is conceivable,'" Weiss said, citing Bill Clinton's 1997 budget deal with House Speaker Newt Gingrich after trouncing Bob Dole in the 1996 election. Weiss said it's "very possible" that Obama in a second term could make progress on a clean energy standard and measures to reduce oil consumption.

Romney bad for environment – Keystone pipeline

Williams 5/31 (Jean Williams is an environment policy examiner for the Examiner. “A Romney administration would intensify the world's climate extremes”. May 31, 2012 http://www.examiner.com/article/a-romney-administration-would-intensify-the-world-s-climate-extremes)

This week, during most of Mitt Romney’s campaign speeches, he stated that drilling for more oil in Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and approving the Keystone pipeline would be among the first things he would do as president. However, experts agree the days of easy oil extraction are gone and what’s left would require significant amounts of energy consumption to move oil from the ground to the pump. Those methods would greatly increase carbon emissions associated with fracking or tar-sands removal. Studies related to the Keystone pipeline indicate that on an annual basis, the extraction of useable oil from tar sands would produce approximately 27 million metric tons of carbon dioxide. That would be 82% greater than pollution created from oil refined in the U.S. Additionally, atmospheric damage would be created by the destruction of carbon-removing elements like permafrost, peat, forests and wetlands.

Romney careless with environment policies all management would end.’

Williams 5/31 (Jean Williams is an environment policy examiner for the Examiner. “A Romney administration would intensify the world's climate extremes”. May 31, 2012 http://www.examiner.com/article/a-romney-administration-would-intensify-the-world-s-climate-extremes)

Romney’s website, espouses overly simplistic views that drilling would solve all domestic energy problems in the U.S., but it doesn’t mention any plans to curb the damage done by the increase in carbon emissions associated with any kind of extreme oil extraction. Republicans still avoid acknowledging the existence of global warming, which has resulted in weather extremes around the world in recent years. The severe weather has included historic numbers of tornados, droughts, wildfires, snowstorms, floods and hurricanes. Nonetheless, a Mitt Romney presidency would strive for Republican control in congress and the senate, which would guarantee that carbon emissions management would grind to a halt. They have vowed to dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), because any laws that aim to guard water and air from the ramifications of greenhouse gas pollution is in direct opposition to GOP vested interests. Environmentalists believe the Republican Party is not concerned about the possibility of impending atmospheric destruction or the survival of planet Earth for future generations, but are essentially controlled by what corporate billionaires and big oil companies want for their daily existence now.

CTBT

Obama Administration looking to push CTBT

Kimball 2011. (Executive Director Daryl Kimball became the Executive Director of the Arms Control Association. “Obama Administration to Begin Effort to Engage Senate on CTBT”. 2011. <http://www.projectforthectbt.org/TauscherCaseforCTBT>)

In the most detailed and substantive address by a senior Barack Obama administration official to date, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen O. Tauscher (to the left) spoke at the Arms Control Association's May 10 annual meeting on "The Case for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty." She made it clear that the administration would soon engage with Republican and Democratic Senators on the CTBT and provide updated information on the key technical issues that gave some Senators reason for pause during the 1999 debate on the treaty. Tauscher explained in detail why prompt U.S. approval is in the United States national security interests. She said: "... we are in a stronger position to make the case for the CTBT on its merits. To maintain and enhance that momentum, the Obama Administration is preparing to engage the Senate and the public on an education campaign that we expect will lead to ratification of the CTBT." "In our engagement with the Senate, we want to leave aside the politics and explain why the CTBT will enhance our national security. Our case for Treaty ratification consists of three primary arguments: "One, the United States no longer needs to conduct nuclear explosive tests, plain and simple. Two, a CTBT that has entered into force will obligate other states not to test and provide a disincentive for states to conduct such tests. And three, we now have a greater ability to catch those who cheat." Under Secretary Tauscher's prepared remarks are available online. A video and full transcript of the event is available online. Tauscher's address speech builds upon National Security Advisor Tom Donilon's March 29 reiteration of the administration's commitment to ratification and entry into force of the CTBT. He said: "We are committed to working with members of both parties in the Senate to ratify the CTBT, just as we did for New START. We have no illusions that this will be easy. But we intend to ... make our case to the Senate and the American people."

Obama will push CTBT

GSN 2012 (Global Security Newswire. Feb 22, 2012. “Obama Administration Promotes CTBT Ratification”. <http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/white-house-again-lobby-congress-ctbt-ratification/>)

The White House remains intent on persuading Congress to ratify an international pact that would prohibit nuclear-weapon testing, the State Department's top arms control official recently said (see GSN, July 20, 2011). The United States is one of eight nations that still must ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty before it can enter into force. President Obama early in his tenure called for Senate passage of the pact, which last came up for a vote in the upper chamber in 1999, Defense News reported on Tuesday. "A lot has changed since 1999, and people have not had a chance to really look at the CTBT and understand what it can accomplish for U.S. national security," acting Undersecretary of State Rose Gottemoeller said. "The International Monitoring System [for the treaty] was barely getting off the ground back then. Now, the International Monitoring System is over 80 percent complete in its deployment and we can see its effectiveness," she said of the worldwide complex of nuclear-test detection technologies (see GSN, Feb. 17). The system, comprised of more than 300 monitoring sites and laboratories spread across the globe, was able to successfully pinpoint the release of trace amounts of radiation into the atmosphere following the March 2011 disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear energy site in Japan, Gottemoeller said. Additionally, the Energy Department's Stockpile Stewardship and Management Program has made significant advancements, the undersecretary said. The program, managed by the semiautonomous National Nuclear Security Administration, is focused on ensuring the reliability, safety, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear arsenal absent any new testing. "It has come a long way and it is developing quite a bit of capability," Gottemoeller said. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has been ratified by 157 countries. A total of 44 "Annex 2" nations must deliver legislative approval for its entry into force; the holdouts from that group are China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States. Advocates say the treaty would help stem nuclear proliferation by preventing nations from conducting test explosions required to develop new or more potent weapons. Opponents of the U.S. ratification argue the potential remains for countries to secretly detonate nuclear devices without being detected and that the United States might in the future need to end its two-decade voluntary moratorium on testing to ensure the viability of its strategic deterrent. Gottemoeller said she has been informing congressional lawmakers and their aides on issues related to the treaty. "I expect to be doing a lot more of that in 2012. "We're not going to set a deadline for ratification; we want to make sure the time is right. Believe me, I was at the [Energy Department] in 1999 and watched the treaty go down in flames. I don't want to see that happen again," said Gottemoeller, who played a leading role in negotiating the 2010 New START nuclear arms control accord with Russia. In pursuing Senate ratification of New START, Gottemoeller said she was pleased to see a number of lawmakers give considerable focus to understanding the technical specifics of the treaty. "I'm hoping that the same thing will happen with the CTBT and we won't have people rushing to judgment," she said (Kate Brannen, Defense News, Feb. 21).

US/Russia relations

Romney will hurt US/Russian relations – nuclear arms control discussions

Hartung 2012 (William D. Hartung is the director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy. “Romney's Foreign Policy Fantasies: "Breathtaking Weakness?"”. March 28, 2012. http://www.ciponline.org/research/entry/romneys-foreign-policy-fantasies)

But Romney's tirade reveals more about his own worldview than it does about President Obama's approach to foreign policy. Romney claims that the administration "granted" Russia limits on our nuclear arsenal. Apparently Romney is referring to the New START treaty, which limited deployed U.S. and Russian warheads at 1,550 while establishing a rigorous verification and monitoring regime that can serve as a foundation for further reductions in the bloated nuclear arsenals of both sides. The lesson of New START is not that we have gone too far in reducing nuclear arsenals, but that we haven't gone nearly far enough. In that context, President Obama's commitment to engage Russia on nuclear reductions during his second term is both admirable and essential. Of necessity, part of that effort will involve talking about missile defense, which Moscow, rightly or wrongly, views as a potential threat to its nuclear deterrent. Romney and his fellow anti-arms control ideologues seem to think that it's possible to negotiate without even giving lip service to the other side's deepest concerns. This puts them far out of the historical mainstream of the Republican Party, in which presidents ranging from Richard Nixon, to Ronald Reagan to George H.W. Bush negotiated and/or signed nuclear arms control agreements with a Soviet Union that was far more heavily armed than today's Russia. Negotiating with a firm sense of our national interest, as President Obama did with the New START treaty, and will hopefully do again given the opportunity, is a sign of strength. Engaging in tough guy fantasies that will almost certainly make the world a more dangerous place is a sign of moral, political, and strategic weakness. Perhaps even "breathtaking weakness," as Mitt Romney would put it.

\*\*Terminal Impacts\*\*

Iran Strikes

Iran strikes causes multiple scenarios for extinction.

Chossudovsky -06 (Michel Chossudovsky, The Next Phase of the Middle East War, Global Research, http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=3147)

The Bush Administration has embarked upon a military adventure which threatens the future of humanity. This is not an overstatement. If aerial bombardments were to be launched against Iran, they would trigger a ground war and the escalation of the conflict to a much broader region. Even in the case of aerial and missile attacks using conventional warheads, the bombings would unleash a "Chernobyl type" nuclear nightmare resulting from the spread of nuclear radiation following the destruction of Iran's nuclear energy facilities. Throughout history, the structure of military alliances has played a crucial role in triggering major military conflicts. In contrast to the situation prevailing prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, America's ongoing military adventure is now firmly supported by the Franco-German alliance. Moreover, Israel is slated to play a direct role in this military operation. NATO is firmly aligned with the Anglo-American-Israeli military axis, which also includes Australia and Canada. In 2005, NATO signed a military cooperation agreement with Israel, and Israel has a longstanding bilateral military agreement with Turkey. Iran has observer status in The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and is slated to become a full member of SCO. China and Russia have far-reaching military cooperation agreements with Iran. China and Russia are firmly opposed to a US-led military operation in the diplomatic arena. While the US sponsored military plan threatens Russian and Chinese interests in Central Asia and the Caspian sea basin, it is unlikely that they would intervene militarily on the side of Iran or Syria. The planned attack on Iran must be understood in relation to the existing active war theaters in the Middle East, namely Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon-Palestine. The conflict could easily spread from the Middle East to the Caspian sea basin. It could also involve the participation of Azerbaijan and Georgia, where US troops are stationed. Military action against Iran and Syria would directly involve Israel's participation, which in turn would trigger a broader war throughout the Middle East, not to mention the further implosion in the Palestinian occupied territories. Turkey is closely associated with the proposed aerial attacks. If the US-UK-Israeli war plans were to proceed, the broader Middle East- Central Asian region would flare up, from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Afghan-Chinese border. At present, there are three distinct war theaters: Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine-Lebanon. An attack directed against Iran would serve to integrate these war theaters transforming the broader Middle East Central Asian region into an integrated war zone. (see map above) In turn the US sponsored aerial bombardments directed against Iran could contribute to triggering a ground war characterized by Iranian attacks directed against coalition troops in Iraq. In turn, Israeli forces would enter into Syria. An attack on Iran would have a direct impact on the resistance movement inside Iraq. It would also put pressure on America's overstretched military capabilities and resources in both the Iraqi and Afghan war theaters. In other words, the shaky geopolitics of the Central Asia- Middle East region, the three existing war theaters in which America is currently, involved, the direct participation of Israel and Turkey, the structure of US sponsored military alliances, etc. raises the specter of a broader conflict. The war against Iran is part of a longer term US military agenda which seeks to militarize the entire Caspian sea basin, eventually leading to the destabilization and conquest of the Russian Federation.

Iran strikes causes multiple scenarios for nuclear war, CBW use and terrorist attacks.

Russell -09 (James A. Russell, managing editor of Strategic Insights, the quarterly ejournal published by the Center for Contemporary Conflict at the Naval Postgraduate School, Spring 2009, *Strategic Stability Reconsidered: Prospects for Escalation and Nuclear War in the Middle East*, Security Studies Center)

Iran’s response to what would initially start as a sustained stand-off bombardment (Desert Fox Heavy) could take a number of different forms that might lead to escalation by the United States and Israel, surrounding states, and non-state actors. Once the strikes commenced, it is difficult to imagine Iran remaining in a Saddam-like quiescent mode and hunkering down to wait out the attacks. Iranian leaders have unequivocally stated that any attack on its nuclear sites will result in a wider war81 – a war that could involve regional states on both sides as well as non-state actors like Hamas and Hezbollah. While a wider regional war need not lead to escalation and nuclear use by either Israel or the United States, wartime circumstances and domestic political pressures could combine to shape decision-making in ways that present nuclear use as an option to achieve military and political objectives. For both the United States and Israel, Iranian or proxy use of chemical, biological or radiological weapons represent the most serious potential escalation triggers. For Israel, a sustained conventional bombardment of its urban centers by Hezbollah rockets in Southern Lebanon could also trigger an escalation spiral. Assessing relative probability of these scenarios is very difficult and beyond the scope of this article. Some scenarios for Iranian responses that could lead to escalation by the United States and Israel are: Terrorist-type asymmetric attacks on either the U.S. or Israeli homelands by Iran or its proxies using either conventional or unconventional (chemical, biological, or radiological) weapons. Escalation is more likely in response to the use of unconventional weapons in populated urban centers. The potential for use of nuclear retaliation against terrorist type attacks is problematic, unless of course the sponsoring country takes official responsibility for them, which seems highly unlikely. Asymmetric attacks by Iran or its proxies using unconventional weapons against U.S. military facilities in Iraq and the Gulf States (Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE, Qatar); • Long-range missile strikes by Iran attacking Israel and/or U.S. facilities in Iraq and the Gulf States: • Conventional missile strikes in and around the Israeli reactor at Dimona • Airbursts of chemical or radiological agents in Israeli urban areas; • Missile strikes using non-conventional weapons against US Gulf facilities such as Al Udeid in Qatar, Al Dhafra Air Base in the UAE, and the 5th Fleet Headquarters in Manama, Bahrain. Under all scenarios involving chemical/biological attacks on its forces, the United States has historically retained the right to respond with all means at its disposal even if the attacks come from a non-nuclear weapons state.82 • The involvement of non-state actors as part of ongoing hostilities between Iran, the United States, and Israel in which Hezbollah and/or Hamas became engaged presents an added dimension for conflict escalation. While tactically allied with Iran and each other, these groups have divergent interests and objectives that could affect their involvement (or non-involvement in a wider regional war) – particularly in ways that might prompt escalation by Israel and the United States. Hezbollah is widely believed to have stored thousands of short range Iranian-supplied rockets in southern Lebanon. Attacking Israel in successive fusillades of missiles over time could lead to domestic political demands on the Israeli military to immediately stop these external attacks – a mission that might require a wide area-denial capability provided by nuclear weapons and their associated PSI overpressures, particularly if its conventional ground operations in Gaza prove in the mid- to longterms as indecisive or strategic ambiguous as its 2006 operations in Lebanon. • Another source of uncertainty is the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) – referred to here as “quasi-state” actor. The IRGC manages the regime’s nuclear, chemical and missile programs and is responsible for “extraterritorial” operations outside Iran. The IRGC is considered as instrument of the state and reports directly to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei. So far, the IRGC has apparently refrained from providing unconventional weapons to its surrogates. The IRGC also, however arms and funds various Shiite paramilitary groups in Iraq and Lebanon that have interests and objectives that may or may not directly reflect those of the Iranian supreme leader. Actions of these groups in a wartime environment are another source of strategic uncertainty that could shape crisis decision-making in unhelpful ways. • The most likely regional state to be drawn into a conflict on Iran’s side in a wider regional war is Syria, which is widely reported to have well developed missile and chemical warfare programs. Direct Syrian military involvement in an Israeli-U.S./Iranian war taking the form of missile strikes or chemical attacks on Israel could serve as another escalation trigger in a nuclear-use scenario, in particular if chemical or bio-chem weapons are used by the Syrians, technically crossing the WMD-chasm and triggering a retaliatory strike using any category of WMD including nuclear weapons. • The last – and perhaps most disturbing – of these near-term scenarios is the possible use by Iran of nuclear weapons in the event of conventional strikes by the United States and Israel. This scenario is built on the assumption of a U.S. and/or Israeli intelligence failure to detect Iranian possession of a nuclear device that had either been covertly built or acquired from another source. It is possible to foresee an Iranian “demonstration” use of a nuclear weapon in such a scenario in an attempt to stop an Israeli/U.S. conventional bombardment. A darker scenario would be a direct nuclear attack by Iran on Israel, also precipitated by conventional strikes, inducing a “use them or lose them” response. In turn, such a nuclear strike would almost certainly prompt an Israeli and U.S. massive response – a potential “Armageddon” scenario.

Strikes crush global econ

Hedges ‘6

(Chris Hedges is former Middle East bureau chief for The New York Times and author of the bestseller “War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning” -- “Bush’s Nuclear Apocalypse” – October 9th – available via TruthDig -- http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?p=300562&sid=c296082a93092430f9a238f8a00a928b)

An attack on Iran will ignite the Middle East. The loss of Iranian oil, coupled with Silkworm missile attacks by Iran on oil tankers in the Persian Gulf, could send oil soaring to well over $110 a barrel. The effect on the domestic and world economy will be devastating, very possibly triggering a huge, global depression.The 2 million Shiites in Saudi Arabia, the Shiite majority in Iraq and the Shiite communities in Bahrain, Pakistan and Turkey will turn in rage on us and our dwindling allies. We will see a combination of increased terrorist attacks, including on American soil, and the widespread sabotage of oil production in the Gulf. Iraq, as bad as it looks now, will become a death pit for American troops as Shiites and Sunnis, for the first time, unite against their foreign occupiers.

Iran strikes absolutely kill hegemony

Lendman 2007 (Stephen Lendman is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization and frequently writes for Global Research Reports –Global Research, March 7, 2007 – cross-posted at: http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com/talk/blogs/911review.)

Attacking Iran will just make things far worse. It would be a fanatical "hail Mary" act of insanity that by one definition is repeating the same mistakes, expecting different results. It has no more chance of success than our misadventures in Iraq and Afghanistan. And if nuclear weapons are used, including so-called low-yield ones, it will be an appalling crime against humanity and catastrophic event potentially affecting millions in the region by radiation poisoning alone. If it happens, it will irreversibly weaken US influence and credibility everywhere accelerating our decline even faster toward second-class status and loss of world leadership already hanging by a thread. It could also be a potentially lethal blow to the benefits of "Western civilization" always arriving through the barrel of a gun and thuggish heel of a colonizer's boot with the US having the biggest barrels and largest shoe sizes.

Strikes make terrorism inevitable:

Haass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations, 2005   (Richard N., Foreign Affairs, July/August,)

Using preventive strikes to destroy Iran's developing weapons program would also be much easier said than done, given the imperfect nature of the intelligence on Iran's program and the operational challenges of attacking its dispersed and buried nuclear facilities. U.S. strikes might succeed in destroying part of Iran's weapons program and set it back by months or even years. But even if this were to occur, Iran would surely reconstitute its program in a manner that would make future strikes even more difficult. Moreover, Iran has the ability to retaliate by unleashing terrorism (using Hamas and Hezbollah) against Israel and the United States or by promoting instability in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia. A U.S. strike on Iran would also further anger the Arab and Muslim worlds, where many already resent the double standard of U.S. and international acceptance of Israel's and India's nuclear weapons programs. Much of the Iranian population, currently alienated from the regime, would likely rally around it in the case of a foreign attack, making external efforts to bring about regime change that much more unlikely to succeed. Attacking Iran would also lead to sharp and possibly prolonged increases in the price of oil, which could trigger a global economic crisis. Nor would the United States avoid these costs if Israel carried out the strike (a scenario suggested by Vice President Dick Cheney in January 2005), since Israel would be widely viewed as doing the United States' bidding.

Warming

It’s anthropogenic and risks extinction

DEIBEL ‘7 (Terry L. Deibel, professor of IR at National War College, Foreign Affairs Strategy, “Conclusion: American Foreign Affairs Strategy Today Anthropogenic – caused by CO2”)

Finally, there is one major existential threat to American security (as well as prosperity) of a nonviolent nature, which, though far in the future, demands urgent action. It is the threat of global warming to the stability of the climate upon which all earthly life depends. Scientists worldwide have been observing the gathering of this threat for three decades now, and what was once a mere possibility has passed through probability to near certainty. Indeed not one of more than 900 articles on climate change published in refereed scientific journals from 1993 to 2003 doubted that anthropogenic warming is occurring. “In legitimate scientific circles,” writes Elizabeth Kolbert, “it is virtually impossible to find evidence of disagreement over the fundamentals of global warming.” Evidence from a vast international scientific monitoring effort accumulates almost weekly, as this sample of newspaper reports shows: an international panel predicts “brutal droughts, floods and violent storms across the planet over the next century”; climate change could “literally alter ocean currents, wipe away huge portions of Alpine Snowcaps and aid the spread of cholera and malaria”; “glaciers in the Antarctic and in Greenland are melting much faster than expected, and…worldwide, plants are blooming several days earlier than a decade ago”; “rising sea temperatures have been accompanied by a significant global increase in the most destructive hurricanes”; “NASA scientists have concluded from direct temperature measurements that 2005 was the hottest year on record, with 1998 a close second”; “Earth’s warming climate is estimated to contribute to more than 150,000 deaths and 5 million illnesses each year” as disease spreads; “widespread bleaching from Texas to Trinidad…killed broad swaths of corals” due to a 2-degree rise in sea temperatures. “The world is slowly disintegrating,” concluded Inuit hunter Noah Metuq, who lives 30 miles from the Arctic Circle. “They call it climate change…but we just call it breaking up.” From the founding of the first cities some 6,000 years ago until the beginning of the industrial revolution, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere remained relatively constant at about 280 parts per million (ppm). At present they are accelerating toward 400 ppm, and by 2050 they will reach 500 ppm, about double pre-industrial levels. Unfortunately, atmospheric CO2 lasts about a century, so there is no way immediately to reduce levels, only to slow their increase, we are thus in for significant global warming; the only debate is how much and how serous the effects will be. As the newspaper stories quoted above show, we are already experiencing the effects of 1-2 degree warming in more violent storms, spread of disease, mass die offs of plants and animals, species extinction, and threatened inundation of low-lying countries like the Pacific nation of Kiribati and the Netherlands at a warming of 5 degrees or less the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets could disintegrate, leading to a sea level of rise of 20 feet that would cover North Carolina’s outer banks, swamp the southern third of Florida, and inundate Manhattan up to the middle of Greenwich Village. Another catastrophic effect would be the collapse of the Atlantic thermohaline circulation that keeps the winter weather in Europe far warmer than its latitude would otherwise allow. Economist William Cline once estimated the damage to the United States alone from moderate levels of warming at 1-6 percent of GDP annually; severe warming could cost 13-26 percent of GDP. But the most frightening scenario is runaway greenhouse warming, based on positive feedback from the buildup of water vapor in the atmosphere that is both caused by and causes hotter surface temperatures. Past ice age transitions, associated with only 5-10 degree changes in average global temperatures, took place in just decades, even though no one was then pouring ever-increasing amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. Faced with this specter, the best one can conclude is that “humankind’s continuing enhancement of the natural greenhouse effect is akin to playing Russian roulette with the earth’s climate and humanity’s life support system. At worst, says physics professor Marty Hoffert of New York University, “we’re just going to burn everything up; we’re going to het the atmosphere to the temperature it was in the Cretaceous when there were crocodiles at the poles, and then everything will collapse.” During the Cold War, astronomer Carl Sagan popularized a theory of nuclear winter to describe how a thermonuclear war between the Untied States and the Soviet Union would not only destroy both countries but possible end life on this planet. Global warming is the post-Cold War era’s equivalent of nuclear winter at least as serious and considerably better supported scientifically. Over the long run it puts dangers form terrorism and traditional military challenges to shame. It is a threat not only to the security and prosperity to the United States, but potentially to the continued existence of life on this planet

Warming causes extinction.

Oliver Tickell, Environmental Researcher, 8/11/’8 [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/aug/11/climatechange>]

We need to get prepared for four degrees of global warming, Bob Watson [PhD in Chemistry, Award for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility from the American Association for the Advacement of Science] told the Guardian last week. At first sight this looks like wise counsel from the climate science adviser to Defra. But the idea that we could adapt to a 4C rise is absurd and dangerous. Global warming on this scale would be a catastrophe that would mean, in the immortal words that Chief Seattle probably never spoke, "the end of living and the beginning of survival" for humankind. Or perhaps the beginning of our extinction. The collapse of the polar ice caps would become inevitable, bringing long-term sea level rises of 70-80 metres. All the world's coastal plains would be lost, complete with ports, cities, transport and industrial infrastructure, and much of the world's most productive farmland. The world's geography would be transformed much as it was at the end of the last ice age, when sea levels rose by about 120 metres to create the Channel, the North Sea and Cardigan Bay out of dry land. Weather would become extreme and unpredictable, with more frequent and severe droughts, floods and hurricanes. The Earth's carrying capacity would be hugely reduced. Billions would undoubtedly die. Watson's call was supported by the government's former chief scientific adviser, Sir David King [Director of the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford], who warned that "if we get to a four-degree rise it is quite possible that we would begin to see a runaway increase". This is a remarkable understatement. The climate system is already experiencing significant feedbacks, notably the summer melting of the Arctic sea ice. The more the ice melts, the more sunshine is absorbed by the sea, and the more the Arctic warms. And as the Arctic warms, the release of billions of tonnes of methane – a greenhouse gas 70 times stronger than carbon dioxide over 20 years – captured under melting permafrost is already under way. To see how far this process could go, look 55.5m years to the Palaeocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum, when a global temperature increase of 6C coincided with the release of about 5,000 gigatonnes of carbon into the atmosphere, both as CO2 and as methane from bogs and seabed sediments. Lush subtropical forests grew in polar regions, and sea levels rose to 100m higher than today. It appears that an initial warming pulse triggered other warming processes. Many scientists warn that this historical event may be analogous to the present: the warming caused by human emissions could propel us towards a similar hothouse Earth.

Global warming will devastate the global economy

Washington Post, 2006

(Warming Called Threat To Global Economy. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/30/AR2006103000269.html)

Failing to curb the impact of climate change could damage the global economy on the scale of the Great Depression or the world wars by spawning environmental devastation that could cost 5 to 20 percent of the world's annual gross domestic product, according to a report issued yesterday by the British government. The report by Nicholas Stern, who heads Britain's Government Economic Service and formerly served as the World Bank's chief economist, calls for a new round of international collaboration to cut greenhouse gas emissions linked to global warming. "There's still time to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, if we act now and act internationally," Stern said in a statement. "But the task is urgent. Delaying action, even by a decade or two, will take us into dangerous territory. We must not let this window of opportunity close."

CTBT

Solves the NPT, global proliferation and nuclear terrorism

Joseph 9 (Jofi, senior Democratic foreign policy staffer in the United States Senate, “Renew the Drive for CTBT Ratification,” The Washington Quarterly, April 2009, <http://www.twq.com/09april/index.cfm?id=338>)

As the historic first 100 days of President Barack Obama’s administration fly by, he faces a tsunami of advice on the key priorities he should pursue over the next four years. Ranging from energy independence and national health care reform to improving America’s image with the Islamic world and revamping our foreign assistance structure, the president must decide where to focus his scarce time, resources, and political capital. One initiative he should strongly consider this year is calling upon the U.S. Senate to once again take up the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) to outlaw nuclear testing around the world, even though the initiative failed in October 1999 by a 51—48 vote. Obama has assumed office at a time when the nuclear nonproliferation regime is seriously tattered. Iran is making significant progress on an ostensibly civilian uranium enrichment program that can be quickly converted into a weapons program. North Korea has quadrupled the size of its fissile material stockpile since 2002 and joined the nuclear club in 2006 with a nuclear weapons test. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the lynchpin of global efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons, is under heavy strain. Revitalizing the nonproliferation regime, and reducing the odds that a terrorist group can seize a nuclear weapon for use in a terrorist attack, must be at the top of any president’s to-do list.

Prolif makes global diplomatic relations unstable – even small triggers set off nuclear wars and make U.S. intervention impossible, destroying U.S. influence

Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, serves on the U.S. Congressional Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism, June-July 2009, “Avoiding a Nuclear Crowd,” Hoover Policy Review, online: http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/46390537.html

So far, the U.S. has tried to cope with independent nuclear powers by making them “strategic partners” (e.g., India and Russia), NATO nuclear allies (France and the UK), “non-NATO allies” (e.g., Israel and Pakistan), and strategic stakeholders (China); or by fudging if a nation actually has attained full nuclear status (e.g., Iran or North Korea, which, we insist, will either not get nuclear weapons or will give them up). In this world, every nuclear power center (our European nuclear NATO allies), the U.S., Russia, China, Israel, India, and Pakistan could have significant diplomatic security relations or ties with one another but none of these ties is viewed by Washington (and, one hopes, by no one else) as being as important as the ties between Washington and each of these nuclear-armed entities (see Figure 3). There are limits, however, to what this approach can accomplish. Such a weak alliance system, with its expanding set of loose affiliations, risks becoming analogous to the international system that failed to contain offensive actions prior to World War I. Unlike 1914, there is no power today that can rival the projection of U.S. conventional forces anywhere on the globe. But in a world with an increasing number of nuclear-armed or nuclear-ready states, this may not matter as much as we think. In such a world, the actions of just one or two states or groups that might threaten to disrupt or overthrow a nuclear weapons state could check U.S. influence or ignite a war Washington could have difficulty containing. No amount of military science or tactics could assure that the U.S. could disarm or neutralize such threatening or unstable nuclear states.22 Nor could diplomats or our intelligence services be relied upon to keep up to date on what each of these governments would be likely to do in such a crisis (see graphic below): Combine these proliferation trends with the others noted above and one could easily create the perfect nuclear storm: Small differences between nuclear competitors that would put all actors on edge; an overhang of nuclear materials that could be called upon to break out or significantly ramp up existing nuclear deployments; and a variety of potential new nuclear actors developing weapons options in the wings. In such a setting, the military and nuclear rivalries between states could easily be much more intense than before. Certainly each nuclear state’s military would place an even higher premium than before on being able to weaponize its military and civilian surpluses quickly, to deploy forces that are survivable, and to have forces that can get to their targets and destroy them with high levels of probability. The advanced military states will also be even more inclined to develop and deploy enhanced air and missile defenses and long-range, precision guidance munitions, and to develop a variety of preventative and preemptive war options. Certainly, in such a world, relations between states could become far less stable. Relatively small developments — e.g., Russian support for sympathetic near-abroad provinces; Pakistani-inspired terrorist strikes in India, such as those experienced recently in Mumbai; new Indian flanking activities in Iran near Pakistan; Chinese weapons developments or moves regarding Taiwan; state-sponsored assassination attempts of key figures in the Middle East or South West Asia, etc. — could easily prompt nuclear weapons deployments with “strategic” consequences (arms races, strategic miscues, and even nuclear war). As Herman Kahn once noted, in such a world “every quarrel or difference of opinion may lead to violence of a kind quite different from what is possible today.”23 In short, we may soon see a future that neither the proponents of nuclear abolition, nor their critics, would ever want.

CTBT is critical to ensuring the transition towards a new security paradigm that precludes nuclear war and solves all international problems

Granoff and Tyson, President and Senior Author of the Global Security Institute, 09

(Jonathan and Rhianna, “Achieving the Entry-Into-Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty: What UN Member States Can Do Now,” April)

The treaty remains as important today as ever throughout its long, tortuous history. The threat of the proliferation of nuclear weapons is arguably greater than at any time since the creation of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which itself is under newfound strains: the 21 st century threat of nuclear terrorism adds a new proliferation dimension against which existing mechanisms are unable to protect; a “renaissance” in nuclear energy highlights inadequacies of the non- proliferation regime; insufficient implementation of the disarmament obligations of the NPT has weakened many nations’ faith in the treaty; suspicious activity has cropped up across the globe in nearly every continent, including the potential quest of existing states to engage in vertical proliferation. After NPT States parties failed to strengthen the NPT at the 2005 Review Conference, it has become ever more imperative to bolster the global disarmament and non- proliferation regime in substantial ways. These challenges will persist despite positive signs coming from a new administration in Washington. From the creation of the NPT, a legal prohibition against testing has been central. States parties have affirmed and reaffirmed this centrality at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference 1 and again at the 2000 Review Conference. 2 Should States parties to the NPT fail to adhere to their own commitments to pursue the CTBT’s entry-into-force, faith in (and commitment to) the NPT—and the global non-proliferation regime at large—will suffer . The CTBT is one of the most effective non-proliferation tools in our shared toolbox. The global verification monitoring system, the International Monitoring System (IMS), can detect all nuclear explosions over a kiloton, (and sometimes smaller), according to a 2002 report from the prestigious US National Academy of Sciences. 3 Smaller tests are unlikely, as they are not useful for major nuclear powers and are unreliable indicators for new proliferators. 4 Beyond these immediate security gains, the CTBT is an important element in the new security paradigm that must emerge. A global norm prohibiting nuclear weapons testing is a light of hope that will help bring us out of the shadow of adversity and aggression. It will advance a cooperative security regime upon which our mutual survival, indeed the survival of the planet, depends. Just as the global recession has rendered the interdependence of our economies as conventional wisdom, so too must we realize the interdependence of our security, and build a network of global norms and laws that are non-discriminatory and technically-verifiable. It is for this latter reason that the CTBT is perhaps most important. The treaty is not just an effective arms control and non-proliferation tool. It is, in essence, a game-changer, a way not only by which we will strengthen our collective security, but will actually impel us to cooperate in that collective regime. The IMS is a global, holistic tool that both reinforces and transcends national security interests. It is a global intelligence gatherer which informs all nations, not just with data on nuclear explosions, but on earthquakes, tsunamis and other natural disasters possibly made more frequent by the collective challenge of climate change. 6 It constitutes another part, a physical, tangible part, of the web of relationships that engender the cooperation necessary to address the global challenges that threaten the existence of civilization and the living systems upon which it depends.

The CTBT is key to preventing multiple scenarios for nuclear war

Kimball, Executive Director of the Arms Control Association, 08

(Daryl, “The Enduring Value of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Prospects for Its Entry Into Force,” August 22, <http://www.armscontrol.org/node/3300#_ftn1>)

The CTBT is also needed to help head-off and deescalate regional tensions. With no shortage of conflict and hostility in the Middle East, ratification by Israel, Egypt, and Iran would reduce nuclear weapons-related security concerns and bring those states further into the nuclear nonproliferation mainstream. Action by Israel to ratify could put pressure on other states in the regions to do so. Iranian ratification would help address concerns that its nuclear program could be used to develop and deploy deliverable nuclear warheads. Likewise, North Korean accession to the CTBT would help demonstrate the seriousness of its commitment to verifiably dismantle its nuclear weapons program through the Six-Party process. The ongoing India-Pakistan nuclear arms race could be substantially slowed to the benefit of both countries if they signed and ratified the CTBT or agreed to an equivalent legal instrument. The CTBT would help limit the nuclear-weapons development capabilities of the established nuclear-weapon states. For instance, in the absence of a permanent CTBT: \* China and Russia might test in order to make certain refinements in their nuclear arsenals. With further nuclear testing China might be able to reduce the size and weight of its nuclear warheads, which would make it easier for China to expand and add multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRV) to its strategic arsenal if it wanted to do so. This could dramatically increase the number of nuclear warheads China could deliver; and \* India and Pakistan could use further testing to perfect boosted fission weapons and thermonuclear warhead designs, greatly increasing the destructive power of their arsenals. The global norm against testing remains strong, for now. Yet the absence of CTBT entry into force also means that the full range of verification and monitoring tools, confidence building measures, and the option of on-site inspections, are not available to help strengthen the international community’s ability to detect, deter, and if necessary respond to possible nuclear testing.

Bush Tax Cuts

Getting rid of Bush Tax Cuts will kill the economy

Kadlec, ’12 (Chris, Forbes staff contributor, 4/23/12, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/charleskadlec/2012/04/23/christina-romer-knows-tax-hikes-will-kill-the-recovery/2/>)

A powerful analysis by President Barack Obama’s first Chair of his Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) indicates the President’s proposed tax increases would kill the economic recovery and throw nearly 1 million Americans out of work. Those are the extraordinary implications of academic research by Christina D. Romer, who chaired the CEA from January 28, 2009 – September 3, 2010. In a paper entitled: “The Macrcoeconomic Effects of Tax Changes” published by the prestigious American Economic Review in June 2010 (during her tenure at the White House), she stated: “In short, tax increases appear to have a very large, sustained, and highly significant negative impact on output.” Although Dr. Romer’s analysis is full of equations and econometric jargon, the clarity of her conclusions are a fatal indictment of the Obama Administration’s demand for tax increases. In what may be the first time since David Stockman’s “Trojan Horse” comment regarding the Reagan tax rate cuts, a high White House Official has completely undermined her own Administration’s policy while serving. Had this happened during a Republican administration, a la Stockman’s Atlantic interview, it would have been Page One news. “Obama To America: Drop Dead.” The AER paper, co-authored with her husband and fellow UC Berkeley Professor, David H. Romer, examines the impact of tax increases and reductions on U.S. economic growth for the period 1945 to 2007. One of the innovations in the paper is its focus on “exogenous” changes in taxes, that is changes in taxes that were meant to either increase the rate of economic growth (not simply offset a recession), such as the Kennedy, Reagan and Bush tax cuts, or to reduce the budget deficit, such as the Clinton tax increase. Excluded were “endogenous” tax changes that were purely countercyclical, such as the 1975 tax rebates, or were used to “offset another factor that would tend to move output growth away from normal”, such as the tax increases to finance the Korean war and the introduction of the payroll tax to finance Medicare. “The behavior of output following these more exogenous changes indicates that tax increases are highly contractionary. The effects are strongly significant, highly robust, and much larger than those obtained using broader measures of tax changes.” Wow! That’s about as strong a statement as you will ever read in a paper published in the AER. The Romers’ baseline estimate suggests that a tax increase of 1% of GDP (about $160 billion in today’s economy) reduces real GDP by 3% over the next 10 quarters. In addition, the Romers used a variety of statistical tests to take into account other factors that could influence economic growth at the time of the tax changes, including government spending, monetary policy, the relative price of oil, and even whether the President was a Democrat or Republican (it doesn’t matter much). A summary of the statistical work estimates that a tax increase of 1% of GDP would lead to a fall in output of 2.2% to 3.6% over the next 10 quarters. “In all cases, the effect of tax changes on output remains large and highly statistically significant,” they write. “Thus the finding that tax changes have substantial impacts on output appears to be very durable. That including controls for known output shocks has little effect on the estimated impact of tax changes is important indirect evidence that our new measure of fiscal shocks is not correlated with other factors affecting output.” In other words, the tax increases proposed by President Obama would have a major contractionary impact on economic growth, and by implication, job creation and employment regardless of changes in government spending, what the Fed does or what happens to the price of oil etc. How big an impact? In his 2013 budget, President Obama proposes $103 billion in 2013 tax increases, including $83 billion of higher income taxes on those who make more than $250,000 a year, or about 0.65% of GDP. Using the Romer baseline estimate, that would reduce real GDP by 2 percentage points over the next 10 quarters. Based on the general relationship between economic growth and unemployment, such a fall in output implies a loss of more than 800,000 jobs. The President’s budget fails to mention, far less include, the negative effects of its proposed tax increases in its economic assumptions. Instead, it assumes real GDP growth will accelerate to 3.0% next year and to 3.6% in 2014. Based on the Romers’ study, it is far more likely real GDP growth would slow to near 2% next year and remain well below 3% in 2014. Slower growth would shrink the tax base by a cumulative $700 billion over the next 3 years. And, with tax revenues estimated at 19% of GDP, that implies tax collections would fall $130 billion below forecast over the next 3 years, and by more than $600 billion over the next 10 years. Pressure for increased spending to provide relief to individuals who lose their jobs or who no longer can get a job in the form of unemployment benefits, food stamps, Medicaid and the like would make it all the more difficult to restrain spending, further offsetting any forecasted reductions in the federal budget deficit due to the tax increases. Such a growth recession would also create havoc with state and local government budgets, where revenues have just now recovered to their pre-recession levels. Unlike the federal government, states would not receive any additional revenues from the hike in federal taxes. But, they would suffer the full loss of revenues and increased spending due to a smaller economy. The publication of the Romers’ research and the soon thereafter resignation of Dr. Romer from the Obama White House to return to Berkeley undermines the authenticity of President Obama’s oft repeated claims that his proposed budget would increase economic growth and produce an “economy built to last.” Given the importance of her work — only the most important research is published by the American Economic Review — it is hard to imagine Professor Romer failed to inform her boss she was publishing an analysis that said the administration’s proposed tax increases would almost certainly be “highly contractionary.” If she failed to so advise the President, she would be guilty of unimaginable treachery and betrayal in her role as the President’s chief economist. If she did convey her findings and the White House chose to ignore them, the implications are staggering and deserve to be the subject of Congressional hearings. In such a case, it would appear President Obama’s zeal for massive tax increases trumps all of his talk about the importance of job creation and economic growth. The vital questions that remain are: • Does the Obama administration fail to grasp the implications of its own analysis — that the President is proposing tax increases that would throw hundreds of thousands of people out of work? • Or, does the President’s allegiance to his ideology and his version of fairness mean that he simply does not care about the lives and fortunes of those who would suffer as a consequence of his policies? • Has “putting government first” become the new mantra of the president and the Democratic Party? And will the White House press corps — or Democrats and Republicans alike — demand that the American people be given an answer?

US/Russian Relations

US/Russian relations prevent nuclear war

Elliott, 5/15/1995 (Michael, Why Russia Still Matters to America, Newsweek, p. lexis)

"Russia," says Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, "is a big country." That it is; lop off the newly independent states born within the old Soviet husk and you've still got a lot left -- a highly educated work force sitting on top of some of the globe's most valuable resources. True, much of that vast territory has an awful climate (climate matters-for different reasons than Russia's, it explains why Australia will never be a great power). But unlike India and China, two other "giant" states, Russia will be able to husband its vast resources without the additional strain of feeding -- and employing-more than a billion souls. It also, of course, is the only country that can launch a devastating nuclear attack on the United States. That kind of power demands respect. And sensitive handling. Stephen Sestanovich, head Russia watcher at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, argues that present U.S. policy is geared too much to "dismantling Russian military might" -- a policy that, since it breeds Russian resentment of Western meddling, is self-defeating. "We have to reorient Russian power," says Sestanovich, "not eliminate it. Because we can't eliminate it." Indeed, Washington should prefer a strong Russia. A Russia so weak, for example, that it could not resist a Chinese land grab of its Far East without resorting to nuclear weapon**s** is a 21st-century nightmare. All this implies a close U.S. -- Russian relationship stretching into the future. American officials say it will be a "pragmatic" one, recognizing that Russian and U.S. national interests will sometimes collide. The danger, for the United States, is that a pragmatic relationship could be dominated by security issues. In Western Europe, some futurists say that in the coming decades Russia will talk to the United States about nuclear weapons but to the European Union about everything else-trade, economic development and the rest.

US/Russian war causes extinction – most probable

Bostrom ‘2 [Nick Bostrom, professor of philosophy - Oxford University, March, 2002, Existential Risks: Analyzing Human Extinction Scenarios and Related Hazards, Journal of Evolution and Technology, p. http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html]

A much greater existential risk emerged with the build-up of nuclear arsenals in the US and the USSR. An all-out nuclear war was a possibility with both a substantial probability and with consequences that might have been persistent enough to qualify as global and terminal. There was a real worry among those best acquainted with the information available at the time that a nuclear Armageddon would occur and that it might annihilate our species or permanently destroy human civilization.[4] Russia and the US retain large nuclear arsenals that could be used in a future confrontation, either accidentally or deliberately. There is also a risk that other states may one day build up large nuclear arsenals. Note however that a smaller nuclear exchange, between India and Pakistan for instance, is not an existential risk, since it would not destroy or thwart humankind’s potential permanently. Such a war might however be a local terminal risk for the cities most likely to be targeted. Unfortunately, we shall see that nuclear Armageddon and comet or asteroid strikes are mere preludes to the existential risks that we will encounter in the 21st century.

Solves multiple extinction level threats

The Atlantic, November 2008, Medvedev Spoils the Party, <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200811u/medvedev-obama>

Like it or not, the United States cannot solve crucial global problems without Russian participation.  Russia commands the largest landmass on earth; possesses vast reserves of oil, natural gas, and other natural resources; owns huge stockpiles of weapons and plutonium; and still wields a potent brain trust.  Given its influence in Iran and North Korea, to say nothing of its potential as a spoiler of international equilibrium elsewhere, Russia is one country with which the United States would do well to reestablish a strong working relationship—a strategic partnership, even—regardless of its feelings about the current Kremlin government.  The need to do so trumps expanding NATO or pursuing “full-spectrum dominance.” Once the world financial crisis passes, we will find ourselves returning to worries about resource depletion, environmental degradation, and global warming – the greatest challenges facing humanity.  No country can confront these problems alone.  For the United States, Russia may just prove the “indispensable nation” with which to face a volatile future arm in arm.

Terrorism

Terrorism will escalate into extinction

Dennis Morgan 2009 South Korea Futures, Volume 41, Issue 10

Moore points out what most terrorists obviously already know about the nuclear tensions between powerful countries. No doubt, they’ve figured out that the best way to escalate these tensions into nuclear war is to set off a nuclear exchange. As Moore points out, all that militant terrorists would have to do is get their hands on one small nuclear bomb and explode it on either Moscow or Israel. Because of the Russian “dead hand” system, “where regional nuclear commanders would be given full powers should Moscow be destroyed,” it is likely that any attack would be blamed on the United States” Israeli leaders and Zionist supporters have, likewise, stated for years that if Israel were to suffer a nuclear attack, whether from terrorists or a nation state, it would retaliate with the suicidal “Samson option” against all major Muslim cities in the Middle East. Furthermore, the Israeli Samson option would also include attacks on Russia and even “anti-Semitic” European cities In that case, of course, Russia would retaliate, and the U.S. would then retaliate against Russia. China would probably be involved as well, as thousands, if not tens of thousands, of nuclear warheads, many of them much more powerful than those used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, would rain upon most of the major cities in the Northern Hemisphere. Afterwards, for years to come, massive radioactive clouds would drift throughout the Earth in the nuclear fallout, bringing death or else radiation disease that would be genetically transmitted to future generations in a nuclear winter that could last as long as 100 years, taking a savage toll upon the environment and fragile ecosphere as well. And what many people fail to realize is what a precarious, hair-trigger basis the nuclear web rests on. Any accident, mistaken communication, false signal or “lone wolf’ act of sabotage or treason could, in a matter of a few minutes, unleash the use of nuclear weapons, and once a weapon is used, then the likelihood of a rapid escalation of nuclear attacks is quite high while the likelihood of a limited nuclear war is actually less probable since each country would act under the “use them or lose them” strategy and psychology; restraint by one power would be interpreted as a weakness by the other, which could be exploited as a window of opportunity to “win” the war. In other words, once Pandora's Box is opened, it will spread quickly, as it will be the signal for permission for anyone to use them. Moore compares swift nuclear escalation to a room full of people embarrassed to cough. Once one does, however, “everyone else feels free to do so. The bottom line is that as long as large nation states use internal and external war to keep their disparate factions glued together and to satisfy elites’ needs for power and plunder, these nations will attempt to obtain, keep, and inevitably use nuclear weapons. Andas long as large nations oppress groups who seek self-determination, some of those groups will look for any means to fight their oppressors” In other words, as long as war and aggression are backed up by the implicit threat of nuclear arms, it is only a matter of time before the escalation of violent conflict leads to the actual use of nuclear weapons, and once even just one is used,it is very likely that many, if not all, will be used, leading to horrific scenarios of global death and the destruction of much of human civilization while condemning a mutant human remnant, if there is such a remnant, to a life of unimaginable misery and suffering in a nuclear winter.

\*\*\*AFF SECTION\*\*\*

\*Romney Winning Now\*

Econ

Romney will win based on 2 economic factors: GDP growth and consumer confidence.

FreeRepublic 6-29

Free Republic.com, Obama Will Lose in November Based on Two Key Economic Indicators

Posted on Fri Jun 29 2012 12:40:34 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time) by libertarian neocon

Over the last almost 50 years, two economic indicators, have done a great job predicting the vote share of incumbents in Presidential elections (note I used vote share vs. the main opponent to adjust out the third party candidacies), real GDP growth and consumer confidence. Each has a correlation of 0.8 with vote share and each suggest that Obama will not be able to get 50% in a two way race with Romney. Let's start with real GDP growth (more precisely, real quarterly GDP growth compared to the prior year during the quarter prior to the election): As you can see, this is a pretty good indicator, with all the relatively deviations from the trend having great explanations. LBJ did better than expected because JFK had just been assassinated the year before, George H.W. Bush did worse because of Perot's outrageously successful 3rd party challenge that siphoned off votes and Ford did worse because of the Watergate fiasco. It suggests that Obama will likely get about 48% of the vote in November, with a full 1% more GDP growth necessary to cross the 50% threshold. That is a pretty tall order given that Obamacare was just affirmed (with all of its job killing taxes and regulations), the upcoming fiscal cliff (taxes increase by 3.4% of GDP in January) and China & Europe are slowing down. If anything, there is a good chance our economy will worsen, putting Obama even deeper in the hole. Now let's take a look at consumer confidence: As you can see, based on the abysmal University of Michigan consumer confidence readings, Obama is likely to get only 42% of the vote. That's what happens when consumers are more unhappy under your administration than they were under Carter!

Obama’s record sends voters fleeing to Romney

Donatelli 4-28

. He worked on [White House Chief of Staff](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_House_Chief_of_Staff) [James Baker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Baker)'s team that negotiated the [1984 presidential debates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1984) and served as a Regional Political Director for [Ronald Reagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan). He was also active in the presidential campaigns of[George H. W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_H._W._Bush) in [1988](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1988) and [1992](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1992) and was a senior advisor to [Bob Dole](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Dole) during the [1996 presidential election](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1996). In 1992, Donatelli served as chairman of the Christopher Columbus Quincentennial Commission which celebrated the 500th anniversary of [Christopher Columbus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Columbus)' arrival in the [New World](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_World). He is Executive Vice President and Director of Federal Public Affairs of McGuireWoods Consulting as well as counsel to [McGuireWoods](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McGuireWoods). He also serves as secretary and treasurer of the board of the [Young America's Foundation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_America%27s_Foundation), is chairman of the [Reagan Ranch Board of Governors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rancho_del_Cielo) and was selected by [John McCain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McCain) to serve as the deputy chairman of the [Republican National Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_National_Committee) under [Mike Duncan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Duncan) during the [2008 presidential election](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_2008). Afterwards, in March 2009, he was chosen to become chairman of [GOPAC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GOPAC), succeeding [Michael Steele](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Steele) who became chairman of the RNC.

But while many pundits give the edge to the incumbent president, Romney is actually in good position to win the general election come November. Here are three reasons why: First, Romney is broadly acceptable to most conservatives, moderates and even a few disillusioned liberals. Aside from extreme Democratic partisans, most Americans believe that he would be a more than able chief executive. He has a record as a competent governor who dealt with many problems the next president will face — including job creation, economic growth, health care and energy. He won’t be easily caricatured as a dangerous right-winger. Romney still has work to do, however, to galvanize his base and answer questions raised about him during the primaries. But his experience in national affairs and policy expertise should enable him to meet these challenges. He has an opportunity to compete for the support of virtually every voter discouraged by the current state of affairs in Washington. Second, it seems clear that Obama won’t run on his record — always a bad sign for a president seeking reelection. His speeches are short on accomplishments but long on excuses. He blames everyone — Congress, Republicans, business, George W. Bush, world oil markets — except himself for the terrible state of our economy. His approval rating has been less than 50 percent for the past two years. He barely mentions his economic stimulus or his “signature achievement” health care plan. No wonder. Both are widely unpopular. Obama wants to make this election about anything — see contraception, war on women, the rich and privileged — but his record. If Romney can keep the focus on jobs and the economy, where Obama has proved unsuccessful and Romney shows experience and potential, he will win.

Gay Marriage

Obama losing votes over his support for gay marriage

Good 5-10

Chris Good. “Rep. Allen West: Obama May Lose African American Votes Over Gay Marriage”. ABC News. <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/05/rep-allen-west-obama-may-lose-african-american-votes-over-gay-marriage/>. Chris Good is a political reporter for ABC News. He has previously covered national politics as an online reporter and editor for The Atlantic and The Hill. May 10, 2012 4:34pm

Some African Americans will think twice about voting for President Obama in November after he declared his support for gay marriage, according to Republican Rep. Allen West of Florida “I think it’s going to cause an incredible discussion in the black community, because, as you know, on Sundays in the black community the most conservative people in America are in those black churches,” West told ABC News on Thursday “I think it may have been a huge miscalculation, especially when you have 41 states that recognize marriage between one man and one woman, and you just came off an incredible loss to them. Sixty-nine percent voted for [the recent same-sex marriage ban] in North Carolina, which is a key swing state he barely won last time,” West said. He noted that even as African Americans overwhelmingly supported Obama in 2008, gay marriage bans passed in both Florida and California. African Americans oppose gay marriage 55 percent to 41 percent, while all poll respondents support it 52 percent to 43 percent, according to an ABC News poll taken in March.

Wisconsin – Key State

Romney won the Wisconsin primary and increases his delegate lead, cinches nomination.

Lederman 4-3

Josh Lederman, 04/03/12 09:30 PM ET. The Hill. http://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/219839-mitt-romney-wins-wisconsin-primary-adds-to-delegate-lead. Romney wins Wisconsin primary, increases lead in delegates.

Mitt Romney won Wisconsin’s primary Tuesday night, increasing the pressure on his rivals to exit the GOP presidential race. The television news networks projected Romney as the winner at 9:30 p.m. ET, about 90 minutes after the polls close. With 98 percent of precincts reporting, Romney had 43 percent of the vote, with second-place finisher Rick Santorum taking 38 percent. Ron Paul came in third with 12 percent, followed by Newt Gingrich at 6 percent. Speaking like a general-election candidate, Romney connected a defense of his personal prosperity to an argument for the economic vision he sees for the nation. “When you attack business and you vilify success, you’re going to have less business and less success,” Romney said. “In Barack Obama’s government-centered society, tax increases not only become a necessity, but also a desired tool for social justice.”Romney’s victory in Wisconsin, coupled with two separate wins on Tuesday in less competitive contests in Maryland and the District of Columbia, was expected to push him past the halfway mark on the way to the 1,144 delegates he needs to clinch the nomination.

And, Wisconsin a KEY state in the election

Herald Times 6-20

The Herald Times, http://www.htrnews.com/article/20120621/MAN0601/306210058/Other-views-Wisconsin-shaping-up-key-state-election. “Other views: Wisconsin shaping up as key state in election.” 4:51 PM, Jun 20, 2012

Wisconsin will be targeted because it’s expected to be a swing state in the fall election between President Barack Obama and Romney, the presumptive Republican nominee and former Massachusetts governor. Obama captured the state in the 2008 election, but the Democrats have given up some ground since then, losing a U.S. Senate seat, as Ron Johnson of Oshkosh defeated incumbent Russ Feingold in 2008 as well as two House seats, as Republican Reid Ribble ousted incumbent Democrat Steve Kagen and Republican Sean Duffy won the seat held by Dave Obey, who had represented the Wausau-area district since 1969. Wisconsin is a battleground, especially in light of the recall elections and recent elections.

Youth

Obama’s numbers of young voters drop drastically.

Elliot 4-25

PHILIP ELLIOTT 04/25/12 03:17 AM ET “Younger Voters Shift From Obama.” The Huffington Post. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/25/obama-young-voters\_n\_1451667.html.

WASHINGTON -- Once thought to be solidly behind President Barack Obama, younger voters burdened by a bleak employment picture, high gas prices and student loan debt are being aggressively wooed by the Democrat and his likely Republican challenger, Mitt Romney. In 2008, Obama had a 34-point advantage over Republican Sen. John McCain among voters under age 30. He won about two-thirds of the vote in that age group. But a new Harvard poll suggests the president may face a harder sales job with younger voters this time around. Obama led Romney by 12 points among those ages 18-24, according to the survey. Among those in the 25-29 age group, Obama held a 23-point advantage. It's an opening Republicans hope to exploit by focusing on young people's disillusionment with the candidate who promised "hope" and "change.""I think young voters in this country have to vote for me if they're really thinking about what's in the best interest of their country and what's in their personal best interest," Romney said Monday in Pennsylvania after announcing his support for an effort Obama is pushing to keep the interest rate on federal student loans from doubling in July. Obama is visiting college campuses in key states this week to rally students around the proposal. "The president's policies have led to extraordinary statistics. When you look at 50 percent of kids coming out college today can't find a job or can't find a job which is consistent with their skills, how in the world can you be supporting a president that has led to that kind of economy?" Romney said. "I think young people will understand that ours is the party of opportunity and jobs." While Republicans don't anticipate erasing the Democrats' long-held advantage among the under-30 voter group, they would like to trim it enough to help Romney win the White House. His aides and advisers have been sharpening a message that assails Obama for an economy that has young people feeling the pinch, too. The Republican National Committee is preparing to launch what it calls the Social Victory Center, which promises to turn the Facebook accounts of supporters into an outreach arm of the party. And Romney's five telegenic sons, none of them younger than 30, are ready to reprise their roles as campaign surrogates. Obama has spent the past week casting himself as a defender of the middle class and urging Congress to keep the 3.4 percent student loan interest rate from doubling to 6.8 percent in July. He rallied students during visits Tuesday to college campuses in North Carolina and Colorado, to be followed by a stop in Iowa on Wednesday. Obama carried all three states in 2008, and they are considered among several that could help decide November's election."When a big chunk of every paycheck goes towards loan debt, that's not just tough on you, that's not just tough for middle-class families, it's not just tough on your parents, it's painful for the economy, because that money is not going to help businesses grow," Obama said at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. "I mean, think about the sooner you can start buying a house, that's good for the housing industry. The sooner you can start up that business, that means you're hiring some folks. That grows the economy." "And this is something Michelle and I know about firsthand. I just wanted everybody here to understand this is not ... I didn't just read about this. I didn't just get some talking points about this. I didn't just get a policy briefing on this. Michelle and I, we've been in your shoes." Despite attempts to relate to college audiences by opening up about his and his wife's experiences with student loans, polling suggests Obama's job approval rating among these voters has declined. The 75 percent rating he enjoyed in 2009, the year he took office, has dropped to 57 percent, according to Gallup. That opens the door for Romney and the Republican Party.

Gas Prices

**High gas prices steer voters away from Obama.**

Reisner 5-29

Hiram Reisner. World Editor at NewsMax Media, Inc. Independent Editor/Contractor at Self-Employed Editorial Director at B'nai B'rith International. News Editor at AOL. Education: University of Maryland College Park, Tel Aviv University “Trump: Obama Re-election Chances Nil Unless Gas Prices Drop.” Thursday, 29 Mar 2012 05:19 AM [http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/trump-obama-romney-gas/2012/03/29/id/434170. NewsMax.com](http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/trump-obama-romney-gas/2012/03/29/id/434170.%20NewsMax.com).

Donald Trump says President Barack Obama will lose the election by a large margin in November unless there is a dramatic drop in the price of gasoline. The real estate mogul also told Fox News’ Greta Van Susteren Wednesday that Obama’s claims that he has no control over the price at the pump are “totally false.” “I believe that gasoline prices will have a huge impact — if they don’t start coming down, I don’t think it's possible for Obama to win the election, personally. I think it will be a bigger victory that most people think,” Trump said. “Then you hear the head of energy say: I want $7 and $8 fuel. And I am saying: Where is this man coming from? I think that statement is one of the two sound bites I would use if I were running for president as a Republican.

AT: Obama wins women’s votes

Romney Catching Women’s Votes

Gedalyahu 5-16

Tzvi Ben Gedalyahu, Reuters: “Women Voters Fleeing Obama for Romney: A startling turnaround in pre-election polls show President Barack Obama losing the women’s vote to Mitt Romney despite, or because of, Obama’s favoring gay marriages.” First Publish: 5/16/2012, 2:38 PM

A startling turnaround in polls show Obama losing the women’s vote to Romney despite, or because of, Obama’s favoring gay marriages. A CBS/New York Times poll gives Romney, the unofficial but de facto Republic candidate, a 46 to 44 per cent lead among women’s voters, a dramatic eight-point turnaround from a month ago. Romney’s new strength among women follow Democratic party charges that the Republican party has declared a “war on women.” The same poll also revealed that two-thirds of the respondents think President Obama’s announcement that he supports gay marriage was made “mostly for political reasons,” while only 24 percent believe the president took his stand on principle.

\*Transportation Popular\*

Generic Popular Links

Infrastructure investment is popular amidst public

Halsey ‘12

(Ashley Halsey III is a staff writer for The Washington Post – Washington Post – April 24, 2012 – lexis)

The plan to energize public support was outlined Monday in a report by transportation experts brought together by the Miller Center at the University of Virginia. After a conference in November, the group concluded that most Americans are aware of the infrastructure crisis and support spending to address it. "Recent public-opinion surveys have found overwhelming support for the idea of infrastructure investment," the report said. "After the 'bridge to nowhere' controversies of recent years, the public has become sensitized to issues of pork-barrel spending and understandably demands to see a clear connection between federal expenditures, actual transportation needs, and economic benefits." Despite apprehension about wasteful spending, the report said, more than two-thirds of voters surveyed by the Rockefeller Foundation said infrastructure improvement was important and 80 percent said spending on it would create millions of jobs. The transportation group, co-chaired by former transportation secretaries Norman Y. Mineta and Samuel K. Skinner, compiled a comprehensive study on infrastructure in 2010. That report estimated that an additional $134 billion to $262 billion must be spent per year through 2035 to rebuild and improve roads, rail systems and air transportation.

Public favors federal government funding for infrastructure, and thinks its underfunded in the SQ

Houston Chronicle May 18 2012

**(“**Americans Value Highways and Bridges as a National Treasure”

[http://www.chron.com/business/press-releases/article/Americans-Value-Highways-and-Bridges-as-a-3568488.php accessed tm 5/19](http://www.chron.com/business/press-releases/article/Americans-Value-Highways-and-Bridges-as-a-3568488.php%20accessed%20tm%205/19) )

Clearly, Americans hold the nation's infrastructure in high regard. Nearly nine in ten (89 percent) Americans feel it’s important for the federal government to fund the maintenance and improvements of interstate highways. Yet, this infrastructure isn’t receiving the fiscal attention it deserves. Congress recently approved the ninth extension of transportation legislation that originally expired in 2009. The [Highway Trust Fund](http://www.chron.com/?controllerName=search&action=search&channel=business%2Fpress-releases&search=1&inlineLink=1&query=%22Highway+Trust+Fund%22) – due to inflation, rising construction costs and increasingly fuel efficient vehicles – no longer collects enough money to support the U.S. surface transportation system, remaining solvent only through a series of infusions from federal general revenue funds. More than half of Americans (57 percent) believe the nation’s infrastructure is underfunded

Public wants transportation infrastructure investment

Findings from a national survey of registered voters, conducted by Hart Research Associates and Public Opinion Strategies, 2011, Rockefeller Foundation, “The Rockefeller Foundation Infrastructure Survey”, <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>

Voters want common ground on transportation legislation more than on any other issue. Americans want leaders to seek common ground across a host of issues, but they want it on transportation legislation more than any other area. 71% of voters say there should be common ground on this issue—higher than other major issues—while 19% say leaders should hold fast to their positions, which is lower than other major issues. By comparison, the next-highest issue is legislation dealing with the budget deficit, where 69% would like to see common ground and 25% want to see leaders holding fast to their positions. This pattern holds across other issues as well, from energy development to health care reform to tax cuts to Social Security. Two in three voters say that improving the nation’s infrastructure is highly important, and many say our current infrastructure system is inadequate. 66% of voters say that improving the country’s transportation infrastructure is extremely (27%) or very (39%) important. Another 27% say it is somewhat important. Just 6% say it is not important. Again, majorities of Democrats (74%), independents (62%), and Republicans (56%) say this is very or extremely important, as do 59% of Tea Party supporters. The importance of improving infrastructure also is consistent regardless of the length of a voter’s commute—whether their commute is less than 15 minutes (60% important), between 15 and 44 minutes (69%), or 45 minutes or longer (63). Indeed, 44% say that roads are often or totally inadequate and that only some public transportation options exist for those who want them. Only 4% of voters say that roads are totally adequate with lots of public transportation options, while 50% say roads are mostly adequate and there are just enough public transportation options.

NIB Popular

Voters love National Infrastructure bank

Rockefeller Foundation, 11

(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller

Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

Moreover, few believe that current government spending in this area is efficient and wise, and voters welcome a range of reforms in how transportation projects are financed. At the same time, as is the case with many spending-related issues today, voters are unwilling to personally pay for additional funding of national transportation projects. While wide support exists for encouraging more private investment, imposing penalties on over-budget projects, and establishing a National Infrastructure Bank, there is very little support for increasing the federal gas tax or increasing tolls on interstate highways and bridges.

Mass Trans Popular

Mass transit popular amidst voters

Rockefeller Foundation, 11

(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

But Americans want changes in the way the Federal government invests in infrastructure and makes policy. Two-thirds of respondents favored 9 of 10 reforms tested in the survey, with 90 supporting more accountability and certification that projects are delivered on time and fit into a national plan. In terms of priorities, a vast majority (80 percent) believe the country would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system and 57 percent believe that “safer streets for our communities and children” should be the one of the top two priorities if more money is to be invested in infrastructure.

Alternative Energy Popular

Hydrogen alternative popular among the public

Teixeira 07  
Ruy Teixeira[Senior editor for Center for American Progress]/What the Public Really Wants on Energy and the Environment/March 5, 2007  
http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/03/wtprw.html

By and large, the American public is unenthusiastic about expanding production from conventional energy sources in the U. S. , tending to favor conservation and protecting the environment over such expansion. In a February, 2006 Pew Research Center poll, for example, 52 percent favored “more energy conservation and regulation on energy use and prices” as the more important priority for U. S. energy policy over “expanding exploration, mining and drilling, and the construction of new power plants,” which found support among 41 percent of those polled by Pew. That same question has elicited a comparable response in Pew surveys going back to 2001. Similarly, in a March, 2006 Gallup question, 49 percent thought “protection of the environment should be given priority, even at the risk of limiting the amount of energy supplies such as oil, gas and coal which the United States produces. ” Forty-two percent thought that the “development of U. S. energy supplies such as oil, gas and coal should be given priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent. ” Gallup has asked that question since 2001, with a similar (in fact, usually stronger) pro-environment response. But attitudes are more positive toward proposals that would actively promote energy conservation and the development of alternative energy sources. In the February, 2006 Pew poll where 85 percent agreed that America was “addicted” to oil, the public strongly supported the following proposals to address America’s energy supply: requiring better auto fuel efficiency (86 percent for/12 percent against); increasing federal funding for research on wind, solar and hydrogen technology (82/14); tax cuts for companies to develop these alternative energy sources (78/18); spending more on subway, rail and bus systems (68/27); and increasing federal funding for research on ethanol (67/22). In contrast, in that same poll the public leaned negative on promoting the increased use of nuclear power, by a 44 percent for to 49 percent against margin and disapproved of tax cuts to encourage energy companies to do more exploration for oil, by a margin of 44 percent to 52 percent. The March, 2006 Gallup survey also documented these positive attitudes toward energy conservation and alternative energy sources. In that poll, the public overwhelmingly supported spending government money to develop alternative sources of fuel for automobiles (85 percent favor/14 percent oppose) and spending more government money on developing solar and wind power (77/21). The Gallup poll also mirrored the findings of the Pew poll, finding that the public was markedly less enthusiastic about proposals such as expanding use of nuclear energy (55 percent for/40 percent against) and opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil exploration (49 percent for /47 percent against). The public’s especially strong interest in developing alternative energy sources is well-illustrated by a finding in a July, 2006 Los Angeles Times poll. The LAT poll asked respondents to choose the best way among a number of options for reducing U. S. reliance on foreign oil. More than half the respondents (52 percent) chose government investment in alternative energy sources, way ahead of the next most popular option, relaxing environmental standards for oil and gas drilling (20 percent), which was followed by requiring stricter mileage standards for cars (eight percent) and more nuclear power plants (six percent). Of course, much of the energy-related polling in the last couple of years has been on the issue of rising gas prices. When gas prices were peaking in 2005, 60 percent to 70 percent of Americans in Gallup polling reported that the rise is gas prices had caused some financial hardship for their families; three-quarters said the rise in gas prices was making them angry. The primary focus of blame for the increases was the big oil companies, followed by the Bush administration. In April of 2006, a Gallup poll found the public willing to entertain a number of strong steps to deal with rising gas prices, including setting prices controls on gasoline (70 percent in favor), temporarily suspending all federal gasoline taxes (64 percent), imposing an additional profits tax on oil companies (64 percent) and even breaking up the big oil companies (56 percent). Indeed, so strong was sentiment about gas prices that concern about energy costs was near the top of the public’s most important problems in many polls in late 2005 and spring and summer of 2006. Naturally, concern has abated since then, due to the decline in gas prices that began last August. But the public remains worried about possible future increases and clearly dissatisfied with the way government has handled the issue. Past polling indicates that concern about gas prices will spike sharply when prices climb again.

Public wants investments that decrease reliance on oil and decrease emissions

Davis 2009

(Stephen Lee, “Poll Finds Americans Favor Smarter Transportation Spending in Stimulus Bill” January 16, 2009 <http://t4america.org/blog/2009/01/16/poll-most-americans-want-stimulus-to-emphasize-road-and-bridge-repair-and-transit-not-new-road-construction-poll-finds/> Accessed tm 5/22/12)

Americans are also very interested in energy conservation. Eighty-nine percent agreed that transportation investments should support the goals of reducing energy use, with 58 percent agreeing strongly. Three in four of those polled also want the stimulus plan to support the reduction of carbon emissions that lead to global warming and climate change.

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Airports Popular

Airport infrastructure investment boosts president in key swing states – perception of mass benefits

Bilotkach, 10

Volodymyr, Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine, October, <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~vbilotka/Draft_September10.pdf> (the october date is correct even though the web address says September)

The federal government plays a crucial role in the infrastructure investment in the United States, including allocation of funds to the airports. Given that airports are perceived to bring substantial benefits to the respective communities, federally funded airport infrastructure projects are both sought after, welcomed, and should be beneficial to the politicians capable of securing the funds. Complicated structure of the American political system creates possibilities for strong influence of political factors on the process of allocation of infrastructure investment funds. Understanding the role of politics in this area is of no trivial importance, as currently perception of the airports’ role is being revised. An increasing number of countries have started viewing airports as the firms rather than the infrastructure objects. Privatization and deregulation of the airports is also becoming more common. It is believed that involvement of the private sector will bring about efficiency gains, and that privately run airports may be more willing and able to contribute to solving the congestion problem. This study offers the first look at the issue of impact of political factors on the aviation infrastructure investment in the USA. We take advantage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 (more broadly known as the Stimulus) to examine contribution of political factors to allocation of the $1.1 billion worth of the airport grants included into the package. The Stimulus provides an excellent case for studying political economy of airport (and more generally, infrastructure) investment, at least as far as involvement of the federal government is concerned. The law was set up rather hastily – Barack Obama was elected President in November of 2008, inaugurated on January 20, 2009, and ARRA became law on February 17, 2009. The criteria for the airport infrastructure projects to be funded under the ARRA were rather vague 2 . We can therefore suspect that the airport infrastructure grants could have been used by the Administration, or the Congress as a mechanism to reward districts which brought more votes in the latest election. Additionally, members of the corresponding Congress Committees (in particular, of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure) might have used ARRA as an opportunity to bring more money to their districts. Empirical research on the impact of politics on transport infrastructure investment deals mostly with the European data. The studies examining US evidence are rare, and include McFadden (1976) and Knight (2004). The former study looks at determinants of highway project selection by the California Division of Highways, while the latter examines congressional voting on transportation projects. Our data analysis showed the association between the airport’s location in the Congressional District with the larger Obama-McCain vote differential in November 2008 Presidential election, and the amount of the ARRA grant received by the airport. At the same time, district level election results are poor predictors of whether the airport receives the grant; and estimation results are not entirely robust to taking election results from the adjacent districts into consideration. We also detect rather robust evidence of the impact of Senate on the grant allocation process. This paper contributes to two broad strains of literature. First, we extend the literature on public provision of infrastructure. Research in this area has been addressing the issues of both effects of the publicly provided infrastructure on private sector productivity, and the determinants of the infrastructure investment. The former literature (e.g., Aschauer, 1989; Holz-Eakin, 1994) is much richer than the latter. Studies of the determinants of public infrastructure investment include Cadot et al. (2006), Castells and Sole-Olle (2005), Kemmerling and Stephan (2002, 2008), Fridstrom and Elvik (1997), Bel and Fageda (2009). All the listed papers study infrastructure investment in Europe, and the latter has the most relevance to our paper, as it examines (and confirms the existence of) the impact of political factors on airport investment in Spain. On the US side, we find a lot of studies asserting the disproportionate power of the Senate 3 (e.g., Hoover and Pecorino, 2005) and Congressional Committees (e.g., Garrett et al., 2006) in allocation of the federal funds across the jurisdictions. Garrett and Sobel (2003) find that states which are politically important to the president will have a higher rate of the disaster declaration; the authors also find the election year effects on the amounts of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster payments. The only studies of political determinants of transport infrastructure investment in the US are McFadden (1976) – an examination of project choices by California Division of Highways, finding limited impact of political determinants on the selection process; as well as Knight (2004), asserting that congressmen respond to common pool incentives when voting for transportation projects.

Generic Link Defense

Infrastructure unimportant for Obama

Freemark 12

Yonah Freemark[Correspondent for Transportation Politic]/On Infrastructure, Hopes for Progress This Year Look Glum/January 25th, 2012  
http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/01/25/on-infrastructure-hopes-for-progress-this-year-look-glum/

The contributions of the Obama Administration to the investment in improved transportation alternatives have been significant, but it was clear from the President’s State of the Union address last night that 2012 will be a year of diminished expectations in the face of a general election and a tough Congressional opposition. Mr. Obama’s address, whatever its merits from a populist perspective, nonetheless failed to propose dramatic reforms to encourage new spending on transportation projects, in contrast to previous years. While the Administration has in some ways radically reformed the way Washington goes about selecting capital improvements, bringing a new emphasis on livability and underdeveloped modes like high-speed rail, there was little indication in the speech of an effort to expand such policy choices. All that we heard was a rather meek suggestion to transform a part of the money made available from the pullout from the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts — a sort of war dividend whose size is undefined — to “do some nation-building right here at home. ” If these suggestions fell flat for the pro-investment audience, they were reflective of the reality of working in the context of a deeply divided political system in which such once-universally supported policies as increased roads funding have become practically impossible to pursue. Mr. Obama pushed hard, we shouldn’t forget, for a huge, transformational transportation bill in early 2011, only to be rebuffed by intransigence in the GOP-led House of Representatives and only wavering support in the Democratic Senate. For the first term at least, the Administration’s transportation initiatives appear to have been pushed aside. Even so, it remains to be seen how the Administration will approach the development of a transportation reauthorization program. Such legislation remains on the Congressional agenda after three years of delays (the law expires on March 31st). There is so far no long-term solution to the continued inability of fuel tax revenues to cover the growing national need for upgraded or expanded mobility infrastructure. But if it were to pass, a new multi-year transportation bill would be the most significant single piece of legislation passed by the Congress in 2012. The prospect of agreement between the two parties on this issue, however, seems far-fetched. That is, if we are to assume that the goal is to complete a new and improved spending bill, rather than simply further extensions of the existing legislation. The House could consider this month a bill that would fund new highways and transit for several more years by expanding domestic production of heavily carbon-emitting fossil fuels, a terrible plan that would produce few new revenues and encourage more ecological destruction. Members of the Senate, meanwhile, have for months been claiming they were “looking” for the missing $12 or 13 billion to complete its new transportation package but have so far come up with bupkis. The near-term thus likely consists of either continued extensions of the current law or a bipartisan bargain that fails to do much more than replicate the existing law, perhaps with a few bureaucratic reforms. In the context of the presidential race, Mr. Obama’s decision not to continue his previously strong advocacy of more and more transportation funding suggests that the campaign sees the issue as politically irrelevant. If the Administration made an effort last year to convince Americans of the importance of improving infrastructure, there seems to have been fewer positive results in terms of popular perceptions than hoped for. Perhaps the rebuffs from Republican governors on high-speed rail took their toll; perhaps the few recovery projects that entered construction were not visible enough (or at least their federal funding was not obvious enough); perhaps the truth of the matter is that people truly care more about issues like unemployment and health care than they do for public transit and roads. This does not mean an end to the beneficial shifts in national policy that have for the first time in decades really made transportation a tool for the improvement of conditions in cities large and small. This, ultimately, is the success of the Department of Transportation under Mr. Obama: Making livability and density primary goals of the mobility system. Even if little gets done in 2012, it is hard to see these ideas disappearing from the popular discourse.

HSR Link Defense

Public doesn’t know or care about HSR

Thomas Dorsey, Soul of America, Jun 22, 2012, “America Must Build Interstate High Speed Rail

Part 1”, http://soulofamerica.com/interact/soulofamerica-travel-blog/interstate-hsr-network/

Unfortunately, vote trading for Interstate HSR is harder to come by due to public’s lack of knowledge about HSR benefits vs. costs. Today the narrative centers around HSR’s direct costs to taxpayers without mentioning the indirect costs or the costs of alternatives. Hearing only soundbites from news media, the average Joe or Jane will reflexively think, “No More Taxes“, when they don’t know existing taxes can pay for it and that HSR is cheaper than highway or airport expansion.

\*Obama Bad/Romney Good\*

Generic Impacts

Obama leads to multiple scenarios for war

Chapin and Hanson 2009 (Dr. Victor Davis Hanson has been a commentator on modern warfare and contemporary politics for [*National Review*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Review) and other media outlets. He was a professor at [California State University, Fresno](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_State_University,_Fresno), and is currently the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at [Stanford University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanford_University)'s [Hoover Institution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoover_Institution). http://pjmedia.com/blog/change-weakness-disaster-obama-answers-from-victor-davis-hanson/)

BC: Are we currently sending a message of weakness to our foes and allies? Can anything good result from President Obama’s marked submissiveness before the world? Dr. Hanson: Obama is one bow and one apology away from a circus. The world can understand a kowtow gaffe to some Saudi royals, but not as part of a deliberate pattern. Ditto the mea culpas. Much of diplomacy rests on public perceptions, however trivial. We are now in a great waiting game, as regional hegemons, wishing to redraw the existing landscape — whether China, Venezuela, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Syria, etc. — are just waiting to see who’s going to be the first to try Obama — and whether Obama really will be as tenuous as they expect. If he slips once, it will be 1979 redux, when we saw the rise of radical Islam, the Iranian hostage mess, the communist inroads in Central America, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, etc. BC: With what country then — Venezuela, Russia, Iran, etc. — do you believe his global repositioning will cause the most damage? Dr. Hanson: I think all three. I would expect, in the next three years, Iran to get the bomb and begin to threaten ever so insidiously its Gulf neighborhood; Venezuela will probably cook up some scheme to do a punitive border raid into Colombia to apprise South America that U.S. friendship and values are liabilities; and Russia will continue its energy bullying of Eastern Europe, while insidiously pressuring autonomous former republics to get back in line with some sort of new Russian autocratic commonwealth. There’s an outside shot that North Korea might do something really stupid near the 38th parallel and China will ratchet up the pressure on Taiwan. India’s borders with both Pakistan and China will heat up. I think we got off the back of the tiger and now no one quite knows whom it will bite or when. BC: Can Obama get any more mileage from his perpetually played “I’m not George W. Bush” card or is that card past its expiration date? Dr. Hanson: Two considerations: 1) It’s hard (in addition to being shameless), after a year, for any president to keep scapegoating a prior administration. 2) I think he will drop the reset/“Bush did it” throat-clearing soon, as his polls continue to stay below 50 percent. In other words, it seems to be a losing trope, poll-wise. Americans hate whining and blame-gaming. So the apologies and bows don’t go over well here at home; one more will be really toxic, politically speaking. Most are starting to see that our relations with Britain, Italy, Germany, or France are no better under Obama — and probably worse — than during the Bush administration. If one were to ignore the media and international elites and the Western youth-obsessed culture, and just empirically ask: Does one-third of the planet in India and China respect the U.S. more or less under Obama? Is the anti-American, radical Islamic world more or less fearful of Obama’s or Bush’s America? Is an Ahmadinejad or Chavez more or less likely to make a risky move? — the answers would be pretty clear. The world is still in its hope-and-change stupor, but slowly through the fog our allies (Britain, Colombia, Czech Republic, Israel, Poland, etc.) are seeing that they are now mere neutrals, while our enemies sense they are suddenly worthy of deference and attention. Why then be an ally when being an enemy is so much more fun? BC: Why have relations with Israel plummeted so far so fast? Dr. Hanson: Let us count the ways: 1) Ignorance: Obama believes that “Bush did it” rather than the problems of the region predating Bush and postdating Obama (he apparently does not know that three wars were fought before Israel occupied the West Bank). 2) In Obama’s morally equivalent universe, no one “judges” the “other,” so a free market, democratic, and pro-Western Israel gets no more deference than does a statist, dictatorial, and anti-Western Hamas, Syria, etc. 3) In Obama’s al-Arabiya interview and Cairo encomium, he makes it clear enough that he is uniquely qualified, by his heritage, name, race, and temperament, to reach out to millions of oil-rich Middle East Muslims. In such a realist calculus, tiny Israel, without numbers, oil, or terrorists, doesn’t quite rate the attention. 4) There are a number of widely diverse names loosely associated with Obama, past and present — Ayers, Brzezinski, Freeman, Khalidi, Powers, Rev. Wright, etc. — who are on record for their anti-Israeli views. At some point, one concludes that birds of a feather flock together. We have seen American politics come full circle: some of the right in the 1950s used to be anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic, while the left was unquestionably pro. Now, it’s reversed. When I hear of virulently anti-Israeli, anti-Jewish sentiment expressed these days, I usually assume it arises, whether here or in Europe, out of a leftist, multicultural perspective that hates any who reflect Western success.

Bush Tax Cuts

Obama will end the Bush Tax cuts in his second term.

Scheiber 2012 (Noam Scheiber is a staff writer for the Daily Beast. March 2 2012. “In Second Term, What Will Obama Do About Bush Tax Cuts?”. http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/03/02/in-second-term-what-will-obama-do-about-bush-tax-cuts.html)

What is clear is that, having been tempted to end all of the Bush tax cuts in 2009, the president would only find the idea more attractive were he to win a second term. At that point, he will never again stand before the voters, at least not as a presidential candidate. There would be nothing to stop him from flouting a campaign promise, even one as sensitive as his tax pledge. Meanwhile, after four straight years of trillion-dollar deficits, the pressure to narrow the budget shortfall would be even more intense than it was during his first term. Perhaps most important of all, killing the entire zombie army of Bush tax breaks would be far, far easier than only slaying the upper-income portions. To pull off the former, Obama literally has to do nothing—the tax breaks are slated to expire on their own. To do the latter, he would have to pass legislation extending the middle-class elements. As a practical matter, that means rounding up majorities in the House and Senate, which seems unimaginable given the likely balance of power on Capitol Hill after the election. (There is a third option, which entails striking a deal with Republicans to junk the entire tax code and rebuild it from scratch, but it’s hard to envision this happening between Election Day and Dec. 31.) In the end, the lesson of the Schiliro plan and the Orszag meeting—to say nothing of the months Obama spent petitioning Republicans for a major deficit deal in 2011—is that the president is a true fiscal conservative. Perhaps even a severe one, to paraphrase his likely opponent. For such a breed of politician, the chance to let the Bush tax cuts lapse may simply be too tempting to pass up.

Obama remains firmly committed to ending the Bush tax cuts – leverage over the budget deficit will force the GOP to compromise

Calmes, ’12(Jackie, NYT staff, 2/13/12, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/14/us/politics/obama-budget-raises-taxes-on-the-rich-to-spend-on-jobs.html>)

WASHINGTON — President Obama’s final budget request of his term amounts to his agenda for a desired second term, with tax increases on the affluent and cuts in spending, especially from the military, both to reduce deficits and to pay for priorities like education, public works, research and clean energy. Multimedia While Republicans issued the usual declarations that the package was dead on arrival at the Capitol on Monday, Mr. Obama harbors hope of winning some victories yet. The likelihood of a post-election lame-duck session and a raft of laws expiring at year’s end — including the Bush-era tax cuts — could give him leverage to force compromises even on taxes. Both parties are already calculating for the prospect of a December showdown. The budget request for the 2013 fiscal year, which starts Oct. 1, and its projections for the years that follow, reflect Mr. Obama’s vision for another term in which he would switch from years of temporary stimulus measures to promoting long-term initiatives to spur new business and manufacturing activity and help educate Americans for new skills that businesses demand. After winding down two wars overseas, Mr. Obama proposed to make good on his often-repeated call to bring troops back and start nation-building at home in symbolic fashion: The budget would use projected military savings — a gimmick, Republicans say — to help pay for a six-year, $476 billion program to modernize the nation’s transportation network. And Mr. Obama once again proposed to narrow inequality in income and opportunity between high- and lower-income Americans, while also reducing annual deficits, through his proposals to raise $1.5 trillion over 10 years mostly from the wealthy but also from closing some corporate tax breaks, chiefly for oil and gas companies. Overhauling the tax codes would be a priority in a second Obama term. Later this month, the administration will propose a revision of the corporate tax code to root out many tax breaks and lower the 35 percent rate, though Mr. Obama said the change must not raise any more revenues than the current system, despite the nation’s chronic deficits. While many of his ideas are retreads of proposals Republicans and some Democrats have blocked before, for the first time Mr. Obama proposed to tax dividends like ordinary income for taxpayers who make more than $250,000, as dividends were before the Bush administration. The change, which would nearly double the rate for affluent taxpayers to 39.6 percent from 20 percent, would raise about $206 billion over 10 years. Republicans are certain to oppose such tax increases as they have before. But the question this year is whether Mr. Obama after the election, win or lose, can use his veto and looming budget deadlines to force some compromises — even a “grand bargain” of spending cuts and revenue increases for deficit reduction could be possible, Mr. Obama has told people privately. “The president’s budget is a reasonable opening move for what will likely be major budget negotiations after the election and before the Bush tax cuts are due to expire at the end of the year,” said Jim Kessler, vice president for policy at Third Way, a centrist policy organization. “The real work begins in November, and right now these opening moves are just pawns shifting on the chessboard,” Mr. Kessler added. “As a deficit hawk, I’m guardedly optimistic about this budget.” After the election, Republicans will be eager to forestall two legislative events. One is the expiration of the Bush-era tax cuts after Dec. 31; Mr. Obama in his budget reiterated his vow to support an extension only for taxpayers making less than $250,000. The second comes in January, when $1.2 trillion in automatic 10-year spending cuts begin, half in military programs, unless the White House and Congress agree to alternative savings.

Terrorism

Obama soft on terrorism

Gerstein 10

JOSH GERSTEIN[Editor of Politico]/Republicans revive 'soft on terror' charge/1/31/10  
http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0110/32250.html

A series of recent controversies — capped by Friday’s decision to pull a key 9/11 trial out of Manhattan — is prompting Republicans to turn up the pressure on President Barack Obama, by resurrecting the kind of “soft on terrorism” charge that has dogged Democrats in the past. Obama largely escaped any controversy over terrorism in the 2008 campaign, because voters were so focused on the economic crisis and because many were supportive of Obama’s plans to break from the Bush-era war on terror, by ending the Iraq war and shutting down Guantanamo Bay prison. But a series of stumbles in recent weeks has given Republicans a chance to renew that line of attack against Obama, at a time when he’s already confronting public criticism of his handling of the economy and health care. The GOP has leapt on Obama’s handling of the Christmas Day bombing plot, saying he was slow to speak to the public about the initial attack and criticizing the Justice Department’s decision to try the suspect in a civilian court, not a military one. Republicans also are criticizing the Justice Department for an FBI decision to end questioning of the suspect, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, after less than an hour and read him his Miranda rights. That came on top of the congressional uproar over Obama’s plan to close Guantanamo Bay prison by moving the detainees to U. S. prisons. Obama missed a self-imposed one-year deadline to close the facility. Republicans also criticized the Justice Department’s decision to send five alleged 9/11 plotters to trial in Manhattan, just blocks from the World Trade Center site — a decision the administration abruptly abandoned Friday after powerful Democrats came out against the New York venue. “It’s the death of a thousand self-inflicted cuts,” said Peter Feaver, a National Security Council official under presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton. “Conservatives like Vice President Cheney have been making the critique from the beginning but it did not stick until the self-inflicted wounds reached a culmination point. . I think they did with the underwear bomber. Prior to that the self-inflicted wounds were separated. They didn’t congeal into a single story line, but now I think they have. ” Republicans howled after Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said “the system worked” because passengers on the plane jumped on the Abdulmutallab. And the head of the National Counterterrorism Center, Michael Leiter, went on a ski vacation shortly after the attack. “The terrain changed on them with the Christmas bombing. It provided, fairly or unfairly, Exhibit A for what the critics on the right . . . were arguing: that by not taking terrorism seriously, you make America more vulnerable. Mirandizing [Abdulmutallab] plays right into that. ‘The system worked’ plays into that. Having someone take a vacation for a week plays right into it,” Feaver said.

Obama soft on terrorism

LoBianco 09

Tom LoBianco[Tom LoBianco has covered energy and environmental policy, including the climate change bill making its way through Congress. From 2007 to 2008, he covered Maryland politics from the Times’s Annapolis bureau. Tom hold’s a master’s degree in political science from Northeastern University and a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Maryland, College Park]/Giuliani calls Obama soft on terrorism/November 16, 2009  
http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/nov/16/giuliani-calls-obama-soft-on-terrorism/

Former New York Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani called President Obama soft on terrorism for deciding to try the acknowledged mastermind of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on U. S. soil, and said it would increase the security risk to the city. Trying Khalid Shaikh Mohammed in the city also would wrongfully force Americans to pay for his security, both in court and in holding while awaiting trial, said the Republican who oversaw the city’s response to the Sept. 11 attacks. “What the Obama administration is telling us loud and clear is that both in substance and reality the war on terror from their point of view is over,” Mr. Giuliani said on “Fox News Sunday. ” “This seems to be an overconcern with the rights of terrorists and a lack of concern for the rights of the public. ” The former mayor made the criticisms the same day that Democratic officials in Illinois trumpeted a prison in their state as a potential site to hold Guantanamo Bay prisoners when the Obama administration closes the facility at U. S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, which is scheduled to happen next year. The Obama administration announced Friday that Mohammed and four other accused co-conspirators would be tried in a civilian court in New York, sparking immediate protest. Supporters of the White House decision say the trial will be the ultimate test of the American style of justice. “I have a lot of faith in our judges. They know how to run a trial,” Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, Vermont Democrat, said on CBS’ “Face The Nation. ” “They know how to keep decorum in their court. If Khalid Shaikh Mohammed wants to stand up and say, as he did in Guantanamo, ‘I committed all these murders, I did all these things’: Fine. If I was a prosecutor, I would just sit there and let that jury hear it, because he’s going to be convicted. ” Mr. Giuliani made the rounds of Sunday talk shows, holding few punches, and other Republicans have been similarly critical of the decision to grant civilian trials to those accused of being illegal combatants. “In this particular case, we’re reaching out to give terrorists a benefit that’s unnecessary,” Mr. Giuliani said on ABC’s “This Week. ” “In fact, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, when he was first arrested, asked to be brought to New York. I didn’t think we were in the business of granting the requests of terrorists. ” He also indicated that he detected a pattern of administration softness in dealing with Islamist killers, citing the administration’s handling of the mass shootings at the Army base in Fort Hood, Texas, where a Muslim officer is accused of killing 13 people and wounding 29 others. “It seems to me that the Obama administration is getting away from the fact that we’re at war with these terrorists. They no longer use the term ‘war on terror. ’ They have been very slow to react to the whole situation with Maj. [Nidal Malik] Hasan, which was clearly a terrorist act in the name of Islamic terrorism. Gosh, he announced it as such when he did it. He was carrying around business cards saying ‘soldier of Allah,’ ” he said on ABC’s “This Week. ” The decision to try the five Sept. 11 suspects in New York is part of Mr. Obama’s larger push to end detentions at Guantanamo Bay by Jan. 22 - a date that a senior White House adviser acknowledged Sunday may not be met. The facility is holding 215 prisoners. “We may not hit it on the date, but we will close Guantanamo. And we are making good progress toward doing that,” David Axelrod said on CNN’s “State of the Union. ” Meanwhile Sunday, Illinois’ top two Democratic elected officials pushed the maximum-security Thomson Correctional Center, about 150 miles west of Chicago, as a place to detain the terrorist suspects, sparking criticism from local and national Republicans. Gov. Pat Quinn and U. S. Senate Majority Whip Richard J. Durbin said that using the near-empty prison this way would create, directly or indirectly, about 3,000 jobs in the depressed rural area. “We have an opportunity to bring thousands of good-paying jobs to Illinois when we need them the most,” Mr. Durbin told reporters at a news conference in Chicago. “We have an opportunity to bring them to a part of our state that has been struggling, and that’s an opportunity we are not going to miss. ” Federal officials from the Bureau of Prisons and the Pentagon will tour the Illinois facility Monday. Several other facilities, including prisons in Kansas and Michigan, are being considered, sparking local debate about jobs versus security. Rep. Mark Steven Kirk, Illinois Republican and a 2010 Senate candidate, urged the White House in a letter “to put the safety and security of Illinois families first and stop any plan to transfer al Qaeda terrorists to our state. ” Republican gubernatorial candidate Andy McKenna agreed, saying in a statement, “I wholeheartedly oppose Governor Quinn and President Obama’s efforts to move Gitmo detainees to our neighborhoods. ” Mr. Quinn dismissed the concerns, saying the prison could hold detainees safely. “We’re not going to let the fearmongers carry the day,” he said. Many Democratic leaders have been broadly critical of the way in which detainees were treated at the detention center and have pushed for court trials for the prisoners. And Mr. Obama’s promise to close the Guantanamo Bay facility was widely hailed by his political base when he announced it at the start of his term this year. But meeting that promise has proved tough as he and his administration have struggled to decide where to put the prisoners. Calls to hold the detainees on U. S. soil have - much like this most recent announcement - turned into political issues. “This is ideology run wild. We’re going to go back into New York City, the scene of the tragedy on 9/11. We’re now going to rip that wound wide open, and it’s going to stay open for, what, two, three, four years as we go through the circus of a trial in New York City. ” Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, the ranking Republican on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, said on “Face the Nation. ” The defendants “are going to do everything they can to disrupt it and make it a circus” for their Islamist ideology, he said. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said on NBC’s “Meet the Press” that New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and the city’s law enforcement officials “believe that New York City can not only handle this, but that it is appropriate to go forward in the very area where these people launched this horrific attack against us. ” Mr. Axelrod spoke similarly Sunday, telling CNN, “We believe that these folks should be tried in New York City near where their heinous acts were conducted in full view, in our court system, which we believe in. ” Mr. Leahy denied on CBS that civilian trials would be a sign of U. S. weakness, saying instead, “What we’re saying to the world is ‘the U. S. acts out of strength, not out of fear. ’ “We have a judicial system that is the envy of the world. Let’s show the world that we can use that system just as we used it with [Oklahoma City bomber] Timothy McVeigh,” he said. “If somebody murders Americans, they ought to be prosecuted in America and hopefully convicted in America. ” Sen. Jack Reed, Rhode Island Democrat, said, “The people in New York who saw the towers fall” would be the ideal people to judge the Sept. 11 terrorists. He also said military trials would play into Muslim sympathies for holy warriors. “If we try them before military officers, that image of a soldier will be portrayed by the Islamic community. That’s not the image we want,” he said on Fox News.

Warming

Obama’s Radical Global Warming policies turns energy and causes global warming

Bachman 12

John Bachman[Editor for NewsMax]/La. Gov. Jindal: Obama’s ‘Radical Environmental Policy’ Wreaks Havoc on Energy/12 Mar 2012  
<http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/Jindal-Obama-radical-environmental/2012/03/12/id/432219>

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal contends that Republican criticism of the Obama administration’s handling of rising energy costs “lets the president off too easily. ” And President Barack Obama's “radical environmental policy” is one of the main causes for his failed national energy policy, Jindal writes in an Op-Ed in The Wall Street Journal. “This administration willfully ignores rational choices that would lower energy prices and reduce U. S. reliance on foreign energy sources,” The Bayou State Republican writes. Jindal, whose state relies on the oil and natural gas industries, also argues that the reason domestic oil production is higher now than it was in 2003 is because decisions to do so were “made by private companies before he took office. ” Jindal mentions several things President Obama should do to give certainty to the American people “that energy independence, not politics, will drive our nation’s security. ” He makes the following suggestions for Obama: “Opening new fields where there is clear bipartisan local support — along the mid-Atlantic coast, the Eastern Gulf, and in Alaska’s National Wildlife Refuge. ” Sending “ a clear signal that his administration will not shut down the revolutionary hydrocracking technique that is making our nation the world leader in natural gas. ” Reversing “a series of cabinet-level decisions that are at odds with a strategy of affordable domestic energy production. That starts with rebuking Energy Secretary Steven Chu. ” Announcing “that he’s going to reverse his decision on the Keystone XL pipeline. ” Obama needs to “make wholesale changes to his energy policy and independence ahead of zealous adherence to left-wing environmental theory,” Jindal concludes.

Obama careless about environment

Merchant 11

Brian Merchant[Editor for TreeHugger]/Obama Calls for More Offshore Drilling. Again./May 16, 2011  
<http://www.treehugger.com/corporate-responsibility/obama-calls-for-more-offshore-drilling-again.html>

Despite the massive economic and ecological damage wrought by the BP spill, and despite the numerous studies by nonpartisan agencies that show increased drilling won't lower prices at the pump, President Obama has taken the bait and is now joining the GOP in calling for expanded offshore drilling. As you'll recall, the last time the president made such a "compromise" (it was really a concession, as yielding increased drilling to the GOP won Democrats precisely nothing in return), the largest offshore oil disaster in American history erupted a few days later. Of course, most vocal conservative and oil-state 'moderate' pols ignored that little mess and went right on calling for more drilling throughout the spill -- meanwhile, not a single meaningful piece of legislation was ever passed to address the reckless safety culture inherent in the oil industry's drilling practices. What's more, despite all that noise about Obama not drilling enough -- which began pretty much when he took office -- it turns out that the administration was actually pretty oil friendly all along: 2008 saw a spike in domestic oil production from the later Bush years, and 2010 passed levels of drilling not seen since 2003. So, to recap: Obama's policies, from day one, allowed for as much or more drilling than Bush's, and lead to a steady rise in domestic production. Then, in 2010, Obama called for even more drilling, perhaps in a totally misguided show of compromise to entice the GOP to come to the bargaining table on climate legislation. Now, one year and one devastating oil disaster later, Obama is calling yet again to further expand offshore drilling. Of course, this is mostly shallow, cynical politics: Voters get angry when gas prices climb above $4 a gallon, and calling for more drilling is step one in the Idiot's Guide to 'Doing Something' About High Oil Prices. It won't -- analysis after analysis reveals that even expanding drilling by huge amounts will do little to impact prices, at least for years and years. Stripping oil subsidies, as the Democrats want to do, won't have an impact either (which is, in fact, why we should quash them). But it's nonetheless discouraging. Obama has been given a number of opportunities to show true leadership; to use the very visibly disastrous consequences of our reliance on oil to make meaningful calls for ramping up clean energy deployment. And he does mention clean energy here, in the same fleeting, noncommittal way he usually does -- but by pairing it with calls for more oil, it ends up sounding more like the GOP's hollow "All of the Above" energy strategy (read: more oil, gas, and coal). Especially since he hasn't worked to translate the narrative of the spill or high gas prices into cautionary tales. So, once again, we're given an example of the president's hugely unambitious energy strategy -- wherein it's more important to cater to GOP falsehoods than to put the nation on an actual path to cleaner energy. In the process, he's apparently willing to endanger numerous more pristine offshore habitats and the economies that rely on them.

Romney recognizes warming as a serious threat

Samuelsohn 11

DARREN SAMUELSOHN[Senior editor for Politic Pro]/Mitt Romney: No apologies on climate change stance/6/9/11  
http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0611/56580.html

Mitt Romney won't be doing any apology tours on climate change. The early GOP presidential front-runner has broken with his party's conservative ranks to declare global warming a real threat to the planet that merits some sort of action to curb heat-trapping emissions. But the former Massachusetts governor is also quick to trash cap and trade, carbon taxes and other controversial policies that have been kicked around over the last decade in Washington. In a sense, Romney's initial global warming stance sounds a lot like that of former President George W. Bush, who during his two terms reluctantly accepted climate science while fighting Democrats and environmentalists over what to do about it. "He realizes it's an issue. It's an issue that's real,” said Jeff Holmstead, a former Bush EPA air pollution official and Romney supporter who doesn't have an official role in the campaign. “But I think he's not convinced that the ideas that the environmental community are putting forward is a sensible way of dealing with it. " Until now, Romney has had a relatively easy time in dealing with the politics of climate change, in no small part because conservatives have been busy pummeling his record in Massachusetts on health care. And when global warming did come up, the right was preoccupied with former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who has repeatedly apologized over his past support for carbon caps and now calls it a "clunker" in his record, and Newt Gingrich, the former House speaker who three years ago cut a TV commercial with Nancy Pelosi where they pledge to work together on the climate issue. Romney's critics got their opening last Friday when he responded to a climate question during a town hall meeting in Manchester, N. H. "I don't speak for the scientific community, of course, but I believe the world is getting warmer, and I believe that humans have contributed to that," Romney said. "I can't prove that, but I believe based on what I read that the world is getting warmer. "No. 2, I believe that humans contribute to that," he continued. "I don't know how much our contribution is to that, because I know there's been periods of greater heat and warmth than in the past, but I believe we contribute to that. And so I think it's important for us to reduce our emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases that may well be significant contributors to the climate change and global warming that you're seeing. "

Romney sees warming as a real and existential threat

Viser 11

Matt Viser[Editor for the Boston Globe]/Romney reaffirms stance that global warming is real: Bucking skeptics, he urges changes/04 June 2011/Romney reaffirms stance that global warming is real: Bucking skeptics, he urges changes  
http://search.proquest.com/docview/870119686

MANCHESTER, N. H. - In the first town hall of his freshly announced presidential campaign, Mitt Romney yesterday reaffirmed his view that global warming is occurring and that humans are contributing to it, a position that has been rejected in recent years by many Republicans as the issue has taken on a greater partisan tinge. After opening remarks in which Romney blamed President Obama's policies for the new anemic hiring figures, the first questioner from the floor - a software developer from Hanover, N. H. - wanted to know the candidate's position on climate change, an issue his opponents have generally avoided so far. "I don't speak for the scientific community, of course," Romney said. "But I believe the world's getting warmer. I can't prove that, but I believe based on what I read that the world is getting warmer. And number two, I believe that humans contribute to that . . . so I think it's important for us to reduce our emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases that may well be significant contributors to the climate change and the global warming that you're seeing. " Romney has made clear that he opposes cap-and-trade, a system that would combat climate change by limiting total emissions and forcing polluters to pay for the greenhouse gases they produce. Instead, he said yesterday, he wants to wean the country from its dependence on foreign oil by seeking alternative sources of energy, and he said Americans should do more to conserve. "I'm told that we use almost twice as much energy per person as does a European, and more like three times as much energy as does a Japanese citizen," Romney said. "We can do a lot better. " If elected, he said he would pursue more oil drilling, as well as natural gas and nuclear energy. "We can't just say it's going to be all solar and wind," he said. "I love solar and wind, but they don't drive cars. And we're not going to all drive Chevy Volts. " Romney's comments were in line with his observations about global warming in his 2010 book, "No Apology. " In it, he wrote: "I believe that climate change is occurring - the reduction in the size of global ice caps is hard to ignore. I also believe that human activity is a contributing factor. " .

Obama fails on climate change, not enough support within government

[Europolitics Environment](javascript:void(0)) 10

Europolitics Environment[Newsletter monitoring European Union environmental and consumer policies, research and new technology. Previously known as Europe Information Environment and before that as Europe Environment]/CLIMATE CHANGE : OBAMA'S FAILURE TO DELIVER DISAPPOINTS/1 December 2010  
http://ry2ue4ek7d.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx\_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx\_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-8&rfr\_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft\_val\_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=CLIMATE+CHANGE+%3A+OBAMA%27S+FAILURE+TO+DELIVER+DISAPPOINTS&rft.jtitle=European+Report&rft.date=2010-11-19&rft.pub=Europolitics&rft.issn=1021-4267&rft.spage=282641&rft.externalDBID=n%2Fa&rft.externalDocID=242395007

Climate change has been penciled into the agenda of the EU-US summit. However, the discussion will not be a particularly comfortable one. Given how in tune President Barack Obama is with Europe on the need to take action to fight climate change, it seems odd that this issue is becoming a source of tension, not harmony, in relations. The conundrum can be boiled down to one word: delivery. President Obama says he wants to sign onto a new United Nations climate treaty and that he supports introducing a US-wide cap and trade' scheme to cut US greenhouse gas emissions by 17% by 2020 compared to 2005 levels. The problem is that it is now painfully obvious that Obama will not be able to deliver on that promise. For the past two years, he has had solid Democrat majorities in both legislative chambers, the House and Senate, and yet has singularly failed to push through legislation that caps US greenhouse gas emissions. The chances of him doing so in the next two years look slim to none since the Republicans, who overwhelmingly oppose climate legislation, retook control of the House in November's mid-term elections and reduced the Democrats' majority in the Senate. So what progress can the EU hope for. Thanks to a 2007 US Supreme Court ruling, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the legal authority to regulate climate change, even without Congress passing new legislation. The EPA can adopt piecemeal regulations in areas like fuel efficiency. Not ideal - and not even certain as some in Congress are trying to remove the EPA's authority - but better than nothing. Meanwhile, the EU will look more toward eco-friendly individual US states like California forleadership and less toward Washington.

Obama Weak on Climate Change

Edmonton Journal 11

Edmonton Journal[Popular Washington newspaper]/Obama weak on climate change: Gore/23 June 2011  
http://search.proquest.com/docview/873647764

Former U. S. vice-president and environmental activist Al Gore has accused President Barack Obama of failing to lead on climate change, warning that the very survival of civilization was at stake. In an impassioned essay in Rolling Stone magazine, Gore sympathized with the challenges facing his fellow Democrat and lambasted big business, political donors, the media and Congress for their role on climate change. Gore credited the administration with moving the United States "slightly" forward on the issue, but said Obama "has thus far failed to use the bully pulpit to make the case for bold action on climate change. " "President Obama has never presented to the American people the magnitude of the climate crisis," wrote Gore, who narrowly lost the 2000 presidential election and won the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize for his advocacy on climate change. "Here is the core of it: we are destroying the climate balance that is essential to the survival of our civilization. This is not a distant or abstract threat; it is happening now," Gore wrote. "The United States is the only nation that can rally a global effort to save our future. And the president is the only person who can rally the United States," he said. Gore lashed out at those who ask if human made climate change is real, noting that nine of the hottest years in recorded history were in the last 13 years. He pointed to extreme events including floods that displaced 20 million people last year in Pakistan, and the major fires or drought in places ranging from Russia to Texas to Australia. "It is not uncommon for the nightly newscast to resemble a nature hike through the Book of Revelation," Gore said. "Yet most of the news media completely ignore how such events are connected to the climate crisis, " he said. In turn, the disappointment from Copenhagen lowered momentum in the international climate talks.

\*Impact Defense\*

Iran Strikes

No retaliation, war, or regional conflict

Bronner, ‘12(Ethan, NYT staff reporter, 1/26/12, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/27/world/middleeast/israelis-see-irans-threats-of-retaliation-as-bluff.html?_r=1&hp>)

JERUSALEM — Israeli intelligence estimates, backed by academic studies, have cast doubt on the widespread assumption that a military strike on Iranian nuclear facilities would set off a catastrophic set of events like a regional conflagration, widespread acts of terrorism and sky-high oil prices. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said he thinks Iranian citizens will welcome an attack. The estimates, which have been largely adopted by the country’s most senior officials, conclude that the threat of Iranian retaliation is partly bluff. They are playing an important role in Israel’s calculation of whether ultimately to strike Iran, or to try to persuade the United States to do so, even as Tehran faces tough new economic sanctions from the West. “A war is no picnic,” Defense Minister Ehud Barak told Israel Radio in November. But if Israel feels itself forced into action, the retaliation would be bearable, he said. “There will not be 100,000 dead or 10,000 dead or 1,000 dead. The state of Israel will not be destroyed.” The Iranian government, which says its nuclear program is for civilian purposes, has threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz — through which 90 percent of gulf oil passes — and if attacked, to retaliate with all its military might. But Israeli assessments reject the threats as overblown. Mr. Barak and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have embraced those analyses as they focus on how to stop what they view as Iran’s determination to obtain nuclear weapons. No issue in Israel is more fraught than the debate over the wisdom and feasibility of a strike on Iran. Some argue that even a successful military strike would do no more than delay any Iranian nuclear weapons program, and perhaps increase Iran’s determination to acquire the capability. Security officials are increasingly kept from journalists or barred from discussing Iran. Much of the public talk is as much message delivery as actual policy. With the region in turmoil and the Europeans having agreed to harsh sanctions against Iran, strategic assessments can quickly lose their currency. “They’re like cartons of milk — check the sell-by date,” one senior official said. But conversations with eight current and recent top Israeli security officials suggested several things: since Israel has been demanding the new sanctions, including an oil embargo and seizure of Iran’s Central Bank assets, it will give the sanctions some months to work; the sanctions are viewed here as probably insufficient; a military attack remains a very real option; and postattack situations are considered less perilous than one in which Iran has nuclear weapons. “Take every scenario of confrontation and attack by Iran and its proxies and then ask yourself, ‘How would it look if they had a nuclear weapon?’ ” a senior official said. “In nearly every scenario, the situation looks worse.” The core analysis is based on an examination of Iran’s interests and abilities, along with recent threats and conflicts. Before the United States-led war against Iraq in 1991, Saddam Hussein vowed that if attacked he would “burn half of Israel.” He fired about 40 Scud missiles at Israel, which did limited damage. Similar fears of retaliation were voiced before the Iraq war in 2003 and in 2006, during Israel’s war against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. In the latter, about 4,000 rockets were fired at Israel by Hezbollah, most of them causing limited harm. “If you put all those retaliations together and add in the terrorism of recent years, we are probably facing some multiple of that,” a retired official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity, citing an internal study. “I’m not saying Iran will not react. But it will be nothing like London during World War II.” A paper soon to be published by the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University, written by Amos Yadlin, former chief of military intelligence, and Yoel Guzansky, who headed the Iran desk at Israel’s National Security Council until 2009, argues that the Iranian threat to close the Strait of Hormuz is largely a bluff. The paper contends that, despite the risks of Iranian provocation, Iran would not be able to close the waterway for any length of time and that it would not be in Iran’s own interest to do so. “If others are closing the taps on you, why close your own?” Mr. Guzansky said. Sealing the strait could also lead to all-out confrontation with the United States, something the authors say they believe Iran wants to avoid. A separate paper just published by the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies says that the fear of missile warfare against Israel is exaggerated since the missiles would be able to inflict only limited physical damage. Most Israeli analysts, like most officials and analysts abroad, reject these arguments. They say that Iran has been preparing for an attack for some years and will react robustly, as will its allies, Hezbollah and Hamas. Moreover, they say, an attack will at best delay the Iranian program by a couple of years and lead Tehran to redouble its efforts to build such a weapon. But Mr. Barak and Mr. Netanyahu believe that those concerns will pale if Iran does get a nuclear weapon. This was a point made in a public forum in Jerusalem this week by Maj. Gen. Amir Eshel, chief of the army’s planning division. Speaking of the former leaders of Libya and Iraq, he said, “Who would have dared deal with Qaddafi or Saddam Hussein if they had a nuclear capability? No way.”

Bush Tax Cuts

GOP controlled congress guarantees survival of Bush tax cuts

Lambro, ’12(Donald, chief political correspondent for The Washington Times , 2/22/12, <http://townhall.com/columnists/donaldlambro/2012/02/22/republicans_will_fight_hard_to_make_bush_tax_cuts_permanent/page/full/>)

Obama wants to keep the former president's middle class tax cuts, but significantly raise taxes on investors, corporations and higher-income working couples earning more than $250,000. However, that's not going to happen as long as Republicans control the House, where all tax revenue bills must originate. This raises fears of a post-election stalemate in a lame-duck Congress that would let the tax cuts expire in 2013 when the unemployment rate is expected to still be above 8 percent. There are those who continue to believe a deal will be made in the 11th hour before this Congress ends. "I see the framework of a big agreement in the lame-duck (session) to finally put this divisiveness behind us," Rep. Richard E. Neal, D-Mass., a senior member of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee, told The Washington Post last week. "Obama's going to have great leverage to get something done." Yeah, like after the 2010 election, when his party got a shellacking in Congress, the economy showed no signs of improvement, and he reluctantly agreed to a two-year extension of the Bush tax cuts. No one can predict what will happen in November, but the likely parameters of the election are beginning to come into sharper focus. Despite polls showing that Congress' approval rating has sunk to a record low of 10 percent, surveys also show a strong majority of voters approve of their own representative and senators. With the House firmly in the grip of the Republicans, by 242 to 192 with one vacancy, it appears highly unlikely the GOP will lose control in November. The Democrats' Senate majority is much more tenuous. Republicans need three more seats to effectively take control if they win the White House, with the vice president breaking tie votes. But if Obama wins a second term, the GOP would need just four more seats, which top forecasters say is easily within their reach. "With five Democratic seats at greatest risk -- Nebraska, North Dakota, Missouri, Montana and Virginia -- and another five -- New Mexico, Ohio, Florida, Wisconsin and Hawaii -- the 2012 Senate landscape is stacked in the Republicans' favor," says Stuart Rothenberg in his latest race-by-race analysis. What this means is that Republicans will be in control of Congress, and if Obama were to win a second term -- which very much depends on who the GOP nominee is -- he can kiss any tax increases goodbye. In that situation, with the Republicans ruling Capitol Hill, he will likely be sent legislation in January to make the tax cuts permanent, with additional tax reforms to boost growth and new job creation. The political pressure on him would be intense to sign the bill to get the economy going again. But what if he loses the election and refuses to extend the Bush tax cuts in a bitter battle in the divided lame-duck Congress, allowing them to expire? That seems unlikely because he would be hurting the very segment of the electorate he says he most wants to protect: the middle class. In that situation, even if he held his ground this time and let the tax cuts die, it would be a futile act of political retribution that would gain him nothing but public enmity. The Republican majority would send legislation to the new president soon after the new Congress was sworn in and restore the tax cuts retroactively, with every assurance it would be immediately signed into law.

CTBT

CTBT would collapse deterrence

Monroe, Former Director of the Defense Nuclear Agency, 07 (Robert, *Washington Times*, Nuclear Testing Realities, December 4, Questia)

Reality No. 1 is that U.S. ratification of the CTBT would do unbelievably grave damage to U.S. national security. Nuclear weapons exist - tens of thousands of them. More states now have them than ever before**,** and they're being improved. A whole world of fourth- generation nuclear weapons is just around the corner. More than half the world's population lives in states that have nuclear weapons, and other states and terrorist organizations are striving to acquire them, and use them. The U.S. will continue to face serious nuclear weapon threats for generations to come. Our very lives will depend upon our ability to develop new nuclear weapon strategies and advanced nuclear weapons to deter these threats. Our survival will depend on our nuclear technology being superior to that of anyone else in the world, decade after decade. This will certainly require testing, which the CTBT would deny.

Causes multiple scenarios for nuclear war

Spring**,** Heritage Foundation Foreign Policy Studies Research Fellow in National Security Policy 07

(Baker, “Ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: A Bad Idea in 1999, a Worse Idea Today,” June 29, http://www.heritage.org/Research/HomelandDefense/wm1533.cfm)

\* The nuclear threat is expanding. Established nuclear powers (Russia and China), new de facto nuclear powers (India, North Korea, and Pakistan), and aspiring nuclear powers (Iran) are moving forward in establishing or expanding their nuclear capabilities. Russian leaders continue to believe that a modernized nuclear arsenal plays a central role in their national strategy.[9] China is expanding the number of nuclear-capable missiles in its arsenal.[10] India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests in 1998, and North Korea conducted one in 2006. Iran continues to defy multilateral demands that it freeze its program for enriching uranium. Without the option to conduct tests in the future, the United States will see lesser powers equal and eventually surpass its nuclear capabilities.

\* Nuclear proliferation is creating the need for a modern U.S. nuclear arsenal that is suited to maintaining stability in a multi-polar setting. The U.S. nuclear arsenal is suited for the bipolar setting of the Cold War; it is not designed to address nuclear multi-polarity created by proliferation. Indeed, the Cold War nuclear deterrence policy and the arsenal it created are likely undermining nuclear stability and increasing the prospect for the use of nuclear weapons.[11] A permanent ban on nuclear testing will bar the United States from developing a new nuclear-deterrent posture. The new arsenal should include nuclear weapons, along with conventional and defensive weapons, that support a damage limitation strategy. Such a strategy aims to prevent or limit the damage from attacks by enemies armed with weapons of mass destruction.

Testing’s key

Medalia 2008, Specialist in National Defense in the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division at the Congressional Research Service, 8

(Jonathan, 3-12-8, “Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments,” March 12, [www.fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/RL34394.pdf](http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/RL34394.pdf), accessed 7-12-09)

CTBT opponents argue that the ability to maintain existing weapons without testing through LEP, even if it can be done, misses the point. Deterrence, as they see it, requires continuing to hold at risk assets that enemy leaders prize. However, they argue, current nuclear warheads have many limitations. ! Current warheads, which were designed during the Cold War, were given high yield to destroy hard targets like Soviet missile silos. But that yield, in this view, could cause the United States to refrain from using these weapons out of concern for inflicting massive civilian casualties in the target area and beyond. As a 2006 Defense Science Board study stated, “weapons that are not seen as useable and effective by potential adversaries cannot be an effective, reliable deterrent.”54 ! Current warheads, if exploded near the Earth’s surface, would leave much residual radiation that would contaminate large areas and kill many people, barring the United States from using them, the treaty’s opponents believe. ! The radiation output of current warheads, they argue, differs from that needed for such missions as destroying chemical or biological agents or generating electromagnetic pulse. ! Current warheads cannot destroy key targets that enemy leaders would value highly, such as hardened and deeply buried bunkers where weapons of mass destruction, key communications nodes, or the leaders themselves might hide. WR1 shares these limitations. For example, it would have about the same yield as the W76 it would replace, and would use a reentry body55 that cannot penetrate the ground. CTBT opponents see deterrence as dynamic, so that it continues to require new military capabilities that can only be embodied in new weapons that could only be developed with nuclear testing. The Threat Reduction Advisory Committee, an expert panel advising DOD, stated that one reason to test would be “[t]o support certification — prior to quantity production — of new nuclear weapons, should the decision be made that a new weapon design requiring testing is the only option to achieve a needed capability.” It provided examples of weapons requiring “tailored physics package design for nuclear effects for new missions,” including:

Other nations will pursue nuclear weapons even if we disarm—maintaining deterrence key to check back WMD release

Chyba, Professor of Astrophyics and International Affairs at Princeton University and Served on the National Security Council Staff in the Clinton Administration, 08

(Christopher, “Time for a Systematic Analysis: U.S. Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Proliferation, December, <http://armscontrol.org/act/2008_12/Chyba#authbio>)

Despite this, skeptics have been quick to insist that disarmament advocates have failed to establish a causal connection between the pursuit of disarmament and the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation. In November 2007, The Wall Street Journal published a reply by former Defense Secretary Harold Brown and former Deputy Defense Secretary John Deutch titled "The Nuclear Disarmament Fantasy," in which the authors declared that "[a] nation that wishes to acquire nuclear weapons believes these weapons will improve its security. The declaration by the U.S. that it will move to eliminate nuclear weapons in a distant future will have no direct effect on changing this calculus. Indeed, nothing that the U.S. does to its nuclear posture will directly influence such a nation's (let alone a terrorist group's) calculus." Such steps, they assert, would also not "convince North Korea, Iran, India, Pakistan or Israel to give up their nuclear weapons programs." [8]Brown and Deutch are hardly alone. A 2004 report to Congress by the secretaries of state, defense, and energy argued that "rogue state proliferation...marches forward independently of the U.S. nuclear program" and that "North Korea and Iran appear to seek [weapons of mass destruction (WMD)] in response to their own perceived security needs, in part, to deter the United States from taking steps to protect itself and allies in each of these regions. In this regard, their incentives to acquire WMD may be shaped more by U.S. advanced conventional weapons capabilities and our demonstrated will to employ them to great effect."[9] Former Bush administration Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control Stephen Rademaker agrees that U.S. nuclear weapons policy is irrelevant to Iranian or North Korean nuclear decision-making, which he argues is driven by hunger for power and prestige. Nevertheless, he asserts, "[s]o long as there is one nuclear weapon remaining in the U.S. inventory, [arms control activists] will point to this as the root cause of nuclear proliferation."[10]A group of 11 members of the Bush administration's International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) to the Department of State have argued that a key role of U.S. nuclear weapons policy is to help prevent nuclear proliferation by providing a "nuclear umbrella" to countries-31, by the authors' count-that might otherwise be tempted to develop their own nuclear weapons.[11] Similarly, the full ISAB claims that "[t]here is clear evidence in diplomatic channels that U.S. assurances to include the nuclear umbrella have been, and continue to be, the single most important reason many allies have forsworn nuclear weapons."[12] If this were the most salient nonproliferation role for U.S. nuclear weapons, careless moves toward disarmament might in fact drive proliferation rather than curtail it.

Warming

Alternate causality—China

Wortzel ‘8 (Former Director of Asian Studies at the Heritage Foundation (Larry et al, Report to Congress of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Nov, p.)

China argues that developed countries are the primary cause of climate change and therefore places primary responsibility for re ducing emissions on those countries rather than on China and other developing countries, a concept identified as ‘‘common but differentiated responsibilities.’’ 190 The United States *is* the largest historical greenhouse gas emitter and far exceeds China in emissions per capita.191 However, in the past two years China has overtaken the United States in total production of greenhouse gas emissions. All projections indicate that, in the absence of major energy consumption changes in China, both China’s aggregate emissions and its share of global emissions will continue to increase dramatically for the foreseeable future. The consequent reality is that it will be impossible for the international community to resolve the climate change problem by sufficiently reducing emissions unless China contributes to the effort. The solution also is unachievable unless the United States—as currently the world’s second largest emitter and the largest historical emitter of greenhouse gases— makes a substantial contribution. Any efforts to address this problem will require global participation by developed and developing nations.

Doesn’t cause extinction

Stampf ’7

[Olaf, Staff Writer for Spiegel Online, May 5, “Not the End of the World as we Know it,” http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,481684,00.html]

But even this moderate warming would likely have far fewer apocalyptic consequences than many a prophet of doom would have us believe. For one thing, the more paleontologists and geologists study the history of the earth's climate, the more clearly do they recognize just how much temperatures have fluctuated in both directions in the past. Even major fluctuations appear to be completely natural phenomena. Additionally, some environmentalists doubt that the large-scale extinction of animals and plants some have predicted will in fact come about. "A warmer climate helps promote species diversity," says Munich zoologist Josef Reichholf. Also, more detailed simulations have allowed climate researchers to paint a considerably less dire picture than in the past -- gone is the talk of giant storms, the melting of the Antarctic ice shield and flooding of major cities. Improved regionalized models also show that climate change can bring not only drawbacks, but also significant benefits, especially in northern regions of the world where it has been too cold and uncomfortable for human activity to flourish in the past. However it is still a taboo to express this idea in public. For example, countries like Canada and Russia can look forward to better harvests and a blossoming tourism industry, and the only distress the Scandinavians will face is the guilty conscience that could come with benefiting from global warming.

US/Russian relations

US/Russian relations are resilient

Ria Novisti, 11/21/2011 (‘Magnitsky List’ Won’t Undermine Russia-US relations, Lavrov says, p. http://en.rian.ru/russia/20111021/167961475.html)

The so-called Magnitsky list that bars entry to the U.S. for Russian officials allegedly involved in the death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, will not undermine relations between the two countries, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Friday. The relations established by the Obama and Medvedev administrations are strong enough to withstand "various attempts to ruin them," Lavrov told three Russian radio stations. “I am sure, that the 'Magnitsky list'… won’t undermine the foundations of Russia-US relations," he said. Magnitsky was arrested and jailed without trial in November 2008, and died in police custody a year later after being denied medical care. The 37-year-old lawyer was working for Hermitage Capital Management, a British-based investment fund, when he accused tax and police officials of carrying out a $230-million tax scam. In July 2011, the U.S. State Department banned visas for about 60 Russian officials over their involvement in the detention and death of Magnitsky. To some extent, the introduction of this list is an attempt to “interfere into Russia’s domestic affairs” and “undermine the political line, held by President Obama,” Lavrov continued. “Perhaps, the authors of this list are more interested in the U.S. pre-election contest than in the essence of the problem.”

No US-Russia war

Thomas Graham, former senior advisor on Russia on the U.S. National Security Council staff, July-September 07, “The Dialectics of Strength and Weakness”, Russia in Global Affairs, http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/20/1129.html, umn-rks

An astute historian of Russia, Martin Malia, wrote several years ago that “Russia has at different times been demonized or divinized by Western opinion less because of her real role in Europe than because of the fears and frustrations, or hopes and aspirations, generated within European society by its own domestic problems.” Such is the case today. To be sure, mounting Western concerns about Russia are a consequence of Russian policies that appear to undermine Western interests, but they are also a reflection of declining confidence in our own abilities and the efficacy of our own policies. Ironically, this growing fear and distrust of Russia come at a time when Russia is arguably less threatening to the West, and the United States in particular, than it has been at any time since the end of the Second World War. Russia does not champion a totalitarian ideology intent on our destruction, its military poses no threat to sweep across Europe, its economic growth depends on constructive commercial relations with Europe, and its strategic arsenal – while still capable of annihilating the United States – is under more reliable control than it has been in the past fifteen years and the threat of a strategic strike approaches zero probability. Political gridlock in key Western countries, however, precludes the creativity, risk-taking, and subtlety needed to advance our interests on issues over which we are at odds with Russia while laying the basis for more constructive long-term relations with Russia.

Russia won’t break relations

Eugene B. Rumer, senior fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University (NDU) and Celeste A. Wallander, director of the Russia and Eurasia Program and the Trustee Fellow at CSIS, Winter 03/04, “Russia: Power in Weakness?”, The Washington Quarterly, http://www.twq.com/04winter/docs/04winter\_rumer.pdf

Given Russia’s geopolitical predicament, it is difficult to imagine how a rational, even selfish, assessment of Russian interests would lead Russia to conclude that it would be best served by undermining the United States. The fallout from a weaker and diminished U.S. role in global security affairs would carry with it a number of serious challenges to Russian security interests, ranging from a strong Russian stake in partnership with the United States on geopolitically balancing China to the immediate threat to Russian security in the event of U.S. abandonment of its security assistance to Central Asia to the prospect of Iran armed with nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles with Moscow well within range. Thus, although Russia apparently has a strong interest in making clear to the United States that it is not to be taken for granted and that its interests and sensitivities are not to be brushed aside, Russia has no compelling rational interest in undermining or geopolitically balancing the United States’ international position.

Deterrence prevents conflict.

Admiral Stansfield Turner, former director of the CIA, Winter/Spring 2002, The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, 26 Fletcher F. World Aff. 115, p. Lexis

There are, of course, other centrals question to be considered: Would Russian psychology differ from American and would Russian society be willing to accept large numbers of nuclear detonations on their soil in order to perpetrate a nuclear war against the United States? These are difficult questions to answer. The more pertinent concern, however, is that this is an issue of life or death. No head of state could contemplate plunging the world into nuclear conflict without considering both the mortal threat to his or her citizens, and also the likelihood of his or her own death, underground shelters notwithstanding. The presumption that heads of state prefer to live than to die gives us one benchmark. Another is the Cuban missile crisis, in which both Leonid Khruschev and President Kennedy quite visibly backed away from the prospect of very limited nuclear war. Finally, Russia’s economy, being about the size of Belgium’s, is so small that its leaders would be well aware that recovery, even from a small nuclear attack, would be a very lengthy process. In terms of nuclear detonation threats, the United States must consider Russian deterrence as very close to its own.