Security of Our Soldiers  
Negative Case by Micah Chapman



One of the questions you hear over and over in Lincoln/Douglas debate is this: “What is the purpose of government?” This question can be debated and dissected but realistically, the government's purpose comes back to something incredibly simple: safety. If a government does not protect its citizens, as well as the soldiers it sends into battle, it fails its core purpose. After all, a government without its people is no government at all.

If safety is the core purpose of government, then it logically follows that safety should be the core of all governmental decision making. A government should avoid actions, military or otherwise, that risk losing human safety. When it comes to war, this means that governments should avoid large risks whenever possible.

That’s what this case is built on. Here a few things you should do while running it:

1. Win your examples. Usually in LD the examples are not the focus of the case. However, this case is much stronger if you properly defend these two examples. In both of the examples, Neg may say “so we should just stand by and allow these corrupt regimes to take over?” That’s not what you’re saying. You’re saying that we have other options than preemptive that are more calculated and safe. Then, turn the rhetoric. Ask the Aff what they would have done in those examples. Are there any other options? Clearly preemptive warfare didn’t work.
2. Be the reasonable one. It’s tempting to viciously attack every rising threat, but that sort of thinking can lead to terrible results in the real world. There’s a reason our invasions in Iraq and Vietnam are seen as mostly unsuccessful: They were reckless. America didn’t take into consideration the future repercussions of its actions. Paint the Aff side as reckless, hasty, and a loose cannon. Win the rhetoric and you win the round.

That’s pretty much it. This case is simple, easy to run, and should be effective if run properly. Above all, take this seriously. You’re talking about actions that could potentially risk thousands of lives. Make sure your rhetoric matches that mood.

Good luck!

Security of Our Soldiers

The fundamental purpose of government is the protection of its citizens. Fail that, and it has failed all. When a government fails to protect its citizen’s safety, it fails its duty. It is because affirming this resolution violates safety that I believe that preemptive warfare is not morally justified.

# Definitions:

1. Preemptive: “Taken as a measure against something possible, anticipated, or feared.”**[[1]](#footnote-1)**

2. Warfare: “The process of military struggle between two nations or groups of nations.”**[[2]](#footnote-2)**

Now that we have the definitions established we can move onto…

# Value: Security

The value, or weighing mechanism in today’s round, is that of*security*. Security is defined as, “the state of being free from danger or threat.”[[3]](#footnote-3) The main reason that securityshould be the value for today’s round is because of the…

## Reason to Prefer: End Goal of War

The end goal of all military actions should be establishing security first and foremost. Wars are waged based off whether or not they will make the world a safer place. Because of this, safety should be the main weighing mechanism for this round.  
  
With the value in place, we need to explore a key contention, showing how affirming today’s resolution fails to uphold security.

# Contention: Preemptive Warfare Harms Security

When a government makes military decisions, they must take into account what those decisions will lead to in the future. If a government recklessly enters wars without constraint, the immediate and future safety of that country is jeopardized.

That is precisely what preemptive warfare does. When a country starts a war without provocation, they have no idea how that war will escalate. With a normal, non-preemptive war, the fighting has already begun, and countries can make their decisions based off the already existing situation. With preemptive warfare, it is nearly impossible to take factors such as military escalation, tactics, and rouge parties into consideration, because they have no idea how those issues will be affected. As is seen throughout history, this type of loose-cannon policy making degrades safety and opens the door to disastrous unintended consequences.

Some examples of this are:

## Example 1: Vietnam

In the mid 1900s, the U.S.S.R was at the height of its communistic regime. America knew that facing The Soviet Union head-on would be disastrous, so they adopting a “containment” strategy, which attempted to stop Russia from spreading the terrors of communism. When that communism spread to Vietnam, the U.S decided to take action. Unprovoked, America invaded Vietnam and attempted to overthrow the communist regime in power at the time.

Unfortunately, it didn’t work. The U.S, being the more powerful state, assumed this takeover would be simple. However, this preemptive action led to 58,000 American soldiers dying.[[4]](#footnote-4) In the end, America pulled out without majorly benefiting the situation, and Vietnamese communism eventually collapsed on its own. If America would have waited, we could have seen that communism in Vietnam was not sustainable, and did not require reckless American action to stop it. In this case, preemptive warfare placed America deep into a conflict that they never should have engaged in.

## Example 2: The Iraq War

In 2003, President George Bush initiated an attack upon the nation of Iraq based on reports by U.S. intelligence mistakenly stating that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Seeing the threat of Saddam Hussein’s regime armed with harmful weapons, America preemptively acted, invading Iraq and finding no weapons of mass destruction, nuclear or otherwise. To this day there is no evidence of Iraq possessing powerful weapons, and this war has cost the U.S over 4,000 soldiers and trillions of dollars.[[5]](#footnote-5) The one “triumph” many claim from the Iraq war was the toppling of Saddam Hussein.

However, even with that success, there were many unintended consequences. The removal of Hussein created a power vacuum in the area, which led to the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS. Most Americans do not support America’s actions in the Iraq war, because it demonstrated the primary problem with preemptive warfare: it’s incredibly risky and reckless. We cannot afford to lose human lives and jeopardize safety with reckless action. A government needs to be sure of the military climate they enter, and they cannot do so with preemptive warfare.

As we can see, preemptive warfare is dangerous and irresponsible. When a country engages in preemptive warfare, they risk safety and put human lives on the line. That is never morally justified. A morally just government puts safety first. It is because preemptive war sacrifices safety that I stand firm in negating today’s resolution, and believe that preemptive warfare is not morally justified. Thank you.

Opposing This Case

The primary negative to this case is how much it assumes. This case assumes that if preemption is avoided, everything will make itself clear. In hindsight, of course we know that Vietnam and Iraq were largely disasters. However, we can’t know the future. Get the Neg to admit that there can possibly be a situation where preemption is acceptable. And then ask the negative *how* we know when that situation arises. When we invaded Iraq, a majority of Americans said it was a good idea. Now, very few do. There’s no way to know for sure until the war is over.

Although we should never be reckless in warfare, some risks are often necessary. Entering World War II was a risk, however that risk was necessary to help stop one of the most heinous regimes of all time. Warfare is like a big game of chess; there can be no reward without risk. Just because an action is risky does not mean it is immoral.

Make sure to be realistic, and ask the negative for alternatives. What should we have done instead of invading Iraq? It’s unlikely that the neg will have a satisfactory answer to that question. Your primary objective is to minimize rhetoric that makes the resolution sound reckless and foolish. If you can bring the round back to real life, you should be able to defeat this case.

Good luck!

1. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/preemptive> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/warfare> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/security> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “Statistical Information about Casualties of the Vietnam War.” National Archives and Records Administration, U.S Federal Government, 13 Mar. 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Goodman, H. A. “4,486 American Soldiers Have Died in Iraq. President Obama Is Continuing a Pointless and Deadly Quagmire.” The Huffington Post, TheHuffingtonPost.com, 17 Sept. 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)