

Cut-And-Run's Consequences

War On Terror: Have the president's swift military pullouts from Afghanistan and Iraq served U.S. interests? All we see is a "surge" on U.S. targets by our enemies, while our secretary of state pleads with them not to meddle.

Pakistani-backed Taliban fighters on Saturday set off a 1,500-pound bomb on an armored vehicle full of American troops and allies, killing 18. It was their biggest armed attack on a U.S. target since they downed a helicopter carrying elite SEALs shortly after the unit took out Osama bin Laden. It was also the biggest attack ever against a U.S. target within the perimeters of Kabul.

Three other attacks on allied targets — one on an Australian unit in the south, one a suicide attack on an Afghan unit and another on a United Nations aid office in Kandahar have followed, taking even more casualties.

It's a surge of sorts, with U.S. troops on its sharp end, our enemies seeking to turn an exit with our "heads held high," as President Obama put it, into a retreat.

It also comes just days after the Pentagon released a report stating the number of enemy-initiated attacks was finally trending lower, as the Associated Press noted.

There can be only one explanation for this sudden change: the president's decision to withdraw troops against all advice from his field generals and all common sense as elections approach and his anti-war base

Worse still, the president announced the dates — at the end of this year for U.S. troops in Iraq and the end of 2012 for most U.S. troops in Afghanistan, with all out by 2014. Those fixed dates have created rallying opportunities for our enemies — and their attacks show they are taking them.

On Wednesday, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will speak in Istanbul on Afghanistan, pleading with Pakistan (and presumably Iran) for the millionth time not to meddle in Afghanistan or Iraq as U.S. troops exit and President Obama begins "nation-building at home."

"We are urging all of Afghanistan's neighbors to commit to a set of principles (that) underscore full respect for Afghan sovereignty and territory," a senior State Department official said ahead of the conference.

Coming from an administration that's withdrawing out of weakness and pressure from the anti-war left, this isn't likely to cut any ice with predator states. In fact, it's likely to initiate the opposite effect.

The first signs can be seen in this surge against American and allied targets. After 10 years of war, the enemy — including Pakistan — remains an enemy and is desperate to claim something in the way of a victory.

The fact that Americans are pulling away and pretending they have won is their ideal scenario for snatching victory from the jaws of defeat.