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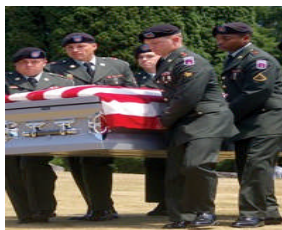
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## Obama Escalates Afghanistan Quagmire

By Patrick Krey

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It could be argued that the single biggest contributor to President Barack Obama's election victory was voter dissatisfaction with former President Bush's [neoconservative](#) warmongering foreign policy (which was embraced by Republican presidential candidate John McCain). Ironically, since taking office, Obama has turned out to be [eerily similar](#) in the warmongering department.



One of Obama's first foreign policy decisions as the commander-in-chief was to copy Bush's Iraq troop "surge" with a surge of his own in Afghanistan. The U.S. troop presence has [drastically increased](#) from 32,000 at the start of 2009 to about 57,000 presently with an anticipated cap around the 68,000 mark (which would more than double the U.S. commitment to the region). Like the salesman on a late-night infomercial typically proclaims, "But wait — there's more!" Defense Secretary Robert Gates announced that the number of boots on the ground could climb even beyond the 68,000 number. In a question and answer session at Fort Drum, Gates [said](#) that what U.S. General Stanley McChrystal, who was recently appointed as the new commander of NATO, reports back to him could influence the decision to send even more troops to war. McChrystal is preparing a classified report for the Defense Secretary on Afghanistan according to [CNN](#).

McChrystal is expected to complete a classified report for Gates by the end of this month, assessing where the war stands, and what needs to be done. He will tell Gates whether he needs more U.S. troops to fight the escalating conflict, according to a senior

U.S. military official.... The review is also expected to recommend that the number of Afghan troops be increased beyond the goal of 134,000, other military sources said.

McChrystal is already seeking to increase troop levels there by [pleading](#) with the British to send more troops. McChrystal also stated that the conflict shows no sign of coming to a near halt. "It will go on until we achieve the progress we want to achieve.... It won't be short." The British casualties in Afghanistan recently just climbed above the number [of those who died](#) in the Iraq conflict. Things continue to deteriorate in the region where attacks are up [70 percent over last year](#). Unlike in America where the marital woes of the stars of *Jon & Kate Plus Eight* [dominate the headlines](#), in the U.K., the [rising death toll](#) and grim analysis of prospects for success have generated controversy and debate over British participation in the war. Such a dialogue has alarmed the Obama administration, which fears the same might happen in the United States, according to [the Financial Times](#).

Britain's increasingly heated debate about its role in Afghanistan has sparked concern in Washington about the sustainability of the military strategy and the US public's own willingness to commit troops for the long term, senior officials and analysts say.... A senior US official told the *Financial Times* that there was "some level of anxiety" within Barack Obama's administration about the UK debate. "It's hard to see our most capable partner struggling in this debate.... If we are going to have to backfill European countries that decide to leave, could we sustain that with US public opinion? That's an open question."

Unfortunately for our brave men and women in the U.S. armed forces, the current administration seems more concerned with public opinion polls than preventing U.S. casualties in an unnecessary and unconstitutional nation building project. The [Associated Press](#) reports that Obama's surge is already proving very deadly.

July is shaping up as the deadliest month of the Afghan war for U.S.-led international forces, with the number killed already matching the highest full-month toll of the nearly eight-year conflict.... As of Wednesday, at least 46 international troops, including 24 Americans, had been killed in Afghanistan this month.... That matches the tolls for the two previous deadliest months — June and August of 2008. *The rate of deaths in July — about three a day — is approaching some of the highest levels of the Iraq war.* [Emphasis added.]

One has to wonder how long it will take the American public to wake up from their mainstream media-induced slumber to recognize that the man sold to them as a peace candidate is turning out to be just as bad of a warmonger, if not worse, than his much-maligned predecessor.