



Written by [Steven J. DuBord](#) on December 5, 2009

Obama's Afghan Troop Surge for 100 al-Qaeda

President Barack Obama's December 1 speech at West Point was meant to justify sending 30,000 more U.S. troops to Afghanistan at a cost of \$30 billion per year, but he neglected to mention one small detail: U.S. intelligence officials estimate there are as few as 100 al-Qaeda operatives in all of Afghanistan.



President Obama called the al-Qaeda presence there a "cancer," but ABC News [reported](#) on December 2 that a senior U.S. intelligence official told them that "the approximate estimate of 100 al Qaeda members left in Afghanistan reflects the conclusion of American intelligence agencies and the Defense Department." Obama was made aware of this so he could factor it into his decision on whether or not to send in more troops.

Obama did not focus on the size of al-Qaeda's presence in Afghanistan when he spoke, but rather said merely that "al Qaeda has not reemerged in Afghanistan in the same number as before 9/11, but they retain their safe havens along the border." U.S. intelligence officials believe there are several hundred al-Qaeda fighters just across the Pakistani border, and an Obama administration official said the additional troops were needed to "sandwich" them between Pakistan and Afghanistan, preventing them from re-gaining a foothold in Afghanistan.

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"So the real question is will Pakistan do enough," said former White House counter-terrorism official Richard Clarke, an ABC News consultant. "What if they take all the money we given them but don't really follow through? What [is] the strategy then?"

The December 2 ABC News article clearly spelled out the hefty price tag for dealing with so few terrorists: "With 100,000 troops in Afghanistan at an estimated yearly cost of \$30 billion, it means that for every one al Qaeda fighter, the U.S. will commit 1,000 troops and \$300 million a year."

Some counter-terror analysts claim the number of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan is not as important as their ability to recruit and train others in the Taliban. "A hundred 'no foolin' al Qaeda operatives operating in a safe haven can do a hell of a lot of damage," said one former intelligence official with extensive experience in the region.

Though there may be truth in that assessment, the former CIA Pakistan station chief, Bob Grenier, testified at a Senate hearing that al-Qaeda had already been defeated in Afghanistan. "So in terms of 'in Afghanistan,' " queried Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.), "they have been disrupted and dismantled and defeated. They're not in Afghanistan, correct?" "That's true," answered Grenier.



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In the midst of recession, deficits, national debt, and expensive healthcare reform proposals, the United States is spending \$300 million and putting 1,000 American lives in danger for each remaining al-Qaeda agent in Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda may never have to attack another U.S. target if they can keep our federal government spending America into the poorhouse and shipping more U.S. troops overseas, basically bringing targets to al-Qaeda for them to shoot at.

Enough is enough; bring America's sons and daughters, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers home now!

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