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Plan to Bribe Taliban Fighters Stalls over Lack of Funds

By Jason Ditz

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A [January plan to throw hundreds of millions of dollars in bribes at “low-level” Taliban fighters](#) in the hope that they will switch sides and back the US-led occupation took a summit earlier this year by storm. It was perhaps unsurprising, as the idea of winning the war by throwing large sums of money at the problem has always appealed to a number of top officials across the war effort.

But the effort has stalled, [the New York Times is reporting, with international donors loathe to throw the money they had initially pledged at the program](#). The summit netted some \$250 million in pledges, but the US “emergency” war bill included a massive appropriation for “reintegration” that could’ve been several times this amount.

This isn’t the only problem, of course, as Afghan officials argue over who gets to run a program whose promise of easy and large scale foreign funding is practically a license to steal in one of the world’s most corrupt governments.

But while unemployment and ideological reasons are presented as other issues, perhaps the most serious problem is left unstated, that as violence escalates and the Taliban shows its ability to attack virtually anywhere in Afghanistan, being on the payroll of international forces is a very dangerous proposition indeed, perhaps even moreso than being an insurgent.

