

Unfortunately, the plan as released doesn't live up to the diagnosis.

True, the proposed new Consumer Financial Protection Agency would help control abusive lending. And the proposal that lenders be required to hold on to 5 percent of their loans, rather than selling everything off to be repackaged, would provide some incentive to lend responsibly.

But 5 percent isn't enough to deter much risky lending, given the huge rewards to financial executives who book short-term profits. So what should be done about those rewards?

Tellingly, the administration's executive summary of its proposals highlights "compensation practices" as a key cause of the crisis, but then fails to say anything about addressing those practices. The long-form version says more, but what it says—"Federal regulators should issue standards and guidelines to better align executive compensation practices of financial firms with long-term shareholder value"—is a description of what should happen, rather than a plan to make it happen.

Furthermore, the plan says very little of substance about reforming the rating agencies, whose willingness to give a seal of approval to dubious securities played an important role in creating the mess we're in.

In short, Mr. Obama has a clear vision of what went wrong, but aside from regulating shadow banking—no small thing, to be sure—his plan basically punts on the question of how to keep it from happening all over again, pushing the hard decisions off to future regulators.

I'm aware of the political realities: getting financial reform through Congress won't be easy. And even as it stands the Obama plan would be a lot better than nothing.

But to live up to its own analysis, the Obama administration needs to come down harder on the rating agencies and, even more important, get much more specific about reforming the way bankers are paid.

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TO DIE FOR A MYSTIQUE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, thank you very much. Tonight, I want to take my time and refer to an article written by Andrew Bacevich. This was in the *American Conservative* of May 18, 2009. The title is "To Die for a Mystique," subtitled "The lessons our leaders didn't learn from the Vietnam War. I'm going to read two or three paragraphs and then close from this article.

"In one of the most thoughtful Vietnam-era accounts written by a senior military officer, General Bruce Palmer once observed, 'With respect to Vietnam, our leaders should have known that the American people would not stand still for a protracted war of an indeterminate nature with no foreseeable end to the United States' commitment.'"

He further stated in the article, "General Palmer thereby distilled into a single sentence the central lesson of Vietnam: to embark upon an open-ended war lacking clearly defined and achievable objectives was to forfeit public support, thereby courting disaster.

The implications were clear: never again."

I further read from the article, "The dirty little secret to which few in Washington will own up is that the United States now faces the prospect of perpetual conflict. We find ourselves in the midst of what the Pentagon calls the 'Long War,' a conflict global in scope (if largely concentrated in the Greater Middle East) and expected to outlast even General Palmer's 'Twenty-Five Year War.' The present generation of senior civilians and officers have either forgotten or inverted the lessons of Vietnam, embracing open-ended war as an inescapable reality."

Madam Speaker, I submit this entire article for the RECORD.

[From *The American Conservative*, May 18, 2009]

TO DIE FOR A MYSTIQUE

(By Andrew J. Bacevich)

In one of the most thoughtful Vietnam-era accounts written by a senior military officer, Gen. Bruce Palmer once observed, "With respect to Vietnam, our leaders should have known that the American people would not stand still for a protracted war of an indeterminate nature with no foreseeable end to the U.S. commitment."

General Palmer thereby distilled into a single sentence the central lesson of Vietnam: to embark upon an open-ended war lacking clearly defined and achievable objectives was to forfeit public support, thereby courting disaster. The implications were clear: never again.

Palmer's book, which he titled "The Twenty-Five Year War", appeared in 1984. Today, exactly 25 years later, we once again find ourselves mired in a "protracted war of an indeterminate nature with no foreseeable end to the U.S. commitment." It's déjà vu all over again. How to explain this astonishing turn of events?

In the wake of Vietnam, the officer corps set out to preclude any recurrence of protracted, indeterminate conflict. The Armed Forces developed a new American way of war, emphasizing advanced technology and superior skills. The generals were by no means keen to put these new methods to the test: their preference was for wars to be fought infrequently and then only in pursuit of genuinely vital interests. Yet when war did come, they intended to dispatch any adversary promptly and economically, thereby protecting the military from the possibility of public abandonment. Finish the job quickly and go home: this defined the new paradigm to which the lessons of Vietnam had given rise.

In 1991, Operation Desert Storm seemingly validated that paradigm. Yet events since 9/11, in both Iraq and Afghanistan, have now demolished it. Once again, as in Vietnam, the enemy calls the tune, obliging American soldiers to fight on his terms. Decision has become elusive. Costs skyrocket and are ignored. The fighting drags on. As it does so, the overall purpose of the undertaking—other than of avoiding the humiliation of abject failure—becomes increasingly difficult to discern.

The dirty little secret to which few in Washington will own up is that the United States now faces the prospect of perpetual conflict. We find ourselves in the midst of what the Pentagon calls the "Long War," a conflict global in scope (if largely concentrated in the Greater Middle East) and expected to outlast even General Palmer's "Twenty-Five Year War." The present gen-

eration of senior civilians and officers have either forgotten or inverted the lessons of Vietnam, embracing open-ended war as an inescapable reality.

To apply to the Long War the plaintive query that Gen. David Petraeus once posed with regard to Iraq—"Tell me how this ends"—the answer is clear: no one has the foggiest idea. War has become like the changing phases of the moon. It's part of everyday existence. For American soldiers there is no end in sight.

Yet there is one notable difference between today and the last time the United States found itself mired in a seemingly endless war. During the Vietnam era, even as some young Americans headed off to Indochina to fight in the jungles and rice paddies, many other young Americans back on the home front fought against the war itself. More than any other event of the 1960s, the war created a climate of intense political engagement. Today, in contrast, the civilian contemporaries of those fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan have largely tuned out the Long War. The predominant mood of the country is not one of anger or anxiety but of dull acceptance. Vietnam divided Americans; the Long War has rendered them inert.

To cite General Palmer's formulation, the citizens of this country at present do appear willing to "stand still" when considering the prospect of war that goes on and on. While there are many explanations for why Americans have disengaged from the Long War, the most important, in my view, is that so few of us have any immediate personal stake in that conflict.

When the citizen-soldier tradition collapsed under the weight of Vietnam, the military rebuilt itself as a professional force. The creation of this all-volunteer military was widely hailed as a great success—well-trained and highly motivated soldiers made the new American way of war work. Only now are we beginning to glimpse the shortcomings of this arrangement, chief among them the fact that today's "standing army" exists at considerable remove from the society it purports to defend. Americans today profess to "support the troops" but that support is a mile wide and an inch deep. It rarely translates into serious or sustained public concern about whether those same troops are being used wisely and well.

The upshot is that with the eighth anniversary of the Long War upon us, fundamental questions about this enterprise remain unasked. The contrast with Vietnam is striking: back then the core questions may not have gotten straight answers, but at least they got posed.

When testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in April 1971, the young John Kerry famously—or infamously, in the eyes of some—asked, "How do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake?"

What exactly was that mistake? Well, there were many. Yet the most fundamental lay in President Johnson's erroneous conviction that the Republic of Vietnam constituted a vital American security interest and that ensuring that country's survival required direct and massive U.S. military intervention.

Johnson erred in his estimation of South Vietnam's importance. He compounded that error with a tragic failure of imagination, persuading himself that once in, there was no way out. The United States needed to stay the course in Vietnam, regardless of the cost or consequences.

Now we are, in our own day and in our own way, repeating LBJ's errors. In his 1971 Senate testimony, reflecting the views of other Vietnam veterans who had turned against the war in which they had fought, Kerry derisively remarked, "we are probably angriest

about all that we were told about Vietnam and about the mystical war against communism."

The larger struggle against communism commonly referred to as the Cold War was both just and necessary. Yet the furies evoked by irresponsible (or cowardly) politicians more interested in partisan advantage than in advancing the common good transformed the Cold War from an enterprise governed by reason into one driven by fear. Beginning with McCarthyism and the post-1945 Red Scare and continuing on through phantasms such as the domino theory, bomber gap, missile gap, and the putative threat to our survival posed by a two-bit Cuban revolutionary, panic induced policies that were reckless, wrong-headed, and unnecessary, with Vietnam being just one particularly egregious example.

The mystical war against communism finds its counterpart in the mystical war on terrorism. As in the 1960s, so too today: mystification breeds misunderstanding and misjudgment. It prevents us from seeing things as they are.

As a direct result, it leads us to exaggerate the importance of places like Afghanistan and indeed to exaggerate the jihadist threat, which falls well short of being existential. It induces flights of fancy so that otherwise sensible people conjure up visions of providing clean water, functioning schools, and good governance to Afghanistan's 40,000 villages, with expectations of thereby winning Afghan hearts and minds. It causes people to ignore considerations of cost. With the Long War already this nation's second most expensive conflict, trailing only World War II, and with the federal government projecting trillion-dollar deficits for years to come, how much can we afford and where is the money coming from?

For political reasons the Obama administration may have banished the phrase "global war on terror," yet the conviction persists that the United States is called upon to dominate or liberate or transform the Greater Middle East. Methods may be shifting, with the emphasis on pacification giving way to militarized nation-building. Priorities may be changing, Af-Pak now supplanting Iraq as the main effort. But by whatever name, the larger enterprise continues. The president who vows to "change the way Washington works" has not yet exhibited the imagination needed to conceive of an alternative to the project that his predecessor began.

The urgent need is to de-mystify that project, which was from the outset a misguided one. Just as in the 1960s we possessed neither the wisdom nor the means needed to determine the fate of Southeast Asia, so today we possess neither the wisdom nor the means necessary to determine the fate of the Greater Middle East. To persist in efforts to do so—as the Obama administration appears intent on doing in Afghanistan—will simply replicate on an even greater scale mistakes like those that Bruce Palmer and John Kerry once rightly decried.

I further read and want to close and then make a few comments with this. This is the last paragraph. Let me say about Andrew Bacevich, he, himself, was a Vietnam veteran. He, himself, was a veteran of Desert Storm. He, himself, taught at West Point. He lost a son in 2007, a young lieutenant who was killed in Iraq. So I think he brings great credibility to this article that he has written.

This is the last paragraph in the article. "The urgent need is to demystify that project, which was from the out-

set a misguided one. Just as in the 1960s we possessed neither the wisdom nor the means needed to determine the fate of Southeast Asia, so today we possess neither the wisdom nor the means necessary to determine the fate of the Greater Middle East.

"To persist in efforts to do so—as the Obama administration appears intent on doing in Afghanistan—will simply replicate on an even greater scale mistakes like those that Bruce Palmer and JOHN KERRY once rightly decried."

Madam Speaker, I bring this forward because my friend from Massachusetts, JIM MCGOVERN, has put a bill in that would say simply to the Secretary of Defense: You need to come to the Congress and tell the Congress what the exit strategy is for Afghanistan. Some people would say end point.

Let me briefly explain, having an exit strategy and saying that to the Congress, you don't have to say in 2009, 2010, or 2015 or 2020, but tell the American people where we are going when we send our young men and boys and girls to die in Afghanistan without a plan, without benchmarks.

So, Madam Speaker, I don't know if Mr. MCGOVERN's amendment has been approved for debate tomorrow on the Armed Services bill, but I want to thank Mr. MCGOVERN for bringing this to the attention of the American people and the Congress, because we need to have benchmarks. We need to have an end point to the strategy in Afghanistan.

The military, I know, from marines down in my district, will tell you that our military is tired. They're worn out. They'll keep going back and forth, back and forth because they love this Nation and they love defending America. But we've got to be realistic about breaking the military, because we have got North Korea over here threatening. We've got the Chinese. We don't know what they might do. Yet we need to have a plan for victory in Afghanistan. We cannot do what the Bush administration did in Iraq and keep going on and on.

Madam Speaker, as I close, as I do every night on this floor, I have signed over 8,000 letters to families and extended families who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan and Iraq. I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform, and I ask God in his loving arms to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Madam Speaker, I ask three times; God, please, God please, God, please continue to bless America.

REPORT ON H.R. 2997, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

Ms. KAPTUR, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privi-

leged report (Rept. No. 111-181) on the bill (H.R. 2997) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. From its very beginning in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, has been forced upon Members of Congress with little time to consider the significant and potentially damaging consequences of this legislation.

On June 12th of this month, the Committee on Agriculture, on which I serve, held a 7-hour hearing to review this bill. We quickly learned that there is little solid economic analysis on how this legislation will affect our economy. Preliminary evidence makes it clear it will increase the cost of energy and, with it, the cost of everything we use in our lives on a daily basis.

We do know that the Congressional Budget Office has said this bill will raise government revenue by \$846 billion over the next 10 years. In everyday terms, that means a huge tax increase. \$846 billion, however, is just the beginning.

H.R. 2454 is permanent, and after the 10-year period analyzed by the CBO, free carbon allowances are phased out, auctioned carbon allowances are phased in, and total allowances are reduced. This means that future generations will be forced to pay much more than that indicated in the initial 10-year budget estimate.

Although billed as cap-and-trade, in reality Waxman-Markey is a cap-and-tax bill. Instead of government directly levying a tax, this legislation disguises that tax as a carbon allowance auction that subsequently requires electrical generation companies, petroleum, and other biofuel refiners, manufacturers, and others to collect the tax through increased costs.

The consequences go far beyond the price and our ability to turn on the lights in rural America. Kansans, who