

October 7: Ten Years of War in Afghanistan. Obama Should End the War or He Will Pay a Heavy Political Price

By [Kevin Zeese](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [AFGHANISTAN](#)

Summary:

The mid-term elections have shown a large enthusiasm gap among Democratic voters. If Obama thinks its bad now, wait until he sees 2012 and seeks re-election. If the wars continue, the peace movement will find somewhere else to go and the Democrats will be in electoral trouble. The Dems need to energize their base by changing course on weapons and war.

As 10th Year of Longest War Begins the Flood of Bad News in Afghanistan Continues

Today, the 10th year of the Afghanistan War begins.

The longest American war continues amidst a flood of bad news from the war front – supply routes cut, oil tankers burning, record deaths of soldiers and Afghan civilians, U.S. funding the Taliban to protect U.S. troops . . . on and on, the war failure stares the United States in the face.

If Obama thinks he is having a hard time with the “enthusiasm gap” in 2010, in 2012 if these wars continue, he will be unable to wake up his anti-war base no matter how much he chides them and tries to scare them with extremist Republicans.

The counterproductive, unnecessary, and damaging Afghanistan war is destroying one of the most impoverished countries in the world, killing Afghan civilians at very high rates and undermining the United States in multiple ways.

The war pushes the U.S. further into debt. The United States spends \$1.5 billion per month in borrowed money on the Afghanistan war.

It undermines the rule of law; the U.S. holds thousands of Afghans in prisons without charges. Torture is reported. And robotic drones result in deaths. Legal experts have described these actions as war crimes.

It undermines democracy by propping up a corrupt leader put in office by a low-voter-turnout elections that are rife with fraud.

And it undermines national security by creating more enemies every day-enemies that will

hate the United States for a generation or more.

Now the war is expanding into an Af-Pak war-quagmire. Since coming to office, President Obama escalated attacks in Pakistan with drone after drone killing civilians and local insurgent leaders. Pakistanis are no longer sitting back but are responding by exploding oil tankers and blocking key border routes. Cutting off U.S. supply lines and burning the oil used to keep tanks rolling and planes flying may end up being the nail in a coffin of a war that cannot be won and should not have been fought. Even before these attacks on supply lines, it cost \$1 million per year to keep a soldier in Afghanistan. With supply routes cut and oil burning, that cost will escalate quickly.

With the mid-term elections soon to be behind us, the Obama administration is shaping up its re-election strategy. One lesson Obama and the Democrats should have learned in the mid-terms is that they cannot take their base for granted. Every day Obama, Biden, and other administration officials are criticizing their voting base for not coming out for the mid-term elections. Don't they get it? The Democrats turned off their voting base. Antiwar voters do not support policies that expand wars, create record military spending and result in the largest weapons sales in history.

Anti-war voters were critical to Obama's election. By the time 2012 comes around if the U.S. is still fighting a war and occupation in Afghanistan anger against the war will be at a very high level. The anti-war vote that got Obama through the Democratic primaries and propelled him to a general election victory will turn against Obama - working for other candidates, funding other candidates and sitting on their hands when it comes to Obama and the Democrats.

Indeed, since 2006 the Democratic base has been saying, "End the wars." The message has been clear with votes in 2006 that gave the Democrats back control of Congress because of the unpopular war policy of Bush and the Republicans. It was clear in the presidential election when Obama's opposition to the Iraq War and pledge to end the war propelled him through the primaries. And, it is clear in polls today: Americans oppose the Afghanistan War.

Anti-war voters need to make sure that Obama and team get the message from the enthusiasm gap in the midterm elections: the Democrats cannot take the peace vote for granted.

Many of us did not support Obama in the last election because of his proposals to expand war, other anti-war voters supported him with the hope that he would end the wars. Some believed him when he said he would end the Iraq war and end the mindset that got the U.S. into war. Now, those voters are seeing the truth. The Iraq war didn't end, soldiers and mercenaries fighting combat in Iraq are now merely re-labeled as non-combat soldiers while the war goes on. Peace voters see the Afghanistan war expanding and evolving into a more dangerous Af-Pak War.

The anti-war voting base is turned off to Obama and the Democratic Party. The Democrats must reverse course on war and excite anti-war voters by ending the wars, cutting military spending and denouncing a war-dominated foreign policy. Denouncing us because we oppose war and therefore will not support candidates who expand war is a recipe for defeat in 2012.

But now, as the longest war enters its 10th year, anti-war voters need to make sure

President Obama gets the message. Tell him, “If the wars continue, you will not get the peace vote. If the wars continue, there will be no peace activists working for you in the primaries or general election. If the war continues you are acting against a majority of Americans who oppose the wars and recognize they undermine the U.S. economy.” Remind him that war is not the answer and it is time for America to come home and focus on the serious domestic problems the country faces. (You can [click here to write the president today.](#))

Peace voters need to realize they have the power because Obama and the Dems need their votes. It is time for us to make clear demands so that as they plan for the next election they understand dramatic policy change is needed or they will be out of office. The peace vote matters.

Kevin Zeese is executive director of Voters for Peace (www.VotersForPeace.US).

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