\*if ev is highlighted in 2 colors, i read the blue

# counterplan

## 1nc

The executive branch of the United States federal government should publish and enforce an executive order to establish that the President is required to acquire the approval of the Pakistani government prior to conducting drone strikes within Pakistan. The order should also establish a bipartisan independent executive branch commission to oversee that the mandate is executed.

Solves the aff

Eric Posner, The University of Chicago Law School Professor, and Adrian Vermeule, Harvard Law School Professor of Law, 2007, The Credible Executive, 74 U. Chi. L. Rev. 865

The Madisonian system of oversight has not totally failed. Sometimes legislators overcome the temptation to free ride; sometimes they invest in protecting the separation of powers or legislative prerogatives. Sometimes judges review exercises of executive discretion, even during emergencies. But often enough, legislators and judges have no real alternative to letting executive officials exercise discretion unchecked. The Madisonian system is a partial failure; compensating mechanisms must be adopted to fill the area of slack, the institutional gap between executive discretion and the oversight capacities of other institutions. Again, the magnitude of this gap is unclear, but plausibly it is quite large; we will assume that it is. It is often assumed that this partial failure of the Madisonian system unshackles and therefore benefits ill-motivated executives. This is grievously incomplete. The failure of the Madisonian system harms the well-motivated executive as much as it benefits the ill-motivated one. Where Madisonian oversight fails, the well-motivated executive is a victim of his own power. Voters, legislators, and judges will be wary of granting further discretion to an executive whose motivations are uncertain and possibly nefarious. The partial failure of Madisonian oversight thus threatens a form of inefficiency, a kind of contracting failure that makes potentially everyone, including the voters, worse off. Our central question, then, is what the well-motivated executive can do to solve or at least ameliorate the problem. The solution is for the executive to complement his (well-motivated) first-order policy goals with second-order mechanisms for demonstrating credibility to other actors. We thus do not address the different question of what voters, legislators, judges, and other actors should do about an executive who is ill motivated and known to be so. That project involves shoring up or replacing the Madisonian system to block executive dictatorship. Our project is the converse of this, and involves finding new mechanisms to help the well-motivated executive credibly distinguish himself as such. IV. Executive Signaling: Law and Mechanisms We suggest that the executive's credibility problem can be solved by second-order mechanisms of executive signaling. In the general case, well-motivated executives send credible signals by taking actions that are more costly for ill-motivated actors than for well-motivated ones, thus distinguishing themselves from their ill-motivated mimics. Among the specific mechanisms we discuss, an important subset involves executive self-binding, whereby executives commit themselves to a course of action that would impose higher costs on ill-motivated actors. Commitments themselves have value as signals of benign motivations. This departs from the usual approach in legal scholarship. Legal theory has often discussed self-binding by "government" or government officials. In constitutional theory, it is often suggested that constitutions represent an attempt by "the people" to bind "themselves" against their own future decisionmaking pathologies, or relatedly, that constitutional prohibitions represent mechanisms by which governments commit themselves not to expropriate investments or to exploit their populations. n72 Whether or not this picture is coherent, n73 it is not the question we examine here, although some of the relevant considerations are similar. n74 We are not concerned with binding the president so that he cannot abuse his powers, but with how he might bind himself or take other actions that enhance his credibility, so that he can generate support from the public and other members of the government. [\*895] Furthermore, our question is subconstitutional: it is whether a well-motivated executive, acting within an established set of constitutional and statutory rules, can use signaling mechanisms to generate public trust. Accordingly, we proceed by assuming that no constitutional amendments or new statutes will be enacted. Within these constraints, what can a well-motivated executive do to bootstrap himself to credibility? The problem for the well-motivated executive is to credibly signal his benign motivations. In general, the solution is to engage in actions that are less costly for good types than for bad types. We begin with some relevant law, then examine a set of possible mechanisms -emphasizing both the conditions under which they might succeed and the conditions under which they might not -and conclude by examining the costs of credibility. A. A Preliminary Note on Law and Self-Binding Many of our mechanisms are unproblematic from a legal perspective, as they involve presidential actions that are clearly lawful. But a few raise legal questions; in particular, those that involve self-binding. n75 Can a president bind himself to respect particular first-order policies? With qualifications, the answer is yes, at least to the same extent that a legislature can. Formally, a duly promulgated executive rule or order binds even the executive unless and until it is validly abrogated, thereby establishing a new legal status quo. n76 The legal authority to establish a new status quo allows a president to create inertia or political constraints that will affect his own future choices. In a practical sense, presidents, like legislatures, have great de facto power to adopt policies that shape the legal landscape for the future. A president might commit himself to a long-term project of defense procurement or infrastructure or foreign policy, narrowing his own future choices and generating new political coalitions that will act to defend the new rules or policies. More schematically, we may speak of formal and informal means of self-binding: 1. The president might use formal means to bind himself. This is possible in the sense that an executive order, if otherwise valid, legally binds the president while it is in effect and may be enforced by the courts. It is not possible in the sense that the president can always repeal the executive order if he can bear the political and reputational costs of doing so. 2. The president might use informal means to bind himself. This is not only possible but frequent and important. Issuing an executive rule providing for the appointment of special prosecutors, as Nixon did, is not a formal self-binding. n77 However, there may be large political costs to repealing the order. This effect does not depend on the courts' willingness to enforce the order, even against Nixon himself. Court enforcement makes the order legally binding while it is in place, but only political and reputational enforcement can protect it from repeal. Just as a dessert addict might announce to his friends that he is going on a no-dessert diet in order to raise the reputational costs of backsliding and thus commit himself, so, too, the executive's issuance of a self-binding order can trigger reputational costs. In such cases, repeal of an executive order may be seen as a breach of faith even if no other institution ever enforces it.

## block

## solvency

#### Markey’s conclusion the CP’s pre-authorization program—zero necessity for Congressional involvement

Daniel Markey is senior fellow for India, Pakistan, and South Asia at the Council on Foreign Relations, 13 [“A New Drone Deal For Pakistan,” Foreign Affairs, July 16, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139584/daniel-markey/a-new-drone-deal-for-pakistan?page=show]

A final option -- and the only realistic compromise at present -- would be for Washington to seek Islamabad’s pre-authorization for specific targets and zones for strikes. The United States would retain full operational control over drone missions, and unlike the earliest stage in the drone program, when Musharraf’s explicit approval was required to kill Nek Muhammad, this process could provide blanket authority for a much longer (mutually agreed, if not publicly disclosed) target list. In return, Pakistani leaders would acknowledge publicly the terms of the new arrangement. Accompanying this preauthorization regime, Washington and Islamabad could establish a mechanism for reviewing claims of civilian losses and providing appropriate compensation, as the United States has done in Afghanistan and Iraq. In bringing the program out of the shadows, U.S. operational authority for the drones would almost certainly have to shift from the CIA to the Pentagon, as the Obama administration has already said it plans to do in other countries.

Admittedly, this final compromise option would be painful for both Islamabad and Washington. Pakistani leaders would finally have to come clean to their people about authorizing drone strikes. That would eliminate even the thin veneer of deniability that past leaders have maintained to protect themselves from political fallout. It would also place Sharif’s party firmly on the blacklists of the Pakistani Taliban and other targeted groups, which to date have enjoyed slightly more ambiguous relationships.

#### The executive would comply with the CP!

Associated Press, 8/1/13, John Kerry says Pakistan drone strikes could end as bilateral talks resume, www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/01/john-kerry-us-pakistan-talks-drones

The US secretary of state, John Kerry, and his Pakistani counterpart, Sartaj Aziz, said on Thursday the two countries will resume high-level negotiations over security issues. Kerry suggested that disputed drone strikes could end soon.

Kerry also said he had invited Pakistan's newly elected prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, to come to Washington to meet Barack Obama.

"I'm pleased to announce that today, very quickly, we were able to agree to a resumption of the strategic dialogue in order to foster a deeper, broader and more comprehensive partnership between our countries," Kerry said, at a news conference with Aziz in Islamabad. He also said the talks would cover "all of the key issues between us, from border management to counterterrorism to promoting US private investment and to Pakistan's own journey to economic revitalization."

Kerry told Pakistani TV that the US would end strikes on Pakistan in the near future. "I believe that we're on a good track," he said. "I think the program will end as we have eliminated most of the threat and continue to eliminate it.

Their evidence just says the government doesn’t like strikes- not congress has to authorize them

**Foust, Fellow at the American Security Project,** 7-12-**12**

(Joshua, “U.S. Drones Make Peace With Pakistan Less Likely,” The Atlantic, accessed 8-1-13, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/07/us-drones-make-peace-with-pakistan-less-likely/259756/>, LMM)

Pakistani ambassador to the U.S. Sherry Rehman recently made an unsurprising statement. She said that her government has not approved any drones strikes. "It hasn't okayed any American drone strikes on its territory in exchange for Washington's apology over the Salala attacks," she said in an interview with CNN. Rehman argued that there are more effective ways to go after terrorists inside Pakistan, and that the Pakistani government officially condemns "unilateral" drone strikes on its territory. The word "unilateral" here is important, because the Pakistani government collaborates with the U.S. on at least some drone strikes. It varies by target, but the Pakistani government is seeking greater control over target selection and intelligence gathering -- and not necessarily an end to the drone strikes. After all, the Pakistani government is fighting terrorists as well. There is a surprisingly simple explanation for this seeming contrast between public statements by officials and what happens behind the scenes. Pakistani authorities don't mind it when U.S. drones kill off people like the TTP (Pakistani Taliban) leader Baitullah Mehsud. They do, however, mind when U.S. drone strikes happen without their consent or involvement, such as one in North Waziristan in May of this year. (There is a chance, too, that the Pakistani officials protested the North Waziristan strike because that is where Jalaluddin Haqqani, an Taliban-linked insurgent commander widely believed to be supported by Pakistani intelligence, lives) Speaking with CNN, Rehman emphasized the problem of so-called "signature strikes," in which a drone is used to attack a group of unidentified people judged as behaving suspiciously. Like many people, she's uncomfortable with a foreign power killing her country's citizens without knowing who they are or what they're doing. The issue of drones in Pakistan is terribly complex. Pakistanis seem, simultaneously, to love and hate them: love, because drones are responsible for killing many of the terrorists who have brutalized communities across the northwest; hate, because they kill innocent people and because it's humiliating to grant America the right to bomb your country. In recent years, U.S. intelligence services have built up the ability to target the destroy targets in Pakistan without involving the Pakistanis, and that has rankled many in the Pakistani government and security services. At the same time, opportunistic politicians like Imran Khan have taken the hurt pride at having America bomb the country and morphed it into outrage at America -- a worrying development if left unchecked. Untangling the many feelings Pakistanis have about drones, then, is not easy. As Reuters reporter Myra MacDonald has noted quite eloquently, many of the voices most essential to understanding the effects of drones -- the residents of the tribal areas themselves -- are deliberately marginalized by opportunists in support of and in opposition to drones. A recent Pew global poll suggests there is global opposition to the U.S drone campaign. More worryingly, however, is the decrease it shows in Pakistanis' perceptions of the U.S.: 19 percent favorable under President Bush in 2008, but only 12 percent favorable under President Obama in 2012. Whatever the cause, the U.S. is losing the war of perception in Pakistan. It's not clear what can be done to stem America's unpopularity. Policymakers don't seem to think they have many options outside using drones to identify and kill suspected terrorists. While Rehman says she thinks that there are other ways to go after terrorists -- she wasn't clear on specifics -- Washington still seems to consider drones the least-bad way to kill bad guys. One way to think about stemming American unpopularity is to change the terms on which the U.S. relates to Pakistan. Despite last week's apology and reopening of supply lines, relations between the two countries remain tense. The prospects for a close alliance don't seem likely, but the U.S. could help deescalate tensions in part by doing more to consider Pakistan's national pride. Including Pakistani officials in the targeting process more often could be one way of building trust -- though U.S. officials often warn that this can make plans for a drone strike more likely to leak, allowing the target to get away. So it's not clear that a mutually beneficial balance could really be struck. Another way to deescalate tensions might be to focus down the drone program to only high value targets such as al-Qaeda leader Ayman Zawahiri, ending strikes against low level (or unidentified) targets, likely allaying some Pakistani objections to the program while still preserving freedom of action against really important threats.

## signal

CP sends the most powerful signal (while avoiding Congressional confrontation)

Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security advisor under U.S. President Jimmy Carter, 12/3/12, Obama's Moment, www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/12/03/obamas\_moment

In foreign affairs, the central challenge now facing President Barack Obama is how to regain some of the ground lost in recent years in shaping U.S. national security policy. Historically and politically, in America's system of separation of powers, it is the president who has the greatest leeway for decisive action in foreign affairs. He is viewed by the country as responsible for Americans' safety in an increasingly turbulent world. He is seen as the ultimate definer of the goals that the United States should pursue through its diplomacy, economic leverage, and, if need be, military compulsion. And the world at large sees him -- for better or for worse -- as the authentic voice of America. To be sure, he is not a dictator. Congress has a voice. So does the public. And so do vested interests and foreign-policy lobbies. The congressional role in declaring war is especially important not when the United States is the victim of an attack, but when the United States is planning to wage war abroad. Because America is a democracy, public support for presidential foreign-policy decisions is essential. But no one in the government or outside it can match the president's authoritative voice when he speaks and then decisively acts for America. This is true even in the face of determined opposition. Even when some lobbies succeed in gaining congressional support for their particular foreign clients in defiance of the president, for instance, many congressional signatories still quietly convey to the White House their readiness to support the president if he stands firm for "the national interest." And a president who is willing to do so publicly, while skillfully cultivating friends and allies on Capitol Hill, can then establish such intimidating credibility that it is politically unwise to confront him. This is exactly what Obama needs to do now.

Self-restraint creates a credible signal

Eric Posner, Professor of Law, The University of Chicago Law School, and Adrian Vermeule, Professor of Law, Harvard Law School, 2007, The Credible Executive, 74 U. Chi. L. Rev. 865

Our aim in this Article is to identify this dilemma of credibility that afflicts the well-motivated executive and to propose mechanisms for ameliorating it. We focus on emergencies and national security but cast the analysis within a broader framework. Our basic claim is that the credibility dilemma can be addressed by executive signaling. Without any new constitutional amendments, statutes, or legislative action, law and executive practice already contain resources to allow a well-motivated executive to send a credible signal of his motivations, committing to use increased discretion in public-spirited ways. By tying policies to institutional mechanisms that impose heavier costs on ill-motivated actors than on well-motivated ones, the well-motivated executive can credibly signal his good intentions and thus persuade voters that his policies are those that voters would want if fully informed. We focus particularly on mechanisms of executive self-binding that send a signal of credibility by committing presidents to actions or policies that only a well-motivated president would adopt.

Bipartisan independent commission solves credibility

Eric Posner, Professor of Law, The University of Chicago Law School, and Adrian Vermeule, Professor of Law, Harvard Law School, 2007, The Credible Executive, 74 U. Chi. L. Rev. 865

2. Independent commissions.

We now turn to some conceptually coherent mechanisms of executive signaling. Somewhat analogously to Katyal's idea of the internal separation of powers, a well-motivated executive might establish independent commissions to review policy decisions, either before or after the fact. Presidents do this routinely, especially after a policy has had disastrous outcomes, but sometimes beforehand as well. Independent commissions are typically blue-ribbon and bipartisan. n83 We add to this familiar process the idea that the President might gain credibility by publicly committing or binding himself to give the commission authority on some dimension. For example, the president might publicly promise to follow the recommendations of such a commission, or to allow the commission to exercise de facto veto power over a policy decision before it is made, or might promise before the policy is chosen that the commission will be given power to review its success after the fact. To be sure, there will always be some wiggle room in the terms of the promise, but that is true of almost all commitments, which raise the costs of wiggling out even if they do not completely prevent it. Consider whether George W. Bush's credibility would have been enhanced had he appointed a blue-ribbon commission to examine the evidence for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq before the 2003 invasion, and publicly promised not to invade unless the commission found substantial evidence of their existence. Bush would have retained his preexisting legal authority to order the invasion even if the commission found the evidence inadequate, but the political costs of doing so would have been large. Knowing this, and knowing that Bush [\*900] shared that knowledge, the public could have inferred that Bush's professed motive -elimination of weapons of mass destruction -was also his real motive. Public promises that inflict reputational costs on badly motivated behavior help the well-motivated executive to credibly distinguish himself from the ill-motivated one. The more common version of this tactic is to appoint commissions after the relevant event, as George W. Bush did to investigate the faulty reports by intelligence agencies that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. n84 If the president appoints after-the-fact commissions, the commissions can enhance his credibility for the next event -by showing that he will be willing, after that event, to subject his statements to scrutiny by public experts. Here, however, the demonstration of credibility is weaker, because there is no commitment to appoint any after-the-fact commissions in the future, but merely a plausible inference that the president's future behavior will track his past behavior. 3. Bipartisan appointments. In examples of the sort just mentioned, the signaling arises from public position-taking. The well-motivated executive might produce similar effects through appointments to office. n85 A number of statutes require partisan balance on multimember commissions; presidents might approve them because they allow the president to commit to a policy that legislators favor, thus encouraging legislators to increase the scope of the delegation in the first place. n86 For similar reasons, presidents may consent to restrictions on the removal of agency officials, [\*901] because the restriction enables the president to commit to giving the agency some autonomy from the president's preferences. n87 Similar mechanisms can work even where no statutes are in the picture. As previously mentioned, during World War II, FDR appointed Republicans to important cabinet positions, making Stimson his Secretary of War. n88 Clinton appointed William Cohen, a moderate Republican, as Secretary of Defense in order to shore up his credibility on security issues. Bipartisanship of this sort might improve the deliberation that precedes decisions, by impeding various forms of herding, cascades, and groupthink; n89 however, we focus on its credibility-generating effects. By (1) expanding the circle of those who share the president's privileged access to information, (2) ensuring that policy is partly controlled by officials whose preferences differ from the president's, and (3) inviting a potential whistleblower into the tent, bipartisanship helps to dispel the suspicion that policy decisions rest on partisan motives or extreme preferences, which in turn encourages broader delegations of discretion from the public and Congress.

Congress doesn’t solve signal – Presidential leadership is key

Tobin, Senior Online Editor of *Commentary* magazine, 9/3/2013

(Jonathan, Congress Can’t Fill Obama’s Leadership Void, http://www.commentarymagazine.com/2013/09/03/congress-cant-fill-obamas-leadership-void-syria/)

The implications of the congressional debate that will ensue on the future of American foreign policy are clear. Given the growth of isolationism on the right and the left, Obama’s decision to punt on Syria has opened the gates for those who have advocated for an American retreat from global responsibilities to gain more influence. Even if, as it is to be hoped, a majority of both houses of Congress vote to back American action in Syria, it’s not likely that the result of what will follow in the coming days will convince the world that America is still prepared to lead. Although there are good reasons to worry about any intervention in Syria, the arguments for inaction are unpersuasive. Given the stakes involved in letting Assad survive in terms of increasing the power of his Iranian and Hezbollah allies and the precedent set in terms of allowing the use of chemical weapons, the case for action in Syria is powerful. Boehner deserves credit for speaking up after meeting with the president and making it clear the leadership of the House of Representatives is not prepared to bow to the growing chorus of politicians who are more concerned with placing limits on the executive or opposing Obama at every turn than the need to stand up against genocidal dictators. Given the refusal of many Republicans to stand up to the Rand Paul wing of their party, it is refreshing for the normally cautious House speaker to show his willingness to put the national interest above partisan concerns. But no matter what Boehner or people like John McCain or Peter King say this week, there is no substitute for presidential leadership. As I wrote last week, it is axiomatic that liberal Democrats are far better placed to convince a majority of Americans that military action is needed in any circumstance than a conservative Republican. Though the left is just as uncomfortable with the assertion of American power as many on the right, there is little doubt that the president is far better placed than his predecessor was or any Republican might be to rally the country behind a policy that would draw a line in the sand about weapons of mass destruction. But with Obama faltering, no one should labor under the illusion that a divided Congress can either stiffen his spin or step into the leadership vacuum he has left.

Congress has zero credibility–ruins the signal

Cook, Editor of *The Cook Political Report*, Columnist for the *National Journal*, 2011

(Charlie, “Congress Becomes a Laughingstock,” http://cookpolitical.com/story/3210)

My wife told me recently about a Facebook post by an acquaintance that held Congress up to ridicule. Apparently, the sentiment was enthusiastically endorsed by people who spanned her entire network of friends—from the most liberal to the most conservative. My wife couldn’t recall anything else that had been so universally embraced by such a politically diverse group of people. If this debt-ceiling debate is producing any political winners or beneficiaries, they have no connection to Congress or the White House. The unfavorable ratings for both parties are climbing, and President Obama’s job-approval rating in the Gallup Poll fell to 43 percent in one recent week, tied for the lowest of his presidency. (At this writing, it is at 46 percent approval/46 percent disapproval, hardly what a president seeking reelection wants to see.) The debt-ceiling debacle has become like a bomb that keeps exploding in Washington, hurting both sides and each end of Pennsylvania Avenue, effectively damaging everyone in sight. Sadly, my view is that it will probably take a significant stock-market plunge of 500 or 1,000 points in the Dow Jones industrial average, perhaps triggered by a bond-ratings downgrade, to focus minds and cut through the political posturing. The stock and bond markets, neurotic and skittish under the best of circumstances, have been remarkably patient, looking the other way and quietly assuming that everything will work out. They may reach the end of their patience any day. Even a modest deal on deficit reduction and a short-term increase in the debt ceiling may not bring enough confidence to the markets. A significant market plunge would cause great pain to 401(k) retirement plans, other personal savings, and the economy in general. The negative wealth effect would be great, but another type of loss would be just as bad—just not as obvious. Washington is now sullying America’s long-deserved reputation as the leading country in the world to such an extent that we are becoming a laughingstock. The renowned, late journalist A.J. Liebling, a fixture for many years in The New Yorker and a chronicler of then-Louisiana Gov. Earl Long, once wrote that the home state I share with Long was “the northernmost of the banana republics.” If Liebling were alive today, he might expand his “northernmost” banana republic to include the whole United States, with Washington as its sorry capital. My guess is that most members of Congress and their aides are too close to the process and don’t fully appreciate what they are doing to themselves, the institution, and the nation’s political process. The Pictorial Directory test will determine if I’m right.

## perm

The perm is the worst of all worlds—aff or CP are individually better

Metzger ‘9

Gillian, Professor of Law, Columbia Law School, “THE INTERDEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SEPARATION OF POWERS,” 59 Emory L.J. 423

Equally important, the relationship between internal and external separation of powers is reciprocal: Internal and external checks reinforce and operate in conjunction with one another. Congress needs information to conduct meaningful oversight of the Executive Branch. n94 Internal agency experts and watchdogs are important sources of that information, whether in the guise of [\*445] formal reports, studies, and testimony or informal conversations and leaks. n95 Procedural constraints within agencies can serve a similar function, alerting Congress to agency activities. n96 Internal mechanisms also reinforce congressional mandates by creating bodies of personnel within the Executive Branch who are committed to enforcing the governing statutory regime that sets out the parameters of their authority and regulatory responsibilities - and on whose expertise the functioning of these regulatory regimes often depends. n97 Courts equally depend on information and evidence compiled by agency personnel to review agency actions, and they have invoked this dependence to justify the requirement that agencies disclose underlying information and offer detailed explanations of their decisions. n98 Moreover, despite courts regularly intoning that "it [is] not the function of the court to probe the mental processes of Secretaries in reaching [their] conclusions," n99 judicial review of agency actions often appears to turn on judges' perceptions of the role politics played in decisionmaking by agency officials. n100 Evidence that decisions were made over the objections of career staff and agency professionals often triggers more rigorous review. n101 A particularly striking [\*446] suggestion of how internal checks can effect judicial review came in the recent Boumediene litigation. Just a few months after refusing to grant certiorari in order to allow the Combatant Status Review Tribunal process to proceed, the Court reversed course and granted review, apparently influenced by the concerns of military lawyers about how the tribunals were functioning. n102

## At: links to politics

Their evidence assumes we are executive action that goes through Congress—not our mechanism

#### CP is executive action—obviously avoids Congressional fights

Fine 12

Jeffrey A. Fine, assistant professor of political science at Clemson University. He has published articles in the Journal of Politics, Political Research Quarterly, and Political Behavior. Adam L. Warber is an associate professor of political science at Clemson University. He is the author of Executive Orders and the Modern Presidency, Presidential Studies Quarterly, June 2012, " Circumventing Adversity: Executive Orders and Divided Government", Vol. 42, No. 2, Ebsco

We also should expect presidents to prioritize and be strategic in the types of executive orders that they create to maneuver around a hostile Congress. There are a variety of reasons that can drive a president’s decision. For example, presidents can use an executive order to move the status quo of a policy issue to a position that is closer to their ideal point. By doing so, presidents are able to pressure Congress to respond, perhaps by passing a new law that represents a compromise between the preferences of the president and Congress. Forcing Congress’s hand to enact legislation might be a preferred option for the president, if he perceives Congress to be unable or unwilling to pass meaningful legislation in the ﬁrst place. While it is possible that such unilateral actions might spur Congress to pass a law to modify or reverse a president’s order, such responses by Congress are rare (Howell 2003, 113-117; Warber 2006, 119). Enacting a major policy executive order allows the president to move the equilibrium toward his preferred outcome without having to spend time lining up votes or forming coalitions with legislators. As a result, and since reversal from Congress is unlikely, presidents have a greater incentive to issue major policy orders to overcome legislative hurdles.

#### The CP triggers Congressional follow-on and avoids confrontation

Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security advisor under U.S. President Jimmy Carter, 12/3/12, Obama's Moment, www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/12/03/obamas\_moment

In foreign affairs, the central challenge now facing President Barack Obama is how to regain some of the ground lost in recent years in shaping U.S. national security policy. Historically and politically, in America's system of separation of powers, it is the president who has the greatest leeway for decisive action in foreign affairs. He is viewed by the country as responsible for Americans' safety in an increasingly turbulent world. He is seen as the ultimate definer of the goals that the United States should pursue through its diplomacy, economic leverage, and, if need be, military compulsion. And the world at large sees him -for better or for worse -as the authentic voice of America.

To be sure, he is not a dictator. Congress has a voice. So does the public. And so do vested interests and foreign-policy lobbies. The congressional role in declaring war is especially important not when the United States is the victim of an attack, but when the United States is planning to wage war abroad. Because America is a democracy, public support for presidential foreign-policy decisions is essential. But no one in the government or outside it can match the president's authoritative voice when he speaks and then decisively acts for America.

This is true even in the face of determined opposition. Even when some lobbies succeed in gaining congressional support for their particular foreign clients in defiance of the president, for instance, many congressional signatories still quietly convey to the White House their readiness to support the president if he stands firm for "the national interest." And a president who is willing to do so publicly, while skillfully cultivating friends and allies on Capitol Hill, can then establish such intimidating credibility that it is politically unwise to confront him. This is exactly what Obama needs to do now.

# War powers

## circumvention

Also causes rollback/circumvention

Laura Young, Ph.D., Purdue University Associate Fellow, June 2013, Unilateral Presidential Policy Making and the Impact of Crises, Presidential Studies Quarterly, Volume 43, Issue 2

A president looks for chances to increase his power (Moe and Howell 1999). Windows of opportunity provide those occasions. These openings create an environment where the president faces little backlash from Congress, the judicial branch, or even the public. Though institutional and behavioral conditions matter, domestic and international crises play a pivotal role in aiding a president who wishes to increase his power (Howell and Kriner 2008, 475). These events overcome the obstacles faced by the institutional make-up of government. They also allow a president lacking in skill and will or popular support the opportunity to shape the policy formation process. In short, focusing events increase presidential unilateral power.

# Stability adv

Climate change pounds Pakistan stability

Parenti 13

Christian Parenti, a Nation contributing editor and visiting scholar at the CUNY Graduate Center, The Nation, April 30, 2013, "With Friends Like These: On Pakistan", http://www.thenation.com/article/174126/friends-these-pakistan?page=0,2#axzz2escYdVwG

One can no longer write a book like Rashid’s and remain silent on the issue of climate change. Pakistan, like all states, will face unimaginable, multifaceted stresses in the coming decades as a result of anthropogenic climate change. Most worrying of all, for three years in a row large parts of the country have been inundated by extreme monsoon rains: in 2010, one area of northwest Pakistan received many times its annual rainfall in less than four days. Floods have inundated up to 20 percent of the country at a time and swept away the homes of hundreds of thousands of mostly poor, hungry and increasingly angry peasants. The incidence of drastic flooding fits the regional pattern that scientists have predicted for the onset of climate change.

The floods have revealed the appalling class oppression that exists in the countryside. In displaced-person camps, I have encountered tenant farmers—landless peasants called haris—who, though stuck in their miserable tents with little to no aid, were refusing to return to their home villages because of the horrible exploitation and humiliation meted out by the zamindars, as the feudal landlords are known. Since independence and partition in 1947, Pakistan has toyed with the idea of land reform but done very little of it. In the wake of the floods, landlords were brazen enough to visit some of these camps and attempt to force “their” haris back to work, but the peasants resisted them by force.

One of the more extreme factions of political Islam in Pakistan, the Jamaat-ud-Dawa, is developing a politicized discourse about the environmental crisis [see “Pakistan One Year After the Floods,” July 18/25, 2011]. The Jamaat-ud-Dawa is linked to the outlawed Islamist terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Taiba, which engineered the 2008 Mumbai attacks and has accused India of “water terrorism” because it was building tunnels and dams on key Indus tributaries. In other words, they fear that India will choke off the Indus and destroy Pakistan’s economy. Thus, Jamaat-ud-Dawa has marched under the slogan “Water Flows or Blood.”

Climate change also threatens atomic Pakistan. Set aside the worry of terrorists getting hold of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons; rising seas and economic disintegration may undermine the civilian atomic infrastructure on which the military program depends long before that. And as Michael Kugelman explained last May in Foreign Policy, the Karachi nuclear power plant is vulnerable to flooding. More than 8 million people live within thirty kilometers of it. As it is, the reactor is “chronically incontinent” and leaks radioactive water regularly. Given Pakistan’s traffic-choked roads and poor emergency preparedness, an intense climate-change-driven cyclone making landfall at the plant “could be truly catastrophic.”

# politics

## 1nc

#### Obama singularly focused on the fiscal crisis—his political capital will resolve it before shutdown and default

Jonathan Allen, Politico, 9/19/13, GOP battles boost President Obama, dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=17961849-5BE5-43CA-B1BC-ED8A12A534EB

There’s a simple reason President Barack Obama is using his bully pulpit to focus the nation’s attention on the battle over the budget: In this fight, he’s watching Republicans take swings at each other.

And that GOP fight is a lifeline for an administration that had been scrambling to gain control its message after battling congressional Democrats on the potential use of military force in Syria and the possible nomination of Larry Summers to run the Federal Reserve.

If House Republicans and Obama can’t cut even a short-term deal for a continuing resolution, the government’s authority to spend money will run out on Oct. 1. Within weeks, the nation will default on its debt if an agreement isn’t reached to raise the federal debt limit.

For some Republicans, those deadlines represent a leverage point that can be used to force Obama to slash his health care law. For others, they’re a zero hour at which the party will implode if it doesn’t cut a deal.

Meanwhile, “on the looming fiscal issues, Democrats — both liberal and conservative, executive and congressional — are virtually 100 percent united,” said Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.).

Just a few days ago, all that Obama and his aides could talk about were Syria and Summers. Now, they’re bringing their party together and shining a white hot light on Republican disunity over whether to shut down the government and plunge the nation into default in a vain effort to stop Obamacare from going into effect.

The squabbling among Republicans has gotten so vicious that a Twitter hashtag — #GOPvsGOPugliness — has become a thick virtual data file for tracking the intraparty insults. Moderates, and even some conservatives, are slamming Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, a tea party favorite, for ramping up grassroots expectations that the GOP will shut down the government if it can’t win concessions from the president to “defund” his signature health care law.

“I didn’t go to Harvard or Princeton, but I can count,” Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) tweeted, subtly mocking Cruz’s Ivy League education. “The defunding box canyon is a tactic that will fail and weaken our position.”

While it is well-timed for the White House to interrupt a bad slide, Obama’s singular focus on the budget battle is hardly a last-minute shift. Instead, it is a return to the narrative arc that the White House was working to build before the Syria crisis intervened.

And it’s so important to the president’s strategy that White House officials didn’t consider postponing Monday’s rollout of the most partisan and high-stakes phase even when a shooter murdered a dozen people at Washington’s Navy Yard that morning.

The basic storyline, well under way over the summer, was to have the president point to parts of his agenda, including reducing the costs of college and housing, designed to strengthen the middle class; use them to make the case that he not only saved the country from economic disaster but is fighting to bolster the nation’s finances on both the macro and household level; and then argue that Republicans’ desire to lock in the sequester and leverage a debt-ceiling increase for Obamacare cuts would reverse progress made.

The president is on firm ground, White House officials say, because he stands with the public in believing that the government shouldn’t shut down and that the country should pay its bills.

#### The plan causes an inter-branch fight that derails Obama’s agenda

Douglas Kriner, Assistant Profess of Political Science at Boston University, 2010, After the Rubicon: Congress, Presidents, and the Politics of Waging War, p. 67-69

Raising or Lowering Political Costs by Affecting Presidential Political Capital

Shaping both real and anticipated public opinion are two important ways in which Congress can raise or lower the political costs of a military action for the president. However, focusing exclusively on opinion dynamics threatens to obscure the much broader political consequences of domestic reaction—particularly congressional opposition—to presidential foreign policies. At least since Richard Neustadt's seminal work Presidential Power, presidency scholars have warned that costly political battles in one policy arena frequently have significant ramifications for presidential power in other realms. Indeed, two of Neustadt's three "cases of command"—Truman's seizure of the steel mills and firing of General Douglas MacArthur—explicitly discussed the broader political consequences of stiff domestic resistance to presidential assertions of commander-in-chief powers. In both cases, Truman emerged victorious in the case at hand—yet, Neustadt argues, each victory cost Truman dearly in terms of his future power prospects and leeway in other policy areas, many of which were more important to the president than achieving unconditional victory over North Korea."

While congressional support leaves the president's reserve of political capital intact, congressional criticism saps energy from other initiatives on the home front by forcing the president to expend energy and effort defending his international agenda. Political capital spent shoring up support for a president's foreign policies is capital that is unavailable for his future policy initiatives. Moreover, any weakening in the president's political clout may have immediate ramifications for his reelection prospects, as well as indirect consequences for congressional races." Indeed, Democratic efforts to tie congressional Republican incumbents to President George W. Bush and his war policies paid immediate political dividends in the 2006 midterms, particularly in states, districts, and counties that had suffered the highest casualty rates in the Iraq War.6°

In addition to boding ill for the president's perceived political capital and reputation, such partisan losses in Congress only further imperil his programmatic agenda, both international and domestic. Scholars have long noted that President Lyndon Johnson's dream of a Great Society also perished in the rice paddies of Vietnam. Lacking both the requisite funds in a war-depleted treasury and the political capital needed to sustain his legislative vision, Johnson gradually let his domestic goals slip away as he hunkered down in an effort first to win and then to end the Vietnam War. In the same way, many of President Bush's highest second-term domestic priorities, such as Social Security and immigration reform, failedperhaps in large part because the administration had to expend so much energy and effort waging a rear-guard action against congressional critics of the war in Iraq.

When making their cost-benefit calculations, presidents surely consider these wider political costs of congressional opposition to their military policies. If congressional opposition in the military arena stands to derail other elements of his agenda, all else being equal, the president will be more likely to judge the benefits of military action insufficient to its costs than if Congress stood behind him in the international arena

#### That spills-over to government shutdown and US default—that kills the economy and US credibility

Norm Ornstein, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, 9/1/13, Showdowns and Shutdowns, www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/09/01/showdowns\_and\_shutdowns\_syria\_congress\_obama

Then there is the overload of business on the congressional agenda when the two houses return on Sept. 9 -with only nine legislative days scheduled for action in the month. We have serious confrontations ahead on spending bills and the debt limit, as the new fiscal year begins on Oct. 1 and the debt ceiling approaches just a week or two thereafter. Before the news that we would drop everything for an intense debate on whether to strike militarily in Syria, Congress-watchers were wondering how we could possibly deal with the intense bargaining required to avoid one or more government shutdowns and/or a real breach of the debt ceiling, with devastating consequences for American credibility and the international economy.

Beyond the deep policy and political divisions, Republican congressional leaders will likely use both a shutdown and the debt ceiling as hostages to force the president to cave on their demands for deeper spending cuts. Avoiding this end-game bargaining will require the unwavering attention of the same top leaders in the executive and legislative branches who will be deeply enmeshed in the Syria debate. The possibility -even probability -of disruptions caused by partial shutdowns could complicate any military actions. The possibility is also great that the rancor that will accompany the showdowns over fiscal policy will bleed over into the debate about America and Syria.

**Nuclear war**

**Harris and Burrows ‘9**

(Mathew, PhD European History at Cambridge, counselor in the National Intelligence Council (NIC) and Jennifer, member of the NIC’s Long Range Analysis Unit “Revisiting the Future: Geopolitical Effects of the Financial Crisis” <http://www.ciaonet.org/journals/twq/v32i2/f_0016178_13952.pdf>, AM)

Of course, the report encompasses more than economics and indeed believes the future is likely to be the result of a number of intersecting and interlocking forces. With so many possible permutations of outcomes, each with ample Revisiting the Future opportunity for unintended consequences, there is a growing sense of insecurity. Even so, history may be more instructive than ever. While we continue to believe that the Great Depression is not likely to be repeated, the lessons to be drawn from that period include the harmful effects on fledgling democracies and multiethnic societies (think Central Europe in 1920s and 1930s) and on the sustainability of multilateral institutions (think League of Nations in the same period). There is no reason to think that this would not be true in the twenty-first as much as in the twentieth century. For that reason, the ways in which the potential for greater conflict could grow would seem to be even more apt in a constantly volatile economic environment as they would be if change would be steadier. In surveying those risks, the report stressed the likelihood that terrorism and nonproliferation will remain priorities even as resource issues move up on the international agenda. Terrorism’s appeal will decline if economic growth continues in the Middle East and youth unemployment is reduced. For those terrorist groups that remain active in 2025, however, the diffusion of technologies and scientific knowledge will place some of the world’s most dangerous capabilities within their reach. Terrorist groups in 2025 will likely be a combination of descendants of long established groups\_inheriting organizational structures, command and control processes, and training procedures necessary to conduct sophisticated attacks\_and newly emergent collections of the angry and disenfranchised that become self-radicalized, particularly in the absence of economic outlets that would become narrower in an economic downturn. The most dangerous casualty of any economically-induced drawdown of U.S. military presence would almost certainly be the Middle East. Although Iran’s acquisition of nuclear weapons is not inevitable, worries about a nuclear-armed Iran could lead states in the region to develop new security arrangements with external powers, acquire additional weapons, and consider pursuing their own nuclear ambitions. It is not clear that the type of stable deterrent relationship that existed between the great powers for most of the Cold War would emerge naturally in the Middle East with a nuclear Iran. Episodes of low intensity conflict and terrorism taking place under a nuclear umbrella could lead to an **unintended escalation** and broader conflict if clear red lines between those states involved are not well established. The close proximity of potential nuclear rivals combined with underdeveloped surveillance capabilities and mobile dual-capable Iranian missile systems also will produce inherent difficulties in achieving reliable indications and warning of an impending nuclear attack. The lack of strategic depth in neighboring states like Israel, short warning and missile flight times, and uncertainty of Iranian intentions may place more focus on preemption rather than defense, potentially leading to **escalating** **crises**. 36 Types of conflict that the world continues to experience, such as over resources, could reemerge, particularly if protectionism grows and there is a resort to neo-mercantilist practices. Perceptions of renewed energy scarcity will drive countries to take actions to assure their future access to energy supplies. In the worst case, this could result in interstate conflicts if government leaders deem assured access to energy resources, for example, to be essential for maintaining domestic stability and the survival of their regime. Even actions short of war, however, will have important geopolitical implications. Maritime security concerns are providing a rationale for naval buildups and modernization efforts, such as China’s and India’s development of blue water naval capabilities. If the fiscal stimulus focus for these countries indeed turns inward, one of the most obvious funding targets may be military. Buildup of regional naval capabilities could lead to increased tensions, rivalries, and counterbalancing moves, but it also will create opportunities for multinational cooperation in protecting critical sea lanes. With water also becoming scarcer in Asia and the Middle East, cooperation to manage changing water resources is likely to be increasingly difficult both within and between states in a more dog-eat-dog world.

## UNIQ

#### Their ev is media hype—GOP opposition isn’t immovable—House GOP strategy makes a deal likely

Chris Weignant, 9/18/13, The Boehner and the Restless, www.chrisweigant.com/2013/09/18/the-boehner-and-the-restless/

The politico-media empire which writes the rules of the Washington "What Serious People Are Saying" game have apparently decided that the government shutdown is now melodramatically going to happen. Cue ominous organ music blast (dum Dum DUM!). The key word in that opening sentence is "melodramatically," because our government can now be seen as nothing more than a continuing soap opera. Call it "As The Boehner Turns," or perhaps more appropriately "The Boehner And The Restless." Personally, I don't buy it. I'm taking the contrarian position on this one. John Boehner just announced that the House will vote on a continuing resolution (to continue funding the government past the first of October) which attempts to "defund" Obamacare, and that the vote will happen this Friday. Across Washington, in newsrooms everywhere, pearls were clutched and editors swooned (and had to be revived with smelling salts). The sky is falling! The shutdown will happen! Oh, my goodness! What a calamity! The melodrama was turned up to eleven, and the knob was then snapped off. The car was about to careen off the cliff (right before the commercial break), so stay tuned, folks.... But, as I said, I don't buy it. In fact, I will go so far as to say that the timing of the vote increases the chances that the government shutdown will not in fact happen. The vote, I suspect, is nothing more than John Boehner showboating within his own caucus -- nothing more than a sop to the rabid Tea Party members who are demanding this showdown. The reason I reach this conclusion is that if Boehner were truly serious about using this bill as his only negotiating position, he would have waited until the last minute to introduce it. Instead, he's going to hold a vote this Friday. There are three basic endgames which are possible in the showdown. The first is that Senate Democrats and President Obama wake up one morning and, in astonishment, blurt out, "What were we thinking? Obamacare sucks! Let's repeal the signature legislation of Barack Obama's term in office!" They then leap out of bed, pass the House's bill and sign it into law. Obamacare is dead! Well, this isn't really true, since the House "defunding" Obamacare doesn't actually defund something like 80 percent of Obamacare, but whatever. The chances of this scenario happening are precisely zero, so it's a moot point. The second endgame is that the House Republicans refuse to budge, the Senate and the House can't agree on a continuing resolution, and the government shuts down at the start of next month. This is what the media is salivating over, with full soundtrack and all the melodrama they can heap upon it. What a great start to the fall season for the soap opera that is Washington! The chances of this happening are unknown, but I predict that they are one whale of a lot smaller than the media would have you currently believe. And, as I said, holding the vote this Friday means the chances of a shutdown actually happening have just grown even smaller. If Boehner really wanted this scenario to happen (he's publicly said he does not, for the record), then he would use the clock to his advantage and delay the vote on the Tea Party bill until, perhaps, next Friday -- giving the Senate almost no time to react. But he's not taking this route, which is the main point everyone seems to be missing (or willfully ignoring, to boost ratings for the soap opera). The third scenario is the most likely. John Boehner, following a script he has used in the past, allows the Tea Party to pillage and riot for a very precise amount of time. He allows their "take no prisoners" bill to be voted on. There is no guarantee that it'll even pass -- another fact many media types are ignoring today. Boehner has had to ignobly yank quite a few bills from the floor before the vote because he simply cannot round up enough votes within his own party to pass them. This could happen with Friday's bill, although it is more likely that Boehner will allow the vote even if he knows it will fail (because doing so will strengthen his position). But say for the sake of conversation that it does pass. The Tea Party will triumphantly proclaim victory, and the Senate will quickly dispose of the bill in one fashion or another -- leaving us right back at square one. The Senate leaders will then meet with the White House and come up with a budget bill which is acceptable to sane Republicans in the Senate, but which does not touch Obamacare's funding. The Senate will pass this bill, and send it over to the House (technically the House has to originate spending bills, but this can be dealt with by a gimmick, as it always is). The ball will be back in Boehner's court. Boehner has already cancelled vacation days scheduled for next week. The House will be in session. And it'll have enough time to act before the deadline is reached. Boehner will (again, he's done this before, folks) reluctantly tell his Tea Party members "well, we tried our hardest, but it didn't work." And then -- at the last minute, no doubt -- he'll put the Senate bill on the House floor for a vote, breaking the Republican "Hastert Rule" once again. Virtually all the Democrats will vote for it, and at least a few dozen Republicans will join them (those in such safe districts that they don't worry about Tea Party primary challenges, for the most part). The bill will pass. A few minor concessions may be wrung from the budget itself, as a sort of consolation prize for House Republicans ("See? We did get some sort of victory!"), and this tweaked bill will go back to the Senate for a vote. The Senate will pass it, and it will thus be placed upon Obama's desk for his signature. Obama, of course, will sign it. The only real question in this scenario is how close we come to hitting the deadline. Maybe the government will temporarily "shut down" for a day or two as the last Senate vote happens, at worst. But some sort of budget will be in place, until the next time this budgetary plot device arises (which seems to be planned for December, just so we can all have a holiday special for the Washington soap opera). Call me an optimist if you will, but this still seems the most-likely scenario. Boehner, by holding the big vote early, is signaling that there will be plenty of time to fix things at the last minute after he tosses the Tea Party their bone. The Tea Partiers will experience a few days of euphoria and then be consumed with white-hot rage when they don't ultimately get their way. Primary challenges will be threatened all around. Talk radio and the conservative echo chamber in the media will explode with angst and denunciation. But we will have a budget, and the government will not shut down.

#### Trends go neg—GOP crazies are uniting under Boehner

Ryan Grim, HuffPo, 9/19/13, Ted Cruz, Liberal Hero, May Have Just Bailed Washington Out Of The Shutdown Crisis , www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/19/ted-cruz-shutdown-house-republicans\_n\_3954461.html?utm\_hp\_ref=politics

In one moment, with one statement, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) managed Wednesday to accomplish what House GOP leaders, Republican senators and the Wall Street Journal editorial page had failed to do for months: Persuade rank-and-file House Republicans that shutting down the government in an attempt to defund Obamacare was simply impossible.

On Wednesday, after House leaders said they'd go forward with the defund strategy Cruz had been pitching with ads on Fox News, his response boiled down to 'Thanks, you're on your own.'

"Harry Reid will no doubt try to strip the defund language from the continuing resolution, and right now he likely has the votes to do so," Cruz said in a statement. "At that point, House Republicans must stand firm, hold their ground, and continue to listen to the American people."

On the surface, House Republicans were seething. Members openly accused Cruz and his allies, Sens. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), of waving the white flag before the fight had even begun. One House GOP aide even called Cruz a "joke, plain and simple."

But by admitting that he had no ability in the Senate to back up the House effort to defund Obamacare, and saying so on the same day that House Republicans had announced they would support the Cruz-inspired strategy, Cruz has inadvertently done more than any other lawmaker to avert a government shutdown.

"Cruz officially jumped the shark this week," said one GOP operative allied with House leadership, who, like others, requested anonymity to speak critically about fellow Republicans. "He's doing for the House Leaders what they couldn't do for themselves. House rank-and-file members are uniting with Boehner, Cantor over Ted Cruz's idiotic position."

#### There’s sufficient negotiating room now

Matthew Yglesias, Slate, 9/18/13, The Odds of a Government Shutdown Are Falling, Not Rising, www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2013/09/18/government\_shutdown\_odds\_falling\_not\_rising.html

A Jonathan Weisman Ashley Parker piece headlined "House Bill Cuts Health Funds, Raising Odds of U.S. Shutdown" is going to alarm a lot of New York Times readers tomorrow morning.

But read on to the second graf of the piece and you'll see that the odds are not rising at all. What's happening is that John Boehner is preparing to pass an appropriations bill that also defunds Obamacare that he knows perfectly well stands no chance of passing, and he's hoping that doing this will placate the right wing of the his caucus for when he surrenders.

Here they explain:

House leaders are hoping the vote on the defunding measure will placate conservatives once the Democratically controlled Senate rejects it. The House, they are betting, would then pass a stopgap spending measure unencumbered by such policy baggage and shift the argument to the debt ceiling, which must be raised by mid-October if the government is to avoid an economically debilitating default.

The key thing to remember here is that the House, as a discretionary decision, operates by the "Hastert Rule" in which only bills that are supported by a majority of GOP members can be brought to the floor for a vote. There is no Hastert-compliant appropriations bill that can pass the Senate. But there very likely is majority support in the House for the kind of "clean" funding bill that can also pass the Senate. All that has to happen is for John Boehner to violate the Hastert Rule. And the Hastert Rule isn't actually a rule, it's something Boehner has put aside many times. But it's also a rule he can't flagrantly ignore, lest his caucus get too grumpy and depose him. The operating theory here is that if Boehner has the whole House GOP indulge the maximalist faction by all passing a defuding bill, that creates enough room to move to later violate the Hastert Rule and pass a continuing resolution.

If anything is happening to the odds of a shutdown, in other words, they're falling, not rising.

#### Obama has enough capital post-Syria for a budget deal

Paul Koring, Globe and Mail, 9/16/13, Obama faces fall showdown with Congress , www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/obama-faces-fall-showdown-with-congress/article14329090/

With war against Syria averted, or perhaps postponed, U.S. President Barack Obama can turn again to September’s anticipated battles against his still-implacable Republican opponents.

Looming is a Sept. 30 deadline for Congress to fund ongoing government operations – everything from food stamps to new bullets – and a showdown is shaping up between a weakened President and Republicans riven by their own divisions.

Then, some time in October, the U.S. Treasury will face another crisis as it reaches its borrowing limit. Without an increase, which some Republicans want to block, the U.S. government could face default. Meanwhile, hopes for progress on major policy initiatives such immigration reform, long expected to be the big legislative issue this fall, are fading.

As hostile as relations are, some observers suggest the averted showdown over Syria – it’s now widely accepted that Congress would have rejected Mr. Obama’s call for an authorization of force had it gone to a vote – didn’t make things any worse.

“We don’t know what September would have looked like in the absence of the Syria issue but my guess is that it would have looked an awful lot like it looks today,” said Sarah Binder, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who watches Congress closely.

“These divisions over spending and size of government have been with us all along and the [Republican] opposition to Obama has been quite strong all along. … Set aside the issue of Syria and really nothing has changed.”

The President’s handling of Syria has hurt him, according to some. Mr. Obama “seems to be very uncomfortable being commander-in-chief of this nation,” said Senator Bob Corker, a Tennessee Republican, adding it left the President “ a diminished figure here on Capitol Hill.”

Americans strongly opposed military intervention in Syria but they still want their presidents to command global respect. Mr. Obama’s embrace of Russian help on Syria may enhance his image internationally as a conciliator but, at home, it can be seen as seen as weak – or vacillating. Americans want their presidents to speak softly and carry a big stick, even if they are also weary of overseas wars.

In turn, despite the President’s impressive oratory, he may be wearing out his bully pulpit. Powerful speeches have failed, so far – on gun control, budget reform and immigration – and now the President has spent more scarce second-term political capital wooing congressional leaders on Syrian strikes that may never materialize.

The mood is ugly on Capitol Hill and it’s made worse by warnings that delays and the time spent talking about Syria may cost members the week off they had planned starting Sept 23.

With the President’s approval rating plunging – and backing for “Obamacare” slipping below 40 per cent – the right wing of the Republican party is seeking ways to “defund” the ambitious health-care program. The most recent Pew Research Center poll, published last week, put the President’s approval at 44 per cent, down 11 points over a year ago.

On Capitol Hill, it’s a three-cornered fight, with Mr. Obama facing off against the Republican-dominated House of Representatives and the Republicans in Congress bitterly divided over whether it’s worth pushing the nation over a fiscal cliff to drive a stake into the President’s health-care program.

One grand plan that would have funded the government, raised the debt ceiling and delayed Obamacare for a year seems dead on arrival The President “will never accept anything that delays or defunds” health care, White House spokesman Jay Carney said last week.

Everyone has an eye on the 2014 elections and frustrations are threatening to boil.

“The anarchists have taken over,” railed Senator Harry Reid, the Nevada Democrat and Majority leader. He accused the Republican leadership of allowing the party’s right wing to block efforts at finding a deal.

“We’re in a position here where people who don’t believe in government – and that’s what the Tea Party is all about – are winning,” Mr. Reid said.

Republican Leader Speaker John Boehner, who backed the President on Syria and irked those in his party who want Mr. Obama opposed on everything, still says that a deal can be found.

“I think there’s a way to get there,” he said late last week, before droves of legislators headed home for a three-day weekend. “There are a million options,” he added.

But even as Mr. Obama’s approval ratings have dropped sharply, they still remain well above the abysmal levels recorded by Congress.

#### Their ev is over-interpreting GOP posture—they aren’t unified over their disruptive budget strategy

Russell Berman, The Hill, 9/20/13, House poised to pass spending bill defunding ObamaCare, thehill.com/homenews/house/323517-house-poised-to-pass-spending-bill-defunding-obamacare

A day after angering House Republicans by suggesting a Senate vote was already lost, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.) vowed to do “anything possible” to defund the healthcare law, including a filibuster of a spending bill that kept it operating.

Yet it was clear that the strategy did not have unified Republican effort. Appearing on CNN, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) said the effort to hollow out the healthcare law was doomed.

“In the U.S. Senate, we will not defund ObamaCare,” McCain said. “And to think we can is not rational.”

Boehner told reporters he expected the bill to pass Friday, and a few conservatives suggested it could gain nearly unanimous support from Republicans. Most Democrats are expected to oppose the measure over the defunding provision and a spending level of $986 trillion that maintains sequestration cuts.

## Capital key

Capital key determines uniqueness—overcomes House GOP opposition

Heidi Moore, The Guardian, 9/10/13, Syria: the great distraction, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/10/obama-syria-what-about-sequester

Political capital – the ability to horse-trade and win political favors from a receptive audience – is a finite resource in Washington. Pursuing misguided policies takes up time, but it also eats up credibility in asking for the next favor. It's fair to say that congressional Republicans, particularly in the House, have no love for Obama and are likely to oppose anything he supports. That's exactly the reason the White House should stop proposing policies as if it is scattering buckshot and focus with intensity on the domestic tasks it wants to accomplish, one at a time.

The president is scheduled to speak six times this week, mostly about Syria. That includes evening news interviews, an address to the nation, and numerous other speeches. Behind the scenes, he is calling members of Congress to get them to fall into line. Secretary of State John Kerry is omnipresent, so ubiquitous on TV that it may be easier just to get him his own talk show called Syria Today.

It would be a treat to see White House aides lobbying as aggressively – and on as many talk shows – for a better food stamp bill, an end to the debt-ceiling drama, or a solution to the senseless sequestration cuts, as it is on what is clearly a useless boondoggle in Syria.

There's no reason to believe that Congress can have an all-consuming debate about Syria and then, somehow refreshed, return to a domestic agenda that has been as chaotic and urgent as any in recent memory. The President should have judged his options better. As it is, he should now judge his actions better.

Produces a budget compromise even if it looks impossible now

Joe Klein, TIME, 9/11/13, Obama and Syria: Stumbling Toward Damascus, swampland.time.com/2013/09/11/obama-and-syria-stumbling-toward-damascus/

There are domestic consequences as well. This was supposed to be the month when the nation’s serious fiscal and budgetary problems were hashed out, or not, with the Republicans. There was a chance that a coalition could be built to back a compromise to solve the debt-ceiling problem and the quiet horrors caused by sequestration and to finally achieve a long-term budget compromise. But any deal would have required intense, single-minded negotiation, including political protection, or sweeteners, for those Republicans who crossed the line. Precious time has been wasted. And, after Syria, it will be difficult for any member of Congress to believe that this President will stick to his guns or provide protection.

Neg Klein ev is about the budget negotiations which occur AFTER the debt ceiling --- debt ceiling is key to budget success---- Obama has a small window for the debate—his capital is key to resolution

AP, 9/12/13, Syria debate on hold, Obama refocuses on agenda, www.timesleader.com/news/apbusiness/569385542543256648058/Syria-debate-on-hold-Obama-refocuses-on-agenda

With a military strike against Syria on hold, President Barack Obama tried Thursday to reignite momentum for his second-term domestic agenda. But his progress could hinge on the strength of his standing on Capitol Hill after what even allies acknowledge were missteps in the latest foreign crisis.

"It is still important to recognize that we have a lot of things left to do here in this government," Obama told his Cabinet, starting a sustained White House push to refocus the nation on matters at home as key benchmarks on the budget and health care rapidly approach.

"The American people are still interested in making sure that our kids are getting the kind of education they deserve, that we are putting people back to work," Obama said.

The White House plans to use next week's five-year anniversary of the 2008 financial collapse to warn Republicans that shutting down the government or failing to raise the debt limit could drag down the still-fragile economy. With Hispanic Heritage Month to begin Monday, Obama is also expected to press for a stalled immigration overhaul and urge minorities to sign up for health care exchanges beginning Oct. 1.

Among the events planned for next week is a White House ceremony highlighting Americans working on immigrant and citizenship issues. Administration officials will also promote overhaul efforts at naturalization ceremonies across the country. On Sept. 21, Obama will speak at the Congressional Black Caucus Gala, where he'll trumpet what the administration says are benefits of the president's health care law for African-Americans and other minorities.

Two major factors are driving Obama's push to get back on track with domestic issues after three weeks of Syria dominating the political debate. Polls show the economy, jobs and health care remain Americans' top concerns. And Obama has a limited window to make progress on those matters in a second term, when lame-duck status can quickly creep up on presidents, particularly if they start losing public support.

Obama’s capital will be effective on the budget

John Harris, Politico, 9/18/13, What’s wrong with President Obama?, dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=B56971FB-BD77-47B8-8EF0-DC47E9CD7FC6

With big tests now looming on the budget and immigration, there could hardly be a better time for Obama to show at last that he has the ability to provide cover to the people who support him on difficult issues, and the ability to punish the people who choose a different path.

## POUNDERS

## AT: Syria/ Russia

#### Syria validates the link thesis, but the deal and lack of a vote mean it won’t impact the short-term agenda—that’s all that matters!

Matthew Baum, AlJazeera America, 9/16/13, Obama's good fortune on Syria, america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/9/16/obama-opinion-pollingsyria.html

Secretary of State John Kerry's announcement Saturday morning of a framework agreement with Russia on dismantling Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's chemical weapons arsenal capped (for now, at least) what undoubtedly has been one of the most bizarre episodes in memory for U.S. foreign policy. In the span of two weeks, U.S. plans caromed from the seemingly imminent use of force to a surprise time-out for consultation with Congress to a full-throttled presidential media blitz on the need for military strikes to slamming on the brakes and calling off the congressional vote in favor of renewed diplomacy with Russia, the U.S.'s erstwhile nemesis on Syria. The Obama administration undoubtedly dodged a very large domestic political bullet, at least in the short term. The president took a calculated but substantial risk when he decided to slow the seemingly inexorable march toward military action against Syria and invite Congress to weigh in on the matter. All available evidence suggests that even if he somehow managed to persuade a reluctant Senate to go along, House approval was improbable at best. Had he lost a congressional vote on a military strike, the costs in political capital at home and credibility abroad, as well as to the executive branch itself, could have been severe. The administration did not help its case or its public image by issuing cringe-worthy pronouncements, such as Kerry's promise that any military strike would be "unbelievably small." This forced Obama to reassure the American people that the U.S. military "does not do pinpricks." Satirists from "The Daily Show" to "Saturday Night Live" were doubtless exchanging high fives. On the other hand, Kerry's seemingly off-the-cuff offer to call off military action if Assad agreed to surrender his chemical weapons turned out to be extraordinarily good political fortune. Surely Kerry did not anticipate that Russia and Syria would call his bluff. Yet they did, thereby taking the impending congressional vote -- and with it a potentially epic domestic political and international diplomatic fiasco -- off the table and the front pages. For the president, this change of subject came not a moment too soon. In a CNN/ORC International poll taken on the eve of his Sept. 10 prime-time television address on Syria, public approval for his handling of foreign affairs reached a new low of 40 percent, while only 31 percent approved of his handling of the situation in Syria. At the same time, numerous surveys found fewer than 30 percent of Americans supported U.S. military action in Syria, and Obama's overall approval rating dipped to 43.5 percent in Gallup's tracking poll. One should not make too much of opinion polls taken prior to a military intervention, yet these numbers make Syria among the least popular proposed U.S. military interventions in recent memory. By comparison, in several surveys leading up to the 2011 U.S.-led intervention in Libya, half or more of the public supported the plan to establish a no-fly zone, and 43 percent approved of the administration's handling of that crisis. Despite the surreal nature of the past two weeks' events, it is worth considering that had the administration announced such a diplomatic breakthrough before the decision to consult Congress, the media likely would have been abuzz with stories of Obama's diplomatic prowess. As it is, a more positive media narrative may yet replace or at least challenge the current dominant media representation of a feckless president stumbling and improvising his way through a crisis. Revisionist accounts have already arisen, asserting that Kerry's comments actually represented a policy option that the U.S. and Russia had been discussing for over a year. Granted, whatever the origins of the deal, it is far from done. The U.S. and Russia are already bickering over the number of Syrian-government-controlled chemical weapons sites to be disarmed. Assad may engage in a Saddam Hussein–like cat-and-mouse game with U.N. inspectors, attempting to thwart or at least delay their efforts. And the consequences if Assad fails to fully cooperate are uncertain at best. Referral to the U.N. Security Council faces veto by Russia and China of any resolution to authorize military force. Even if every dispute can be resolved, safely dismantling all of Assad's chemical weapons would be a daunting task even absent an ongoing civil war. Regardless, unless the deal with Russia collapses, the chances are very good that a month from now the media and public will have moved on from Syria to focus on an array of pressing domestic issues, including looming showdowns between the White House and congressional Republicans over the budget and the debt ceiling and the launch of critical elements of the Affordable Care Act. According to a Sept. 11 Gallup poll, despite all the attention heaped on Syria, Americans rate it as only the fifth most important problem facing the nation, well behind a host of domestic concerns. Whether or not Syria is ultimately disarmed and if the process drags on for many months or years, the ultimate success or failure of Obama's second term may rest far less on Syria than on those imminent domestic political battles and, of course, the state of the economy, where his approval rating stood at a precarious 43 percent in the CNN/ORC International poll -- just one percentage point higher than his approval rating on health care policy.

#### Syria out of the agenda now—Obama’s strong—there wont’ be any hiccups in the Russia deal

Fred Kaplan, Slate, 9/14/13, A Win-Win-Win for Everyone (Except the Syrians), www.slate.com/articles/news\_and\_politics/war\_stories/2013/09/the\_u\_s\_russian\_chemical\_weapons\_deal\_is\_a\_win\_win\_win\_for\_everyone\_except.single.html

It should be no surprise that U.S. and Russian diplomats struck a deal to get rid of Syria’s chemical weapons so quickly. Both nations had strong converging interests to do just that. Diplomacy becomes almost easy under those circumstances. Russian leaders have always been keen to block the spread of weapons of mass destruction. During Soviet days, the Kremlin was far fiercer—and more effective—at keeping nukes out of the hands of the Warsaw Pact nations than the White House was at keeping them away from its NATO allies. It’s not that Soviet premiers had a deeper dread of nuclear war than American presidents. It’s that they had a greater need to impose control over their client states. In this sense, it’s likely that Russian President Vladimir Putin was horrified when Syrian President Bashar al-Assad (or his henchmen) started firing rockets loaded with nerve gas. The horror stemmed not so much from the casualties as from the chaos it would set in motion. Assad’s move made him a client out of control; it suddenly aroused the ire of Westerners who had been kept at bay through two years of bloody mayhem and who were now seriously thinking of—or being pressured into—intervening militarily. When Secretary of State John Kerry fatefully (who knows how casually?) remarked that the United States would halt its preparations for airstrikes if Assad destroyed his chemical arsenal, Putin said, “It’s a deal,” then muscled Assad to agree. Several U.S. neocons scoffed that Putin’s gambit was merely a ploy to buy time, elevate his stature in the Middle East, and make President Barack Obama look weak. There was something to this, but the critics left out another motive, and I think the prime one: Putin really wanted to get rid of Assad’s chemical weapons and the instability they were bound to set off. It is certainly true that Putin went about this very cleverly. Obama had said that airstrikes would be “limited,” designed strictly to “deter” Assad from firing more chemical weapons and to “degrade” his ability to do so. In his public statements, Obama had also said that his long-term goal was to reach a political settlement to the Syrian civil war, a settlement that would involve Assad’s departure. But the airstrikes, he said, were a separate matter; an outsider’s military power could not help one side or another win a civil war. Putin must have seen this distinction as confusing at best, duplicitous at worst. War, after all, is by nature political; military strikes always have political objectives. This is why he had so firmly opposed any talk of punishing Assad for using chemical weapons: He figured that U.S. airstrikes in Syria would be a pretense or prelude to deeper intervention and “regime change.” However, when Kerry said that dismantling the weapons might halt the juggernaut of U.S. military action, Putin saw an opening. He took the narrowest slice of Obama’s rhetoric literally: that the coming airstrikes were strictly about Assad’s chemical weapons. OK, then, Putin replied: I’ll help to remove those chemical weapons, and you call off the airstrikes. End of story. And so, assuming all goes according to plan, Assad loses his stash of deadly chemicals—but he stays in power, at least for the time being, and the Russian Federation re-emerges as a serious player in Middle Eastern politics. A win-win-win for Putin. At the same time, Obama can cite his threat to use force as the reason Putin suddenly swung into action (this might even be true, to some extent). He can thus take at least joint credit for ridding Syria of chemical weapons and upholding international law. And he is saved from having to make good on letting Congress vote on whether to authorize the use of force—a vote that he seemed all but certain to lose. A win-win-win for Obama. The only losers in this diplomatic venture are the Syrians. They’re stuck with Assad, and the civil war rages on. But this is how things were before the sarin strike of Aug. 21, which pushed Obama across a red line he didn’t want to cross all by himself—and then pushed him into a compounding crisis of his own making when it became clear that no other institution (not the United Nations, NATO, the Arab League, or the U.S. Congress) wanted to cross with him. This, by the way, is another reason why it should have been obvious from the beginning that Putin wanted his proposed deal to work. If his goal was simply to humiliate Obama, he could have waited for the House of Representatives to vote down the authorization to use force. The fact is, no Russian leader, particularly an authoritarian ex-KGB man like Putin, could have believed for a moment that a foreign leader—especially a U.S. president—would back away from the threat of military action simply because the legislature opposed it. In this sense, Obama’s wavering rhetoric might have thrown Putin into a deeper panic, for Russian leaders have found unpredictable opponents to be at least as fearsome as strong ones. And yet, Assad cannot help but come out of this deal weaker than before. First, he has had to admit that he has chemical weapons—and in fact to lead foreign inspectors to their sites—after earlier denying that he had any. (The sign of weakness here isn’t the admission of a lie but the necessity to come clean.) Second, he has had to submit to a deal struck by two outside powers; he can no longer present himself—to his people, his enemies, or perhaps most fatefully, to his military officers—as a strong, independent ruler. He appears to be, instead, Putin’s lackey and perhaps even Obama’s manservant. It is also worth noting that the “Framework for Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons,” which Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov signed in Geneva, is a tough document, as far as these things go. The Syrians must submit a record of their stockpile within a week. The weapons and assorted equipment (launchers, precursors, etc.) are to be removed and destroyed, under international inspection and control, in the first half of 2014. And if Syria doesn’t comply with any part of it, the matter gets referred to the U.N. Security Council in a Chapter VII resolution—that is, a resolution that includes enforcement through the use of force. True, the Russians may veto this resolution, but it is a rare thing for them to permit even the hypothetical drafting of such a thing—and if Russia does veto it, the hypocrisy would be clear, and Obama might have a stronger hand in Congress for carrying out the airstrikes after all. It’s also true, as Obama’s critics say, that verification will be difficult. It’s much easier to hide chemical agents than, say, nuclear missiles. But, again, Russia has a very strong interest in getting rid of these weapons, and Russia is also the only entity separating Assad from a firing squad. Assad knows that Russia needs an ally in Damascus and that he has been a faithful ally; however, he probably also knows that others could step to the throne in his place. He needs Russia more than Russia needs him personally; the Russians have a lot of leverage in this deal, and he has very little.

#### Proves the pounders have not spilled-over—the plan pushes it past the breaking point

Rebekah Metzler, US News, 9/13/13, Obama's Plunging Approval Threatens Fall Agenda, Lexis

A raft of issues have contributed to President Barack Obama's falling approval numbers, which have now dipped well below 50 percent in the year since he won re-election. According to an average by RealClearPolitics.com, just 44 percent of the public approves of his performance, while 51 percent disapprove. But for a president free from facing the voters again, his main concern is whether or not he can rebound to a position that helps Democrats going into the 2014 midterm elections and allows him to effectively push for his policy goals throughout the remainder of his presidency. "His wavering approval rating is not good news for having leverage for dealing with Congress," says Kay Lehman Schlozman, a political science professor at Boston College. "On the other hand, it's not the kind of disaster zone approval rating that, for example, George W. Bush had at the end of his second term." The Syria issue has been hoarding the most public attention of late, something particularly troublesome for Obama. "As a student of public opinion, I've been impressed to the extent to which there's been less support for this kind of foreign policy move than many, many in the past," says Schlozman. "And that means the American people are paying some attention. It's just not as clear that American interests are at stake." Recent polling shows just about one-third of Americans favor Obama's proposal of limited military strikes in response to reported chemical weapons use by Syrian President Bashar Assad, which killed more than 1,400 Syrians, including 400 children. Whit Ayers, a Republican pollster, says the administration's seeming lack of decisiveness and leadership with regard to Syria has deeply damaged Obama's reputation with the public. "It's downright embarrassing and anytime the administration acts in a way that embarrasses the country in front of the world, it's not helpful for the president's job approval," he said. But there's still time for Obama to turn things around, Ayers said. "Performance and events can turn things around, but it's got to be performance and events unlike those we have seen in recent months," he said. This fall, Obama and Congress are scheduled for showdowns on federal spending, the debt ceiling, Senate approval of a new Federal Reserve chairman, among other weighty issues like immigration reform. His chances for notching wins depends on how quickly he can right the ship, the experts said

## AT: Summers

They say summers ---- Dems are united around GOP – that’s 1nc – more ev Dems united on short-term budget issues which INCLUDES SUMMERS

Nancy Cook, National Journal, 9/17/13, How Dangerous Is the Rift Among Democrats?, www.nationaljournal.com/congress/how-dangerous-is-the-rift-among-democrats-20130917

Democrats hope it doesn't come to that – and many think it will not. The prospects for a major budget deal are so slim, they say, that the president will not get to the point of offering any deal-sweeteners that congressional Democrats dislike, like Medicare cuts or chained CPI.

Democratic Rep. Chris Van Hollen says the White House, for weeks, has promised House Democrats that it would only offer these cuts as part of a major budget deal. Now, that elusive grand bargain seems unlikely given the short time frame of the fall's fiscal battles and overall budget fatigue. "It's all a moot point," says Van Hollen, a close ally to the White House on fiscal matters. "The Republicans have refused to raise one penny of revenue for the purpose of reducing the deficit. They are not even talking about it."

In the end, that may be the greatest force uniting Democrats. While they don't agree on the particulars of budget politics, they can come together around their disdain for the House Republicans and their attempts to cast them as extreme leading up to the debt ceiling fight.

"I think the president continues to enjoy broad-based support on our side of the aisle," says House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer. "I think there is nobody in the Democratic Party who wants to shut down the government—the president certainly does not want to shut down the government—I think we're talking about tactics to make sure we don't do that."

## 2nc link threshold

Plan causes an inter-budget fight –that’s 1nc---- The plan causes Obama to use necessary political capital for budget debates to unsuccessfully preserve his war power authority

Carrie Budoff Brown, Jake Sherman, Politico, 9/4/13, President Obama’s political capital spreads thin, dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=59456290-12C8-4DCA-970E-0856C9FA6E6C

President Barack Obama faced a heavy lift in Congress this fall when his agenda included only budget issues and immigration reform.

Now with Syria in the mix, the president appears ready to spend a lot of the political capital that he would have kept in reserve for his domestic priorities.

A resolution authorizing the use of force in Syria won’t make it through the House or the Senate without significant cajoling from the White House. That means Obama, who struggles to get Congress to follow his lead on almost everything, could burn his limited leverage convincing Democrats and Republicans to vote for an unpopular military operation that even the president says he could carry out with or without their approval.

“The only effect is — and I don’t mean this to be dismissive in any way — it will be taking up some time and there be some degree of political capital expended by all,” said Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), the Foreign Relations Committee ranking member who helped draft the Senate resolution. “At the end of the day, it’s a tough vote for anybody because the issue is trying to draft an authorization knowing that they’re going to implement it.”

The West Wing says it’s too early to know how Obama’s surprise decision to seek congressional authorization will affect the rest of his agenda, but his advisers are betting that a win could usher in other domestic successes. A failed vote, however, would undoubtedly weaken him.

A senior administration official said the effort could build some trust between the White House and Republicans that might ease tensions in negotiations over the budget and other issues.

White House aides have long argued that success begets success. Their latest test of that theory was the broad bipartisan Senate vote for comprehensive immigration reform bill, which was supposed to compel the House to act. So far, it has not — and House Republicans don’t think the Syria vote will be any different.

“The idea that passing the authorization for use of military force in Syria would give the administration more leverage in future political debates is absurd,” one senior GOP leadership aide said. “They are currently spending political capital they don’t have.”

## Impact ext

#### Default collapses the global economy

Adam Davidson, NYTimes, 9/10/13, Our Debt to Society, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/magazine/our-debt-to-society.html?pagewanted=all&\_r=0

This is the definition of a deficit, and it illustrates why the government needs to borrow money almost every day to pay its bills. Of course, all that daily borrowing adds up, and we are rapidly approaching what is called the X-Date — the day, somewhere in the next six weeks, when the government, by law, cannot borrow another penny. Congress has imposed a strict limit on how much debt the federal government can accumulate, but for nearly 90 years, it has raised the ceiling well before it was reached. But since a large number of Tea Party-aligned Republicans entered the House of Representatives, in 2011, raising that debt ceiling has become a matter of fierce debate. This summer, House Republicans have promised, in Speaker John Boehner’s words, “a whale of a fight” before they raise the debt ceiling — if they even raise it at all.

If the debt ceiling isn’t lifted again this fall, some serious financial decisions will have to be made. Perhaps the government can skimp on its foreign aid or furlough all of NASA, but eventually the big-ticket items, like Social Security and Medicare, will have to be cut. At some point, the government won’t be able to pay interest on its bonds and will enter what’s known as sovereign default, the ultimate national financial disaster achieved by countries like Zimbabwe, Ecuador and Argentina (and now Greece). In the case of the United States, though, it won’t be an isolated national crisis. If the American government can’t stand behind the dollar, the world’s benchmark currency, then the global financial system will very likely enter a new era in which there is much less trade and much less economic growth

. It would be, by most accounts, the largest self-imposed financial disaster in history.

Nearly everyone involved predicts that someone will blink before this disaster occurs. Yet a small number of House Republicans (one political analyst told me it’s no more than 20) appear willing to see what happens if the debt ceiling isn’t raised — at least for a bit. This could be used as leverage to force Democrats to drastically cut government spending and eliminate President Obama’s signature health-care-reform plan. In fact, Representative Tom Price, a Georgia Republican, told me that the whole problem could be avoided if the president agreed to drastically cut spending and lower taxes. Still, it is hard to put this act of game theory into historic context. Plenty of countries — and some cities, like Detroit — have defaulted on their financial obligations, but only because their governments ran out of money to pay their bills. No wealthy country has ever voluntarily decided — in the middle of an economic recovery, no less — to default. And there’s certainly no record of that happening to the country that controls the global reserve currency.

Like many, I assumed a self-imposed U.S. debt crisis might unfold like most involuntary ones. If the debt ceiling isn’t raised by X-Day, I figured, the world’s investors would begin to see America as an unstable investment and rush to sell their Treasury bonds. The U.S. government, desperate to hold on to investment, would then raise interest rates far higher, hurtling up rates on credit cards, student loans, mortgages and corporate borrowing — which would effectively put a clamp on all trade and spending. The U.S. economy would collapse far worse than anything we’ve seen in the past several years.

Instead, Robert Auwaerter, head of bond investing for Vanguard, the world’s largest mutual-fund company, told me that the collapse might be more insidious. “You know what happens when the market gets upset?” he said. “There’s a flight to quality. Investors buy Treasury bonds. It’s a bit perverse.” In other words, if the U.S. comes within shouting distance of a default (which Auwaerter is confident won’t happen), the world’s investors — absent a safer alternative, given the recent fates of the euro and the yen — might actually buy even more Treasury bonds. Indeed, interest rates would fall and the bond markets would soar.

While this possibility might not sound so bad, it’s really far more damaging than the apocalyptic one I imagined. Rather than resulting in a sudden crisis, failure to raise the debt ceiling would lead to a slow bleed. Scott Mather, head of the global portfolio at Pimco, the world’s largest private bond fund, explained that while governments and institutions might go on a U.S.-bond buying frenzy in the wake of a debt-ceiling panic, they would eventually recognize that the U.S. government was not going through an odd, temporary bit of insanity. They would eventually conclude that it had become permanently less reliable. Mather imagines institutional investors and governments turning to a basket of currencies, putting their savings in a mix of U.S., European, Canadian, Australian and Japanese bonds. Over the course of decades, the U.S. would lose its unique role in the global economy.

The U.S. benefits enormously from its status as global reserve currency and safe haven. Our interest and mortgage rates are lower; companies are able to borrow money to finance their new products more cheaply. As a result, there is much more economic activity and more wealth in America than there would be otherwise. If that status erodes, the U.S. economy’s peaks will be lower and recessions deeper; future generations will have fewer job opportunities and suffer more when the economy falters. And, Mather points out, no other country would benefit from America’s diminished status. When you make the base risk-free asset more risky, the entire global economy becomes riskier and costlier.