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CIA Fears Afghan Pullout Would Stall Their Drone War

By Jason Ditz

February 16, 2014

The Obama Administration continues to push the idea that the “zero option,” of leaving Afghanistan outright at the end of the year, remains possible. Despite this, officials across several agencies, including the Pentagon, have insisted it is not under serious consideration.

The CIA sees such a pullout as a huge problem, after the Pakistani government chased them out of airfields they were using for drones and forced them to relocate into Afghanistan. A withdrawal would effectively stall the drone war, and it might never recover.

Officials say that the CIA would not be able to retain the massive drone program in an unoccupied Afghanistan, nor would they be able to continue the job of bribing people in Pakistan’s tribal areas into giving them targets to kill.

Though officials say there are “contingency plans” to relocate the drones themselves into an unnamed former Soviet country north of Afghanistan, the already slap-dash intelligence the agency manages to get about who it kills would be much worse still.

So while the actual military logic behind occupying Afghanistan becomes weaker and weaker, the spy agency is pushing to continue that occupation, potentially for decades to come, simply so they can more conveniently assassinate people in Pakistan.

