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## Gen. Allen: Leaving Afghanistan Was Never an Option

By Jason Ditz

March 25, 2013

Recently retired commander of the Afghan occupation General John Allen has revealed that despite claims from White House officials, the “zero troops option” was never under consideration for post-2014 Afghanistan, and that US had only considered various numbers of troops to remain beyond that date.

Officials made the claim of the “zero option” in early January, just days before Afghan President Hamid Karzai’s visit to the US, and it was seen as primarily a diplomatic ploy for officials hoping to keep Karzai in line. Allen’s comments seem to confirm that.

Rather, Gen. Allen says that the various options the administration was considering, and which he wrote, all included keeping troops in the nation to “support” Karzai, and that the notion of leaving was never really on the table.

“Sometimes this comes as a surprise when I say this: that on January 1 2015, there’s still going to be fighting in Afghanistan,” Allen added. President Obama signed a deal to keep US troops in Afghanistan through at least 2024.