

AFGHANISTAN, THE GRAVEYARD OF EMPIRES, NATO CRUSADE

© M. Ragheb
7/8/2023

“Humanity loses every war.”

“The first method for estimating the intelligence of a ruler is to look at the men he has around him.”
Machiavelli

“The war is not meant to be won; it is meant to be continuous.”
George Orwell

“When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,
and the women come out to cut up what remains,
jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains,
and go to your gawd like a soldier.”
Rudyard Kipling

“Cedant arma togae
[Roman: Soldiery must yield to statesmanship]”
Grégoire Diamantidis, French General

“The great enemy of truth is often not the lie-deliberate,
contrived and dishonest-but the myth-persistent, persuasive and unrealistic.”
USA President John F. Kennedy

“It became necessary to destroy the town to save it.”
Unnamed USA officer about the capital city of B  n Tre, Vietnam, February 7, 1968.

“Whatever does not destroy me makes me stronger.”
Friedrich Nietzsche

"When the facts change, I change my mind. What do you do?"
John Maynard Keynes

"I consider myself a Zionist."
President Joe Biden

“500,000 dead Iraqi Children was ‘worth it’.”
Madeleine Albright, Medal of Freedom recipient

“We came, we saw, he died”
“What difference does it make?”
Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

“Why did you sting me? We will both now die,”
asked the frog to the scorpion.
"I can't help it, it is in my nature,"
answered the scorpion.
Aesop Fable

INTRODUCTION

Two countries share the title of being “Graveyard of Empires”: Egypt and Afghanistan. Their strategic geographic locations acted as magnets attracting invaders and occupiers throughout history. Afghanistan doggedly fought, resisted, and eventually expelled its invaders, whereas Egypt subtly defeated them by melting, assimilating, and absorbing them into its own superior culture.

It is claimed that the USA went out of Afghanistan because its military could not source the necessary oil to maintain the war machine over there, which came directly from Russia through contraband circuits. After President Vladimir Putin plugged that leak, the USA magically had to leave. It is more plausible that the strategic retreat was in preparation for launching an attack on Iran at the instigation of Israel and Saudi Arabia. In the previous 20 years, the USA has spent \$8 trillion or 40 percent of annual GDP on conducting totally unsuccessful wars. Over the course of the war there were 2,401 USA military personnel killed in Afghanistan, with over 20,000 wounded. Many of these casualties were due to Taliban suicide tactics, which became difficult to defend against, as well as roadside bombs Improvised Explosive Devices, IEDs.

In fact, there are many successful military operations that occur every year that go unnoticed. Israel, the USA, British and even the French conduct special operations throughout the world almost every day. The USA destroyed Iraq's conventional military machine easily, same for Afghanistan. But the military is not designed for nation building. And you cannot build a nation from competing tribes. So many do not realize that the European colonial powers used uninformed political bureaucrats to divide territories among themselves and draw most of the borders in the world with little regard to ethnic blood lines or culture in the Middle East and Africa. Those tribal entities have historical resentment and regard for their own neighbors who are likely a different tribe but only happened to end up in the same designated country as a "divide and rule" entity by the colonial powers. It is hard for Americans to understand the tribal nature of most countries. Most "countries" are really a forced union of multiple tribes with their retained own identity, customs, and language. The number of dialects in the world is quite large.

At the hands of global war criminals over many decades, between four and 5 million Moslems and their children have been annihilated, and an equal number made homeless refugees that were dumped into Europe immigration. They have displaced approximately 83 million people in the Middle East forever wars, and millions were murdered. It has been estimated that close to 400,000 innocent Afghans and Iraqis have been killed. Many think the number is an underestimation. Estimates of the total number of deaths in the Syrian Civil War, by opposition activist groups, vary between 494,438 and about 606,000. This does exceed the casualties of all world wars.

Hundreds of thousands of Afghans escaped the conflict in Afghanistan and became refugees seeking asylum in other countries. There are 1.4 million refugees globally who need permanent settlement in a country other than where they currently have asylum, according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, UNHCR. This can be because of personal needs, security, or lack of international treaties. Worldwide, there were 26 million refugees and more than four million asylum seekers in 2019, before the coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic began.

Brown University's Cost of War Project detailed that the USA has spent \$2.26 trillion dollars on a generation of war in Afghanistan. Much of this money has been spent, according to the USA government's own Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, on useless "nation-building" exercises that have built practically nothing.

President Joe Biden announced that the USA military would be out of Afghanistan by the 20th anniversary of the tragic attacks of September 11, 2001. He was finishing a planned policy negotiated by his predecessor President Donald Trump. President Donald Trump negotiated a May 1, 2021. pullout date. President Joe Biden unilaterally extended that to September 11, 2021, voiding the cease fire that went along with that negotiation. In late April 2021, President Joe Biden announced it was time "to end the forever war" in Afghanistan, saying the USA has accomplished its mission. The departure marks the longest American war in its history, and the costs include 2,312 American lives and a \$2.26 trillion bill to USA taxpayers. About 700,000 "interpreters" were rumored to be considered to seek asylum in the USA in fear of retaliation against collaboration with the occupying forces. To fill in a security void at Kabul Airport, Turkish NATO "Askar" troops were brought in. According to the agreement, the American embassy in Kabul would host 650 troops. A possibility is that 300 troops may stay at the base in Kabul for additional security measures.

An internet comment:

“Feels like a Fall Day here in the foothills of the Alleghenies. Lately have seen some obvious disabled veterans in various places, such as at the supermarket waiting for the bus to take them home. Lots of former military here.

You might wonder: Why should this person's physical and mental health have been ruined for life?”

Military commanders have been taught that the first rule of pursuing policies by other means is: “Do not start a war before you define an exit strategy and how to eventually get out of it.” The second rule that they were taught is: “The first rule rings truer when it was not you who started the war.”



Figure 1. Afghan shepherd, Kabul, October 2008.

The oldest military manual in the world: “The Art of War” by Sun Tzu advises those same military commanders: “If you must go to war, marshal your forces to achieve a rapid victory. Otherwise, the cost of keeping the army in the field will empty the Treasury.” Sun Tzu, Sun Tze, Sun Wu or Sunzi, the Chinese military general, strategist and philosopher, authored “The Art of War,” a renowned Chinese book on military strategy.



Figure 2. The rugged Hindu Kush Mountains of Afghanistan, site of USA President Barack Obama’s drone attacks personal crusade, earlier was a morass to the invading armies of Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Great Britain, and Russia.

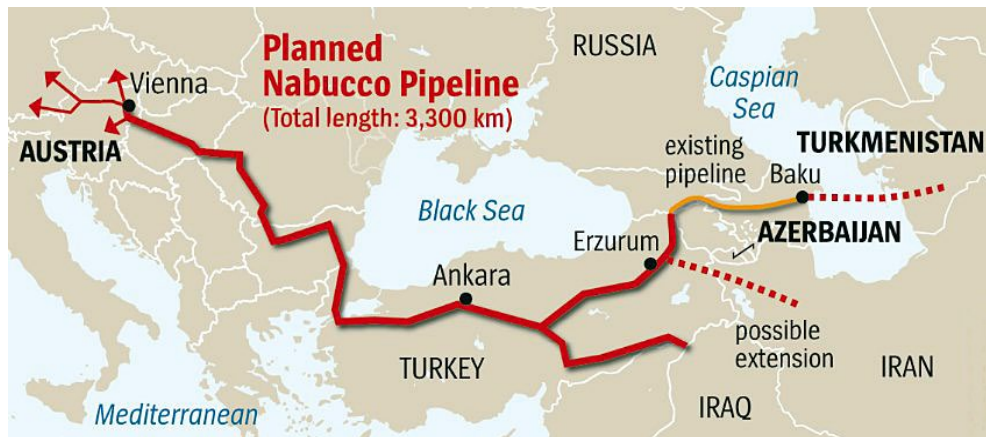


Figure 3. Planned Nabucco Afghanistan gas pipeline to Europe. Source: Der Spiegel.

The Library of Congress has the following to say about the War Powers Resolution: “Section 1544(b), that requires that USA forces be withdrawn from hostilities within 60 days of the time a report is submitted or is required to be submitted under Section 1543(a)(1), unless Congress acts to approve continued military action, or is physically unable to meet as a result of an armed attack upon the United States.”

Over 111,000 Afghans, including civilians, soldiers, and militants, are estimated to have perished in the conflict.

THE GREAT GAME

It was the desire for control of Central Asia that sucked the British Army into its Afghan disaster. For most of the 1800s, the UK and Russia pushed for power and influence in Central Asia in a competition known as “the Great Game.” Losing India terrified the British. India had huge economic resources, a plentiful supply of military-aged males, and a strategic geography. London treasured India as “The jewel in the crown of the British Empire.” The expansion of the Russian Empire into Central Asia was a threat to their control of India. Neighboring Afghanistan was their red line. If the Russians could draw Afghanistan into their sphere of influence, they would become an intolerable threat to British India.

In 1839, the British Army invaded and installed a puppet regime in Kabul that would stand as a buffer to Russian influence. Every previous attempt to bring Afghanistan under foreign rule had ended badly. The Afghans are some of the toughest and most stubborn fighters in the world. The British knew that executing their plan would not be a cakewalk. After a few years of trying and then failing to impose their will, the British threw in the towel.



Figure 4. “Remnants of an Army” by Elizabeth Butler.

Early in 1842, 16,500 British soldiers and civilians packed up and left Kabul, Afghanistan. As they retreated through the mountainous trails, the Afghan tribal fighters attacked them repeatedly. If the Afghan fighters did not kill them, disease and the winter weather would. After seven days, only one man was left alive. William Brydon was bloody, torn, and exhausted. He was the only one to make it to the nearest British military outpost in Jalalabad, 90 miles away from Kabul. The Afghans are rumored to have left him alive so there would be someone to tell the story.

The garrison in Jalalabad lit signal fires to guide other British survivors to safety. After several days, they realized no one was left to see the light. It was the most humiliating military disaster in British history. The death toll sealed Afghanistan's reputation as "The graveyard of empires."

History repeating itself in 2021, as USA troops withdrew, the Afghan military surrendered to the Taliban in rural areas. They were shocked at how fast USA-supported Afghan forces either surrendered or run. They slowed down their advances to prevent overextending, and in some cases to avoid offending the USA.

NEW SILK ROAD

Tying Eurasia together with land routes frees it from dependence on maritime transport ending the importance of controlling the high seas by the Imperial powers. In late 2013, Chinese president Xi Jinping announced the New Silk Road project. On November 18, 2014, a train carrying containerized goods left Yiwu, China and arrived in Madrid, Spain, 21 days later. It was the first shipment across Eurasia on the Yiwu-Madrid route; the longest train route in the world and one of the first components of the New Silk Road.

The godfather of geopolitical theory was British strategist Sir Halford Mackinder who developed a general theory that connected geography with global power. He argued that dominating the Eurasian landmass was the key to being the leading global power. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the American geopolitical strategist, echoes Mackinder on the importance of Eurasia in his book: "The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives":

"Ever since the continents started interacting politically, some five hundred years ago, Eurasia has been the center of world power. A power that dominates "Eurasia" would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions...rendering the Western Hemisphere and Oceania geopolitically peripheral to the world's central continent. About 75 percent of the world's people live in "Eurasia," and most of the world's physical wealth is there as well, both in its enterprises and underneath its soil. "Eurasia" accounts for about three-fourths of the world's known energy resources."



Figure 5. New Silk Road, Wall Street Journal.

China, Russia, and others are working on the ambitious plan seeking to make the UK and USA dominance of the high seas unimportant. They are tying Eurasia together with a web of land-based transport facilities. A constellation of supporting organizations for financial, political, and security cooperation is also in the works. If they are successful, they would wipe away hundreds of years of geopolitical strategic thinking.

For over a thousand years, the Silk Road, named for the lucrative trade it carried, was the world's most important land route. At 4,000 miles long, it passed through a chain of empires and civilizations and connected China to Europe. It was the path along which merchant Marco Polo traveled to the Orient. When he returned, he gave Europeans their first contemporary glimpse of China.

The New Silk Road would include high-speed rail lines, modern highways, fiber-optic cables, energy pipelines, seaports, and airports. They will link the Atlantic shores of Europe with the Pacific shores of Asia.

A set of interlocking international organizations has emerged as the institutional support for the new political-economic-financial order in Eurasia:

1. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Launched in 2014 with financing for New Silk Road projects in mind. Its initial capital base is more than \$100 billion. The AIIB would be a Eurasian alternative to the USA-dominated International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Those institutions have been standing atop the international financial system. China, Russia, and India are the main shareholders and decision makers at the AIIB. Nearly 60 countries, mostly in Eurasia, have signed up to join the bank. Japan and the USA declined to join. Then, the USA government embarrassed itself by trying, and failing, to pressure its allies: the UK, France, and Germany into snubbing the organization.

2. New Development Bank (NDB): The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) are all onboard for Eurasian integration. The NDB, like the AIIB, is an international financial institution headquartered in China but headed by an Indian banker, with \$100 billion in capital. Also, like the AIIB, the NDB is an alternative to the IMF and World Bank. The BRICS countries established the NDB in July 2015. The NDB will also finance infrastructure projects in Africa and South America. The NDB will use members' national currencies, bypassing the USA dollar. It would not depend on USA-controlled institutions for anything. That reduces the NDB's exposure to USA pressure. The BRICS countries are also exploring building an alternative to

SWIFT, the international payments network. In 2012, the USA was able to kick Iran out of SWIFT. That crippled Iran's ability to trade internationally. It also demonstrated that SWIFT had become a USA political weapon. Neutralizing that kind of power is precisely why the BRICS countries want their own international payments system.

3. Eurasian Economic Union (EEU): The EEU is a Russian-led trading bloc. It opened for business in January 2015. The EEU provides free movement of goods, services, money, and people through Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia. Other countries may join in. Trade discussions have started with India, Vietnam, and Iran. The EEU is gradually expanding as countries along the New Silk Road remove barriers to trade. Egypt, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela joined into trade talks with the EEU.

4. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO): Operating in the military and security realm, current members include China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan and Iran planned to join in.

OIL AND GAS PIPELINE

The Central Asian Oil pipeline project, later designated as the Trans-Afghanistan pipeline, was proposed by several USA oil companies in the 1990's. Political and security instability prevented the execution of the project. To build the project, cooperation was required from the Taliban who were in power in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the Russian forces.

Some believe that the failure to be able to build the project was behind the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 following the September 2001 attacks. After the Taliban were removed from power, an agreement was signed with the new Afghanistan government and the USA pipeline companies. Continued conflict slowed the building of the project, but it is still hoped to be built in the future.

The projected pipeline would transport natural gas from the Caspian Sea through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Indian Ocean. The project was needed as the only other pipelines from the Caspian Sea went through Russia and that was an unacceptable route to the predominantly USA oil companies involved.

Another pipeline known as the Peace Pipeline from Iran-Pakistan-India, being built by the USA, has created considerable pressure on Pakistan including the threat of sanctions to kill the project because of the USA's dispute with Iran. Saudi Arabia has also made overtures to Pakistan to abandon the project because of its dispute with Iran.

BRITISH, SOVIET AND USA INVASIONS OF AFGHANISTAN

Military power can destroy armies but cannot "win the hearts and minds" of the folks who are being bombed, invaded and occupied. Noted examples are the failures of the British, the Soviets and the USA in Afghanistan since the imposition of the Durand Line in 1893 to partition the Pashtun Tribes' lands without their consent.



Figure 6. Surviving a sandstorm in the Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

USA military deaths in the Afghan war reached 2,126 in 2012, a cold reminder of the human cost of an extended conflict that garnered little public interest at home as the USA prepared to withdraw most of its combat forces. In addition to the 2,000 Americans killed since the Afghan war began on October 7, 2001, at least 1,065 more coalition troops from other countries have also died. According to the Afghanistan index kept by the Washington-based research center Brookings Institution, about 40 percent of the American deaths were caused by improvised explosive devices. The majority of those were after 2009, when President Barack Obama ordered a surge that sent in 33,000 additional troops to combat heightened Taliban activity. The surge brought the total number of American troops to 101,000, the peak for the entire war. According to the Brookings Institution, hostile fire was the second most common cause of death, accounting for nearly 31 percent of the Americans killed. NATO and allied troops were dying in Afghanistan at a rate of one per day.



Figure 7. Booby-trapped vehicle at Kandahar. Source: Reuters.

Table 1. Casualties in Afghanistan [1].

Year	USA	UK	Other	Total
2001	12	0	0	12
2002	49	3	18	70

2003	48	0	10	58
2004	52	1	7	60
2005	99	1	31	131
2006	98	39	54	191
2007	117	42	73	232
2008	155	51	89	295
2009	317	108	96	521
2010	499	103	109	711
2011	418	46	102	566
2012	262	39	43	344
Total	2126	433	632	3,191

According to the United Nations (UN), 13,431 civilians were killed in the Afghan conflict between 2007, when the UN began keeping statistics, and the end of August 2012. Going back to the USA-led invasion in 2001, most estimates put the number of Afghan civilian deaths in the war at more than 20,000.



Figure 8. Marine soldier taking returned fire in Afghanistan. Source: Reuters.



Figure 9. Surprised by a firefight, Zachery Boyd urgently responding with “I love New York” wear, Afghanistan.



Figure 10. Solidarity of wounded by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), Afghanistan.

The American public grew weary of having its military in a perpetual state of conflict, especially after the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq at the end of 2011. That war, which began with a USA-led invasion in 2003 to oust Iraq's President Saddam Hussein, cost the lives of nearly 4,500 USA troops, more than twice as many as have died in Afghanistan.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a crossroad between the East and West, and supposedly as a reason to stay there; rich in mineral resources of iron, copper, cobalt, gold and lithium, turned out to be the place where the dreams and hopes of President Barack Hussein Obama's presidency are buried with economic insolvency and debt crashing and burning on the rocks of the Hindu Kush Mountains. There, the war on terrorism suddenly became the war for metal resources and the longest war in USA history. The competition for access to these resources is with China which allegedly paid a \$30 million bribe to the Afghan's government minister of mines to be awarded the rights to develop a copper mine.

The countries involved in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan could advance and could not retreat. They were mired in a policing armed conflict siding with the government in a civil war and drug interdiction operation against the Islamic fighters destroying opium poppy fields that are assumed to financially support them. This is eerily like 50 years earlier when the USA government sent "military advisers" to support a corrupt government in South Vietnam against the Viet Kong in the longest war in American history.

The irresponsibility of this war is that it went against both the first and second rules of warfare. The deployment of armed forces to supposedly safeguard security and order in the middle of a civil war commits them to an endless task. There will never be a realization of the first rule with a proud "mission accomplished" statement. Instead, the involved politicians and generals will invoke the sense of duty to be continuously mired out into an endless police watch. A war is supposed to end with a peace settlement after negotiations followed by the opponent's surrender; whereas police work does not involve negotiations or surrender, and never ends.

The war in Afghanistan is a typical case of an "asymmetrical war" between rebellious, determined groups and government militaries or foreign invading and occupying forces. These wars prevailed during colonial times and are now proudly called "wars of independence" by the local victors who inevitably end up prevailing in the conflict. The American nation itself owes its existence to a conflict between a foreign government power and local rebels and their victory in their own war of independence.

ANCIENT HISTORY

In ancient times, Afghanistan was briefly invaded by, among others; the Greeks led by Alexander the Great around 330 BC, and by the Mongols led by Genghis Khan around 1219 AD, who devastated the landscape.

It has been invaded by many invaders and conquerors throughout its modern history. The Russians occupied it in the 1980s, and earlier several times by the British. The Anglo-Afghan wars were fought over the periods 1839-1842, 1878-1880 and in 1919. During the periods of British interventions, the ethnic Pashtun tribes' territories were arbitrarily divided along the so-called Durand line, leading to strained relations with British-ruled India and later with Pakistan.

As part of the cold war strategy, the USA under President Jimmy Carter in 1979 and President Ronald Reagan covertly funded the Islamic Mujahedin coalition of different factions against Russian intervention that supported a pro-Russian secular government. Russia had to withdraw in 1989 after 600,000-2,000,000 Afghan; not Russian, casualties. Five million Afghans had fled the fighting as refugees to Pakistan, Iran and other neighboring countries. Fighting continued among the various Mujahedin factions with the Taliban group seizing the capital Kabul in 1996 and proclaiming an Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan for a 7-year rule in which the opium trade was eradicated.

Following the tragic September 11, 2001 attacks in the USA, a military campaign was launched by President George W. Bush under the name "Operation Enduring Freedom" with the goal of eradicating the Taliban Islamic regime under the pretext of its refusing to hand out some Al Qaeda leaders and to destroy its training camps in Afghanistan. The USA allied itself with a former Mujahedin faction; The Northern Alliance and occupied Afghanistan with a collaboration with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces.

In Afghanistan, the tribal system, which controls the life of most people outside the urban areas, is potent in political terms. The Afghani citizens feel a fierce loyalty to their respective tribes. If called upon, they would bear arms as a militia under the tribal chiefs and local clan leaders. Under Islamic law, every believer has an obligation to bear arms at the ruler's call to defend against outside aggression against the faith. With fierce and dedicated resistance to foreign invaders, Afghanistan has been proudly referred to by nationals and foreigners alike as the "Grave of Empires."

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Like in the situation of the ethnic war between Serbia and the other groups in the former country of Yugoslavia, the conflict with the Taliban is classified as a "non-international armed conflict," as defined in an additional protocol of the Geneva Conventions on war rights. Whoever takes part in such a conflict can shoot and attack in order to kill opponents; not just in self-defense or for emergency help, as police forces do. In the martial law of a civil war, anyone who takes part directly in the fighting, or gives the strong impression of doing so, loses their protection rights as a civilian. This has resulted in mounting civilian casualties with the occupying forces targeting civilians suspected of harboring or aiding the Taliban forces.

The boundaries between war and peace, between military and police operations, have been blurred since the events on September 11, 2001. Wars are increasingly no longer clearly defined events between two or more countries. The basis of international law, which is part of the very foundations of first, human, and second, Western civilization, has been called into question ever since President George W. Bush imposed his "Bush Doctrine" of waging a crusade disguised as a "war on terror" against the Islamic fundamentalists throughout the world, and since President Barack Obama blindly followed in his steps and proceeded in the much-maligned extra-judicial assassinations of suspected opponents, even American citizens, in distant lands with rockets fired from remotely controlled unmanned drones.

Insisting on a clear distinction between war and peace is the only defense against the Bush Doctrine; that continued to be applied under President Barack Obama that treated the entire globe as an arena for inflaming the irregular crusade against Islamic fundamentalism. The rules that have been developed within international law that have allowed the maintenance of a kind of

boundary in civilization between the validity of human rights and a law that allows killing in war, have been blurred-out and generally ignored.

MODERN WESTERN CRUSADE

The Medieval crusades saw troops from multiple European countries joining together in invading the Islamic lands. History repeated itself under NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) including combat troops from the USA, England, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Canada who could not resist the urge to enjoy their technological military superiority in controlling Islamic lands. Poland and Australia were also eager contributors to the endeavor.

President Nicholas Sarkozy of France made a declaration of crusading honor on behalf of the French media and electorate: “The French are ready to send soldiers to Kabul to fight for the rights of Afghan women;” by orphaning and widowing them, that is.

A romantic illusion that is popular in Germany is that the Afghanistan crusading mission is one primarily focused on redevelopment and on providing a safe place for the delicate flower of a halfway free society to flourish. This is thought to be achievable with occupying troops rather than by economic, educational and technical development.

These have invited themselves in to meddle in Afghanistan affairs after earlier failed incursions in modern times by the British and the old Soviet Union. Ironically, the Soviet Union was thrown out of Afghanistan by the Mujahedeen with help from the USA which was then launching another kind of crusade against communism.

INTO THE VALLEY OF DEATH, AFGHANISTAN



Figure 11. NATO Bundeswehr German armor deployed in the desert at Mazar e Sharif, Afghanistan for the first-time outside Germany since World War II and CH53 military helicopter.

According to its constitution, Germany can defend itself using military measures only when “attacked” and stipulates that Germany should go to war only in “defense” and that this requires parliament to declare a "state of defense" as well as an external “state of emergency.”



Figure 12. Graveyard of rusting abandoned Russian armor, vestige from an earlier occupation of Afghanistan that eventually was defeated in 1989, ironically with USA help.



Figure 13. USA Chinook helicopter at a base in Nijrab, Afghanistan, February 2009. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) is the name that the USA government gave to all activities that were allegedly directed against "international terrorism" after the attacks of September 11, 2001.

In “The Charge of the Light Brigade” poem, poet Alfred Lord Tennyson describes how “Some one had blundered” in the slaughter by the Russian artillery of a British light cavalry charging it in the Crimean War:

“Forward, the Light Brigade!’
 Was there a man dismayed?
 Not though the soldier knew
 Some one had blundered:
 Theirs not to make reply,
 Theirs not to reason why,
 Theirs but to do and die:
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
 Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon in front of them

Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred”

In Afghanistan, like in Crimea, “Some one had blundered,” again!



Figure 14. Charge of the Light Brigade.



Figure 15. Crimean War.

AFGHANISTAN, PROUD GRAVEYARD OF EMPIRES

In a telephone conversation with Kabul on September 17, 2008, then USA Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice threw a stinging threat at Afghanistan’s President Hamid Karzai: “If you continue to criticize America, we will no longer cooperate with you.” President Hamid Karzai’s

response was proud and defiant: "I will not be silent, and I will not stop promoting the interests of my people and their children." President Hamid Karzai had received the arrogant ungracious call because he had repeatedly accused the occupying American troops of insensitivity toward Afghan civilians. This time he was referring to a bombing attack on the northwestern town of Aziz Abad. The Afghans said that 90 innocent civilians were killed; the American military insisted that it was just seven and not 90. No big deal! What is the fuss about?

After the call, President Hamid Karzai called together a group of his closest associates and reportedly told them: "These Americans do not understand that, although we are their friends, we are not their servants. They want to treat us like colonized generals. They do not understand that we are a proud nation. I would rather die honorably than be their powerless vassal." It was a turning point in the relationship between the protective power and its ruling protégés.

President Hamid Karzai is a conservative, devout Moslem who is deeply rooted in the loyalties of his tribal society. He does not drink alcohol; he prays five times a day; and he encourages his wife, a medical physician, to keep out of the public eye. He has been seeking reconciliation with the Taliban faction and wants to include those who renounce the Al Qaida violent ideology in his government. He is not troubled that the Taliban despises independent courts and wants to introduce traditional Islamic Sharia Law. According to President Hamid Karzai: "Afghanistan is an Islamic republic, which is why there are no problems whatsoever with that."

President Hamid Karzai told the Associated Press, AP that he recently sold "some of his businesses, including another restaurant in Baltimore." He used to operate restaurants in Boston, San Francisco, and Baltimore, but in recent years moved more into Afghanistan's cement, banking, and car industries and has amassed a net worth of \$12 million. He splits his time between his home in Glenmont, in Howard County, and rentals in Dubai and Kabul.

After becoming a darling of the World Bank-IMF-led establishment and a long-shot candidate for head of the UN, next President Ashraf Ghani instead was elected president of Afghanistan in 2014. His reign was fraught from the start, as then-Secretary of State John Kerry quickly elevated one of his top political rivals. President Trump's Administration later cut him out in favor of direct talks with the Taliban. "Ashraf Ghani has betrayed his own motherland, team and tribe," Abdul Haq Hamad, a member of Taliban's media team, told Afghanistan's Tolo News. "Such treason will always be remembered." He was last seen leaving the country to the UAE with four cars full of 150 million dollars cash in tow. According to the NY Post, his daughter "Mariam Ghani, a 42-year-old visual artist and filmmaker, enjoys a bohemian lifestyle in her Brooklyn loft, where the contrast to harsh Taliban rule over women and girls couldn't be more stark."

Many decisions that are made in Afghanistan are hard to reconcile with Western standards. Until December 2005, the Helmand province, which is a center of the opium drug trade and one of the country's largest provinces, was run by Governor Sher Mohammed Akhundzada. He was a known opium producer and a friend of the president. According to President Hamid Karzai, when Akhundzada was governor, children were able to go to school, opium production was only a third of what it is today, and the governor was in control of the province. The NATO UK forces callously searched his property, and nine tons of opium were found; accordingly, the governor was replaced.

The Helmand province consequently reverted to the control of the Taliban, and the drug barons gained control of most of the province. President Hamid Karzai blames it on the West, and particularly the British occupying forces.

The Newsweek magazine has written that Afghanistan is "Obama's Vietnam." In other words, just as former President Lyndon B. Johnson once did in Vietnam, President Barack Hussein Obama attempted to gain control over the country by sending in more troops. And if that did not work, the USA would throw in the towel and bring its soldiers back home. The Afghans are a proud nation, and they value a good fight.

SECOND AFGHANISTAN CRUSADE

At the beginning of 2009 there appeared a growing USA bipartisan consensus that Afghanistan is “the good war” in contrast to Iraq which became considered as the “bad war.” Certainly, that was the impression the new President Barack Obama conveyed throughout his presidential campaign.

From bipartisan consensus usually springs horrible policy, devised hastily such as the 700 trillion wasted bailout of the USA “money-shuffling class.” Those who supported the coming “surge” and expanding the war to Pakistan and Iran did not articulate who exactly the enemy is, how this enemy will be pursued and defeated, what resources should be devoted to achieving this objective to avoid an Iraq and Vietnam style escalation.

The torching in Pakistan in December 2008 of a NATO military supply convoy destined to Afghanistan was an ill omen. There is just one slender supply line for USA and NATO forces stretching from Karachi up through Pakistan and through the Khyber Pass into Afghanistan. Most supplies, including fuel, are unloaded in Karachi on the Arabian Sea and then carried along main roads through Pakistan and into Afghanistan via the Khyber Pass. The depot in Peshawar, the nearest city to the Khyber Pass which crosses the north-west frontier into Afghanistan, is a vital link in this chain.

The latest attack was a double victory for the Taliban. Earlier incidents had temporarily closed the Khyber Pass, causing a buildup of military trucks at the depot. A significant portion of this backlog was destroyed.



Figure 16. Torched Humvee vehicles and military fuel trucks destined for Afghanistan NATO troops at the Portward Logistic Terminal in Peshawar, Pakistan, December 7, 2008. AP Photos.

REPEAT OF THE SOVIET EXPERIENCE

The alliance between the USA and the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan helped in the dissolution and breakage of the old Soviet Union. Some observers fear that the USA military adventures spending could repeat the process.

The USA already had \$14 trillion in fiscal liabilities, including public debt. To this amount, one adds the current unfunded obligations for Social Security benefits of about \$7 trillion.

Then Medicare's unfunded promise: \$34 trillion, of which about \$26 trillion relates to Medicare (parts A and B) and about \$8 trillion relates to Medicare D, the new prescription drug. Adding another trillion in miscellaneous items and we get: $14 + 7 + 34 + 1 = \$56$ trillion. The USA would need \$56 trillion invested today, with a population of 300 million, this is about $56 \times 10^{12} / 300 \times 10^6 = \$186,666$ per person, to deliver on the government's obligations and promises.

CROSS BORDERS AIR STRIKES

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, installed in power by the USA, in September 2008 fired two military commanders in the wake of USA airstrikes in western Afghanistan that killed 89 civilians, mostly children. The firings included General Jalandar Shah, the Afghan army's corps commander for western Afghanistan, and another commander, Abdul Jabbar.

The USA-led coalition has said it was “Aware of allegations that the engagement in the Shindand District of Herat province may have resulted in civilian casualties. All allegations of civilian casualties are taken very seriously. Coalition forces make every effort to prevent the injury or loss of innocent lives.”





Figure 17. Asymmetric conflict: Taliban foot fighters in Afghanistan hunted by motorized Bundeswehr German troops in the Kunduz province equipped with night vision goggles, armor vests, and communication equipment, and supported by air strikes, August 2008. In November 2020, Australia was rocked by scandal when a detailed investigation known as the “Brereton War Crimes Report” revealed that Aussie special forces were implicated in up to 39 or more "unlawful killings" of Afghan civilians and prisoners. At least 13 Australian soldiers faced criminal charges after horrific details emerged that they were killing random civilians essentially for sport, in something they called "blooding" - or initiating a special forces new join into war by orchestrating their first kill and then covering it up: “Don’t be afraid, we are coming to bring you peace!”



Figure 18. Taliban fighters in a snowstorm and USA infantry searching villages in Afghanistan. January 2009.

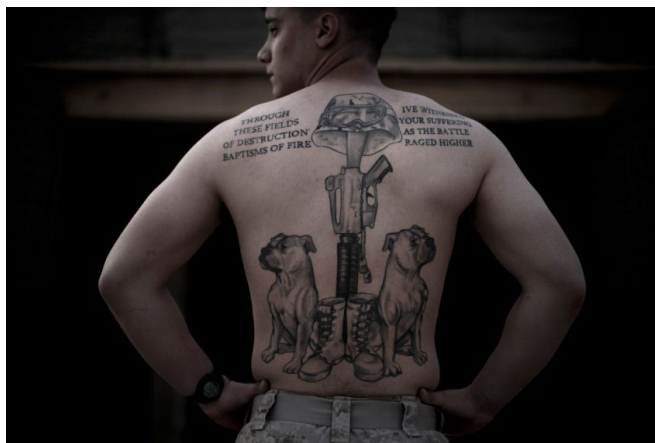


Figure 19. Tattooed Sergeant Paul Williams, age 20, from Orestia, Ohio, shows-off lyrics from Dire Straits Brothers in Arm: “Through these fields of destruction, Baptisms of fire, I’ve witnessed your suffering, as the battle raged higher.”



Figure 20. Fallen soldier memorial ceremony. Source: AP.

THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT

The Taliban, or "students" in the Pashto language, emerged in the early 1990s in northern Pakistan following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. It is believed that the predominantly Pashtun movement first appeared in religious seminaries, supported by Saudi Arabia, which preached a hardline Wahhabi form of Sunni Islam.

The promise made by the Taliban - in Pashtun areas straddling Pakistan and Afghanistan - was to restore peace and security and enforce their own austere version of Sharia, or Islamic law, once in power.

From south-western Afghanistan, the Taliban quickly extended their influence. In September 1995 they captured the province of Herat, bordering Iran, and exactly one year later they captured the Afghan capital, Kabul, overthrowing the regime of President Burhanuddin Rabbani - one of the founding fathers of the Afghan mujahideen that resisted the Soviet occupation. By 1998, the Taliban were in control of almost 90 percent of Afghanistan.

Afghans, weary of some mujahideen's excesses and infighting after the Soviets were driven out, generally welcomed the Taliban when they first appeared on the scene. Their early popularity was largely due to their success in stamping out corruption, curbing lawlessness and making the roads and the areas under their control safe for commerce to flourish. They opposed the opium production and narcotics trade.

The Taliban also introduced or supported punishments in line with their strict interpretation of Sharia law - such as public executions of convicted murderers and adulterers, and hand amputations for those found guilty of theft. Men were required to grow beards and women had to wear the all-covering burka dress.

The Taliban banned television, music and movies, and disapproved of girls aged 10 and over going to school. They were accused of various human rights and cultural abuses. One example was in 2001, when the Taliban went ahead with the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha statues in central Afghanistan, considered a form of idolatry as opposed by Islam.

On October 7, 2001, a USA-led military coalition launched attacks in Afghanistan, and by the first week of December 2001, the Taliban regime had collapsed. The group's then-leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, and other senior figures, including Osama Bin Laden, evaded capture despite one of the largest manhunts in the world.

USA president, Joe Biden, announced in April 2021 that all American forces would leave the country by September 11, 2021- two decades to the day since the felling of the World Trade Center.

CONTINUED CONFLICT

An airstrike was called in by Afghan and coalition troops as they embarked on a raid to arrest a Taliban commander in Shindand. The insurgents fired on the soldiers with small arms and rocket propelled grenades, and troops responded with their own small arms fire and called in airstrikes, killing 30 insurgents, including Mullah Sadiq, a known Taliban commander.

President Hamid Karzai said he talked by telephone with a tribal elder in the village that was bombed and “expressed his condolences to the people affected in the airstrike.” He blamed the USA-led coalition forces for failing to coordinate their attack with the Afghan army: “All efforts of the Afghan government to avoid civilian casualties have not yielded any positive results, and our innocent countrymen are still killed in anti-terrorism operations.”

FRANCE JOINS THE NATO CRUSADING FRAY

About 1,670 French troops served in Afghanistan in 2008 under NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).



Figure 21. French soldiers with communications gear on patrol in Afghanistan.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy affirmed that his “Determination is intact to continue this battle against terrorism for democracy and liberty. The cause is just. It is an honor for France and its armies to defend them.”

USA, British, Canadian, German and Dutch troops have been engaged in much of the combat in Afghanistan. The USA has been urging other countries in the NATO-led alliance to help ease the burdens of those troops on the front lines.

OPIUM CRUSADE

General Bantz John Craddock, referred to as the “hard-core Rumsfeld man,” as the NATO High Commander issued a binding order, disguised as “guidance,” calling on troops fighting in Afghanistan with NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to attack drug traffickers and facilities. Many of Craddock's comrades found the order unpalatable since it explicitly directed NATO troops to kill those involved in the drug trade even if there was no proof that they supported insurgents fighting against NATO or the Afghan security forces.

Lacking other beneficial crops growing opportunities, about 1/3 of Afghanistan's Gross domestic Product, GDP comes from growing poppy and illicit drugs including opium and its two derivatives, morphine and heroin, as well as marijuana or hashish production for export through smuggling.

It should be noted that according to the USA Geological Survey and the Afghan Ministry of Mines and Industry, Afghanistan may be possessing up to 36 trillion cubic feet or 1,000 km³ of natural gas, 3.6 billion barrels or 570,000,000 m³ of petroleum liquids and up to 1,325 million barrels or 2.107

$\times 10^8 \text{ m}^3$ of natural gas liquids. This could mark the turning point in Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts.

The contentious contents of Craddock's paper unleashed dismay throughout the alliance and across the political spectrum. "Afghan people are not chickens whom one could hunt whenever one wanted to," commented Afghan Foreign Minister Rangeen Dadfar Spanta.



Figure 22. NATO high commander General Bantz John Craddock ordered the killing of Afghans involved in the opium-growing trade.

General Egon Ramms, from Germany, who headed the NATO command center responsible for Afghanistan in Brunssum, the Netherlands, expressed his displeasure with the order as did USA General David McKiernan, who headed the NATO command in Afghanistan. Both felt that the order violated ISAF rules of engagement as well as international law.

General Bantz John Craddock was extremely upset by the resistance from his subordinates and considered sending a written demand to Berlin that General Ramms be relieved of duty. In the end, the USA general bowed to the inevitable and made the change demanded by both Ramms and McKiernan. Instead of being given a free hand against drug traffickers, NATO troops would continue to be allowed to attack only those drug traffickers with provable ties to insurgents and terror groups.

General Bantz John Craddock remained unflinching. For him, it is a proven fact that all drug traffickers help finance the radical Islamists of the Taliban. He said in Kabul: "The NATO Council has confirmed the connection between the drug trade and the insurgents. I have never issued an illegal order."

British political scientist and activist Mary Kaldor wrote that the Iraq war illustrates: "The dangers of not adapting one's own idea of war to new global conditions." This is similarly true of the war in Afghanistan.

PRIVATE MILITARY CONTRACTORS, NEW BREED OF MERCENARIES

The USA State Department had a long-standing contract with Armor Group North America for a yearly payment of \$180 million. It is a security company responsible for guarding the USA embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan.



Figure 23. At Camp Sullivan, next to the USA embassy in Kabul drunken Armor Group security guards behaving in a lewd manner sparked shock and disbelief around the world. Photo: Project on Government Oversight, Der Spiegel, August 2009.

The Project on Government Oversight POGO revealed explicit pictures and video recordings at Camp Sullivan in Kabul, Afghanistan. Witnesses reported that it was a repeated event, and that any individuals refusing to take part in the activities were bullied and even fired.

USA Secretary of Defense Robert Gates described the behavior as: “offensive” and “inexcusable.” Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that she was “genuinely offended” by the behavior of the private security guards at the USA embassy in Kabul.

WIPING TAROK KOLACHE OFF THE MAP

The Afghan village of Tarok Kolache in Kandahar’s Arghandab River Valley was wiped off the map in October 2010. Nothing remained of Tarok Kolache after Lt. Col. David Flynn, commander of Combined Joint Task Force 1-320th, made a fateful decision. After two failed attempts at clearing the village of insurgents resulted in USA and Afghan casualties, Flynn’s response was to completely take the village out. He ordered a mine-clearing line charge, using rocket-propelled explosives to create a path into the center of Tarok Kolache.

Airstrikes from A-10s and B-1 bombers combined with powerful ground-launched rockets on October 6, 2010 to batter the village with 49,200 lbs of ordnance. The rockets have a blast radius of about 50 meters or 164 feet, so the potential for hitting bystanders is high with every strike.



Figure 24. Afghan village of Tarok Kolache in Kandahar’s Argnandab River Valley was pulverized by 25 tons of explosives on October 6, 2010.

As Paula Broadwell, a West-Point graduate and General David Petraeus biographer describes it: “The villagers understood that the United States needed to destroy their homes.” One villager “in a fit of theatrics had accused Flynn of ruining his life after the demolition.”

An adviser to President Hamid Karzai said that the 1-320th “caused unreasonable damage to homes and orchards and displaced a number of people.” Flynn has held “reconstruction shuras” with the villagers and begun compensating villagers for their property losses.

Destroying Tarok Kolache “in order to rebuild it” is not standard procedure for USA-led troops to destroy whole villages, but the property destruction has eliminated a lot of goodwill.

The event follows the infamous rogue “Kill Team” from the 5th Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division that allegedly hunted and “murdered for sport” at least three innocent Afghan civilians in late 2009 and early 2010. The commander of the 5th Strykers was unaware of what the “Kill Team” was doing.

Although counterinsurgency is a violent affair, the theory holds that popular sentiment will ultimately determine who wins in a guerrilla war, which imposes restrictions on how to use force. Popular Afghan dissatisfaction was the reason that General McChrystal and his predecessor, General David McKiernan, rolled back the air strikes only to be relieved of their posts.

WHISTLE BLOWING ON VICTIMS DESECRATION, “SEMPER FIDELIS,” “ALWAYS FAITHFUL”



Figure 25. Marines equipped with a 30-caliber sniper rifle urinating on their victims in Afghanistan. January 11, 2012.



Figure 26. Snipers sport-hunting miles away across a valley in Afghanistan.

According to the Geneva Conventions, the international laws that lay out the rules of war, bodies of enemy soldiers must be “honorably interred, if possible according to the rites of the religion to which they belonged.”

Four marines equipped with a 30-caliber sniper rifle in Afghanistan are seen in a video laughing and joking as they relieve themselves over three corpses that lie at their feet. After checking to be sure no one is watching them, they unbutton their uniforms and urinate on the bloody bodies, with one soldier telling a dead man: “Have a great day, buddy.” A voice asks, “You got it on the video?” to which another voice responds, “Yeah.” Another jokes, “Golden, like

a shower." A fifth person films the scene with a hand-held camera from a few feet away, shifting their position at one point to get a better view of one of the dead men's faces.

The 39 seconds footage was posted by a whistle-blower within the Marine Corps on January 10, 2012 by an online marine named 'semperfiLoneVoice', a reference to the Marine Corps' motto "semper fidelis", which means "always faithful" in Latin.

A caption written by semperfiLoneVoice asserted that the men were members of a scout sniper team from the Third Battalion of the Second Marine Regiment, a unit of around 800 troops based in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. In the same caption, he wrote: "I thought Marines were supposed to do the right thing when no one is watching."

A spokesman for the Marine Corps said: "While we have not yet verified the origin or authenticity of this video, the actions portrayed are not consistent with our core values and are not indicative of the character of the Marines in our Corps. "This matter will be fully investigated and those responsible will be held accountable for their actions." The official added that the desecration of a body by USA troops could be considered a potential war crime. "Regardless of the circumstances or who is in the video, this is egregious, disgusting behavior," said DOD spokesman Captain John Kirby. "It's hideous. It turned my stomach."



Figure 27. "God loves you just as you are" inscription on the helmet of a member of the "Betio Bastards" 3rd Battalion 2nd Marines.

The battalion had a distinguished history beginning during World War II. In 1943 its members earned the nickname "Betio Bastards" for their role in the bloody battle for Betio, a small Pacific island occupied by the Japanese Army. Camp Lejeune is in North Carolina and is the largest Marine Corps Base on the East Coast of the USA, home to 40,000 marines. The 3rd Battalion 2nd Marines consists of 800 Marines and sailors and is nicknamed the 'Betio Bastards', a reference to the island of Betio in the Tawara Atoll and the site of one of the deadliest battles with the Japanese in World War II. More recently they have served in Iraq, the Haiti earthquake of 2010 and in Afghanistan. Their motto is: 'We quell the storm and ride the thunder!' or 'Strength and Honor'.

QURAN BURNING

The burning of Qurans at a NATO base in Afghanistan involved five American servicemen and a local translator. The Qurans burned were among religious materials seized from a detainee facility at Bagram Airfield.

Thousands of outraged Afghans took to the streets following the incident, prompting USA President Barack Obama to apologize to his Afghan counterpart, President Hamid Karzai, calling the burning "an inadvertent error." Furor over the burnings have fueled a string of protests and attacks that have left at least 39 people dead, including four American soldiers. Hundreds more were wounded in the attacks.

Rick Santorum, USA Republican presidential candidate, said there was "no deliberate act ... of disrespect" when USA authorities at Bagram airbase north of Kabul apparently disposed of the Islamic holy books in a fire. According to Rick Santorum, President Barack Obama's apology in itself had "made it sound like there was something that you should apologize for, and there was no act that needed an apology. I think the response needs to be apologized for, by Mr. Karzai and the Afghan people, for attacking and killing our men and women in uniform and overreacting to this inadvertent mistake. That is the real crime, not what our soldiers did."

The other Republican presidential candidate, Governor Mitt Romney told Fox News that "with regards to the (Obama) apology, I think for a lot of people, it sticks in their throat. The idea that we are there, having lost thousands of individuals through casualty and death – we have made an enormous contribution to help the people there achieve freedom, and for us to be apologizing at a time like this is something which is very difficult for the American people to countenance."

A third Republican presidential candidate, Newt Gingrich, with higher crusading zeal, made more strident denunciations of President Barack Obama's apology, labeling him an appeaser and saying he was "deeply offended" that President Barack Obama did not hold President Hamid Karzai responsible for the killings: "There does not seem to be any request for an apology from Karzai. And I frankly just think this one-sided process of apologizing for America has gone too far. Churches get burned in Nigeria, there are no apologies. Churches get burned in Egypt, there are no apologies."

AFGHANISTAN MAI LI MASSACRE, MARCH 11, 2012

A USA soldier, Staff Sgt. Roberts Bales, 38, massacred 16 Afghan civilians in their homes with undisclosed accomplices, remembered "very little" of the incident. He arrived at the military detention center in Kansas after being flown from Kuwait. The Taliban called off peace talks in the wake of the deadly rampage, in which men, women and children were shot and killed at close range.

Sgt. Robert Bales became the only known suspect in the killings, despite repeated Afghan assertions that more than one American were involved. His wife, mother of two children, Karilyn, issued a statement expressing her condolences to the victims and their families and saying what reportedly took place is "completely out of character of the man I know and admire". She said the Afghan victims and their families "are all in my prayers, as is my husband, who I love very much".

Sgt. Robert Bales served two tours of duty in Iraq after enlisting in 2001. He consumed alcohol on the nights of the killings. His lawyer suggested that his client was not fit to serve because of two injuries he had suffered on previous tours of duty. Sgt. Robert Bales and his wife were reportedly having trouble making their mortgage payments. He and his wife had reportedly struggled to make the payments on two properties they had bought. Along with another man and his company, Sgt. Robert Bales owed a reported \$1.5 million from an arbitration ruling nearly a decade earlier which found him guilty of securities fraud while he was working as a stockbroker.

The sergeant's had past brushes with the law including charges for assault and fleeing a car accident site. He paid fines in both cases and had to attend anger management classes for the assault, after which the charges were duly dropped.

MASSACRE AT KUNDUZ

The most devastating German-ordered attack since World War II occurred on the night of September 4, 2009, when German Colonel Georg Klein ordered two American jets to bomb a pair of tanker trucks he believed "might" be used to attack his base. When Colonel Klein learned on the

evening of September 3, 2009, that the Afghan insurgents had hijacked two tanker trucks nearby, he made the paranoid assumption that these could be used as mobile bombs to attack German forces [2].



Figure 28. Bombed-out tanker at Kunduz caused the death of 137 civilians. Source: AP.



Figure 29. Protesters at the first civil chamber of Bonn's District Court, Germany hearing about the Kunduz tragedy. "Warum tötet ihr meine Schwestern und Brüder?" : "Why are you killing my sisters and brothers?" "Schluss mit der Bombardierung in Afghanistan!" : "Stop the bombardment in Afghanistan!"



Figure 30. Colonel Georg Klein, NATO German officer caused the unwarranted death of 137 civilians at Kunduz. He was acquitted of any criminal charges [2].



Figure 31. Kunduz base in Afghanistan.



Figure 32. German soldiers patrolling Kunduz, Afghanistan.



Figure 33. Memorial for fallen German soldiers at Kunduz, Afghanistan. Upon retreating from the Kunduz base, October 13, 2013.

The resulting blast killed many innocent civilians. The Bundeswehr, Germany's armed forces, said 91 people were killed. A NATO report arrived at the figure of at least 142 dead or injured. According to research conducted by lawyers representing the victims, it was 137 people that were killed. The German defense minister at the time of the attack, Franz Josef Jung, resigned from his later post as labor minister two months after the attack. He had falsely stated that the Kunduz airstrike killed only "terrorist Taliban," not any civilians.

Bremen, Germany-based lawyers Karim Popal and Peter Derleder have sued the German state over the incident, asking for a paltry symbolic sum of around €90,000 or \$124,000 in compensation for damages and suffering to the surviving family members of the 137 air-strike's

victims. In March 2013, the first civil chamber of Bonn's District Court heard a case concerning the deadly military strike.

"Dude 15," a pilot from California, struggled with dropping the bombs. Having already discussed the matter for some time with the German forward air controller, code named "Red Baron 20," Dude 15 radioed his fellow pilot in the other jet, "I really want to drop on them, but just something doesn't... something doesn't feel right."

"Confirm that one last time, these pax are an imminent threat," American fighter pilot "Dude 15" radioed to the German forward air controller. For half an hour on the night of September 4, 2009, two F-15 fighter jets had been circling above a sandbank in the Kunduz River in Afghanistan. Then Staff Sergeant W. spoke the crucial words: "Yeah, those pax are an imminent threat." Two minutes later, the weapon systems operators aboard the two jets each released a 500-pound (230-kg) GBU-38 guided bomb. The two bombs detonated on the ground at 1:50 a.m. local time, striking two tanker trucks Colonel Georg Klein had feared might attack his base.

Dude 15 then attempted to involve a superior officer in the matter, but the German soldier refused, saying clearance would come from the commander of the German base, who was "right next to me." For the fifth time now, the American pilot requested permission to perform a low-altitude flyover of the sandbank, which would warn civilians and allow them the chance to seek cover. Red Baron denied permission for such a "show of force," replying, "Negative. I want you to strike directly."

When questioned by NATO investigators, USA pilot Dude 15 stated that he and the others in the two fighter jets were unaware that the hijacked truck drivers, themselves civilians, were still present on the ground. If they had known, the pilot stated, they "would not have fired" their weapons.

The civil court in Bonn, presided over by Judge Heinz Sonnenberger, tried to determine whether Klein was in culpable violation of his duty to protect civilians. The German Federal Prosecutor's Office dropped its own criminal proceedings against Klein. In a final report, classified as secret, the officer was cleared of the charge of murder of civilians, on the grounds that "based on the circumstances as they were known to him" and on an informant's intelligence, "the presence of civilians was considered unlikely," and thus Klein was not obligated to provide warning to the people on the ground around the tanker trucks [2].

POSING WITH CORPSES

In January 2012, a video appeared on the Internet showing four USA Marines urinating on Afghan corpses. In February 2012, the inadvertent burning of copies of the Quran at a USA base triggered riots that left 30 dead and led to the deaths of six Americans. In March 2012, a USA Army sergeant went on a nighttime shooting rampage in two Afghan villages, killing 17 people.



Figure 34. Victims of a March 2012 shooting spree.

In April 2012 a soldier provided The Times magazine with a series of 18 photos of soldiers posing with corpses on condition of anonymity. He served in Afghanistan with the 82nd Airborne's 4th Brigade Combat Team from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. He said the photos point to a breakdown in leadership and discipline that he believed compromised the safety of the troops.



Figure 35. Soldiers from the Army's 82nd Airborne Division posing with Afghan police with a mangled corpse.



Figure 36. Posing with corpses by Army's 82nd Division smiling tattooed soldier. An extremist neo-Nazi skinhead and white supremacist about to be deployed overseas was quoted as saying: "looking forward to killing all the bloody sand niggers."

CLAUSEWITZ AND NAPOLEON ON WAR

Prussian General Carl von Clausewitz wrote about war:

"In war more than anywhere else, things do not turn out as we expect. Nearby they do not appear as they did from a distance." Accordingly, it is imperative to adapt to the enemy, hit hard, do one's business and finish things rapidly. Otherwise, time degrades one's ability to reach objectives. Do not drag things out. "Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult."

Clausewitz's better-known opponent Napoleon Bonaparte concurs. He was quoted in the Russian campaign: "Ask me for anything, anything but time." As he crossed the Russian steppes,

he knew that there were time-imposed constraints regarding the weather, supplies, manpower and political will at home to support the expedition.

If only their advice were heeded...

DISCUSSION

Runaway military spending is a sure sign as well as a cause of decline of empires. Osama bin Laden understood how it worked and applied it in Afghanistan in defeating and bringing the old Soviet Union Empire to its knees. He lured it into spending money it did not have on a war it could not win.

He tried to apply the same strategy to the USA. It appears that, even after his death, his strategy is succeeding. People have no clue what happened to Osama Bin Laden. No one ever saw his body and all the Seal Team Six members who allegedly killed him were allegedly later killed in a helicopter crash.



Figure 37. Friendly greeting between an American soldier and an innocent Afghan child, Afghanistan.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Economic Output for 2011, in 1969, more than 1/3 of the income in the entire globe was earned in the USA. By 2000, that number had fallen to 31 percent of global income. By 2011, with its unending world crusades, the USA's share has fallen by 7 percent to 23 percent of the world's income.



Figure 38. Jihad Museum display at Hirat, Afghanistan, showing Mujahedin main figures with Ismail Khan at center.



Figure 39. Since 2001, around 92,000 people were killed, and nearly 100,000 injured in Afghanistan. Out of these were 26,000 civilian deaths.



Figure 40. Friendly Afghanistan children.



Figure 41. Screen grabs of shooting a civilian truck driver for fun. The original video was uploaded by the “Happy Few Company.” The man wearing the camera on the left side of his helmet rides on top of a military truck, likely a M-ATV. On the left is an open turret mounted on the truck, on the right we see the part of the man holding an M1014 semi-automatic 12-gauge gun with an effective range of 36.5 meters. The military truck he is riding-on quickly overtakes a civilian white truck on a paved road. The speed of the military truck is an estimated 70 km/h or 45 mph, the white truck is driving at some 60 km/h or 37 mph. It behaves normally sticking to the right side of the road. Given the speed of the truck the shot driver; if not outright killed; will have had little chance to bring it to a secure halt.



Figure 42. “Will kill for food, Combat Veteran, God Bless,” possibly a prank on a Special Forces “Happy Few Company” member in Afghanistan among ammunition boxes.

In comparison, during the same period, China’s economy was about 1/8th the size of the USA’s. By 2011 it was 41 percent and is expected to be the largest in the world surpassing the USAs within a dozen years. This also applies to the entire NATO developed nations lemmings which could not resist the temptation of following down the crusading cliff.

Afghanistan, the Graveyard of Empires, is living out to its name and fame.

EXODUS FROM AFGHANISTAN





Figure 43. Exodus from Kandahar Airport on C15 Globe Master aircraft.

The UN refugee agency, the UNHCR, estimates 550,000 Afghans have been internally displaced by the conflict since the beginning of 2021. Between 20,000 and 30,000 are thought to be fleeing across borders every week, the UNHCR's Afghanistan representative, Caroline Van Buren, told CNN. And government figures suggest 120,000 moved to Kabul as Taliban forces closed in.

Many of those in fear for their lives have worked with US-led forces, notably as translators or contractors. At the beginning of August 2021, the White House announced a plan to allow thousands of Afghans with links to the USA to resettle there. President Joe Biden announced \$500m (£362m) in aid for Afghan refugees. The US has relocated some 2,000 Afghans out of the country under its Special Immigrant Visa scheme.

Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel told party leaders that Germany may need to evacuate some 10,000 people, including 2,500 support staff.



Figure 44. Evacuation of Embassy staff with helicopters, Hanoi, Vietnam and Kabul, Afghanistan. The evacuation of 6,000 Americans and 118,000 Afghans from Karzai Kabul airport was a remarkable feat over two weeks by the USA military.

ISIS-K MUJAHEDDIN AND TALIBAN CONTINUED CONFLICT

The saga continues in Afghanistan. A conflict exists between the Taliban and the Mujaheddin ISIS-K groups. Apparently, ISIS has carried out dozens of attacks in Afghanistan in recent years and a regional ISIS leader was one of the few prisoners executed by the Taliban following their takeover in August 2021. "Of the 110 civilians and 25 Taliban killed at the airport, 80% were cut down by cowboys with machine guns firing down into the crowd from a watch tower!" From the English "Daily Mail":

"Founded in 2015, its followers aim to establish an Islamic caliphate across Khorasan (hence the initial 'K') – a historic region covering Pakistan and Afghanistan along with parts of Central Asia

In 2015 it was recognized by ISIS's leaders in Iraq and Syria, and in January 2016 declared a terrorist organization by the State Department.

Its strongholds are eastern Afghanistan, straddling the border with Pakistan in Nangarhar province, and the north of Afghanistan.

In 2018 the group was weakened in the north of Afghanistan, and in 2019 severely beaten back in the east. But in 2020 they regrouped and launched a series of devastating terror attacks."

The USA and its allies have mounted one of the biggest air evacuations in history, bringing out more than 88 thousand people, including 19 thousand in a single day, out of the country. The American military said planes were taking off roughly every 39 minutes on average. As the evacuation winds down, western reporters have continued to report on rumors out of Panjshir, a mountainous district not far from Kabul where the last remnants of Taliban opposition have gathered. The "National Resistance Front" is a group made up of former Afghan National forces hiding out in the mountains.

The resistance is being led by Ahmad Massoud, son of the late Ahmad Shah Massoud, the famous guerrilla commander who helped fight off the Soviets.

List of equipment left by the USA to the Afghan military excluding medical and all nonlethal equipment:

- 2,000 Armored Vehicles Including Humvees and MRAP's
- 75,989 Total Vehicles: FMTV, M35, Ford Rangers, Ford F350, Ford Vans, Toyota Pickups, Armored Security Vehicles, etc.
- 45 UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopters
- 50 MD530G Scout Attack Choppers
- ScanEagle Military Drones
- 30 Military Version Cessnas
- 4 C-130's
- 29 Brazilian made A-29 Super Tucano Ground Attack Aircraft
- 208+ Aircraft Total
- At least 600,000+ Small arms M16, M249 SAWs, M24 Sniper Systems, 50 Calibers, 1,394 M203 Grenade Launchers, M134 Mini Gun, 20mm Gatling Guns and Ammunition
- 61,000 M203 Rounds
- 20,040 Grenades
- Howitzers
- Mortars +1,000's of Rounds
- 162,000 pieces of Encrypted Military Communications Gear
- 16,000+ Night Vision Goggles
- Newest Technology Night Vision Scopes
- Thermal Scopes and Thermal Mono Goggles
- 10,000 2.75-inch Air to Ground Rockets
- Reconnaissance Equipment (ISR)
- Laser Aiming Units
- Explosives Ordnance: C-4, Semtex, Detonators, Shaped Charges, Thermite, Incendiaries, AP/API/APIT
- 2,520 Bombs
- Operational Administration Encrypted Cell Phones and Laptops
- Pallets with millions of Dollars in U.S. Currency
- Millions of rounds of ammunition including but not limited to 20,150,600 rounds of 7.62mm bullets and 9,000,000 rounds of .50 caliber bullets
- Large Stockpile of Plate Carriers and Body Armor
- U.S. Military HIIDE (Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment) Biometrics
- Lots of Heavy Equipment Including Bull Dozers, Backhoes, Dump Trucks, Excavators

Table 1: Quantities of Key U.S.-Funded Equipment for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, by Type and Fiscal Year, 2003–2016

Fiscal year	Communications equipment	Vehicles	Weapons	Explosive ordnance disposal equipment	Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment	Aircraft	Total
2003	497	510	0	0	0	0	1,007
2004	1,528	11	10,700	0	0	0	12,239
2005	9,340	2,503	28,913	0	0	0	40,756
2006	21,563	9,251	133,964	57	0	0	164,835
2007	3,743	2,292	126,878	81	1,205	1	134,200
2008	14,720	15,619	46,431	0	0	31	76,801
2009	21,704	7,521	59,976	468	792	7	90,468
2010	22,525	8,902	20,276	195	5,072	2	56,972
2011	47,928	21,841	27,207	2,582	3,643	59	103,260
2012	1,825	0	20	1,399	0	50	3,294
2013	6,578	139	21,114	22,383	4,992	32	55,238
2014	1,361	0	143	365	254	13	2,136
2015	4,237	5,512	43,994	1,640	233	10	55,626
2016	5,094	1,797	80,074	511	0	3	87,479
Total	162,643	75,898	599,690	29,681	16,191	208	884,311

Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense (DOD) data. | GAO-17-667R

Figure 45. Equipment delivered to Afghan security forces.

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN’S LEGACY: KABUL STRIKE PARTING SHOT

President Joe Biden in blind imitation of Presidents Barack Obama’s and Donald Trump’s extrajudicial assassinations drone killings; judge, jury and executioner of innocents, murdered an innocent Afghani family when the USA military conducted a "righteous strike" on Aug. 29, 2021, against a vehicle that American officials thought was an ISIS bomb that posed an imminent threat to people assembled at the Kabul airport. Under President Barack Obama family gatherings and weddings were targeted with hellfire missiles from drones. No wonder these people then go join the Taliban/ISIS/Al-Qaeda groups. These types of war crimes have been going on for years in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen and Syria.

The New York Times revealed that "Military officials said they did not know the identity of the car’s driver when the drone fired but deemed him suspicious because of how they interpreted his activities that day, saying that he possibly visited an ISIS safe house and, at one point, loaded what they thought could be explosives into the car." In reality, they were filling water bottles.



Figure 46. Murder of an innocent Afghani family when the USA military conducted a "righteous strike" on Aug. 29, 2021. The USA administration lied about who it killed with its drone strike. “They had no idea who they hit.” The media mindlessly repeated the false claim that they killed

"terrorists" when, in fact, they just killed innocent people. They call it "death by joystick", and the pilots love their jobs. "So, who is the real terrorist here?"



Figure 47. An AGM-114B Hellfire missile is launched from an MH-60S Seahawk helicopter, attached to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron Eight (HSC-8), during a live fire exercise in San Clemente, Calif., Feb. 4, 2015. HSC-8 provides vertical lift Search and Rescue, Logistics, Anti-Surface Warfare, Special Operations Forces Support, and Combat Search and Rescue capabilities for Carrier Air Wing Eleven (CVW-11) in support of the USS Nimitz (CVN-68) and Carrier Strike Group Eleven (CSG-11) operations. Unlike most missiles, the RX9 Hellfire does not explode. In place of the missile's standard 18-20 pound warhead, the RX9 instead carries six long blades. Akin to swords, the blades lie just inside the missile along the length of the Hellfire body. Then, moments before impact, the blades spring outward. The combination of razor-sharp blades combined with the missile's approximately 100-pound mass crush and slice its target. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Daniel M. Young/Released).

According to the New York Times:

"Times reporting has identified the driver as Zemari Ahmadi, a longtime worker for a NGO USA aid group (Nutrition and Educational International headed by Dr. Steven Kwon who makes "diverse" creamers for Starbucks, and infant formulas for Nestle). The evidence, including extensive interviews with family members, co-workers, and witnesses, suggests that his travels that day actually involved transporting colleagues to and from work in a white Toyota. And an analysis of video feeds showed that what the military may have seen was Mr. Ahmadi and a colleague loading canisters of water into his trunk to bring home to his family. The neighborhood suffered from a water shortage, and he routinely filled up containers at the office. The location of the "unknown compound" overlaps with the location of an NGO's office, and the military told us that they only saw the white sedan at one location that afternoon. What the military called an unknown compound was in fact the NGO's office.

While the USA military said the drone strike might have killed three civilians, the New York Times reporting shows that it killed 10, including seven children, in a dense residential block.

Mr. Ahmadi, 43, had worked since 2006 as an electrical engineer for Nutrition and Education International, a California-based aid and lobbying group. The morning of the strike, Mr. Ahmadi's boss called from the office at around 8:45 a.m., and asked him to pick up his laptop."

According to Pentagon spokesman John Kirby, Washington is "not in a position" to dispute reports that the drone strike killed civilians, however he claimed that one of the family members belonged to radical Islamic group, ISIS-K. Four days before Ahmadi was

killed, his employer had applied for his family to receive refugee resettlement in the USA. At the time of the strike, they were still awaiting approval. Looking to the USA for protection, they became some of the last victims in America's longest war.

Nutrition and Education International NEI is a non-partisan, non-profit organization based in Pasadena, California. NEI was formed in 2003 by Dr. Steven Kwon to fight widespread malnutrition among women and children who live in high-mortality areas in Afghanistan.

I DON'T KNOW BECAUSE WE'RE REVIEWING IT

Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky was the one Congressional leader who went "gloves off" in grilling Secretary of State Antony Blinken over the USA drone strike in Kabul which came in the final days of the chaotic evacuation and troop pullout.

The Pentagon continued to defend the August 29, 2021, attack which it says was against an ISIS-K target in the vehicle which was utterly destroyed. This despite a detailed New York Times investigation which found it killed 10 Afghan civilians, including seven children, with the original target likely being an aid worker and not a terrorist at all. The most heated moment of the exchange came with Sen. Paul asked Secretary of State Antony Blinken directly, "Was he an aid worker or an ISIS-K operative?" To which Blinken responded "I don't know," and said the strike was still being reviewed internally. Paul continued to press Blinken over just what the Pentagon knew about its target ahead of the strike, and that is when the Republican senator delivered his most stinging and sarcastic rebuke: "You'd think you'd kind of know before you off someone with a predator drone". Senator Rand Paul explained that the drone and assassinations programs going back across multiple USA administrations have served to make America less safe, given it leads to "blowback". "If you killed an aid worker on accident, do you think we are better off because of that?" Senator Rand Paul said, emphasizing that it inevitably weakens USA standing abroad.

Security at Kabul airport had been vulnerable and on high alert following the August 26, 2021, devastating suicide bombing attack which killed 13 USA troops and over 60 Afghan civilians. The White House was under pressure to "do something" by way of revenge for the initial ISIS-K suicide attack. In announcing the drone operation, administration officials had hailed it as a "success" in terms of delivering a blow to ISIS-K, despite reports quickly coming out that tragically most of the deceased were actually children. It did not hurt that Blinken did not bother to show up in person.

Random internet comments:

"We did it for the children." You mean " We did it to the children".

"Buffoons and Clowns rule. 'Its a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World'."

"No politician cares about brown people in other countries."

"You wonder how on earth anyone in authority - anyone at all - has the gall to endorse the savagery. They not only don't care about the murders, they don't care who knows about them, and they don't care how many people around the world despise the USA for a savagery that is no less wicked than the Taliban's. This is the stuff of the Nuremberg War Trials, for God's sake!"

"Bomb first, ask questions later."

"And video of the drone strikes, and audio of the command to strike, as well as 1000's of hours of helicopter footage downing people, some of which were journalists, civilians, etc. We even have the footage of when the US droned a NATO hospital FFS, not to mention all the friendly fire incidents."

"Wait until they start droning people in the US who they suspect are their definition of a terrorist. 'Oops we killed grandma, well she wasn't wearing a covid mask anyway and she missed her booster last Thursday...'"

"I am not an emotional guy but I broke down in tears when I read this."

"Don't forget they hate us for our freedoms."

"This is not America. No patriotic American will stand for this wickedness."

"All were innocent because they never had a trial and were never charged with an offence. All drone attacks are criminal murder."

"Somewhere at some moment somebody decided -on very sketchy information- to give the order to launch. To that person I wish nightmares every night seeing the faces of these people until the end of his or her life. And for other ones involved, the argument of "I was just following orders" has not been valid since the end of WW II."

"The US seems to really know how to keep creating more enemies, (known by their creators as terrorists)."

"Somewhere there is a second lieutenant who just developed ptsd (post traumatic stress disorder) after realizing he took part in the killing of innocent children by piloting the drone and/or releasing the weapon. They wanted to be a pilot, and a patriotic one at that, waving the flag and saving the country. Now they realize how they were used and lied to, and innocent blood is on their hands."

"Per one report/estimate, America's military killed more than 40,000 innocent civilians in Afghanistan in the last 20 years. Or: To be more accurate: The war that America led resulted in the deaths of more than 40,000 innocent civilians. Basic math says that 25 percent of these deaths (more than 10,000) were children. 20,000 were women - mothers, grandmothers. Think about this number. We are not supposed to think about it - and almost nobody does - but let us do think about it."

"Ten thousand other Hellfire drone military strikes received no coverage."

"It is all collateral damage to them."

"The official rules of engagement allow any Afghan who has a cell phone or radio to be droned and killed. (Not a joke. Cell phones make perfect homing beacons)."

"What a sad joke. You just made 10 new terrorists. And I wouldn't blame them."

"I am now starting to see why there are terrorist attacks against the USA. I wonder how many this will create?"

"God have Mercy on America. Rest in Peace those who made the ultimate sacrifice for a lie."

"Just the fact Americans are ok with unelected officials that make a life or death decisions based on "intel" and kill from the air is beyond anything I was raised to believe in! Where is due process, human rights or our humanity?"

"If I found out my actions had inadvertently-but-directly led to the death of 7 children, I would be devastated for years. Truly sickening."

"I demand resignations from everyone in the chain of command from the idiot who pulled the trigger, all the way up. They are a discredit to themselves, to their units, and to the United States Armed Forces."

"So stupid. No one local would support any USA function now. Probably anywhere in the world."

"We should have never even been there to begin with. The entire thing was a farce. This is just one more nail in the coffin of the evil empire our formerly free nation has become. But unfortunately, the evil empire is turning its predatory attention on the people it ostensibly represents. Lord help us."

"Day of reckoning will come, and when it does, I do not want to be anywhere near these people. What goes around comes around and history has a nasty habit to repay in thousands fold. There are civilizations and their cities buried deep in sands of time and ocean to prove it."

“Maybe this is why half the world hates your guts while the other half are laughing their heads off at the imbeciles you have left in control of the USA. When, if ever, are you guys going to do anything about it?”

“These guys want to drone any Americans who don't consider them their absolute rulers, so why would they care about some faceless Afghans? The family they blew up gave them a few hours of cover during a bad time. As Albright said, "worth it." Most people have a difficult time accepting that many of our civilian and military leaders are literally psychopaths. They have no empathy, and they don't care what damage they do to the country. They enjoy killing and they will do anything for power.”

"We lie we cheat we steal and we kill some brown folk."

“The US specializes in the double tap. Blow up a wedding party with the first tap, then blow up anyone who come along to help in the second tap.”



Figure 48. Afghanistan high-hand farewell, August 31, 2021. It is time to resort to diplomacy and refrain from bombing.



Figure 49. New Afghanistan's Flag.

From the book - Double Down: Game Change" 2012:

"In Pakistan, the numbers are even more alarming. There have been approximately 383 strikes — 332 during President Obama's time in office — resulting in up to 3,719 people killed. Of those killed, as many as 957 were

civilians, including almost 200 children. ... The notion that the Obama Administration has carried out drone strikes only when there is “near-certainty of no collateral damage” is easily disproved propaganda. ... And last year, Scott Shane of the New York Times provided a more accurate assessment of U.S. drone strikes than any Obama has offered. “Every independent investigation of the strikes has found far more civilian casualties than [Obama] administration officials admit,” he wrote.”

Another President Bill Clinton moment was bombing the 'Aspirin factory' or bombing from 20,000 feet to avoid political blow back. President Barack Obama, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, has overseen the expansion of the CIA's targeted killing program, which the Bureau of Investigative Journalism estimates has killed between 2,528 and 3,648 individuals in Pakistan since 2004. That organization also estimates that between 416 and 948 of those killed in drone strikes were civilians. Among those civilians, according to Amnesty International, was a Pakistani grandmother killed alongside 18 civilian laborers in a 2012 strike. The grandmother's family came to Washington, D.C. to testify before Congress and urge an end to drone warfare.

President Joe Biden, to his credit, is the first POTUS, President of the United States of America, who has gone against lobbyists and defense contractors by withdrawing from Afghanistan. President Donald Trump talked a lot about it, he started to negotiate with the Taliban, released 5000 of Taliban prisoners, but gave the Pentagon record budgets, sold arms to Yemen and Saudi Arabia, and gifted Israel pretty much everything military that they wanted.

AFTERMATH

The USA admitted that a drone strike in Kabul days before its military pullout killed 10 innocent people. A USA Central Command investigation found that an aid worker and nine members of his family, including seven children, died in the August 29, 2021 strike. The youngest child, Sumaya, was just two years old.

The strike was a "tragic mistake," The strike happened as the aid worker named Zamairi Ahmadi pulled into the driveway of his home, 3km or 1.8 miles from the airport. The explosion set off a secondary blast, which US officials initially said was proof that the car was indeed carrying explosives. However the investigation has found it was most likely caused by a propane tank in the driveway. One of those killed, Ahmad Naser, had been a translator with USA forces. Other victims had previously worked for international organizations and held visas allowing them entry to the USA. Relatives of the victims had applied to be evacuated, and had been waiting for a phone call telling them to go to the airport.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said: "We now know that there was no connection between Mr. Ahmadi and Isis-Khorasan, that his activities on that day were completely harmless and not at all related to the imminent threat we believed we faced. "We apologize, and we will endeavor to learn from this horrible mistake."

The security situation was further heightened after a suicide bomber killed up to 170 civilians and 13 USA troops outside the airport on 26 August. IS-K said it had carried out the attack. Many of those killed had been hoping to board evacuation flights leaving the city. More than 124,000 foreigners and Afghans were flown out of the country beforehand. The catastrophe exposed the dreadful human cost of a war that had been fought largely from the air for years.

In Roman times, engineers who built bridges were made to stand under their bridges while their army marched over them. If the bridge failed, they died. According to Lawrence Peter: “The Peter Principle, which states that people are promoted to their level of incompetence, suggests that something is fundamentally misaligned in the promotion process.” “Iceberg dead ahead.”

REFERENCES

1. iCasualties.org, "Operation Enduring Freedom," <http://www.icasualties.org/OEF/index.aspx>, September 30, 2012.
2. Jorg Diehl and Matthias Gebauer, "Kunduz Trial: New Scrutiny for Deadly Afghanistan Attack," Der Spiegel, October 31, 2013.

APPENDIX I

Thanks for Nothing.

Michael Murry, "The Misfortune Teller," 2009

Benevolent invader of my land
How can I thank you for the helping hand?
Why, had you not come here with awe and shock,
Reducing my poor home to piles of rock,
I might have raised my children safe and sound,
But, thanks to you, I've laid them in the ground.

A wife I had, once too, but now no more.
She died one day while driving to the store.
Some nervous mercenaries that you hired
Screamed something at her once, then aimed and fired.
The bullet-riddled windshield told the tale:
That "freed" of life, our women need no veil.

Your generals have come so many times,
Yet never have to answer for their crimes.
Instead, promotion weighs them down with stars
But never, like enlisted men, the scars
Resulting from the bungling and sheer waste
Of thinking last but shooting first in haste.

On nine-eleven, two-thousand-and-one
You got a taste of what you've often done
To countries that had never caused you harm
Yet still, too late, you sounded the alarm
And whipped yourself into a lather thick
So you could hurt yourself with your own stick.

Three thousand on that fateful day you lost.
Six thousand more you've added to the cost
Since then, which only proves that there or here
You act the same: in folly, rage, and fear.
In time, you'll go back home to where you're from,
To fight among yourselves, the deaf and dumb.

Too bad for all the carnage that you've caused
Who never thought or for a minute paused
Before afflicting us with your disease:
A plague of bankrupt bullies, fascist fleas,
Who, both hands outward stretched to beg a loan,
Continue "helping" us to shrink and groan.

You talk to pat yourselves upon the back.
Your actions only scream of what you lack:

The insight and intelligence to see
How much you've harmed yourself as well as me.
But just the same I'll thank you to go home
Before you earn the fate that toppled Rome."

APPENDIX II

TRUTH, LIES AND AFGHANISTAN HOW MILITARY LEADERS HAVE LET US DOWN

Lt. Colonel Daniel L. Davis,
Armed Forces Journal, USA, 2012.

"I spent last year in Afghanistan, visiting and talking with US troops and their Afghan partners. My duties with the Army's Rapid Equipping Force took me into every significant area where our soldiers engage the enemy. Over the course of 12 months, I covered more than 9,000 miles and talked, traveled, and patrolled with troops in Kandahar, Kunar, Ghazni, Khost, Paktika, Kunduz, Balkh, Nangarhar and other provinces.

What I saw bore no resemblance to rosy official statements by US military leaders about conditions on the ground.

Entering this deployment, I was sincerely hoping to learn that the claims were true: that conditions in Afghanistan were improving, that the local government and military were progressing toward self-sufficiency. I did not need to witness dramatic improvements to be reassured, but merely hoped to see evidence of positive trends, to see companies or battalions produce even minimal but sustainable progress.

Instead, I witnessed the absence of success on virtually every level."

APPENDIX III

CHARTER OF NUREMBERG TRIALS



Charter of IMT 1945 Nuremburg trials.pdf

No. 251

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND
NORTHERN IRELAND,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FRANCE,
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Agreement for the prosecution and punishment of the major war criminals
of the European Axis. Signed at London, on 8 August 1945

Official texts: English, French and Russian.

Filed and recorded at the request of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 15 March 1951.

ROYAUME-UNI DE GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET

D'IRLANDE DU NORD,
ETATS-UNIS D'AMERI QUE, FRANCE,
UNION DES REPUBLIQUES SOCIALISTES SOVIETIQUES

Accord concernant la poursuite et le chatiment des grands criminels de guerre des Puissances Européennes de l'Axe. Signé à Londres, le 8 aout 1945

Textes officiels anglais, français et russe.

Classe et inscrit au repertoire à la demande du Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord le 15 mars 1951.

No. 251. AGREEMENT¹ BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS FOR THE PROSECUTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE MAJOR WAR CRIMINALS OF THE EUROPEAN AXIS. SIGNED AT LONDON, ON 8 AUGUST 1945

Whereas the United Nations have from time to time made declarations of their intention that War Criminals shall be brought to justice;

And whereas the Moscow Declaration of the 30th October, 1943, on German atrocities in Occupied Europe stated that those German officers and men and members of the Nazi Party who have been responsible for or have taken a consenting part in atrocities and crimes will be sent back to the countries in which their abominable deeds were done in order that they may be judged and punished according to the laws of these liberated countries and of the free Governments that will be created therein;

And whereas this Declaration was stated to be without prejudice to the case of major criminals whose offences have no particular geographical location and who will be punished by the joint decision of the Governments of the Allies;

Now therefore the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of the United States of America, the Provisional Government of the French Republic and the Government of the

¹ In accordance with article 7, the Agreement came into force on the date of its signature, on 8 August 1945, in respect of the following signatory States:

France	United Kingdom of Great Britain
Union of Soviet	and Northern Ireland
Socialist Republics	United States of America

It came subsequently into force on the dates indicated in respect of the following States, which, in accordance with article 5, adhered to the Agreement by notice given to the Government of the United Kingdom:

Australia	5 October	1945	Netherlands	25 September	1945
Belgium	5 October	1945	New Zealand	19 November	1945
Czechoslovakia	26 September	1945	Norway	20 October	1915
Denmark	10 September	1945	Panama	17 October	1945
Ethiopia,	9 October	1945	Paraguay	14 November	1945
Greece	10 September	1945	Poland	25 September	1911
Haiti	3 November	1945	Uruguay	11 December	1945
Honduras	17 October	1945	Venezuela	17 November	1915
India	22 December	1945	Yugoslavia	29 September	1945
Luxembourg	1 November	1945			

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (hereinafter called "the Signatories") acting in the interests of all the United Nations and by their representatives duly authorised thereto have concluded this Agreement.

Article 1

There shall be established after consultation with the Control Council for Germany an International Military Tribunal for the trial of war criminals whose offences have no particular geographical location whether they be accused individually or in their capacity as members of organisations or groups or in both capacities.

Article 2

The constitution, jurisdiction and functions of the International Military Tribunal shall be those set out in the Charter annexed to this agreement, which Charter shall form an integral part of this Agreement.

Article 3

Each of the Signatories shall take the necessary steps to make available for the investigation of the charges and trial the major war criminals detained by them who are to be tried by the International Military Tribunal. The Signatories shall also use their best endeavours to make available for investigation of the charges against and the trial before the International Military Tribunal such of the major war criminals as are not in the territories of any of the Signatories.

Article 4

Nothing in this Agreement shall prejudice the provisions established by the Moscow Declaration concerning the return of war criminals to the countries where they committed their crimes.

Article 5

Any Government of the United Nations may adhere to this Agreement by notice given through the diplomatic channel to the Government of the United Kingdom, who shall inform the other signatory and adhering Governments of each such adherence.

Article 6

Nothing in this Agreement shall prejudice the jurisdiction or the powers of any national or occupation court established or to be established in any Allied territory or in Germany for the trial of war criminals.

Article 7

This Agreement shall come into force on the day of signature and shall remain in force for the period of one year and shall continue thereafter,

subject to the right of any Signatory to give, through the diplomatic channel, one month's notice of intention to terminate it. Such termination shall not prejudice any proceedings already taken or any findings already made in pursuance of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Undersigned have signed the present Agreement.

Done in quadruplicate in London this 8th day of August, 1945, each in English, French and Russian, and each text to have equal authenticity.

For the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

JO WITT

For the Government of the United States of America: Robert H.

JACKSON

For the Provisional Government of the French Republic: Robert FALCO

For the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: J. N.

IKITCHENKO

A. TRAININ

CHARTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL

!.-CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL

Article 1

In pursuance of the Agreement signed on the 8th August, 1945, by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of the United States of America, the Provisional Government of the French Republic and the Government of the Union Soviet Socialist Republics, there shall be established an International Military Tribunal (hereinafter called "the Tribunal") for the just and prompt trial and punishment of the major war criminals of the European Axis.

Article 2

The Tribunal shall consist of four members, each with an alternate. One member and one alternate shall be appointed by each of the Signatories. The alternates shall, so far as they are able, be present at all sessions of the

Tribunal. In case of illness of any member of the Tribunal or his incapacity for some other reason to fulfil his functions, his alternate shall take his place.

Article 3

Neither the Tribunal, its members nor their alternates can be challenged by the prosecution, or by the Defendants or their Counsel. Each Signatory may replace its member of the Tribunal or his alternate for reasons of health or for other good reasons, except that no replacement may take place during a trial, other than by an alternate.

Article 4

(a) The presence of all four members of the Tribunal or the alternate for any absent member shall be necessary to constitute the quorum.

(b) The members of the Tribunal shall, before any trial begins, agree among themselves upon the selection from their number of a President, and the President shall hold office during that trial, or as may otherwise be agreed by a vote of not less than three members. The principle of rotation of presidency for successive trials is agreed. If, however, a session of the Tribunal takes place on the territory of one of the four Signatories, the representative of that Signatory on the Tribunal shall preside.

(c) Save as aforesaid the Tribunal shall take decisions by a majority vote and in case the votes are evenly divided, the vote of the President shall be decisive: provided always that convictions and sentences shall only be imposed by affirmative votes of at least three members of the Tribunal.

Article 5

In case of need and depending on the number of the matters to be tried, other Tribunals may be set up; and the establishment, functions and procedure of each Tribunal shall be identical, and shall be governed by this Charter.

II.-JURISDICTION AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Article 6

The Tribunal established by the Agreement referred to in Article I hereof for the trial and punishment of the major war criminals of the European Axis countries shall have the power to try and punish persons who, acting in the interests of the European Axis countries, whether as individuals or as members of organisations, committed any of the following crimes.

The following acts, or any of them, are crimes coming within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal for which there shall be individual responsibility:-

(a) *Crimes against peace*: namely, planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing;

(b) *War crimes*: namely, violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations shall include, but not be limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave labour or for any other purpose of civilian population of or in occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity;

(c) *Crimes against humanity*: namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war, or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where perpetrated.

Leaders, organisers, instigators and accomplices participating in the formulation or execution of a common plan or conspiracy to commit any of the foregoing crimes are responsible for all acts performed by any persons in execution of such plan.

Article 7

The official position of defendants, whether as Heads of State or responsible officials in Government Departments, shall not be considered as freeing them from responsibility or mitigating punishment.

Article 8

The fact that the Defendant acted pursuant to order of his Government or of a superior shall not free him from responsibility, but may be considered in mitigation of punishment if the Tribunal determines that justice so requires.

Article 9

At the trial of any individual member of any group *or* organisation the Tribunal may declare (in connection with any act of which the individual may be convicted) that the group *or* organisation of which the individual was a member was a criminal organisation.

After receipt of the Indictment the Tribunal shall give such notice as it thinks fit that the prosecution intends to ask the Tribunal to make such declaration and any member of the organisation will be entitled to apply to the Tribunal for leave to be heard by the Tribunal upon the question of the criminal character of the organisation. The Tribunal shall have power to allow or reject the application. If the application is allowed, the Tribunal may direct in what manner the applicants shall be represented and heard.

Article 10

In cases where a group or organisation is declared criminal by the Tribunal, the competent national authority of any Signatory shall have the right to bring individuals to trial for membership therein before national, military or occupation courts. In any such case the criminal nature of the group or organisation is considered proved and shall not be questioned.

Article 11

Any person convicted by the Tribunal may be charged before a national, military or occupation court, referred to in Article 10 of this Charter, with a crime other than of membership in a criminal group or organisation and such court may, after convicting him, impose upon him punishment independent of and additional to the punishment imposed by the Tribunal for participation in the criminal activities of such group or organisation.

Article 12

The Tribunal shall have the right to take proceedings against a person charged with crimes set out in Article 6 of this Charter in his absence, if he has not been found or if the Tribunal, for any reason, finds it necessary, in the interests of justice, to conduct the hearing in his absence.

Article 13

The Tribunal shall draw up rules for its procedure. These rules shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this Charter.

III.-COMMITTEE FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF MAJOR WAR
CRIMINALS

Article 14

Each Signatory shall appoint a Chief Prosecutor for the investigation of the charges against and the prosecution of major war criminals.

The Chief Prosecutors shall act as a committee for the following purposes:

- (a) to agree upon a plan of the individual work of each of the Chief Prosecutors and his staff,
- (b) to settle the final designation of major war criminals to be tried by the Tribunal,
- (c) to approve the Indictment and the documents to be submitted therewith,
- (d) to lodge the Indictment and the accompanying documents with the Tribunal,
- (e) to draw up and recommend to the Tribunal for its approval draft rules of procedure, contemplated by Article 13 of this Charter. The Tribunal shall have power to accept, with or without amendments, or to reject, the rules so recommended.

The Committee shall act in all the above matters by a majority vote and shall appoint a Chairman as may be convenient and in accordance with the principle of rotation: provided that if there is an equal division of vote concerning the designation of a Defendant to be tried by the Tribunal, or the crimes with which he shall be charged, that proposal will be adopted which was made by the party which proposed that the particular Defendant be tried, or the particular charges be preferred against him.

Article 15

The Chief Prosecutors shall individually, and acting in collaboration with one another, also undertake the following duties:

- (a) investigation, collection and production before or at the Trial of all necessary evidence,
- (b) the preparation of the Indictment for approval by the Committee in accordance with paragraph (c) of Article 14 hereof,
- (c) the preliminary examination of all necessary witnesses and of the Defendants,
- (d) to act as prosecutor at the Trial,

- (e) to appoint representatives to carry out such duties as may be assigned to them,
- (f) to undertake such other matters as may appear necessary to them for the purposes of the preparation for and conduct of the Trial.

It is understood that no witness or Defendant detained by any Signatory shall be taken out of the possession of that Signatory without its assent.

IV.-FAIR TRIAL FOR DEFENDANTS

Article 16

In order to ensure fair trial for the Defendants, the following procedure shall be followed:

(a) The Indictment shall include full particulars specifying in detail the charges against the Defendants. A copy of the Indictment and of all the documents lodged with the Indictment, translated into a language which he understands, shall be furnished to the Defendant at a reasonable time before the Trial.

(b) During any preliminary examination or trial of a Defendant he shall have the right to give any explanation relevant to the charges made against him.

(c) A preliminary examination of a Defendant and his Trial shall be conducted in, or translated into, a language which the Defendant understands.

(d) A Defendant shall have the right to conduct his own defence before the Tribunal or to have the assistance of Counsel.

(e) A Defendant shall have the right through himself or through his Counsel to present evidence at the Trial in support of his defence, and to cross-examine any witness called by the Prosecution.

V.-POWERS OF THE TRIBUNAL AND CONDUCT OF THE TRIAL

Article 17

The Tribunal shall have the power:

- (a) to summon witnesses to the Trial and to require their attendance and testimony and to put questions to them,
- (b) to interrogate any Defendant,
- (c) to require the production of documents and other evidentiary material,

- (d) to administer oaths to witnesses,
- (e) to appoint officers for the carrying out of any task designated by the Tribunal including the power to have evidence taken on commission.

Article 18

The Tribunal shall:

- (a) confine the Trial strictly to an expeditious hearing of the issues raised by the charges,
- (b) take strict measures to prevent any action which will cause unreasonable delay, and rule out irrelevant issues and statements of any kind whatsoever,
- (c) deal summarily with any contumacy, imposing appropriate punishment, including exclusion of any Defendant or his Counsel from some or all further proceedings, but without prejudice to the determination of the charges.

Article 19

The Tribunal shall not be bound by technical rules of evidence. It shall adopt and apply to the greatest possible extent expeditious and non-technical procedure, and shall admit any evidence which it deems to have probative value.

Article 20

The Tribunal may require to be informed of the nature of any evidence before it is offered so that it may rule upon the relevance thereof.

Article 21

The Tribunal shall not require proof of facts of common knowledge but shall take judicial notice thereof. It shall also take judicial notice of official governmental documents and reports of the United Nations, including the acts and documents of the committees set up in the various Allied countries for the investigation of war crimes, and the records and findings of military or other Tribunals of any of the United Nations.

Article 22

The permanent seat of the Tribunal shall be in Nuremberg. The first meetings of the members of the Tribunal and of the Chief Prosecutors shall be held at Nuremberg in a place to be designated by the Control Council for Germany. The first trial shall be held at Nuremberg, and any subsequent trials shall be held at such places as the Tribunal may decide.

Article 23

One or more of the Chief Prosecutors may take part in the prosecution at each Trial. The function of any Chief Prosecutor may be discharged by him personally, or by any person or persons authorised by him.

The function of Counsel for a Defendant may be discharged at the Defendant's request by any Counsel professionally qualified to conduct cases before the Courts of his own country, or by any other person who may be specially authorised thereto by the Tribunal.

Article 24

The proceedings at the Trial shall take the following course: (a)

The Indictment shall be read in court.

(b) The Tribunal shall ask each Defendant whether he pleads "guilty" or "not guilty".

(c) The Prosecution shall make an opening statement.

(d) The Tribunal shall ask the Prosecution and the Defence what evidence (if any) they wish to submit to the Tribunal, and the Tribunal shall rule upon the admissibility of any such evidence.

(e) The witnesses for the Prosecution shall be examined and after that the witnesses for the Defence. Thereafter such rebutting evidence as may be held by the Tribunal to be admissible shall be called by either the Prosecution or the Defence.

(f) The Tribunal may put any question to any witness and to any Defendant, at any time.

(g) The Prosecution and the Defence shall interrogate and may cross-examine any witnesses and any Defendant who gives testimony.

(h) Defence shall address the court.

(i) The Prosecution shall address the court.

(j) Each Defendant may make a statement to the Tribunal.

(k) The Tribunal shall deliver judgment and pronounce sentence.

Article 25

All official documents shall be produced, and all court proceedings conducted, in English, French and Russian, and in the language of the Defendant. So much of the record and of the proceedings may also be translated into the language of any country in which the Tribunal is sitting, as the Tribunal considers desirable in the interests of justice and public opinion.

VI.-JUDGMENT AND SENTENCE

Article 26

The judgment of the Tribunal as to the guilt or the innocence of any Defendant shall give the reasons on which it is based, and shall be final and not subject to review.

Article 27

The Tribunal shall have the right to impose upon a Defendant, on conviction, death or such other punishment as shall be determined by it to be just.

Article 28

In addition to any punishment imposed by it, the Tribunal shall have the right to deprive the convicted person of any stolen property and order its delivery to the Control Council for Germany.

Article 29

In case of guilt, sentences shall be carried out in accordance with the orders of the Control Council for Germany, which may at any time reduce or otherwise alter the sentences, but may not increase the severity thereof. If the Control Council for Germany, after any Defendant has been convicted and sentenced, discovers fresh evidence which, in its opinion, would found a fresh charge against him, the Council shall report accordingly to the Committee established under Article 14 hereof for such action as they may consider proper, having regard to the interests of justice.

VII.-EXPENSES

Article 30

The expenses of the Tribunal and of the Trials shall be charged by the Signatories against the funds allotted for maintenance of the Control Council for Germany.
