

# The Biden Skedaddle

by [G. Murphy Donovan](#) (September 2021)



*Will Evil Voltage Rise in the 21st Century?*, Ichiro Fukuzawa, 1986

Back in the day when American generals knew the difference between a win and a loss, a running defeat was called a “skedaddle,” a loss so humiliating that the vanquished would drop their weapons and kit and flee the battlefield at a gallop.

No horses in evidence this week. Americans are retreating from the Taliban fight in USAF cargo holds. Afghanistan is Joe Biden’s big skedaddle.

And yes Joe, Kabul is not Saigon; the Afghan

humiliation is much worse by any measure. Like Vietnam, Afghanistan is now compound evidence of both failure and strategic incompetence: to many observers like [China](#), Russia, and the *Ummah*, clear omens of American national decline.

Let the hand wringing and recriminations begin.



Poor military Leadership and even worse Intelligence, again, top the usual suspect list. We were led to believe that American Intelligence speaks truth to power. Alas, candid Intelligence left the station at the end of WW II. Recall that the Korean War, unresolved to this day, was characterized as a “police action.” Ever since, both the Pentagon and Intelligence Community have been cooking the strategic books at will. Afghanistan just continues a late 20th Century tradition of strategic mendacity.

Words matter.

Without rehashing all the warning and/or analytical failures from Korea to Cuba to Vietnam on through 9/11: let’s

review the most recent Intelligence fictions; the fake "Intelligence" that led to the humiliation underway in Afghanistan today.

Strategic illusions are both probative and predictive, harbingers of even worse humiliations to come.

#### Nationhood fiction

Afghanistan was never a nation, in any sense of what sovereignty means in the secular world. Afghanistan is a toxic mix of ethnic, tribal, and family affiliations; aggravated by a lack of a common language, illiteracy, and political fanaticism wearing a religious burka. Factions are indeed divided by a common religion, Islam; where most militants believe they are "mujahedeen" of one sort or other; in short, god's warriors.

As with Iran, toxic theocracy is the only realpolitik truth in Afghanistan. With the Taliban victory, political Islam and Islamofascism gets another a big win.

#### Mujahadeen fiction

Before the Soviet departure in 1989, CIA was running a closet war in Afghanistan with some success, exploiting Tajik *mujahadeen*. Unfortunately, Ahmad Shah Masoud, putative leader of the "Northern Alliance," was always viewed by the Pashtun majority as a CIA or American stooge. Masoud was assassinated by the Taliban a few days before 9/11. The so-called Northern Alliance evaporated after the Pentagon took the point in Kabul in 2001.

The Panjshir Valley, under Masoud's son may continue to be a locus of resistance to Pashtun rule. But this time around, CIA Mujtahids will have fight without Charlie Wilson and Gust Avrakotus.

At this point, it is instructive to compare the manner

of Soviet departure in 1989 to the American skedaddle today. The 40th (Soviet) Army, even in defeat, literally paraded out of Kabul, flags flying, equipment and most of their martial dignity intact.

Knowing when to furl your flag or spike your guns are military options lost on woke warriors at the Pentagon today. No army wins anywhere with clueless brass.



#### Timeline fiction

The White House continues to date the Afghanistan War to 2001, as if it were a modest 20-year debacle, when the true narrative covers almost 40 years. Charlie Wilson's War, run by a Democrat congressman and the CIA, commenced shortly after the Soviet invasion in 1979. Facts matter. America was poking the bear, and Islam, long before 9/11.

#### Petraeus fiction

We are now told by the White House that the mission in Afghanistan, or any of the Islamic wars in progress, is not "nation-building." Really? If true, that would make US Army

*Field Manual 3-24* a fantasy and Generals Petraeus and Miley liars. If our “laser focus” is now only on tactics; then we are back to another lame euphemism, that pyrrhic “War on Terror.”

Waging a war against a tactic is the kind of operational nonsense that now passes muster in the woke warrior school of military arts and sciences. A war on terror is the semantic equivalent of “Islamic freedom fighter” or “Islamic republic.”

### War Fictions

We are now told by the White House that Afghanistan is a “civil war” where American troops have no constructive role to play. Really? By that metric, almost every Islamic country where America troops are deployed is a waste. Indeed, in countries like Iraq, Syria, and Libya; America created or enabled civil wars that persist to this day. If the truth be told, America has positioned itself betwix Shite and Sunni religious fascists where the only sure outcome is Yankee road kill.

Mohamed now has Uncle Sam by the operational short hairs. Better that America should now think of all those small wars in the *Ummah* as Muslims do, as local theaters of the larger global *jihad*.

### Quantification fictions

We end the Afghan adventure as we began; putting lipstick on a pig. Vietnam veterans will recognize the statistical hair spray now being laid on by the Pentagon; a mist of numbers about American lives lost, tax dollars invested and the salutary troop redeployments, sorties, and passenger loads coming out of Kabul; the kind of *bravo sierra* meant to cover or distract from the ugly strategic truth of failure.

If they are watching, Robert McNamara and Daniel Ellsberg are probably having hot flashes of *déjà vu*.

### Blame fictions

A stand-alone Kabul "government" and the Afghan "Army" were always fictions and now they are handy scapegoats. Spiffy uniforms and guns do not an army make. Even lap dancers on Wisconsin Avenue know that a puppet regime and a nutcracker militia will not survive without close air support. Kandahar Airbase was abandoned by Americans surreptitiously, at night, without consultation; leaving our Kabul "partners," Afghan ground forces, and the American embassy up the proverbial creek.

### Ally Fictions

Pakistan, not Afghanistan, is host to the various headquarters staff of the Taliban and al Qaeda in South Asia. Bin Laden had to be killed, by Americans, in Pakistan. Islamabad tolerates terrorists because accommodation is an existential matter for the fragile Pakistan janissary, always one bullet away from the Islamic abyss.

Trusting Pakistan on Islamism is like confusing Covid-19 symptoms with a head cold.

### Key Judgements

After decades in Afghanistan, America has been defeated by Muslim fanatics equipped primarily with small arms and Toyotas.

Removing American troops and air support from Afghanistan *before noncombatants*, was a grave operational error which enabled the collapse of the Afghan Army, accelerated the Taliban advance, and created the panic and chaos now evident in Kabul.

The failure to destroy arms, equipment, and facilities

was another military fail, indeed a gift to the Taliban and the [global](#) jihad.

As the 20th anniversary of 9/11 approaches, Afghanistan is likely, again, to become a haven for jihadists in South Asia.

No principal at the National Security Council, Department of State, or Pentagon will be fired or relieved. The 9/11 precedent abides: flag officers who enabled that fail were decorated, celebrated, and promoted.

The small wars fiction, the so-called "[war on terror](#)," will abide; emphasizing the tactical sectarian ghettos of Islam; the Taliban, Hezbollah, Hamas, al Qaeda, and ISIS instead of the strategic global threat: state-sponsored imperial Islam.

Sunni Arabs and Shite Persians will continue to [finance](#) and enable Islamist politics and the global jihad with impunity.

Drug money from urban America will continue to be a primary source of [revenue](#) for jihadists in Afghanistan and elsewhere. The irony of American addicts financing America's Islamic enemies will continue to be lost on the State Department and the Pentagon.

[Islamofascism](#) will continue to be rationalized by America as unrepresentative of the larger Muslim demographic.

The United States and Europe will absorb unvetted Muslims refugees fleeing Afghanistan.

The Pentagon and the Intelligence Community will continue to cower behind fictions that confuse tactical trees with strategic forest.

The next likely [target](#) for the Taliban may be Pakistan, another potential strategic coup that would create

yet another “Islamic emirate” with a nuclear weapons capability.

At this point, America is clearly losing the [global](#) war with Islamic religious fascism.

Things will get a lot worse before they get better.

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