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Is President Obama's Surge A Trap?

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Last night, President Obama announced both his decision to add 30,000 U.S. troops to the mire in Afghanistan and his desire to see other countries and N.A.T.O. match his surge. Thanks to U.S. taxpayers, mercenaries will continue to be a part of the foreign presence in Afghanistan. The Republicans support the President's move and are expected to reward President Obama with the bulk of their Congressional votes to pass his plan.

However, there is deep disquiet today within the ranks of the President's own base in the Democratic Party, with independents, and with middle-of-the-roaders called "swing" voters. In unprecedented numbers, voters in the United States of all previous political persuasions went to the polls and invested their dreams and, most importantly, their votes in the "hope" and "change" promised by the Obama campaign. But in light of the President's defense of Bush Administration war crimes and torture in U.S. courts, the transfer of trillions of hard-earned taxpayer dollars to the wealthy banking elite, continued spying on environmental and peace activists as well as support for the extension of the Patriot Act, and removal of Medicare-for-all (single payer) as a central feature of proposed health care reform, Obama voters are rethinking their support.

Already, according to a Daily Koss report written by Steve Singiser: "Two in five Democratic voters either consider themselves unlikely to vote at this point in time, or have already made the firm decision to remove themselves from the 2010 electorate pool. Indeed, Democrats were *three times* more likely to say that they will 'definitely not vote' in 2010 than are Republicans." By contrast, Republicans are happy today. Almost giddy with glee as far as I can see. Warmonger John McCain and most Republicans will make sure the President gets what he wants. And in 2012, they will abandon their support of this President and support the candidate that comes from their base.

War-weary voters in this country are committed to peace. They reject the notion, as put forward by Vice President Dick Cheney that “the American way of life” is something worth fighting for when that means that war becomes an energy policy.

Tragically, the major unstated U.S. interest in the region that the President has bought into is the unacceptability of a proposed Iran-Pakistan-India (I-P-I) pipeline at a time when our country is saber-rattling against and threatening Iran with more sanctions. Earlier this year, Iran and Pakistan decided to move forward with their pipeline even if India decides to drop out. Ironically, I-P-I is also known as the “peace pipeline.”

The alternative pipeline route, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (T-A-P-I), is supported by Washington because it denies an important economic benefit to Iran. Sadly, nowhere in the President’s remarks did he mention the pipeline on which construction is slated to begin in 2010.

U.S. policy is not only guided by pipeline politics. There is also the consideration of chessboard geo-positioning necessary to contain Russia, China, and ensure U.S. empire—for those inclined to traditional Cold Warrior “containment” thinking. Apparently, behind what some are calling a “shadow war in Muslim lands,” are targeted assassination teams that have wreaked tri-border havoc in Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

Fortunately, this time around, I’m convinced that U.S. voters will vote for peace. President Obama has now ensured this outcome. Imagine, John McCain and Joe Lieberman have just been made very happy by the President’s choice while that same choice leaves swing voters, independents, and some Democrats who enthusiastically supported Obama’s campaign looking for somewhere else to go.