

Jake Towne – Afghanistan War Plank

“All Warfare is Deception... There has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited.”

- Sun Tzu, circa 250 BC

Summary: I will not approve spending to extend this unconstitutional war of aggression against Afghanistan and Pakistan. As Congressman, I will drive for a rapid immediate and orderly withdrawal from Afghanistan and redeployment to protect America's sieve-like borders. I support increasing the reward for the capture of Osama Bin Laden forty times from \$27 million to over \$1 billion. I support issuing constitutional letters of marque to bring indicted terrorists to justice in a court of law.

To support this stance, I offer the following four key points: First, elected officials must begin behaving like the United States is a nation of laws, not a collection of rogues who delegate their gravest responsibility and immaturely fail to follow the supreme law of the land and declare war. Second, America's historical foreign policy actions in Afghanistan and Pakistan must be understood, which contain the true reasons why terrorists attacked the United States in 2001. Third, a sober look at the eco-politics of the area, such as opiates and oil pipelines, must be taken. Lastly, we should contain the problem by securing our borders, and with all of the economic unrest, now is no time to be nation-building and quartering troops in foreign lands.

The Problem of Osama Bin Laden

“The Congress shall have Power... to declare War [and] grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal.”

-The Constitution of the United States

When America began bombing Afghanistan in November 2001 and expanded the “War of Terror” by commencing daily bombing of Pakistani villages in September 2008, both assaults were committed against sovereign states without a declaration of war, which is a constitutional requirement. The key justification related to the public for both wars was the tragic 9/11 attacks. The key goal related to the public for both wars was simply to capture Osama Bin Laden.



After having read the July 2004 9/11 Commission Report, there should be enough evidence to bring Bin Laden to trial for the 9/11 attacks. Even though I believe Bin Laden was behind the attacks, a dispassionate observer would question why the following facts are not generally known by the American public:

1. Per the CIA's FBIS, Bin Laden said in a public interview on September 18, 2001 that “I am not involved in the 11 September attacks in the United States... Neither I had any knowledge of these attacks...” While he could certainly be lying, why would he deny responsibility? The entire point of terrorism is to advance a cause through violence and fear.
2. On their “Most Wanted” poster, the FBI does not specify that Bin Laden is wanted for trial in connection to the 9/11 attack which may mean that there is not enough hard or admissible evidence to try him in a court of law.

However, the question of 9/11 responsibility is somewhat moot in the case of Bin Laden. Although he was a CIA “asset” in the proxy war fought against the Soviets in the 1980s, Bin Laden has been America's enemy since 1998 when, on the anniversary of American troops to Bin Laden's native Saudi Arabia, simultaneous bombings at US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania killed 12 American citizens. The USS Cole suicide bombing which killed 17 American sailors while harbored in Yemen, and the 1993 World Trade Center garage explosion which killed 6 civilians are also tied to Bin Laden.

However, hurling armies of tens of thousands after Bin Laden is not cost effective, nor is it constitutional – nor has it succeeded after the past 8 years. Therefore I would support the raising the reward for the capture of Bin Laden from \$27 million to over \$1 billion, and the issuing of a constitutional letter of marque to bring him – and

other responsible Al-Qaeda - to justice. Letters of marque and reprisal are warrants issued by Congress to specified parties giving them permission to commit what would otherwise be illegal acts as they capture "marked" enemies or seek retribution, as was done against the Barbary pirates in 1812. The higher reward would incentivize groups to pursue Bin Laden, and could conceivably include US special forces.

Afghanistan and Pakistan are Unjust Wars

"Preventive war was an invention of Hitler. Frankly, I would not even listen to anyone seriously that came and talked about such a thing." - Dwight D. Eisenhower

Besides a formal declaration of war, the "just war" doctrine specifies that wars cannot be preemptive; that there must be a just cause and innocent life must be in immediate jeopardy; that war must be a last resort after all diplomatic initiatives have failed; and it must be proportional in regards to the damage caused by the aggressor.

Neither the Taliban nor Pakistan attacked the United States, and America was not in dire danger of an attack from either the Taliban or Pakistani military.

While the Taliban did shelter Bin Laden, the American government did not exhaust diplomacy – as a matter of fact, the government blindly ignored any efforts by the Taliban. On October 4, 2001, a Taliban plan to extradite Bin Laden to Pakistan for trial failed. On October 7, as the bombing began, the Taliban stated they would place Bin Laden on trial in Afghanistan. On October 14, the Taliban stated they would extradite Bin Laden to a third country for trial if America presented evidence of his involvement.



Proportional? In 2001, 2,976 died during the 9/11 tragedy with 4 planes destroyed, 3 collapsed buildings in New York City, and a damaged Pentagon. In return, we have annihilated many tens of thousands of innocent civilians, many insurgents, and laid waste to countless cities and villages in a country that had no air force. If one includes the 19-year long Iraq War, several million civilian dead is a reasonable total. If this were somehow not enough, 5,278 American soldiers have died abroad.

Afghanistan, the Graveyard of Empires: History on Brutal Rerun

"Intelligence is quickness in seeing things as they are." - George Santayana

The Russians, British, even Alexander the Great have all met with defeat in Afghanistan, where the allegiances of a motley collection of tribes and clans still shift like the wind. America's present-day involvement did not start in 2001, but instead began in 1979. The Muslim rebels, including Bin Laden, were funded via a proxy war to bleed the Soviet Empire dry a few years before its' failed central economic planning would have accomplished the same feat. President Carter's National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski – who later was an advisor for President Obama – related in a 1998 interview that America fomented unrest in Afghanistan by secretly funding the Mujahadeen well before the Soviets invaded. When Brzezinski was asked if he regretted funding Islamic fundamentalists and future terrorists, he replied, "What is



most important to the history of the world? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some stirred-up Moslems or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the cold war?"

Brzezinski's attitude was typical as America wiped its hands clean and left Afghanistan to tribal warfare which resulted in the Taliban consolidating power in the late 1990s. After fleeing Sudan, Osama Bin Laden found shelter with old contacts in the Northern Alliance and also the Taliban. As is related in the 9/11 Commission Report in chapters titled "The Attack Looms" and "The System Was Blinking Red," America took very few actions to capture or kill Bin Laden until after 9/11 occurred. However, even after 9/11 America was very hesitant to spend our soldiers' lives. Consider:

On October 7, 2001 American and British air forces began the bombardment of Afghanistan, which had no air force. Air strikes directed by small British and American special forces units working alongside the Northern Alliance were the key reason the Taliban was defeated very quickly.

On November 13, Kabul was captured by Northern Alliance ground forces.

On November 26, Kunduz was captured by Northern Alliance ground forces.

In December the last major city of Kandahar was captured, also by Northern Alliance ground forces.

During December 12-17 the infamous Battle of Tora Bora was fought in the mountains on the Afghanistan border. It is widely believed that this is when Bin Laden escaped to Pakistan.

So President Bush, despite any rhetoric to the contrary, did **NOT** allow American land forces to pursue him on land. In other words, **we launched 150,000 troops over the Iraqi border in 2003 to capture Saddam Hussein, who was completely uninvolved with 9/11, but had only aerial bombardment and a few scant special op/CIA forces in Afghanistan to capture Bin Laden.** Bush was content to let the Northern Alliance, a group of tribal warlords, fight a proxy war on our behalf.

It wasn't until March 2002 that a major ground campaign was launched by the US to attack Al-Qaeda, and this can be seen by just looking at the casualty list's details – most of those who died up to March were non-hostile airplane crashes or special ops related deaths. The first US combat death was a CIA operative on November 25.

Will America join the dead phalanxes of Alexander and the rusted tanks of the Soviets in the graveyard of empires? I do not think we should stay long enough to find out. We are spending \$400 to deliver each gallon of gasoline to patrol foreign borders, and currently maintaining an expensive army of 68,000 troops in the field. The current National Security Advisor James Jones claimed in October 2009 that there are "less than 100 [al Qaeda] operating in the country, no bases, no ability to launch attacks on either us or our allies."

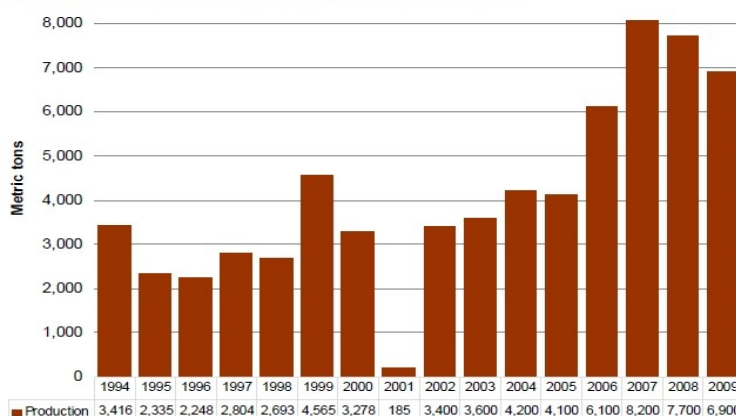
A Tale of Opiates and Oil

"The first casualty when war comes is the truth." - Senator Hiram Johnson, 1917

These are two fairly taboo subjects when the Afghanistan War is covered by the mainstream press. How much each factor truly played in foreign policy decision-making is left to the reader to decide.

Per the most recent, highly detailed United Nations report, the opium crop is over twice the pre-invasion levels. In fact, up until the invasion in November 2001, the Taliban's mission to eradicate the crop was well underway due to their religious beliefs as seen by the dramatic drop in this chart. The claim that the invasion has slowed down the drug trade is false; the

Figure 8: Potential opium production in Afghanistan (mt), 1994-2009



war has accomplished the exact opposite. This is a major cash market, with Afghanistan supplying over 90% of the world's opiates.

The second topic is the geopolitics of oil. While Afghanistan itself does not have fossil fuels, the vast and fairly-untapped reservoirs of oil and natural gas lie in the former Soviet satellite nations on the Afghan northern border. The Caspian Sea region is landlocked and there are plans to pipe the resources out via a Turkish or an Afghani-Pakistani pipeline, but political instability makes this difficult. A modern "Great Game" of geopolitical power struggles with the Russian, Chinese, Indian and Iranian governments is well underway.

Border Security and the Economy

For those who do not heed the Constitutional limits on government, the brutal lessons taught by history, the immorality of unjust war, here are another two attempts to reason – border security and the economic turmoil.

As a chemical engineer, in industry when attacking customer problems, the first step is always containment of the problem, followed by root cause analysis, then preventative actions. In the case of 9/11, the Bush II administration made a foolhardy leap directly to preventative action, and has still not contained the threat of terrorism. In fact, even the "root cause analysis" from the 9/11 Commission did not begin until 14 months **AFTER** 9/11 instead of on 9/12/2001. Despite all the wasted bureaucracy in creating the monstrous \$44-billion-a-year Department of Homeland Security, the American border is still a sieve with more holes than a piece of Swiss cheese as evidenced by rampant illegal immigration. Returning the overseas Defense Department troops back to actually defending our borders with civilian border patrol staffing access points is extremely crucial for two reasons – our border security and our budget.

We must extricate our country from the overseas military empire of well over 700 bases in 150 of the planet's 194 countries costing well over \$1 trillion before it is too late. With unemployment raging at over 20% and the dollar currency in crisis, imperial overstretch will result in the further stripping from the false Keynesian economy of our capital equipment, businesses, and jobs. If we and our children are to have peace in our lifetimes, we must drop the silly notion of America serving as the "world's policeman" and **JUST BRING OUR TROOPS HOME.**

What kind of "policeman" patrols city streets with tanks, assault rifles, automated Predator drones and calls in aerial bombing and strafing runs to "peacekeep" the neighborhood? Washington DC is full of warmongers, armchair generals and chicken hawks who have no idea what the horrors of war entail. If our country were truly in danger of being invaded, I would be among the first to protect my family and friends.

The enemies I have chosen to peacefully rise up against instead walk the halls of government. Errant foreign policies are to blame for 9/11 and any future acts of terrorism on our soil. In return for military and CIA meddling during the past century, America was hit on 9/11 by "blowback," a CIA term coined to describe what goes around comes around. Without our troops stationed on Saudi, Bahraini, Qatari, Kuwaiti, et cetera soil, continuous supply of arms to both Israeli and Arab factions, and continuous bombing of Iraq, and harsh sanctions on Iraq and Iran, we would not have been attacked on 9/11.

We must be far more wary of the reckless spenders who support the Warfare-Welfare state, the FED and corporatist bailouts than of desperate bands starving in caves on the opposite side of the world. The American republic was conceived in liberty and is dead in its grave until We the People decide to fight for our freedoms. While I draw breath I intend to see that liberty shall not perish under the heavy fist of this unconstitutional and illegal collection of rogues in government.

Jake Towne is [running for US Congress](#) in Pennsylvania's 15th District in the 2010 election as a citizen unaffiliated with any political parties. Jake plans to implement a novel "Our Open Office" form of accountable and transparent government when elected to give each resident a public voice. Visit [TowneForCongress.com](#) to learn more. Jake can be reached at TowneForCongress@gmail.com. Jake's full plank with sourcing is at <http://towneforcongress.com/platform-issues/afghanistan-war>