



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 16, 2021

Afghanistan: The Fruits of Western Fancies and Fallacies

“The Afghan security forces have the capacity to sufficiently fight and defend their country,” said Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley in July. “A negative outcome, a Taliban military takeover, is not a foregone conclusion.”

Actually, not only was it not a foregone conclusion, it took mere weeks.

After the United States and NATO spent billions over 20 years building up the Afghan security forces, those troops folded like a tent and the capital, Kabul, collapsed so quickly it “stunned U.S. officials,” [writes USA Today](#).

But, hey, perhaps Milley can chalk it up to “white rage,” which in June he [claimed to be studying](#) (the Taliban are Arabs and, technically, Arabs are Caucasian). Not that he should worry: He also [claimed](#) that our main threat is white supremacist “domestic terrorists.”

Then there’s his boss, Joe Biden. While he’s being faulted for the Afghan fiasco, he shouldn’t be singled out. It’s not just that he isn’t lucid — it’s that the whole Establishment deserves blame.

Question: What was the point of the Afghanistan campaign? What was the end game?

Here’s reality, “The US war on Afghanistan was not lost yesterday in Kabul,” [wrote](#) former congressman Ron Paul earlier today. “It was lost the moment it shifted from a limited mission to apprehend those who planned the attack on 9/11 to an exercise in regime change and nation-building.”

Simply bringing 9/11 plotters to justice would have been a logical, rational, realistic goal. And immediately after the 9/11 attacks, “I proposed that we issue letters of marque and reprisal to bring those responsible to justice,” Paul also relates. “But such a limited and targeted response to the attack was ridiculed at the time.”

Paul implicates Congress, for funding the Afghan debacle long after its folly was clear; and high-ranking military brass and intelligence agencies, all of whom/which lied to their commander-in-chief for years. Of course, Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama also deserve blame for pursuing irrational Mideast policy.

Oh, it’s not that the “nation-building” idea came out of nowhere. After WWII, the representative republics that were installed during the Allied occupations in the defeated nations of Germany, Japan, and Italy did take root. But Madisonian republics are not-one-size-fits-all — they must have a cultural substrate in which they can flourish.



AP Images

U.S. Chinook helicopter flies over U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, Aug. 15, 2021.



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I [warned](#) that our nation-building would ultimately be fruitless in my 2007 piece “The Folly of Deifying Democracy in Iraq,” writing:

While we often view democracy [as in republican government] as the terminus of governmental evolution ... the truth is that civilizations have tended to transition not from tyranny to democracy, but democracy to tyranny (e.g., the ancient Romans)... Benjamin Franklin understood this gravitation toward tyranny well, for when asked what kind of government had been created when he emerged from the constitutional convention, he said, “A republic, madam, if you can keep it.”

This brings us to the crux of the matter: Even if we can successfully install democratic republics in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, what makes us think they can keep them?

... To average westerners, all groups are essentially the same, despite profound religious and cultural differences. If a civilization – be it Moslem or Christian, Occidental or Oriental – suffers under the yoke of tyranny, it is only due to a twist of fate that has bestowed the wrong system of government upon it. Change that system and “voila!” all live happily ever after. What eludes these Pollyannas is that politics doesn’t emerge in a vacuum but is a reflection of a far deeper realm, the spiritual/moral[/philosophical]. Alluding to this, Ben Franklin observed,

“Only a moral and virtuous people are capable of freedom; the more corrupt and vicious a society becomes, the more it has need of masters.”

...[S]piritual [and moral/philosophical] health must precede the political variety....

Of course, this helps explain why the Afghan security forces folded so quickly: If we didn’t have anything rational and realistic to fight for, neither did they.

Consider: On one side in this conflict you had the Taliban. We may despise their theology and conception of God, but they believe they have a divine mandate, that they’re doing “Allah’s” will, and that dying in his name is a ticket to Paradise.

On the other side, imagine you’re a young, American-trained Afghan man. You’re fighting for a “system,” so-called “democracy,” marketed by a culture wholly foreign to you. This culture preaches the Sexual Devolution (LGBTQ agenda); would replace the Taliban with the Femiban (radical feminism); espouses secularism explicitly and relativism implicitly; knows not the meaning of virtue; and claims you can switch sexes like some kind of Hollywood-movie, shape-shifting alien. Add to this that you may have some sense you’re opposing God (Allah) and earning a place in Hell by advancing its cause, and, well, would you die for that?

Of course, the corruption we allowed on the ground in Afghanistan could only have cemented this sense. Consider the shocking Friday evening *Tucker Carlson Tonight* segment below (the whole thing is worth watching, but the relevant portion begins at 4:25). A teaser: We spent \$130 billion on Afghan nation-building, but the Pentagon doesn’t know where all the money went. Some of it, however, went to Afghan commanders who pocketed U.S. taxpayer cash via “ghost soldiers,” security-force recruits who



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appeared on the payroll but didn't actually exist. (Also, of those who did exist, only two in 10 could read or write.)

This is all the more reason why we should have heeded the words of our sixth president, John Quincy Adams. America "goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy," he told Congress in 1821. "She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own."



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