



Mr. Goldstein argues that it's clear the counterinsurgency and population-protection policy, as set out in Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal's manifesto last summer, is failing, reminiscent of the grandiose plans Mr. Bundy promulgated in Vietnam in the 1960s.

There is emerging a consensus that the policy is heading south. This consensus includes the more than 100 House Democrats who voted against war funding last month, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, a growing number of foreign policy elites outside the Obama administration and the president of Pakistan.

Supposed differences, such as those displayed by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in recent ABC News interviews over how substantial will be the troop withdrawals starting next summer, reflect a false choice. Given the situation and costs in lives and treasure, there seems little doubt that Mr. Obama will scale back the U.S. commitment.

Another false debate grew out of the papers recently published on the WikiLeaks Web site showing that elements of the Pakistani intelligence agency were cooperating with the Taliban; that was neither surprising nor unexpected.

The numbers underscore why this policy is unsustainable. U.S. casualties this year are likely to double to between 600 and 700, more than during the entire administration of President George W. Bush; July was the deadliest month in the history of the conflict.

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