



My Drift

The Afghanistan War Ends

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The last American soldier to leave Afghanistan was MAJ GEN Chris Donahue, Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division seen here boarding the last C-17 military cargo airplane out just before midnight on August 30th, 2021, ending the U.S. mission in Kabul and the war in Afghanistan.

I applaud President Biden for ending the “never ending” 20-year war in Afghanistan! U.S. Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump failed to do it. Okay, the “Withdrawal Plan” could have been better, but nothing goes as planned in this “Godforsaken Country”.

America's longest war is over

The United States finished its withdrawal efforts from the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, the Pentagon said Monday (30 Aug 2021), effectively ending a two-decade conflict that began in October 2001, a few weeks after the attacks of September 11th. The Taliban (in power) at the time provided sanctuary to al-Qaeda, the terrorist group that planned and carried out the devastating terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

“The past 17 days have seen our troops execute the largest airlift in U.S. history, evacuating over 120,000 U.S. citizens, citizens of our allies, and Afghan allies of the United States,” the president said in the statement. “They have done it with unmatched courage, professionalism, and resolve. Now, our 20-year military presence in Afghanistan has ended.”

Costs of America's Longest War: Thousands of lives and trillions of dollars. Here is the breakdown of the Human Cost:

- **American service members killed in Afghanistan: 2,461**
- **American service members injured in Afghanistan: 20,742**
- **U.S. contractors killed: 3,846 (Note: More than US troops)**
- **Other allied NATO service members killed: 1,144**
- **Multi-nation aid workers killed: 444**
- **Afghan civilians killed: More than 50,000**
- **Afghan national military and police killed: More than 66,000**
- **Taliban and other opposition fighters killed: More than 52,000**

In the final weeks of the planned exodus of foreign forces from Afghanistan, the Taliban carried out a succession of shocking battlefield gains. The Taliban seized Bagram Air Base, a sprawling and once-stalwart U.S. military installation, less than two months after U.S. commanders transferred it to the Afghan National Security and Defense Force. In 2012, at its peak, Bagram saw more than 100,000 U.S. troops pass through. It was the largest U.S. military installation in Afghanistan.

As the Taliban moved closer to the capital, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled the country, and Western nations rushed to evacuate embassies amid a deteriorating security situation. The Afghan National Security and Defense Force (180,000 members) only put up a token resistance against the Taliban (75,000 fighters).

Despite being vastly outnumbered by the Afghan military, which has long been assisted by U.S. and NATO coalition forces, the Taliban seized the presidential palace in Kabul on Aug. 15. It wasn't long before all 180,000 members of the Afghan military had surrendered and/or completely disappeared.



The Taliban were yet again in power!

Biden ordered the deployment of thousands of U.S. troops to Kabul to help evacuate U.S. Embassy staff and secure the perimeter of the airport. Meanwhile, thousands of Afghans swarmed the tarmac at the airport desperate to flee Taliban rule.



American and Afghan civilians board C-17 transport plane

Following the Taliban takeover, Biden defended his decision that the U.S. would depart the war-torn country. “I stand squarely behind my decision. After 20 years I’ve learned the hard way that there was never a good time to withdraw U.S. forces,” Biden said a day after Afghanistan collapsed to the Taliban.

“American troops cannot and should not be fighting in a war and dying in a war that Afghan forces are not willing to fight for themselves,” Biden said. “We gave them every chance to determine their own future. We could not provide them with the will to fight for that future,” he added.

Again, I agree 100% with President Biden! They have been fighting wars in this region and country since the beginning of time and they will continue fighting wars forever – that’s all they know how to do.



There are many terrorist groups in Afghanistan planning ways to kill innocent people

Final U.S. military casualties of Afghan war

It was very sad about the ISIS-K suicide bombing at the Kabul airport that killed 13 and injured 20 American military personnel and killed at least 170 Afghan civilians.



Nancy Pelosi

Did you hear about the Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi refusing to read the names of the 13 servicemembers killed in Afghanistan during the ISIS-K attack? This is the same Pelosi who wore Kente cloth and kneeled for 8 minutes and 46 seconds in the Capitol Visitor Center to honor George Floyd, a criminal who resisted arrest and died in police custody. Pelosi’s action — or lack thereof, as this case may be — should be rebuked and condemned. She should be fired from her government position and sent home.

Well, I think these 13 brave American servicemembers are heroes and should be honored. Pelosi won't do it, but I will – here are pictures along with their names:



(Top row left to right)

Marine Corps Lance Cpl. David L. Espinoza, 20, of Rio Bravo, Texas

Marine Corps Sgt. Nicole L. Gee, 23, of Sacramento, Calif.

Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Kareem M. Nikoui, 20, of Norco, Calif.

Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Knauss, 23, of Corryton, Tenn.

(Middle row left to right)

Marine Corps Cpl. Humberto A. Sanchez, 22, of Logansport, Ind.

Marine Corps Cpl. Hunter Lopez, 22, of Indio, Calif.

Navy Hospital Corpsman Maxton W. Soviak, 22, of Berlin Heights, Ohio

Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Dylan R. Merola, 20, of Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.

Marine Corps Sgt. Johanny Rosario Pichardo, 25, of Lawrence, Mass.

(Bottom row left to right)

Marine Corps Cpl. Daegan W. Page, 23, of Omaha, Neb.

Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Darin T. Hoover, 31, of Salt Lake City

Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Rylee J. McCollum, 20, of Jackson, Wyo.

Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Jared M. Schmitz, 20, of St. Charles, Mo.



The 13 fallen service members arrive at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware

“God Bless our Military Personnel and America”



**The Taliban Flag flies again in Afghanistan
(That’s the ugliest flag I ever saw!)**

Question of the day. What did the United States accomplish in Afghanistan?

The United States did what we went to do in Afghanistan: to get the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11 and to deliver justice to Osama bin Laden, and to degrade the terrorist threat to keep Afghanistan from becoming a base from which attacks could be continued against the United States. We achieved those objectives.

(In my humble opinion, President George W. Bush should had declared victory and got our troops out of the country within the first two years.)



George W. Bush

Summary of what went on in Afghanistan during the last 20 years

By December 2001, Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaeda, and other top commanders had fled to safety in Pakistan, a nominal U.S. ally. American forces did not pursue them, and Pakistan ultimately evolved into a safe haven for Taliban fighters, who in subsequent years crossed the border to attack American and Afghan forces. **Inside Afghanistan, American troops quickly toppled the Taliban government and crushed its fighting forces.**



U.S. Military Quickly Defeat the Taliban

In December 2001, the Taliban's spokesman offered an unconditional surrender, which was rejected by the United States. In May 2003, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld announced an end to major combat operations in the country.

After routing the Taliban, the United States and NATO turned to rebuilding a failed state and establishing a Western-style democracy, spending billions trying to reconstruct a desperately poor country already ravaged by decades of war.



Life under the pro-western government was much better for women and girls



Life under the Taliban government was and is now very bad for women and girls

There were early successes. A pro-Western government was installed. New schools, hospitals and public facilities were built. Thousands of girls, barred from education under Taliban rule, attended school. Women, largely confined to their homes by the Taliban, went to college, joined the work force, and served in Parliament and government. A vigorous, independent news media emerged.

But corruption was rampant, with hundreds of millions of dollars in reconstruction money stolen or misappropriated. The government proved unable to meet the most basic needs of its citizens. Often, its authority evaporated outside major cities.

In 2003, with 8,000 American troops in Afghanistan, the United States began shifting combat resources to the war in Iraq, started in March of that year. Despite the presence of American and NATO troops and its superior air power, the Taliban rebuilt their fighting capabilities.

In 2009, President Barack Obama began deploying thousands more troops to Afghanistan in a “surge” that reached nearly 100,000 by mid-2010. But the Taliban only grew stronger, inflicting heavy casualties on Afghan security forces.

In May 2011, a U.S. Navy SEAL team killed Osama bin Laden in a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, where he had been living for years near a military training academy. In June, President Obama announced that he would start bringing American forces home and hand over security duties to the Afghans by 2014.

By then, the Pentagon had concluded that the war could not be won militarily and that only a negotiated settlement could end the conflict — the third in three centuries involving a world power. Afghan fighters defeated the British army in the 19th century and the Russian military in the 20th century.

With the war at a stalemate, President Obama ended major combat operations on Dec. 31, 2014, and transitioned to training and assisting Afghan security forces.

Nearly three years later, President Donald J. Trump said that although his first instinct had been to withdraw all troops, he would nonetheless continue to prosecute the war. He stressed that any troop withdrawal would be based on combat conditions, not predetermined timelines.



Barack Obama

But the Trump administration also had been talking to the Taliban since 2018, leading to formal negotiations that excluded the Afghan government, led by President Ashraf Ghani. Nothing good happened from these talks.

Ahead of the planned withdrawal in August, the Taliban's summer-long military campaign had forced widespread surrenders and retreats by beleaguered Afghan government forces. In many cases, they gave up without a fight, sometimes following the intercession of village elders dispatched by the Taliban. At the same time, civilian casualties soared to some of the highest levels of the two-decade old war.



Donald Trump

It was now President Joe Biden's turn to do something about this war. And he did something!

Now, 20 years later, the Taliban are back in control of the country, and everybody is saying the US lost the war. I disagree. The Afghan government forces led by their cowardly president Ashraf Ghani lost the war. The US should be able to keep the terrorists at bay in Afghanistan using our superior surveillance and air power.

The History of the Taliban

The Taliban is a Deobandi Islamist religious-political movement and military organization based in Afghanistan. The Taliban's ideology has been described as combining an "innovative" form of Sharia Islamic law based on Deobandi fundamentalism and militant Islamism, combined with Pashtun social and cultural norms known as Pashtunwali, as most Taliban are Pashtun tribesmen. The group is internally funded by its activities in the illegal drug trade by producing and trafficking narcotics such as heroin, extortion, and kidnap and ransom. They also seized control of mining operations in the mid-2010s which were illegal under the previous government.

From 1996 to 2001, the Taliban held power over roughly three-quarters of Afghanistan, and enforced a strict interpretation of Sharia, or Islamic law. The Taliban emerged in 1994 as one of the prominent factions in the Afghan Civil War and largely consisted of students (talib) from the Pashtun areas of eastern and southern Afghanistan who had been educated in traditional Islamic schools, and fought during the Soviet–Afghan War. Under the leadership of Mohammed Omar, the movement spread throughout most of Afghanistan, shifting power away from the

Mujahideen warlords. The totalitarian Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was established in 1996 and the Afghan capital was transferred to Kandahar. It held control of most of the country until being overthrown after the American-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 following the September 11 attacks.

The Taliban have been condemned internationally for the harsh enforcement of their interpretation of Islamic Sharia law, which has resulted in the brutal treatment of many Afghans. During their rule from 1996 to 2001, the Taliban and their allies committed massacres against Afghan civilians, denied UN food supplies to 160,000 starving civilians, and conducted a policy of scorched earth, burning vast areas of fertile land and destroying tens of thousands of homes. While the Taliban controlled Afghanistan, they banned activities and media including paintings, photography, and movies that depicted people or other living things. They also prohibited music using instruments, with the exception of the daf, a type of frame drum. The Taliban prevented girls and young women from attending school, banned women from working jobs outside of healthcare (male doctors were prohibited from treating women), and required that women be accompanied by a male relative and wear a burqa at all times when in public. If women broke certain rules, they were publicly whipped or executed. Religious and ethnic minorities were heavily discriminated against during Taliban rule and they have engaged in cultural genocide, destroying numerous monuments including the famous 1500-year-old Buddhas of Bamiyan. According to the United Nations, the Taliban and their allies were responsible for 76% of Afghan civilian casualties in 2010, and 80% in 2011 and 2012.

The Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence and military are widely alleged by the international community and the Afghan government to have provided support to the Taliban during their founding and time in power, and of continuing to support the Taliban during the insurgency. Pakistan states that it dropped all support for the group after the 11 September attacks. In 2001, reportedly 2,500 Arabs under command of Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden fought for the Taliban. Following the Fall of Kabul on 15 August 2021, the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan.

Why couldn't the Afghan Army defeat the Taliban? A Taliban religious scholar explained it this way, "The Taliban fight for belief, for janat (heaven) and ghazi (killing infidels). They don't mind dying. The army and police fight for money."

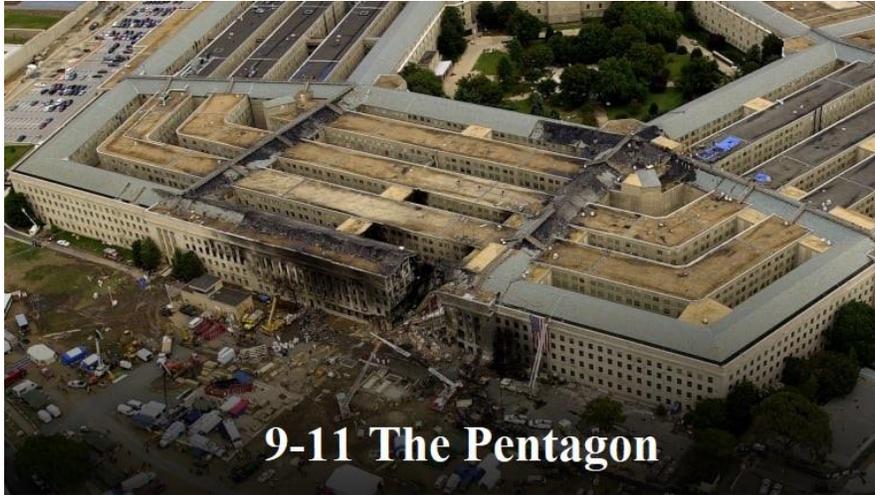
Well, that's a nice theory but it didn't work too great when U.S. military forces crushed the Taliban and removed them from power in just a few months.

9-11 Twenty Years Later



World Trade Center - Twin Towers





9-11 The Pentagon

AMERICA WILL NEVER FORGET 9-11

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