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Tonya Executive Summary

As part of The Center's desire to solve America's most pressing problems, a proposal is currently being launched to revitalize the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO. The greatest threat to both America and Europe now is from Islamic terrorism. The ongoing war in Afghanistan is being fought by NATO and its force ISAF. The Taliban is still fighting and killing NATO soldiers and al-Qaeda is still able to launch attacks abroad against Western targets. The security of all NATO countries directly relates to the situation in the mountainous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Center wants to convince Europe that the safety of their citizens directly relates to the commitment that each one gives to NATO in Afghanistan. The Center wants to convince European countries to bolster their commitments to ISAF and NATO in Afghanistan to prevent a resurgence of the al-Qaeda backed Taliban. For it must be remembered that it was from Afghanistan that al-Qaeda received sanctuary while it planned and implemented the attacks of September 11th 2001.

I spent the majority of my summer researching various tangents to this proposal for the revitalization of NATO. We found that since September 11th, in Europe there had been 359 killed and 4398 wounded from attacks directly attributed to Islamic terrorism. It was thought that the strongest counter-argument to our research was that Europe was never under threat until post-September 11th and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. However between 1980 and September 11th, at least 196 were killed and 865 were wounded. What was also striking was the nature of the attacks that occurred almost singularly focused on Jews and affiliated targets. Essentially, prior to September 11th, most European Gentiles had little to fear from Islamic Terrorism because they were never the targets.

One major issue that continued to arise was that most European governments support the war in Afghanistan and recognize the danger that losing the campaign presents to their countries at home, however, the general populations do not support the operation and fails to recognize the correlation between Islamic Terrorism in Europe and its source in Afghanistan. Success in Afghanistan would revitalize the NATO alliance and strengthen the crucial trans-Atlantic bonds that are being strained.