## 2AC

### T

**We meet – we give the industry money and tax credits**

**Epa.gov 12** [“Solar Power Purchase Agreements,” May 24th, <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/buygp/solarpower.htm>]

A Solar Power Purchase Agreement (SPPA) is a financial arrangement in which a third-party developer owns, operates, and maintains the photovoltaic (PV) system, and a host customer agrees to site the system on its roof or elsewhere on its property and purchases the system’s electric output from the solar services provider for a predetermined period. This financial arrangement allows the host customer to receive stable, and sometimes lower cost electricity, while the solar services provider or another party acquires valuable financial benefits such as tax credits and income generated from the sale of electricity to the host customer.

**DoE says we’re T**

**Waxman 98 –** Solicitor General of the US (Seth, Brief for the United States in Opposition for the US Supreme Court case HARBERT/LUMMUS AGRIFUELS PROJECTS, ET AL., PETITIONERS v. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, http://www.justice.gov/osg/briefs/1998/0responses/98-0697.resp.opp.pdf)

2 On November 15, 1986, Keefe was delegated “the authority, with respect to actions valued at $50 million or less, to approve, execute, enter into, modify, administer, closeout, terminate and take any other necessary and appropriate action (collectively, ‘Actions’) with respect to Financial Incentive awards.” Pet. App. 68, 111-112. Citing DOE Order No. 5700.5 (Jan. 12, 1981), the delegation defines “Financial Incentives” as the authorized financial incentive programs of DOE, “including direct loans, loan guarantees, purchase agreements, price supports, guaranteed market agreements and any others which may evolve.” The delegation proceeds to state, “[h]owever, a separate prior written approval of any such action must be given by or concurred in by Keefe to accompany the action.” The delegation also states that its exercise “shall be governed by the rules and regulations of [DOE] and policies and procedures prescribed by the Secretary or his delegate(s).” Pet. App. 111-113.

**Interpretation – incentives are the disbursement of public funds**

**Gielecki 1**, Mark, economist with the Energy Information Administration, Fred Mayes, Senior Technical Advisor for the coal, nuclear, and renewables program within the EIA, Lawrence Prete, retired from the EIA, [“Incentives, Mandates, and Government Programs for Promoting Renewable Energy,” February, <http://lobby.la.psu.edu/_107th/128_PURPA/Agency_Activities/EIA/Incentive_Mandates_and_Government.htm>]

Over the years, incentives and mandates for renewable energy have been used to advance different energy policies, such as ensuring energy security or promoting environmentally benign energy sources. Renewable energy has beneficial attributes, such as low emissions and replenishable energy supply, that are not fully reflected in the market price. Accordingly, governments have used a variety of programs to promote renewable energy resources, technologies, and renewable-based transportation fuels. (1) This paper discusses: (1) financial incentives and regulatory mandates used by Federal and State governments and Federal research and development (R&D), (2), (3) and (2) their effectiveness in promoting renewables. A financial incentive is defined in this report as providing one or more of the following benefits: A transfer of economic resources by the Government to the buyer or seller of a good or service that has the effect of reducing the price paid, or, increasing the price received, respectively; Reducing the cost of production of the good or service; or, Creating or expanding a market for producers. The intended effect of a financial incentive is to increase the production or consumption of the good or service over what it otherwise would have been without the incentive. Examples of financial incentives are: tax credits, production payments, trust funds, and low-cost loans. Research and development is included as a support program because its effect is to decrease cost, thus enhancing the commercial viability of the good(s) provided. (4)

### Manufactor

**No shortage**

**ITA 11**

(International Trade Administration, “The Commercial Outlook for U.S. Small Modular Nuclear Reactors” Manufacturing and Services Competitiveness Report, February 2011, US Department of Commerce)

A serious obstacle to the resurgence of traditional nuclear power in the United States is the eroded domestic manufacturing capacity for the major nuclear components. A robust program of building SMRs, however, could make use of **existing domestic capacity** that **is already capable of completely constructing** most proposed SMR designs. **SMRs would not require the ultra-heavy forgings that currently can only be made overseas.** U.S. suppliers say that firms could retool using existing capabilities and resources and could source most of the components of SMRs here in the United States. This ability could mean tremendous new commercial opportunities for U.S. firms and workers.

A substantial SMR deployment program in the United States could result in the creation of many new jobs in manufacturing, engineering, transportation, construction (for site preparation and installation) and craft labor, professional services, and ongoing plant operations. As SMR manufacturers prove their designs in the domestic market, **they will likely consider export opportunities**. The modular nature of SMRs and their relative portability means that locating export-oriented SMR manufacturing and assembly could make sense for U.S. companies, as opposed to the localiza-tion that is typically necessary for building larger reactors

**SMRs solve**

**Schimmoller 11**, Brian, contributing editor to Power Engineering “Go Small or Go Home,” July, Power Engineering115. 7 (Jul 2011): 12.

Manufacturing/construction: SMRs would be built predominantly off-site at a fabrication facility. This provides for greater quality control and reduced exposure to the schedule and cost uncertainties that can plague large-scale nuclear construction. Also, because SMRs will be fabricated using physically smaller components than those in today’s large conventional reactors, the bottlenecks that exist with forging capacity for large reactor components can be avoided.

### NG

#### SMR key to help nuclear beat-out natural gas

Lamonica 12—Tech Review Writer. 20 years of experience covering technology and business (8/9/12, Martin, A Glut of Natural Gas Leaves Nuclear Power Stalled, [www.technologyreview.com/news/428737/a-glut-of-natural-gas-leaves-nuclear-power/](http://www.technologyreview.com/news/428737/a-glut-of-natural-gas-leaves-nuclear-power/))

The nuclear renaissance is in danger of petering out before it has even begun, but not for the reasons most people once thought. Forget safety concerns, or the problem of where to store nuclear waste—the issue is simply cheap, abundant natural gas.¶ General Electric CEO Jeffrey Immelt caused a stir last month when he told the Financial Times that it's "hard to justify nuclear" in light of low natural gas prices. Since GE sells all manner of power generation equipment, including components for nuclear plants, Immelt's comments hold a lot of weight.¶ Cheap natural gas has become the fuel of choice with electric utilities, making building expensive new nuclear plants an increasingly tough sell. The United States is awash in natural gas largely thanks to horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking" technology, which allows drillers to extract gas from shale deposits once considered too difficult to reach. In 2008, gas prices were approaching $13 per million BTUs; prices have now dropped to around $3. ¶ When gas prices were climbing, there were about 30 nuclear plant projects in various stages of planning in the United States. Now the Nuclear Energy Institute estimates that, at most, five plants will be built by 2020, and those will only be built thanks to favorable financing terms and the ability to pay for construction from consumers' current utility bills. Two reactors now under construction in Georgia, for example, moved ahead with the aid of an $8.33 billion loan guarantee from the U.S. Department of Energy. ¶ What happens after those planned projects is hard to predict. "The question is whether we'll see any new nuclear," says Revis James, the director of generation research and development at the Electric Power Research Institute. "The prospects are not good."¶ Outside the United States, it's a different story. Unconventional sources of natural gas also threaten the expansion of nuclear, although the potential impact is less clear-cut. Around the world, there are 70 plants now under construction, but shale gas also looms as a key factor in planning for the future. Prices for natural gas are already higher in Asia and Europe, and shale gas resources are not as fully developed as they are the United States.¶ Some countries are also blocking the development of new natural gas resources. France, for instance, which has a strong commitment to nuclear, has banned fracking in shale gas exploration because of concerns over the environmental impact.¶ Fast-growing China, meanwhile, needs all the energy sources available and is building nuclear power plants as fast as possible.¶ Even in United States, of course, super cheap natural gas will not last forever. With supply exceeding demand, some drillers are said to be losing money on natural gas, which could push prices back up. Prices will also be pushed upward by utilities, as they come to rely on more natural gas for power generation, says James.¶ Ali Azad, the chief business development officer at energy company Babcock & Wilcox, thinks the answer is making nuclear power smaller, cheaper, and faster. His is one of a handful of companies developing small modular reactors that can be built in three years, rather than 10 or more, for a fraction of the cost of gigawatt-size reactors. Although this technology is not yet commercially proven, the company has a customer in the Tennessee Valley Authority, which expects to have its first unit online in 2021 (see "A Preassembled Nuclear Reactor").¶ "When we arrive, we will have a level cost of energy on the grid, which competes favorably with a brand-new combined-cycle natural gas plants when gas prices are between $6 to $8," said Azad. He sees strong demand in power-hungry China and places such as Saudia Arabia, where power is needed for desalination.¶ Even if natural gas remains cheaper, utilities don't want to find themselves with an overreliance on gas, which has been volatile on price in the past, so nuclear power will still contribute to the energy mix. "[Utilities] still continue [with nuclear] but with a lower level of enthusiasm—it's a hedging strategy," says Hans-Holger Rogner from the Planning and Economics Studies section of the International Atomic Energy Agency. "They don't want to pull all their eggs in one basket because of the new kid on the block called shale gas."

### Saudi

**No capacity for backstopping**

**Saxena 11** (Puru, founder of Puru Saxena Wealth Management, his Hong Kong based firm which manages investment portfolios for individuals and corporate clients. He is a highly showcased investment manager and a regular guest on CNN, BBC World, CNBC, Bloomberg, NDTV and various radio programs, “7-18 An Epic Energy Crunch, Global Crude Oil Demand Exceeds Production ,” http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/Article29323.html, AM)

The majority of the world’s developed economies are growing at a sluggish pace, yet the price of NYMEX crude is trading around US$100 per barrel. Interestingly, the price of Brent Crude (the price most nations pay) is even higher! You may recall that during the last oil spike in 2008, world governments blamed those wily speculators. Therefore, in order to diminish speculation, the authorities banned leveraged ‘long’ oil exchange traded funds It is notable that a few months ago, the price of NYMEX crude (once again) spiked to US$115 per barrel and this caused the politicians to panic. This time around, the governments could not blame the speculators so, a few days ago, they decided to dump 60 million barrels of crude on the market from their strategic petroleum reserves. This ‘oil pour’ created a lot of sensational headlines in the media and caused the price of crude to drop sharply. However, **this decline proved to be short-lived and the oil price bounced right back up again.** Political manipulation notwithstanding, the truth is that **the fundamentals for petroleum are wildly bullish and all the governments put together will not succeed in suppressing the price of oil.** According to the International Energy Agency, the world is likely to consume 89.3 million barrels of liquid fuels per day in 2011 (Figure 1) and in May, global production came in at 87.68 million barrels per day. Thus, you can see that output is failing to keep up with rising worldwide consumption and the 60 million barrels ‘oil pour’ represents less than a single day’s usage! Bearing in mind the fact that global usage of liquid fuels will only increase in the future, one does not need to be a rocket scientist to figure out that the world will need to raise its production. So, in this editorial, we will evaluate whether the oil producing nations will be able to rise to the challenge. When reviewing crude’s supply picture, it is important to realise that several oil producing regions are already past their peak flow rates and have entered an irreversible decline. For instance, it is no secret that the North Sea, Mexico, Indonesia and a host of other areas are past their prime. In terms of future production growth, all eyes are now fixated on OPEC which claims to have almost 5 million barrels per day of spare capacity. Nobody really knows whether OPEC is capable of increasing production by such a large amount but Saudi Arabia keeps insisting that it can ramp up daily output by approximately 3.5 million barrels (Figure 2). Now, given the fact that the vast majority of Saudi Arabia’s super-giant oil fields are extremely old, one has to wonder whether the nation is capable of boosting production. According to some reports, Saudi Arabia is struggling to maintain its current flow rates and in a desperate attempt to maintain reservoir pressure, it is pumping huge amounts of water into its ageing oil fields. More importantly, we are of the view that Saudi Arabia has grossly overstated its oil reserves and it is extremely unlikely that the nation has 270 billion barrels of petroleum. After all, the Saudi reserves have never been audited and a recent report by WikiLeaks suggests that the Saudis have inflated their oil bounty by 40%! The proof of the pudding is in the eating and when one reviews Saudi oil production data, it becomes clear that despite all the rhetoric, its flow rate is in decline! Figure 3 shows that Saudi oil production reached a high in 2004 and ever since, it has been heading south. If Saudi Arabia is indeed sitting on humungous oil reserves and it has the ability to raise output, why has production failed to climb above the level recorded seven years ago? Now some may argue that the Saudis are deliberately keeping a lid on production, but we have a different view. Call us sceptics, but we believe that Saudi Arabia is already stretched to the limit and will find it hard to increase production. Unfortunately, if Saudi Arabian oil production is close to its peak, then the world simply cannot produce more crude. Furthermore, when you take into account the ongoing depletion in the world’s existing oil fields, it becomes clear **that the world is heading into an epic energy crunch.** Under these circumstances, we believe that the price of oil will appreciate considerably and the impending surge will cause the next worldwide recession. However, as long as the global economy is expanding, the oil bull will charge ahead and it is likely that the all-time high recorded in 2008 will be left in the dust. Accordingly, we are maintaining our overweight investment position in upstream energy companies, oil services firms and nuclear energy plays. Although we are aware that nuclear energy is currently out of favour and many are unsure about its future, we are convinced that there is no Plan B. With the finite supply of liquid fuels, the world will need to generate more electricity and nuclear energy is the only viable option. Sceptics may want to note that if France can generate over 75% of its power from nuclear energy and do so without any accidents, then the rest of the world can surely do the same. It is notable that with the exception of Germany, most other nations are going ahead with their nuclear programs and this is good news for the sector. In summary, we view the panic fueled sell off in the nuclear sector as a great opportunity for the patient investor.

### Epertise

**Personnel have expertise**

**Causbie and Hart ’12** (Lieutenant Colonel Steven Hart, Cadet Hanson Causbie, West Point, New York, United States Military Academy, “Deployable Nukes: The Future Of Nuclear Power In The Deployed Environment”, March 13, 2012, LEQ)

Much of this material, however, is readily available and easily transported to the deployed environments. For example, steam generators capable of supporting 25 MW of power are readily available in the commercial market and are sized to be transported with relative ease.43 After some additional research a reasonable estimate for the added cost of support structures, training, and water requirements necessary for the reactor an additional $8 million plus $3 million dollars annually would be a likely figure for each power plant. This would put the total cost of operation at $372,603.00, still less than half of the costs associated with the current power infrastructure. **Even with these rough estimates using approximated numbers the benefits of nuclear technology in the deployed environment are substantial.** COMPARISON After calculating the cost per day for each type of technology it can be seen that nuclear power provided by the Gen4 module costs approximately $372,603.00 per day compared to the $755,760.00 for diesel generators. Therefore, nuclear power appears to be over 50% less than the current power infrastructure in our deployed environment. Nonetheless, a number of other factors must be taken into consideration when considering the costs and considerations of nuclear power compared to diesel generators. As stated above, estimated numbers were used for predicting the costs in addition to the cost of the reactor itself. Therefore, fluctuation in costs of transport, training of personnel, water, and additional material necessary for power plant construction may drastically alter the affordability of such power plants. 25 MW steam turbines, for example, may cost as much as $2 million and vary by manufacturer and design. The need for extra training is another added cost of nuclear power. Even though Gen4 Energy includes operator training, licensing support, and technical support with the installation of their units contractors must be hired or Army personnel must be retrained in order to install the modules as well as to address any maintenance or safety issues with the plants.45 It is quite possible, however, that training for Amy personnel could be provided by other branches. The Navy, for example could provide the training or even the personnel for the sustainment of nuclear facilities. The Army may also require additional security and safety measures because of the dangers of nuclear power even though the units are buried underground and thus safe from threats of terrorism or theft. Even though the reactors discussed are buried underground and are relatively isolated from terrorist threats more research and analysis needs to be done by both the Army as well as the manufacturer to address security concerns. These challenges do not exist with the current power infrastructure. **Personnel are already trained to maintain generators with minimum security and safety requirements**. **Generators also do not require special transport** as they are not considered as volatile and dangerous as their nuclear counterparts. Additionally, the stigma associated with nuclear power does not exist with diesel power production. Education of the military population regarding the safety of nuclear power as well as our coalition partners is essential to successful use of this technology. While a host nation may not have an issue with diesel generators they may have concerns with the installation of a nuclear power facility on their own soil. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS Even with the additional costs and limitations nuclear power provided by small reactors is still a viable option for the future of Army operations in the deployed environment. However, this technology may only work in certain areas suitable for this new technology. First, the technology is more cost-effective in larger FOBs because of cheaper transportation costs as well as the current high security state of these facilities. Large FOBs may also have greater access to the good and services necessary for the construction and maintenance of these facilities. Finally, larger FOBs allow for the refinement of this technology before such units are deployed closer to the tactical edge. The greatest concern with the placement of nuclear power in the deployed environment is security and threat of attack. Most of these modules are not designed to military specifications and do not take into account the risk of rocket and mortar attack as well as IEDs. More research needs to be done and standards need to be established in order to insure that these units are durable enough to sustain the myriad of risks associated with being downrange. This establishment of standards and additional testing will make these units much more appropriate for use by our military forces. There is no doubt **small nuclear modules** have a future in the Army’s power infrastructure. However, these modules must be refined and **tested** before being sent overseas, a process which may take many more years of research and design **especially** with regards to safety and security **during a war**. We recommend that this technology is integrated gradually into the current power infrastructure at larger FOBs where resources are readily available and security is pre-established. Only after this technology has been tested and proven reliable should it be fielded to smaller FOBs closer to the tactical edge.

### 2AC States CP

**More evidence**

**King et. al. ’11** (Marcus King , LaVar Huntzinger , Thoi Nguyen, CNA Think Tank, Environment and Energy Team, “Feasibility of Nuclear Power on U.S. Military Installations”, March 31, 2011, LEQ)

Certification and licensing issues The most basic licensing issue relates to whether NRC will have jurisdiction over potential nuclear reactor sites or whether DoD could be **self-regulating**. Our conversations with NRC indicate it is the only possible licensing authority for reactors that supply power to the com- mercial grid. However, DOE and **DoD are authorized to regulate mission critical nuclear facilities under Section 91b of the Atomic Energy Act**. **There is some historical precedent for DoD exercising this authority.** For example, the Army Nuclear Program was granted exception under this rule with regard to the reactor that operated aboard the Sturgis barge in the 1960s and 1970s.

**Race to the bottom kills solvency**

**Shobe and Burtraw ’12** [William M. Shobe, Director, Center for Economic and Policy Studies Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Professor of Public Policy, Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, Dallas Burtraw, PhD in Economics from University of Michigan, Senior Fellow at Resources for the Future, “Rethinking Environmental Federalism in a Warming World,” <http://www.rff.org/rff/Documents/RFF-DP-12-04.pdf>]

**For local environmental problems, a state may become involved in a race to the bottom if the mobility of investment away from higher regulation swamps the reciprocal mobility of other resources into the state in response to the cleaner environment**. This logic is often invoked as a rationale for nationalizing environmental regulation and may apply well to climate change, where the consequences of a changing climate may have very different local effects in physical terms (temperature, precipitation, fire) and economic terms. Moreover, **the cost of controlling local GHG emissions may vary considerably but does not have any obvious correlation with the local environmental consequences, either in absolute terms or in relation to other states. There is no more reason to expect localities to choose stringent controls on a global pollutant or to expect firms engaged in global commerce to locate in jurisdictions that choose such controls** (in fact, the opposite) **than there is to expect individuals to make optimal voluntary contributions to national defense expenditures**.

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### WW

**SMRs solve inevitable water wars**

**Palley ’11** Reese Palley, The London School of Economics, 2011, The Answer: Why Only Inherently Safe, Mini Nuclear Power Plans Can Save Our World, p. 168-71

The third world has long been rent in recent droughts, by the search for water. In subsistence economies, on marginal land, water is not a convenience but a matter of life and death. As a result small **wars have been fought, rivers diverted, and wells poisoned in what could be a warning of what is to come as industrialized nations begin to face failing water supplies.** Quite aside from the demand for potable water is the dependence of enormous swaths of industry and agriculture on oceans of water used for processing, enabling, and cleaning a thousand processes and products. It is interesting to note that fresh water used in both industry and agriculture is reduced to a nonrenewable resource as agriculture adds salt and industry adds a chemical brew unsuitable for consumption. More than one billion people in the world already lack access to clean water, and things are getting worse. Over the next two decades, the average supply of water per person will drop by a third, **condemning millions** of people **to** waterborne **diseases** and an avoidable premature death.81 So **the stage is set for water access wars between** the **first and the third worlds**, between **neighbors** downstream of supply, between **big industry** and big agriculture, between **nations**, between **population** centers, and ultimately between you and the people who live next door for an already inadequate world water supply that is not being renewed. **As populations inevitably increase, conflicts will intensify**.82 It is only by virtue of the historical accident of the availability of nuclear energy that humankind now has the ability to remove the salt and other pollutants to supply all our water needs. The problem is that **desalination is an intensely local process**. Some localities have available sufficient water from renewable sources to take care of their own needs, but not enough to share with their neighbors, and it **is here that the scale of nuclear energy production must be defined locally.** Large scale 1,000 MWe plants can be used to desalinate water as well as for generating electricity However we cannot build them fast enough to address the problem, and, if built they would face the extremely expensive problem of distributing the water they produce. Better, much better, would be to use small desalinization plants sited locally. Beyond desalination for human use is the need to green some of the increasing desertification of vast areas such as the Sahara. Placing twenty 100 MWe plants a hundred miles apart along the Saharan coast would green the coastal area from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, a task accomplished more cheaply and quickly than through the use of gigawatt plants.83 This could proceed on multiple tracks wherever deserts are available to be reclaimed. Leonard Orenstein, a researcher in the field of desert reclamation, speculates: If most of the Sahara and Australian outback were planted with fast-growing trees like eucalyptus, the forests could draw down about 8 billion tons of carbon a year—nearly as much as people emit from burning fossil fuels today. As the forests matured, they could continue taking up this much carbon for decades.84 **The use of small, easily transported**, easily **sited**, and walk away **safe nuclear reactors dedicated to desalination is the only answer** to the disproportionate distribution of water resources that have distorted human habitation patterns for millennia. Where there existed natural water, such as from rivers, great cities arose and civilizations flourished. Other localities lay barren through the ages. We now have the power, by means of SMRs profiled to local conditions, not only to attend to existing water shortages but also to smooth out disproportionate water distribution and create green habitation where historically it has never existed. **The endless wars that have been fought**, first over solid bullion gold and then over oily black gold, **can now engulf us in the desperate reach for liquid blue gold. We need never fight these wars again as we now have the nuclear power to fulfill the** biblical **ability to “strike any local rock and have water gush forth**.”

**That solves indo-pak water wars that go nuclear.**

**Zahoor ‘11**

(Musharaf, is researcher at Department of Nuclear Politics, National Defence University, Islamabad, “Water crisis can trigger nuclear war in South Asia,” <http://www.siasat.pk/forum/showthread.php?77008-Water-Crisis-can-Trigger-Nuclear-War-in-South-Asia>, AM)

South Asia is among one of those regions where water needs are growing disproportionately to its availability. The high increase in population besides large-scale cultivation has turned South Asia into a water scarce region. The two nuclear neighbors Pakistan and India share the waters of Indus Basin. All the major rivers stem from the Himalyan region and pass through Kashmir down to the planes of Punjab and Sindh empty into Arabic ocean. It is pertinent that the strategic importance of Kashmir, a source of all major rivers, for Pakistan and symbolic importance of Kashmir for India are maximum list positions. Both the countries have fought two major wars in 1948, 1965 and a limited war in Kargil specifically on the Kashmir dispute. Among other issues, the newly born states fell into water sharing dispute right after their partition. Initially under an agreed formula, Pakistan paid for the river waters to India, which is an upper riparian state. After a decade long negotiations, both the states signed Indus Water Treaty in 1960. Under the treaty, India was given an exclusive right of three eastern rivers Sutlej, Bias and Ravi while Pakistan was given the right of three Western Rivers, Indus, Chenab and Jhelum. The tributaries of these rivers are also considered their part under the treaty. It was assumed that the treaty had permanently resolved the water issue, which proved a nightmare in the latter course. India by exploiting the provisions of IWT started wanton construction of dams on Pakistani rivers thus scaling down the water availability to Pakistan (a lower riparian state). The treaty only allows run of the river hydropower projects and does not permit to construct such water reservoirs on Pakistani rivers, which may affect the water flow to the low lying areas. According to the statistics of Hydel power Development Corporation of Indian Occupied Kashmir, India has a plan to construct 310 small, medium and large dams in the territory. India has already started work on 62 dams in the first phase. The cumulative dead and live storage of these dams will be so great that India can easily manipulate the water of Pakistani rivers. India has set up a department called the Chenab Valley Power Projects to construct power plants on the Chenab River in occupied Kashmir. India is also constructing three major hydro-power projects on Indus River which include Nimoo Bazgo power project, Dumkhar project and Chutak project. On the other hand, it has started Kishan Ganga hydropower project by diverting the waters of Neelum River, a tributary of the Jhelum, in sheer violation of the IWT. The gratuitous construction of dams by India has created serious water shortages in Pakistan. The construction of Kishan Ganga dam will turn the Neelum valley, which is located in Azad Kashmir into a barren land. The water shortage will not only affect the cultivation but it has serious social, political and economic ramifications for Pakistan. The farmer associations have already started protests in Southern Punjab and Sindh against the non-availability of water. These protests are so far limited and under control. The reports of international organizations suggest that the water availability in Pakistan will reduce further in the coming years. If the situation remains unchanged, the violent mobs of villagers across the country will be a major law and order challenge for the government. The water shortage has also created mistrust among the federative units, which is evident from the fact that the President and the Prime Minister had to intervene for convincing Sindh and Punjab provinces on water sharing formula. The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) is responsible for distribution of water among the provinces but in the current situation it has also lost its credibility. The provinces often accuse each other of water theft. In the given circumstances, Pakistan desperately wants to talk on water issue with India. The meetings between Indus Water Commissioners of Pakistan and India have so far yielded no tangible results. The recent meeting in Lahore has also ended without concrete results. India is continuously using delaying tactics to under pressure Pakistan. The Indus Water Commissioners are supposed to resolve the issues bilaterally through talks. The success of their meetings can be measured from the fact that Pakistan has to knock at international court of arbitration for the settlement of Kishan Ganga hydropower project. The recently held foreign minister level talks between both the countries ended inconclusively in Islamabad, which only resulted in heightening the mistrust and suspicions. The water stress in Pakistan is increasing day by day. The construction of dams will not only cause damage to the agriculture sector but India can manipulate the river water to create inundations in Pakistan. The rivers in Pakistan are also vital for defense during wartime. The control over the water will provide an edge to India during war with Pakistan. The failure of diplomacy, manipulation of IWT provisions by India and growing water scarcity in Pakistan and its social, political and economic repercussions for the country can lead both the countries toward a war. The existent A-symmetry between the conventional forces of both the countries will compel the weaker side to use nuclear weapons to prevent the opponent from taking any advantage of the situation. Pakistan's nuclear programme is aimed at to create minimum credible deterrence. India has a declared nuclear doctrine which intends to retaliate massively in case of first strike by its' enemy. In 2003, India expanded the operational parameters for its nuclear doctrine. Under the new parameters, it will not only use nuclear weapons against a nuclear strike but will also use nuclear weapons against a nuclear strike on Indian forces anywhere. Pakistan has a draft nuclear doctrine, which consists on the statements of high ups. Describing the nuclear thresh-hold in January 2002, General Khalid Kidwai, the head of Pakistan's Strategic Plans Division, in an interview to Landau Network, said that Pakistan will use nuclear weapons in case India occupies large parts of its territory, economic strangling by India, political disruption and if India destroys Pakistan's forces. The analysis of the ambitious nuclear doctrines of both the countries clearly points out that any military confrontation in the region can result in a nuclear catastrophe. The rivers flowing from Kashmir are Pakistan's lifeline, which are essential for the livelihood of 170 million people of the country and the cohesion of federative units. The failure of dialogue will leave no option but to achieve the ends through military means.

### 2AC Prodcurement/ Liscensing

#### Perm Do both

#### Perm Do the CP – There is no distinction between Procurement and a PPA – PPA allows the DOD to pick the model that suits their needs – doesn’t lock in designs. A PPA is a contract between the DOD and private companies to produce SMRs. The SMRs aren’t owned by the private industry the DOD buys them.

**Perm the liscening pathway plank**

**The purchasing part of Procurement is the plan – The Procurement acuiqistion is the CP means it’s plan plus**

**Schwartz 10**—Specialist in Defense Acquisition @ Congressional Research Service [Moshe Schwartz, “Defense Acquisitions: How DOD Acquires Weapon Systems and Recent Efforts to Reform the Process,” Congressional Research Service, April 23, 2010

The Department of Defense (DOD) **purchases** goods and services from contractors to support¶ military operations. Any purchase of a good or service by DOD is defined as a procurement. In¶ contrast, the term defense acquisition is a broader term that applies to **more than just the purchase** or procurement, of an item or service; the acquisition process encompasses the **design, engineering, construction, testing, deployment**, sustainment, and disposal of weapons or related items purchased from a contractor.1 DOD’s acquisition system is highly complex (see Appendix A), and does not always produce systems that meet anticipated cost or performance expectations. Pg. 1

#### PPA generates competition amongst SMR industry – through competitive bidding process

Cory, Canavan, and Koenig, No Date (Karlynn Cory, Brendan Canavan, and Ronald Koenig of NREL, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, a national laboratory of the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, “Power Purchase Agreement Checklist for State and Local Governments”, No Date, LEQ)

This fact sheet provides information and guidance on the solar photovoltaic (PV) power purchase agreement (PPA), which is a financing mechanism that state and local government entities can use to acquire clean, renewable energy. We address the financial, logistical, and legal questions relevant to implementing a PPA, but we do not examine the technical details—those can be discussed later with the developer/con- tractor. This fact sheet is written to support decision makers in U.S. state and local governments who are aware of solar PPAs and may have a cursory knowledge of their structure but they still require further information before committing to a particular project. Overview of PPA Financing The PPA financing model is a “third-party” ownership model, which requires a separate, taxable entity (“system owner”) to procure, install, and operate the solar PV system on a consumer’s premises (i.e., the government agency). The government agency enters into a long-term contract (typically referred to as the PPA) to purchase 100% of the electricity generated by the system from the system owner. Figure 1 illustrates the financial and power flows among the consumer, system owner, and the utility. Renewable energy certificates (RECs), interconnection, and net metering are dis- cussed later. Basic terms for three example PPAs are included at the end of this fact sheet. The system owner is often a third-party investor (“tax inves- tor”) who provides investment capital to the project in return for tax benefits. The tax investor is usually a limited liability corporation (LLC) backed by one or more financial institu- tions. In addition to receiving revenues from electricity sales, they can also benefit from federal tax incentives. These tax incentives can account for approximately 50% of the project’s financial return (Bolinger 2009, Rahus 2008). Without the PPA structure, the government agency could not benefit from these federal incentives due to its tax-exempt status.1 The developer and the system owner often are distinct and separate legal entities. In this case, the developer structures the deal and is simply paid for its services. However, the developer will make the ownership structure transparent to the government agency and will be the only contact through- out the process. For this reason, this fact sheet will refer to “system owner” and developer as one in the same. While there are other mechanisms to finance solar PV systems, this publication focuses solely on PPA financing because of its important advantages:2 1. No/low up-front cost. 2. Ability for tax-exempt entity to enjoy lower electricity prices thanks to savings passed on from federal tax incentives. 3. A predictable cost of electricity over 15–25 years. 4. No need to deal with complex system design and permitting process. 5. No operating and maintenance responsibilities. High-Level Project Plan for Solar PV with PPA Financing Implementing power purchase agreements involves many facets of an organization: decision maker, energy manager, facilities manager, contracting officer, attorney, budget offi- cial, real estate manager, environmental and safety experts, and potentially others (Shah 2009). While it is understood that some employees may hold several of these roles, it is important that all skill sets are engaged early in the process. Execution of a PPA requires the following project coordina- tion efforts, although some may be concurrent:3 Step 1. Identify Potential Locations Identify approximate area available for PV installation including any potential shading. The areas may be either on rooftops or on the ground. A general guideline for solar installations is 5–10 watts (W) per square foot of usable rooftop or other space.4 In the planning stages, it is useful to create a CD that contains site plans and to use Google Earth software to capture photos of the proposed sites (Pechman 2008). In addition, it is helpful to identify current electricity costs. Estimating System Size (this page) discusses the online tools used to evaluate system performance for U.S. buildings. Step 2. Issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to Competitively Select a Developer If the aggregated sites are 500 kW or more in electricity demand, then the request for proposal (RFP) process will likely be the best way to proceed. If the aggregate demand is significantly less, then it may not receive sufficient response rates from developers or it may receive responses with expensive electricity pricing. For smaller sites, government entities should either 1) seek to aggregate multiple sites into a single RFP or 2) contact developers directly to receive bids without a formal RFP process (if legally permissible within the jurisdiction). Links to sample RFP documents (and other useful docu- ments) can be found at the end of this fact sheet. The materi- als generated in Step 1 should be included in the RFP along with any language or requirements for the contract. In addition, the logistical information that bidders may require to create their proposals (described later) should be included. It is also worthwhile to create a process for site visits. 3 Adapted from a report by GreenTech Media (Guice 2008) and from conver- sations with Bob Westby, NREL technology manager for the Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP). 4 This range represents both lower efficiency thin-film and higher efficiency crystalline solar installations. The location of the array (rooftop or ground) can also affect the power density. Source: http://www.solarbuzz.com/Consumer/ FastFacts.htm Renewable industry associations can help identify Web sites that accept RFPs. Each bidder will respond with an initial proposal including a term sheet specifying estimated output, pricing terms, ownership of environmental attributes (i.e., RECs) and any perceived engineering issues. Step 3. Contract Development After a winning bid is selected, the contracts must be negoti- ated—this is a time-sensitive process. In addition to the PPA between the government agency and the system owner, there will be a lease or easement specifying terms for access to the property (both for construction and maintenance). REC sales may be included in the PPA or as an annex to it (see Page 6 for details on RECs). Insurance and potential municipal law issues that may be pertinent to contract development are on Page 8. Step 4. Permitting and Rebate Processing The system owner (developer) will usually be responsible for filing permits and rebates in a timely manner. However, the government agency should note filing deadlines for state-level incentives because there may be limited windows or auction processes. The Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency (http://www.dsireusa.org/) is a useful resource to help understand the process for your state. Step 5. Project Design, Procurement, Construction, and Commissioning The developer will complete a detailed design based on the term sheet and more precise measurements; it will then procure, install, and commission the solar PV equipment. The commissioning step certifies interconnection with the utility and permits system startup. Once again, this needs to be done within the timing determined by the state incentives. Failure to meet the deadlines may result in forfeiture of benefits, which will likely change the electricity price to the government agency in the contract. The PPA should firmly establish realistic developer responsibilities along with a process for determining monetary damages for failure to perform.

#### DOD procurement empirically fails

Plew 10/26/12 – Staff writer for Policy Intern (Policy think tank based in DC) Frank, How the Procurement Process Hurts the US Military, http://policyinterns.com/2012/10/26/how-the-procurement-process-hurts-the-us-military/

There has been a disturbing trend in the US military in recent years. The weapon systems that have been touted as the most advanced, most game changing, have been almost uniformly late, over budget, and under performing. The F-22, F-35, V-22, and Littoral Combat Ship have all fallen into this trap. And this trend does not even take into account systems that have been canceled after a long period of investment, such as the Comanche helicopter or the Crusader artillery system. The United States has a long tradition of fielding the very best equipment, and this tradition is under threat. The procurement process has a lot to do with this. Take the struggle necessary to replace the Air Force’s aging tanker fleet. This contract, which has the possibility to be the largest ever issued by the Defense Department, was originally awarded to EADS, a European defense company. The planes would be built in America and EADS formed a partnership with Northrop-Grumman to ensure that all aspects of the program would remain under American control. The process was derailed when Boeing protested the award, basing their complaint primarily on political, rather than military, concerns. DoD rewrote the requirements, and in the end Boeing received the contract. This saga has played out in a number of other contracts. The Littoral Combat Ship has had a particularly rough time, with three separate variants of the ship being built at one time. Currently the LCS has been a spectacular failure in trials, and the mission and survivability of the platform has been called into question. There have been significant problems with the creation of two of the biggest prestige projects in the US inventory, the F-22 and F-35. Both of the aircraft were vastly over budget, and their necessity has been doubted. The F-35 was supposed to be a relatively cheap and capable aircraft. Instead, it has been one of the single most expensive procurement projects in US history. And it has yet to be deployed. The F-22 is insanely expensive, is designed to shoot down Soviet bombers at high altitude, and seems to have a problem with poisoning it’s pilots. Both of these planes were essentially ordered to fill a hole in the Air Force inventory that did not exist. The current fleet of F-16s and F-15s are perfectly capable of dealing with any threat that the Air Force might encounter. As the Air Force has been developing these two expensive and unnecessary aircraft, they have been actively trying to get rid of the A-10 Warthog, one of the most effective planes in the inventory and the one plane that has the most impact in the wars that we are currently fighting. The F-22 has yet to fly a mission in support of the war in Afghanistan. This is a stark example of how the goals of the individual services do not take into account the best needs of the war fighter.

### 2AC Immigration

#### Can’t solve the economy – CIR will cost trillions

Daily Caller 1/31 (<http://dailycaller.com/2013/01/31/expert-bipartisan-immigration-reform-bill-will-cost-trillions/#ixzz2JcReWOIx>)

Robert Rector, a senior research fellow with the Heritage Foundation, expects the bipartisan immigration reform proposal, which includes a path to citizenship, will end up costing taxpayers more overtime than the trillion-dollar calculations he testified to during debate over the 2007 immigration reform bill.

¶ “[The proposal] seems to be virtually identical to the 2007 bill and would be extremely costly to the U.S. taxpayers,” Rector told The Daily Caller in a Wednesday interview. “Granting amnesty or legal status to illegals will generate costs in Medicare and Social Security alone of $2.5 trillion above any taxes paid in.”¶ ¶ According to Rector, the majority of the undocumented immigrants who would eventually be legalized by the legislation are largely uneducated, and therefore more likely to be dependent on government assistance. Fifty to 60 percent of the new immigrants are high school dropouts, and 75-80 percent have no more than a high school degree. “It’s not like they pay in a lot when they are young, and they take it out when they’re old. They are in fiscal deficit every year of their lives,” Rector explained. “For example, the typical household headed by someone who does not have a high school degree, as I said in that paper in 2007, got back then $30,000 in benefits and paid $10,000 [in income and consumption taxes]. It’s a net cost of $20,000. **That would be significantly higher now.”**¶ ¶ Rector’s numbers, he noted, were from 2007, which means that now the cost will higher due to the increase in benefits programs and number of undocumented.

#### No impact to econ collapse; recession proves.

Thomas P.M. **Barnett,** senior managing director of Enterra Solutions LLC, “The New Rules: Security Remains Stable Amid Financial Crisis,” 8/25/**2009**, http://www.aprodex.com/the-new-rules--security-remains-stable-amid-financial-crisis-398-bl.aspx

When the global financial crisis struck roughly a year ago, the blogosphere was ablaze with all sorts of scary predictions of, and commentary regarding, ensuing conflict and wars -- a rerun of the Great Depression leading to world war, as it were. Now, as global economic news brightens and recovery -- surprisingly led by China and emerging markets -- is the talk of the day, it's interesting to look back over the past year and realize how globalization's first truly worldwide recession has had virtually no impact whatsoever on the international security landscape. None of the more than three-dozen ongoing conflicts listed by GlobalSecurity.org can be clearly attributed to the global recession. Indeed, the last new entry (civil conflict between Hamas and Fatah in the Palestine) predates the economic crisis by a year, and three quarters of the chronic struggles began in the last century. Ditto for the 15 low-intensity conflicts listed by Wikipedia (where the latest entry is the Mexican "drug war" begun in 2006). Certainly, the Russia-Georgia conflict last August was specifically timed, but by most accounts the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics was the most important external trigger (followed by the U.S. presidential campaign) for that sudden spike in an almost two-decade long struggle between Georgia and its two breakaway regions. Looking over the various databases, then, we see a most familiar picture: the usual mix of civil conflicts, insurgencies, and liberation-themed terrorist movements. Besides the recent Russia-Georgia dust-up, the only two potential state-on-state wars (North v. South Korea, Israel v. Iran) are both tied to one side acquiring a nuclear weapon capacity -- a process wholly unrelated to global economic trends. And with the United States effectively tied down by its two ongoing major interventions (Iraq and Afghanistan-bleeding-into-Pakistan), our involvement elsewhere around the planet has been quite modest, both leading up to and following the onset of the economic crisis: e.g., the usual counter-drug efforts in Latin America, the usual military exercises with allies across Asia, mixing it up with pirates off Somalia's coast). Everywhere else we find serious instability we pretty much let it burn, occasionally pressing the Chinese -- unsuccessfully -- to do something. Our new Africa Command, for example, hasn't led us to anything beyond advising and training local forces. So, to sum up: \* No significant uptick in mass violence or unrest (remember the smattering of urban riots last year in places like Greece, Moldova and Latvia?); \* The usual frequency maintained in civil conflicts (in all the usual places); \* Not a single state-on-state war directly caused (and no great-power-on-great-power crises even triggered); \* No great improvement or disruption in great-power cooperation regarding the emergence of new nuclear powers (despite all that diplomacy); \* A modest scaling back of international policing efforts by the system's acknowledged Leviathan power (inevitable given the strain); and \* No serious efforts by any rising great power to challenge that Leviathan or supplant its role. (The worst things we can cite are Moscow's occasional deployments of strategic assets to the Western hemisphere and its weak efforts to outbid the United States on basing rights in Kyrgyzstan; but the best include China and India stepping up their aid and investments in Afghanistan and Iraq.) Sure, we've finally seen global defense spending surpass the previous world record set in the late 1980s, but even that's likely to wane given the stress on public budgets created by all this unprecedented "stimulus" spending. If anything, the friendly cooperation on such stimulus packaging was the most notable great-power dynamic caused by the crisis. Can we say that the world has suffered a distinct shift to political radicalism as a result of the economic crisis? Indeed, no. The world's major economies remain governed by center-left or center-right political factions that remain decidedly friendly to both markets and trade. In the short run, there were attempts across the board to insulate economies from immediate damage (in effect, as much protectionism as allowed under current trade rules), but there was no great slide into "trade wars." Instead, the World Trade Organization is functioning as it was designed to function, and regional efforts toward free-trade agreements have not slowed. Can we say Islamic radicalism was inflamed by the economic crisis? If it was, that shift was clearly overwhelmed by the Islamic world's growing disenchantment with the brutality displayed by violent extremist groups such as al-Qaida. And looking forward, austere economic times are just as likely to breed connecting evangelicalism as disconnecting fundamentalism. At the end of the day, the economic crisis did not prove to be sufficiently frightening to provoke major economies into establishing global regulatory schemes, even as it has sparked a spirited -- and much needed, as I argued last week -- discussion of the continuing viability of the U.S. dollar as the world's primary reserve currency. Naturally, plenty of experts and pundits have attached great significance to this debate, seeing in it the beginning of "economic warfare" and the like between "fading" America and "rising" China. And yet, in a world of globally integrated production chains and interconnected financial markets, such "diverging interests" hardly constitute signposts for wars up ahead. Frankly, I don't welcome a world in which America's fiscal profligacy goes undisciplined, so bring it on -- please! Add it all up and it's fair to say that this global financial crisis has proven the great resilience of America's post-World War II international liberal trade order.

#### Won’t pass.

Porter 2-7. [Eduardo, economics reporter, "2nd chance to overhaul immigration" International Herald Tribune -- lexis]

Despite the strong case for an overhaul, however, changing the United States' immigration laws may be tougher than the president appears to believe. While the administration may have overcome some of the same obstacles as in 2007, the proposed changes will probably face deep-seated opposition from many Americans - including most conservative Republicans - to what they will view as a potentially large expansion of welfare.¶ Mr. Obama's proposal is based on principles similar to those of the 2007 attempt: a path to citizenship for millions of illegal immigrants already in the United States, a legal channel for future immigrant workers and their families and a plan to better secure borders and enforce immigration laws.¶ Yet the necessary changes in immigration rules today are quite different from 2007. Notably, the elements needed to stop the flow of illegal immigrants north are much less important to the enterprise. The Obama administration has already spent huge amounts of money on border enforcement. And deportations have soared. What is more, illegal immigration has slowed to a trickle as the Mexican economy has grown more robustly than that of the United States. The illegal immigrant population has even been shrinking in the last few years. And it may continue to do so as the Mexican population of prime migration-age people stops growing.¶ Also, many employers have already gotten some of what they wanted: The number of workers entering the United States on temporary visas for low-end jobs in agriculture and other industries has increased sharply.¶ ''The discussion is in a different environment,'' said Gordon H. Hanson, an expert on the economics of immigration at the University of California, San Diego. ''The flow of new immigrants is not the story anymore.''¶ That might help the cause of change in some ways. It could allow the discussion about work visas to focus on the highly educated workers coveted by technology companies and pre-empt the kind of argument between business and labor over visas for cheap immigrant workers that sank the bill in 2007. The A.F.L.-C.I.O., for instance, has heartily embraced Mr. Obama's plan.¶ But what supporters of an overhaul of immigration law seem to be overlooking is that those very changes could also make it more difficult to build a coalition across the political divide. If change is mainly about granting citizenship to 11 million mostly poor illegal immigrants with relatively little education, it is going to land squarely in the cross hairs of the epic battle over taxes, entitlements and the role of government in American society.¶ It is hard to say with precision what effect offering citizenship would have on the budget, but the chances are good that it would cost the government money. Half to three-quarters of illegal immigrants pay taxes, according to studies reviewed in a 2007 report by the Congressional Budget Office. And they are relatively inexpensive, compared with Americans of similar incomes. Their children can attend public schools at government expense - putting a burden on state and local budgets. But they are barred from receiving U.S. government benefits like the earned-income tax credit, which benefits lower-income people; food stamps, a food subsidy program; and Medicaid, a health insurance program for the poor. Only their American-born children can get those.¶ Government revenue might not change much with legalization. Most illegal immigrants who do not pay taxes probably work in the cash economy - as nannies or gardeners - where tax compliance among citizens is also low. Costs, of course, would increase. Once they became citizens, immigrants would be entitled to the same array of government benefits as other Americans. Just for Social Security, which provides benefits to retirees and disabled people, and Medicare, a health insurance program for the elderly, offering citizenship to illegal immigrants would mean losing a subsidy worth several billion dollars a year in payroll taxes from immigrants who cannot collect benefits in old age.¶ The White House and other backers of an overhaul have made much of a 2007 analysis by the Congressional Budget Office concluding that the failed immigration bill would have increased government revenue by $48 billion over a decade while adding only $23 billion to direct spending on entitlements and other programs. But the report also said that with the costs of carrying out the new law, it would have actually increased the budget deficit by $18 billion over the decade and several billion a year after that. What is more, it noted that most of the expected new tax revenue would have come from new immigrant workers, not from the population of those with newly legal status.¶ History suggests the United States could have much to gain by turning illegal immigrants into citizens and putting an end to unauthorized immigration. The last time the United States permitted illegal immigrants to gain legal status, in 1986, incomes jumped for those who took advantage of the opportunity. Their children became more proficient in English and completed more years of school - becoming more productive and paying more taxes over their lifetimes.¶ But the same history underscores how immigration sets off fears about further sharing of government resources. Ten years after the immigration overhaul of 1986, reeling from public anger, Congress passed a law barring legal immigrants from means-tested government services. The issue is likely to be a major flash point again. Dr. Hanson, of the University of California, San Diego, pointed to ''the older white man who sees his entitlements at risk because of the demands placed by legalization on our fiscal resources.''¶ Conservative Republicans set on cutting government spending share those concerns. And for all their reasons to reach out to Hispanics, they might not find giving illegal immigrants legal status politically advantageous. On Tuesday, Republicans in the House argued against granting citizenship to illegal immigrants at all.¶ Hispanics are more liberal than the general population on economic matters, polls suggest, and more supportive of Big Government initiatives. Granting them citizenship would give them the vote.¶ As Steven A. Camarota, director of research at the Center for Immigration Studies, an advocacy group in Washington that favors more limits on immigration, said, ''They will see legalization as a voter registration drive for Democrats.''

**Obama isn’t using political capital, and if he did it would fail**

**Rothman ‘1-29** (Obama Says Nothing In Presser, Saves Immigration Reform by Noah Rothman, political analyst and journalist, analyst with Mediaite.com, a news and opinion blog covering politics and entertainment in the media industry as well as other issues. It is the flagship blog of Abrams Media, a ring of blogs run by ABC legal analyst Dan Abrams 5:23 pm, January 29th, 2013

CNN reported on Monday that the Congressional Hispanic Caucus specifically **requested the White House to stand down** and allow Republican Senators and Congressmen, **warming to** the possibility of **a major deal** on immigration reform, to entertain the proposals put forward **by the Gang of Eight**. “It’s a tricky thing. We want him to lead, but Republicans are in a difficult position,” one unnamed Democratic source told CNN. This time, **the president complied**. **This is a major**, though **underreported**, **development. It may have preserved the political will** that seems to exist in Congress for a broad reform package that includes a pathway to citizenship for many illegal immigrants while strengthening border security: My fears that the president did not truly want progress on immigration reform, but would rather seek to isolate his opponents and preserve their opposition to comprehensive reform as a political cudgel for his party’s electoral purposes, were not unfounded. Obama has set dubious **precedent after precedent of wrenching legislative defeat from the jaws of victory**. On July 25, 2011, **with just days to go before the debt ceiling limit** was reached on August 2 of that year, President Barack Obama delivered a prime time address to the nation warning of the consequences of the House Republican plan to avert the catastrophe of default on the nation’s debt. The president did not offer a concrete plan of his own to avert the crisis, but endorsed Sen. Harry Reid’s (D-NV) proposal which he knew was unpalatable to Republicans. The president’s speech **hardened the positions of partisan members** of Congress. The framework of a bipartisan deal **was scuttled**. What was ultimately passed was not favorable to the White House and amounted to a Republican victory – one that Obama’s supporters on the left were roiled over. The episode amounted to the most significant defeat of Obama’s presidency to date: The president had learned his lesson.

#### Turn- SMR’s are popular in Congress

Sullivan, Stenger, and Roma ’10 (Mary Anne Sullivan is a partner in Hogan Lovells' energy practice in Washington, D.C. Congress, Daniel F. Stenger is a partner in Hogan Lovells' energy practice in Washington, D.C., Amy C. Roma is a senior associate in Hogan Lovells' energy practice in Washington, D.C., “Are Small Reactors the Next Big Thing in Nuclear?”, [www.pennenergy.com/index/power/display/3288852302/articles/electric-light-power/volume-88/issue-6/sections/are-small-reactors-the-next-big-thing-in-nuclear.html](http://www.pennenergy.com/index/power/display/3288852302/articles/electric-light-power/volume-88/issue-6/sections/are-small-reactors-the-next-big-thing-in-nuclear.html), November 2010, LEQ)

#### SMRs have enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress. The House Committee on Science and Technology and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee have approved similar legislation designed to promote the development and deployment of SMRs along the lines the DOE has proposed. Promoting SMR development in legislation has its price. The Congressional Budget Office recently estimated that the Senate bill would cost $407 million over the next five years to support cost-sharing programs with private companies for the development of two standard SMR designs. Costs for the out-years were not included in the estimate, but the bill would require the DOE to obtain NRC design certifications for the reactors by 2018 and to secure combined construction and operating licenses by Jan. 1, 2021. If Congress can pass an energy bill, it seems likely the bill will support SMRs. Even in the absence of new authorizing legislation, however, appropriations bills that must be passed to keep the government running almost certainly will contain strong support for the DOE's research and development program for SMRs.

#### PC theory is wrong- winners win

*-add green highlighting for immigration*

Hirsh, 2-7 – National Journal chief correspondent, citing various political scientists

[Michael, former Newsweek senior correspondent, "There’s No Such Thing as Political Capital," National Journal, 2-9-13, www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/there-s-no-such-thing-as-political-capital-20130207, accessed 2-8-13, mss]

**There’s No Such Thing as Political Capital**

The idea of political capital—or mandates, or momentum—is so poorly defined that presidents and pundits often get itwrong. On Tuesday, in his State of the Union address, President Obama will do what every president does this time of year. For about 60 minutes, he will lay out a sprawling and ambitious wish list highlighted by gun control and immigration reform, climate change and debt reduction. In response, the pundits will do what they always do this time of year: They will talk about how unrealistic most of the proposals are, discussions often informed by sagacious reckonings of how much “political capital” Obama possesses to push his program through. Most of **this** talk **will have no bearing on what actually happens** over the next four years. Consider this: Three months ago, just before the November election, if someone had talked seriously about Obama having enough political capital to oversee passage of both immigration reform and gun-control legislation at the beginning of his second term—even after winning the election by 4 percentage points and 5 million votes (the actual final tally)—this person would have been called crazy and stripped of his pundit’s license. (It doesn’t exist, but it ought to.) In his first term, in a starkly polarized country, the president had been so frustrated by GOP resistance that he finally issued a limited executive order last August permitting immigrants who entered the country illegally as children to work without fear of deportation for at least two years. Obama didn’t dare to even bring up gun control, a Democratic “third rail” that has cost the party elections and that actually might have been even less popular on the right than the president’s health care law. And yet, for reasons that have very little to do with Obama’s personal prestige or popularity—variously put in terms of a “mandate” or “political capital”—chances are fair that both will now happen. What changed? In the case of gun control, of course, it wasn’t the election. It was the horror of the 20 first-graders who were slaughtered in Newtown, Conn., in mid-December. The sickening reality of little girls and boys riddled with bullets from a high-capacity assault weapon seemed to precipitate a sudden tipping point in the national conscience. One thing changed after another. Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association marginalized himself with poorly chosen comments soon after the massacre. The pro-gun lobby, once a phalanx of opposition, began to fissure into reasonables and crazies. Former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., who was shot in the head two years ago and is still struggling to speak and walk, started a PAC with her husband to appeal to the moderate middle of gun owners. Then she gave riveting and poignant testimony to the Senate, challenging lawmakers: “Be bold.” As a result, momentum has appeared to build around some kind of a plan to curtail sales of the most dangerous weapons and ammunition and the way people are permitted to buy them. It’s impossible to say now whether such a bill will pass and, if it does, whether it will make anything more than cosmetic changes to gun laws. But one thing is clear: The **political tectonics** have **shift**ed **dramatically in very little time**. Whole new possibilities exist now that didn’t a few weeks ago. Meanwhile, the Republican members of the Senate’s so-called Gang of Eight are pushing hard for a new spirit of compromise on immigration reform, a sharp change after an election year in which the GOP standard-bearer declared he would make life so miserable for the 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. that they would “self-deport.” But this turnaround has very little to do with Obama’s personal influence—his political mandate, as it were. It has almost entirely to do with just two numbers: 71 and 27. That’s 71 percent for Obama, 27 percent for Mitt Romney, the breakdown of the Hispanic vote in the 2012 presidential election. Obama drove home his advantage by giving a speech on immigration reform on Jan. 29 at a Hispanic-dominated high school in Nevada, a swing state he won by a surprising 8 percentage points in November. But the movement on immigration has mainly come out of the Republican Party’s recent introspection, and the realization by its more thoughtful members, such as Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida and Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, that without such a shift the party may be facing demographic death in a country where the 2010 census showed, for the first time, that white births have fallen into the minority. It’s got nothing to do with Obama’s political capital or, indeed, Obama at all. The point is not that “political capital” is a meaningless term. Often it is a synonym for “mandate” or “momentum” in the aftermath of a decisive election—and just about every politician ever elected has tried to claim more of a mandate than he actually has. Certainly, Obama can say that because he was elected and Romney wasn’t, he has a better claim on the country’s mood and direction. Many pundits still defend political capital as a useful metaphor at least. “It’s an unquantifiable but meaningful concept,” says Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute. “You can’t really look at a president and say he’s got 37 ounces of political capital. But the fact is, it’s a concept that matters, if you have popularity and some momentum on your side.” The real problem is that the idea of political capital—or mandates, or momentum—is so poorly defined that presidents and pundits often get it wrong. “Presidents usually over-estimate it,” says George Edwards, a presidential scholar at Texas A&M University. “The best kind of political capital—some sense of an electoral mandate to do something—is very rare. It almost never happens. In 1964, maybe. And to some degree in 1980.” For that reason, **political capital** is a concept that **misleads** far more than it enlightens. **It is** **distortionary**. It conveys the idea that we know more than we really do about the ever-elusive concept of political power, and it discounts the way unforeseen events can suddenly change everything. Instead, it suggests, erroneously, that a political figure has a concrete amount of political capital to invest, just as someone might have real investment capital—that a particular leader can bank his gains, and the size of his account determines what he can do at any given moment in history. Naturally, any president has practical and electoral limits. Does he have a majority in both chambers of Congress and a cohesive coalition behind him? Obama has neither at present. And unless a surge in the economy—at the moment, still stuck—or some other great victory gives him more momentum, it is inevitable that the closer Obama gets to the 2014 election, the less he will be able to get done. Going into the midterms, Republicans will increasingly avoid any concessions that make him (and the Democrats) stronger. But the abrupt emergence of the immigration and gun-control issues illustrates how suddenly shifts in mood can occur and how political interests can align in new ways just as suddenly. Indeed, the pseudo-concept of political capital masks a larger truth about Washington that is kindergarten simple: You just don’t know what you can do until you try. Or as Ornstein himself once wrote years ago, “**Winning wins.”** In theory, and in practice, depending on Obama’s handling of any particular issue, even in a polarized time, he could still deliver on a lot of his second-term goals, depending on his skill and the breaks. Unforeseen catalysts can appear, like Newtown. Epiphanies can dawn, such as when many Republican Party leaders suddenly woke up in panic to the huge disparity in the Hispanic vote. Some **political scientists** **who study** the elusive calculus of **how to pass legislation** and run successful presidencies **say** that **political capital is**, at best, **an empty concept**, and that **almost nothing in** the **academic literature** successfully quantifies or even defines it. “It can refer to a very abstract thing, like a president’s popularity, but there’s no mechanism there. That makes it kind of useless,” says Richard Bensel, a government professor at Cornell University. Even Ornstein concedes that the calculus is far more complex than the term suggests. **Winning** on one issue often **changes the** **calculation** for the next issue; there is never any known amount of capital. “The idea here is, if an issue comes up where **the conventional wisdom is that president is not going to get what he wants**, and [they]he gets it, then each time that happens, it changes the calculus of the **other actors**” Ornstein says. “If they think he’s going to win, they may **change positions to get on the winning side**. **It’s a bandwagon effect**.” ALL THE WAY WITH LBJ Sometimes, a clever practitioner of power can get more done just because [they’re]he’s aggressive and knows the hallways of Congress well. Texas A&M’s Edwards is right to say that the outcome of the 1964 election, Lyndon Johnson’s landslide victory over Barry Goldwater, was one of the few that conveyed a mandate. But one of the main reasons for that mandate (in addition to Goldwater’s ineptitude as a candidate) was President Johnson’s masterful use of power leading up to that election, and his ability to get far more done than anyone thought possible, given his limited political capital. In the newest volume in his exhaustive study of LBJ, The Passage of Power, historian Robert Caro recalls Johnson getting cautionary advice after he assumed the presidency from the assassinated John F. Kennedy in late 1963. Don’t focus on a long-stalled civil-rights bill, advisers told him, because it might jeopardize Southern lawmakers’ support for a tax cut and appropriations bills the president needed. “One of the wise, practical people around the table [said that] the presidency has only a certain amount of coinage to expend, and you oughtn’t to expend it on this,” Caro writes. (Coinage, of course, was what political capital was called in those days.) Johnson replied, “Well, what the hell’s the presidency for?” Johnson didn’t worry about coinage, and he got the Civil Rights Act enacted, along with much else: Medicare, a tax cut, antipoverty programs. He appeared to understand not just the ways of Congress but also the way to maximize the momentum he possessed in the lingering mood of national grief and determination by picking the right issues, as Caro records. “Momentum is not a mysterious mistress,” LBJ said. “It is a controllable fact of political life.” Johnson had the skill and wherewithal to realize that, at that moment of history, he could have unlimited coinage if he handled the politics right. He did. (At least until Vietnam, that is.)

[Matt note: gender paraphrased]

### 2AC NRC Overstretch

#### NRC not giving licenign now ev. from 2011

#### Zero risk of meltdown

Rosner and Goldberg 11

Robert Rosner, Stephen Goldberg, Energy Policy Institute at Chicago, The Harris School of Public Policy Studies, November 2011, SMALL MODULAR REACTORS –KEY TO FUTURE NUCLEAR POWER GENERATION IN THE U.S., <https://epic.sites.uchicago.edu/sites/epic.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/EPICSMRWhitePaperFinalcopy.pdf>

While the focus in this paper is on the business case for SMRs, the safety case also is an important element of the case for SMRs. Although SMRs (the designs addressed in this paper) use the same fuel type and the same light water cooling as gigawatt (GW)-scale light water reactors (LWRs), there are significant enhancements in the reactor design that contribute to the upgraded safety case. Appendix A provides a brief overview of the various technology options for SMRs, including the light water SMR designs that are the focus of the present analysis. Light water SMR designs proposed to date incorporate passive safety features that utilize gravity-driven or natural convection systems – rather than engineered, pump-driven systems – to supply backup cooling in unusual circumstances. These passive systems should also minimize the need for prompt operator actions in any upset condition. The designs rely on natural circulation for both normal operations and accident conditions, requiring no primary system pumps. In addition, these SMR designs utilize integral designs, meaning all major primary components are located in a single, high-strength pressure vessel. That feature is expected to result in a much lower susceptibility to certain potential events, such as a loss of coolant accident, because there is no large external primary piping. In addition, light water SMRs would have a much lower level of decay heat than large plants and, therefore, would require less cooling after reactor shutdown. Specifically, in a post-Fukushima lessons-learned environment, the study team believes that the current SMR designs have three inherent advantages over the current class of large operating reactors, namely: 1. These designs mitigate and, potentially, eliminate the need for back-up or emergency electrical generators, relying exclusively on robust battery power to maintain minimal safety operations. 2. They improve seismic capability with the containment and reactor vessels in a pool of water underground; this dampens the effects of any earth movement and greatly enhances the ability of the system to withstand earthquakes. 3. They provide large and robust underground pool storage for the spent fuel, drastically reducing the potential of uncovering of these pools. These and other attributes of SMR designs present a strong safety case. Differences in the design of SMRs will lead to different approaches for how the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requirements will be satisfied. Ongoing efforts by the SMR community, the larger nuclear community, and the NRC staff have identified licensing issues unique to SMR designs and are working collaboratively to develop alternative approaches for reconciling these issues within the established NRC regulatory process. These efforts are summarized in Appendix B; a detailed examination of these issues is beyond the scope of this paper.

**DoD bypasses and solves the NRC**

**EnergyWashington Week 10**

(“DOD STRESSING NEED FOR NRC COLLABORATION ON 'MINI' REACTOR BUILD OUT” July 5, 2010, Vol. 7 No. 27)

The U.S. Army is rejecting arguments by some industry and government officials who say military bases could proceed to build small modular reactors (SMRs) on military bases without Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) certification and license approvals. Instead, the Department of Defense (DOD) believes it must work closely with NRC and that legislation will likely be needed to clearly define the various agency roles before the novel nuclear energy systems are constructed, according to DOD and industry sources. A senior DOD source also says that a collaborative arrangement between DOE, DOD, and NRC will be needed to begin constructing reactors that currently have not been licensed by the NRC -- including all prominent SMR models being examined by the three agencies for potential licensing and deployment. **Sm**all **r**eactor industry and government proponents have been struggling to find ways to accelerate the development of small reactors, including through the use of military bases as a test bed for building and demonstrating the reactors **ahead of NRC certification** of SMR designs, according to industry sources, who note that NRC approval is required before a utility can apply for a license to build a small reactor. One senior industry consultant says **the NRC does not have authority over military bases and therefore a non-certified reactor could be built there without the technology being vetted by NRC.** While industry proponents want NRC certification, they see it as slow because of a lack of resources to review the new reactors and certify the designs, says the industry consultant. **Building the reactors on military bases would help demonstrate SMR functionality that would eventually help accelerate commercial licensing**, says the source.

## 1AR

**Saudi Back stop**

**Nuclear doesn’t displace oil**

**IM No date**

International Mundi, “United States - electricity production from oil sources

Electricity production from oil sources (kWh),” <http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/electricity-production-from-oil-sources>, AM\*Cites the IEA

Electricity production from oil sources (% of total) in United States was 1.11 as of 2010. Its highest value over the past 50 years was 17.17 in 1977, while its lowest value was 1.11 in 2010. Definition: Sources of electricity refer to the inputs used to generate electricity. Oil refers to crude oil and petroleum products. Source: International Energy Agency (IEA Statistics © OECD/IEA, http://www.iea.org/stats/index.asp), Energy Statistics and Balances of Non-OECD Countries, Energy Statistics of OECD Countries, and Energy Balances of OECD Countries.

**And the military is way too insignificant- no link**

**Kreutzer ’12** (David Kreutzer, Research Fellow in Energy Economics and Climate Change, Heritage Foundation, “Military Biofoolishness”, <http://energy.nationaljournal.com/2012/05/powering-our-military-whats-th.php>, May 21, 2012, LEQ)

The entire U.S. military currently consumes about 360,000 barrels per day of petroleum-based fuel, with 175,000 barrels per day (or less) going to the Air Force’s jets. A single platform in the Gulf of Mexico (Thunderhorse) produces as much petroleum as these jets consume and at a much lower cost than the biofuel replacements. The Keystone XL Pipeline would bring enough petroleum from a very secure Canada to meet our total military consumption two or three times over. The same story holds for other potential sources of conventional petroleum, such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Air Force’s target is to replace about 26,000 barrels per day with biofuels. Whatever energy security that may provide could be doubled by a single well in the Gulf of Mexico. As a strategic policy, switching the military to biofuels can only make our enemies think we are not serious. **If the entire military consumption were switched away from petroleum, that would cut worldwide demand by 0.4 percent. This cut would reduce revenues to oil producers by about 1.5 percent**. Let’s hope biofuels are not anti-terrorism Plan A. Though some energy technologies that are too expensive for general civilian use may make sense for the military, biofuels are not among them. The military needs to rethink its biofuels program.

**No impact Russia econ**

**No impact to Russian economy**

**Blackwill, 09** – former associate dean of the Kennedy School of Government and Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Planning (Robert, RAND, “The Geopolitical Consequences of the World Economic Recession—A Caution”, http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional\_papers/2009/RAND\_OP275.pdf, WEA)

Now on to Russia. Again, five years from today. **Did the global recession and** Russia’s present **serious economic problems substantially modify Russian foreign policy? No**. (President Obama is beginning his early July visit to Moscow as this paper goes to press; nothing fundamental will result from that visit). **Did it produce a serious weakening of** Vladimir **Putin’s power** and authority in Russia? **No, as** recent **polls** in Russia **make clear**. Did it reduce Russian worries and capacities to oppose NATO enlargement and defense measures eastward? No. Did it affect Russia’s willingness to accept much tougher sanctions against Iran? No. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov has said there is no evidence that Iran intends to make a nuclear weapon.25 In sum, **Russian foreign policy is today on a steady, consistent path** that can be characterized as follows: to resurrect Russia’s standing as a great power; to reestablish Russian primary influence over the space of the former Soviet Union; to resist Western eff orts to encroach on the space of the former Soviet Union; to revive Russia’s military might and power projection; to extend the reach of Russian diplomacy in Europe, Asia, and beyond; and to oppose American global primacy. **For Moscow, these foreign policy first principles are here to stay, as they have existed in Russia for centuries**. 26 **None of these enduring objectives of Russian foreign policy are likely to be changed in any serious way by** the **economic crisis**.

**AT: Turns Heg**

**Soft power fails – doesn’t solve Heg**

Abe **Greenwald 2010** is policy adviser and online editor with the Foreign Policy Initiative in Washington, July/August **2010** http://www.commentarymagazine.com/viewarticle.cfm/the-soft-power-fallacy-15466?page=all

Like Francis Fukuyama’s essay “The End of History,” **soft-power theory was a creative and appealing attempt to make sense of America’s** global **purpose**. Unlike Fukuyama’s theory, however, which the new global order seemed to support for nearly a decade, **Nye’s was basically refuted by world events** in its very first year. In the summer of 1990, a massive contingent of Saddam Hussein’s forces invaded Kuwait and effectively annexed it as a province of Iraq. Although months earlier Nye had asserted that “geography, population, and raw materials are becoming somewhat less important,” the fact is that Saddam invaded Kuwait because of its geographic proximity, insubstantial military, and plentiful oil reserves. Despite Nye’s claim that “the definition of power is losing its emphasis on military force,” **months of** concerted international **pressure**, including the passage of a UN resolution, **failed to persuade Saddam to withdraw**. **In the end, only overwhelming American military power succeeded** in liberating Kuwait. The American show of force also succeeded in establishing the U.S. as the single, unrivaled post–Cold War superpower. Following the First Gulf War, **the 1990s saw brutal acts of aggression in the Balkans:** the Bosnian War in 1992 and the Kosovo conflicts beginning in 1998. These raged on despite international negotiations and were quelled only after America took the lead in military actions. It is also worth noting that attempts to internationalize these efforts made them more costly in time, effectiveness, and manpower than if the U.S. had acted unilaterally. Additionally, the 1990s left little mystery as to how cataclysmic events unfold when the U.S. declines to apply traditional tools of power overseas. In April 1994, Hutu rebels began the **indiscriminate killing of Tutsis in Rwanda**. As the violence escalated, the United Nations’s peacekeeping forces stood down so as not to violate a UN mandate prohibiting intervention in a country’s internal politics. Washington followed suit, refusing even to consider deploying forces to East-Central Africa. By the time the killing was done, in July of the same year, Hutus had slaughtered between half a million and 1 million Tutsis. And in the 1990s, Japan’s economy went into its long stall, making the Japanese model of a scaled down military seem rather less relevant. All this is to say that during the presidency of Bill Clinton, **Nye’s “intangible forms of power” proved to hold little sway in matters of statecraft, while** modes of **traditional power remained as critical as ever in coercing other nations and affirming America’s role as chief protector of the global order.**

**UQ**

**Won’t pass – GOP opposition.**

**Lillis 1-29**. [Mike, congressional reporter, "Despite momentum, tough fight looms for immigration-reform advocates" The Hill -- thehill.com/homenews/news/279761-despite-momentum-tough-fight-looms-over-immigration-reform]

Despite the momentum growing behind comprehensive immigration reform, advocates face high hurdles in their fight for changes on an issue that has been a political third rail on Capitol Hill for more than a decade.¶ While President Obama and congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle are optimistic they can enact the reforms that have eluded Washington policymakers for years, the immediate pushback from some conservatives is a clear signal that the debate will be fierce and no changes will come easily — **or at all.**¶ To be sure, November's elections, which saw Hispanic voters come out in heavy favor of Obama and the Democrats, have made the political environment much more conducive to reform than the last time Congress took up a comprehensive immigration package roughly eight years ago.¶ But President George W. Bush was similarly optimistic about the chances of his proposal at the time — “I’ll see you at the bill-signing,” he famously said — only to see the effort fall at the hands of his fellow Republicans in the House.¶ Immigration reformers on both sides of the aisle are hoping for a different ending this time around, but they're also not holding their breath.¶ Former Rep. Chris Cannon (R-Utah), an original supporter of the DREAM Act and a sponsor of several other bills, said November's election results were "like a two-by-four to the forehead" of Republican leaders who "have realized how stupid their position has been." ¶ But he warned that conservative Republicans could still sink the effort to overhaul the system.¶ "The intransigents who would rather carp about a potential problem than look for a solution, they'll do whatever they can [to kill the proposed reforms]," Cannon said Monday by phone. "I think it's fair to question their political motivations.

**Winners win**

**Winners win – its empirically proven and its Obama’s new strategy**

**Gergen ‘1-18** (CNN Senior Political Analyst, David, CNN, 1-19-2013, http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/18/opinion/gergen-obama-two/index.html)

On the eve of his second inaugural, President **Obama appears smarter, tougher and bolder than ever** before. But whether he is also wiser remains a key question for his new term. It is clear that **he is consciously changing his leadership style** heading into the next four years. Weeks before the November elections, his top advisers were signaling that he intended to be a different kind of president in his second term. "Just watch," they said to me, in effect, "he will win re-election decisively and then **he will throw down the gauntlet** to the Republicans, insisting they raise taxes on the wealthy. Right on the edge of the fiscal cliff, he thinks Republicans will cave." What's your Plan B, I asked. "We don't need a Plan B," they answered. "**After the president hangs tough** -- no more Mr. Nice Guy -- **the other side will buckle**." **Sure enough**, **Republicans caved on taxes. Encouraged, Obama has since made clear he won't compromise ///////with Republicans on the debt ceiling,** either. **Obama 2.0 stepped up** this past week **on yet another issue: gun control**. No president in two decades has been as forceful or sweeping in challenging the nation's gun culture. Once again, he portrayed the right as the enemy of progress and showed no interest in negotiating a package up front. In his coming State of the Union address, and perhaps in his inaugural, the president will begin a hard push for a comprehensive reform of our tattered immigration system. Leading GOP leaders on the issue -- Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida, for example -- would prefer a piecemeal approach that is bipartisan. Obama wants to go for broke in a single package, and on a central issue -- providing a clear path to citizenship for undocumented residents -- he is uncompromising. After losing out on getting Susan Rice as his next secretary of state, Obama has also shown a tougher side on personnel appointments. Rice went down after Democratic as well as Republican senators indicated a preference for Sen. John Kerry. But when Republicans also tried to kill the nomination of Chuck Hagel for secretary of defense, Obama was unyielding -- an "in-your-face appointment," Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-South Carolina, called it, echoing sentiments held by some of his colleagues. Republicans would have preferred someone other than Jack Lew at Treasury, but Obama brushed them off. Hagel and Lew -- both substantial men -- will be confirmed, absent an unexpected bombshell, and Obama will rack up two more victories over Republicans. Strikingly, Obama has also been deft in the ways he has drawn upon Vice President Joe Biden. During much of the campaign, Biden appeared to be kept under wraps. But in the transition, he has been invaluable to Obama in negotiating a deal with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell on the fiscal cliff and in pulling together the gun package. Biden was also at his most eloquent at the ceremony announcing the gun measures. All of this has added up for Obama to one of the most effective transitions in modern times. And it is paying rich dividends: A CNN poll this past week pegged his approval rating at 55%, far above the doldrums he was in for much of the past two years. **Many of his long-time supporters are rallying behind him**. As the first Democrat since Franklin D. Roosevelt to score back-to-back election victories with more than 50% of the vote, **Obama is in the strongest position** since early in his first year.