

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپائی

Antiwar.com

Say Nyet to Afghanistan

By [Jeff Huber](#)

November 12, 2009

[Mikhail Gorbachev](#), head of state of the Soviet Union when it withdrew from Afghanistan, has two words for Barack Obama: get out. Gorbachev, now 78, said in an interview in Berlin that he sees no chance of American success in Afghanistan even with more troops. "I believe that there is no prospect of a military solution," he said. The U.S. "should be preparing the ground for withdrawal rather than additional troops."

Gorbachev noted there was little chance that Obama would take his advice. Maybe yes, maybe no.

ABC's [George Stephanopoulos](#) offers a ray of hope. He says Obama is looking for "off ramps" out of Afghanistan, that Obama's not satisfied with what he's heard so far from his advisers, and well he should not be.

In early 2009 when Gen. Mark McKiernan was still in charge of Afghanistan, then brand new President Obama nixed a full bore surge of troops there because McKiernan couldn't say what he'd do with them and the Joint Chiefs of Staff couldn't describe an end state for the conflict. We still don't have a coherent strategy for Afghanistan and there's no end state in sight. If we continue to pour blood and money into Afghanistan, we'll be there for at least another 20 years, and if we ever leave, we'll have done more harm than good. We're just recruiting terrorists.

Obama would do well to sack most of his senior advisers. Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, Adm. Mike Mullen, is as full of gas as the Goodyear Blimp. He has said, "If we don't get a level of legitimacy and governance [in Afghanistan], then all the troops in the world aren't going to make any difference." But he's also part of the triumvirate that includes Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton who want Obama to send

[30,000 or more additional troops](#) to Afghanistan. We won't get legitimacy and governance in Afghanistan. Hamid Karzai and his [family](#) are among the biggest crooks on the planet, and the CIA has been funding them. And we're stuck with them.

Pakistan is controlled by its military and its Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI). ISI has ties to all of the [terrorist groups](#) in the region, according to Pakistan's former military leader Pervez Musharraf. Maybe that give some credence to reports that [Hillary Clinton](#) has taken to dealing directly with Pakistan's military and the ISI.

But why should we even be bothering with these people? They're not worth the trouble.

Any assertion that we're in Af-Pak because of terrorism, or 9/11, is a crock of horse mustard. We're not even sure whom we're fighting there.

There are probably fewer than 100 [al-Qaeda](#) fighters in Afghanistan, and less than 300 of them in the tribal areas of Pakistan. We and our NATO coolies already have more than 100,000 troops in the theater. The Taliban, who aren't a threat to our national security, number at best around [25,000](#). We already have a force advantage — when we count Afghan [security forces](#), of 12 to one. If we give Stan McChrystal the U.S. troops he wants, and plus up Afghan forces to 400,000 as he projects, we'll end up with an astronomical numeric advantage. And it won't do a bit of good.

We're experiencing the kind of madness C.S. Forester described in [The General](#), a novel of World War I that notes how career British military officers drove their country to mindless slaughter of its youth and how mindless and spineless politicians let them get away with it. Forester is the one who compared the senseless trench warfare of the Great War to a group of dimwits haplessly trying to pull a screw out of the floor with a hammer claw, never imagining they could accomplish the task easily with a screwdriver.

Today's American generals figure they can keep their wars going as long as they keep the friendly casualties low. They know, at some level, that the wars they're in are unwinnable. But they don't want to lose them, and as long as they can keep them going they won't lose. That's the crux of the [Long War](#) strategy, which isn't so much a strategy as it is a theology, or an ideology, or something akin to voodoo.

The dudes behind the Long War — the top tier of which includes Gen. David Petraeus and Adm. Mike Mullen — aren't interested in defending America. They're interested in preserving the military-industrial-congressional complex, and the trillion-plus dollar annual bite it takes out of the federal budget. ([Plausible estimates](#) place our military spending at almost \$1.5 trillion, 54 percent of annual federal government spending.)

The latest media swag, from the increasingly war-friendly [Washington Post](#), says that "Military planners will present President Obama with several options for how to proceed in Afghanistan on Wednesday afternoon that at a minimum would send 20,000 additional U.S. troops."

How tragic. 20,000 troops won't make a bit of difference in that conflict. It will just put 20,000 more American kids in harm's way for no purpose. We [committed](#) a half-million troops to Vietnam and they didn't to a bit of good there.

Gorbachev is right. We should be preparing to haul buns out of Afghanistan, not getting stuck further in the crack than we already are.

In a Veterans' Day speech, Obama said, "As long as I am Commander in Chief, I am going to do right by [its service members]. American will not let you down, we will take care of our own."

If Obama is serious about that promise, he'll follow Gorbachev's advice, not the hawkish screech chorus of his generals and their supporters in Congress and the press. Obama met today with his national security team for the [eighth time](#) for another skull dig, possibly the last one until he announces what he's going to do about Af-Pak.

If Obama really wants out of Afghanistan, he doesn't need an off ramp. He just needs to pull off the road his generals and the hawks in Congress want him to take.

Just say *nyet*, Mr. President. Pull the plug on this misadventure.

[Karl Eikenberry](#), U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan and former general in command of forces in the country, has warned Obama against sending additional troops as well.

The good news: Obama has [rejected](#) the four options that his national security team has presented him. It's sounding more every day like he's come to his senses, and understands Afghanistan is not a "war of necessity," and wants a way out.

As Seymour Hersh told Rachel Maddow on MSNBC Wednesday night, Obama may be putting his foot down. Let's hope so. It's about time.