

## Decades of War Achieve Absolutely Nothing

### AFGHANISTAN: The Graveyard of Empires

The situation in Afghanistan is in a state of flux. Even before the US evacuation of Bagram Airbase, the Taliban had been encircling major Afghan cities. Though well trained and well armed, the Afghan troops usually prefer to flee rather than resist Taliban onslaughts, leaving heavy armaments behind.

The Taliban, a Pashtun-based militia, dominates large swathes of the Afghan countryside from north to south, historically their stronghold. They continue to receive support from elements of Pakistan's military, notably its intelligence services ISI. Since American and NATO troops began their withdrawal on May 1, dozens of Afghan districts have fallen under Taliban control. Taliban territory is rapidly expanding, taking over district after district in the provinces of Baghlan, Balkh and Kunduz in the north – vast territories inhabited by non-Pashtun ethnic groups with pockets of Pashtun communities, with key supply routes from Central Asia nearby, and provincial capitals are surrounded by Taliban fighters.

US President Biden has said that he decided to exit from Afghanistan as the objective of taking out Osama bin Laden had been achieved besides crippling Al-Qaeda. The US is now more concerned with rescuing from Taliban retribution nearly 50,000 Afghan contractors that supported their efforts over the 20 year war.

Affluent Afghans, in search of a better future, feel cheated. They thought that the USA longed to ward off obscurantism and transform the Afghan society into a vibrant enlightened polity.

They question the costs of war in money and human toll. The US spent \$2.261 trillion on the Afghan war during the period from 2001 to 2021. A Brown University study concluded that, as of April 2021, the total financial cost of the US war on terror is closer to \$6.4 trillion, and more than 800 thousand lives lost.

About 241 thousand people were killed in the Afghanistan and Pakistan war zone since 2001, including 71 thousand civilians. America's Afghan war casualties since 2001 tell us that a total of 2,312 service personnel have been killed, and more than 20 thousand wounded. 3,846 contractors, & 1,144 allied troops, 69,000 Afghan troops & police, 51,191 Taliban, and 47,245 Afghan civilians killed.

The Afghan government, presuming that Americans would never leave Afghanistan or strike a deal with the Taliban, never prepared itself to make the most of training and equipment provided by the Americans. It never prepared to become a viable force after the American exit. The Americans, on the other hand, struck many compromises with the Taliban.



Taliban fighters rightly say *"The Americans have the watches, but we have the time."* The Taliban's thinking is akin to the Vietnamese General Vo Nguyen Giap's:

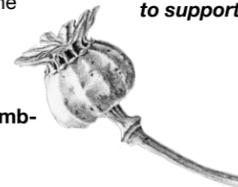
***"I could lose every battle and still win the war - US Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara had worked out that I was controlling the frequency and scale of engagements to keep my losses just below the birth rate, that way the Vietnamese could fight for ever."***

In 1842, 16,000 British troops perished in retreat in Afghanistan. In 1942 (WWII), Britain again failed to "civilize" (gunpoint democratize) Afghanistan. Britain realized *"masterly inactivity"* is the best policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is commonly known as the graveyard of empires. Several rulers tried to overpower it. But their efforts were in vain. Genghis Khan lost a son during the siege of Bamian. Alexander the Great had to beat a hasty retreat.

When the Soviet Union rushed its troops to Afghanistan in aid of the tottering Afghan government caught in civil conflict, in retaliation, the US and its allies funded Afghan resistance, *mu-jahideen*, to fight the Soviet forces. The conflict became a proxy war for super power strategic dominance. The Soviet Union retreated. The war caused grave destruction in Afghanistan and is believed to have contributed to the Soviet collapse and the end of the Cold War. Various estimates put the civilian death toll between half a million and two million people during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979-1989). The Taliban government emerged after the Soviet departure.

**When the US attacked Afghanistan to oust the Taliban that had sheltered Osama bin Laden, the Taliban had no response to the incessant aerial bombing carried out, and their government collapsed.**



-A Greenfuse Radical Remix with Reporting by:  
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## BEAUTIFICATION

Cancer cells are constantly developing in our bodies. Luckily, our immune systems routinely kill them off. Similarly, our minds always harbor pockets of crazy-making misconceptions and faulty imprints. They usually don't rise up and render us insane thanks to the psychic versions of our immune systems.

### How can you stay strong in your ability to fight off madness?

You know the drill: Eat healthy food, sleep well, get physical exercise, minimize stress, give and receive love. But as an aspiring *pronoiac*, you have at your disposal other actions that can provide powerful boosts to your psychic immune system.

#### Here are examples:

Scheme to put yourself in the path of beautiful landscapes, buildings, art, and creatures. Exercise your imagination regularly. Get in the habit of feeding your mind's eye with images that fill you with wonder and vitality.

Eliminate *uhs*, *you knows*, *I means*, and other junk words from your speech. Avoid saying things you don't really mean and haven't thought out. Stop yourself when tempted to make scornful assertions about people. Every night before you fall asleep, review the day's activities in your mind's eye. As if watching a movie about yourself, try to be calmly objective as you observe your memories from the previous 16 hours. Be especially alert for moments when you strayed from your purpose and didn't live up to your highest standards. With a companion, sit in front of a turned-off TV as you make up a pronoiac story that features tricky benevolence, scintillating harmony, and amusing redemption. Speak this tale aloud or write it down.

Take on an additional job title, *beautifier*. Put it on your business card and do something every day to cultivate your skill. If you're a people person, bring grace and intrigue into your conversations; ask unexpected questions that provoke original thoughts.

If you're an artist, leave samples of your finest work in public places. If you're a psychologist or sociologist, point out the institutions and relationships that are working really well. Whatever you do best, be alert for how you can refine it and offer it up to those who'll benefit from it.

If you're going through a phase when you feel you have nothing especially beautiful to offer, or if you think it would be self-indulgent to inject your own aesthetic into shared environments, turn for help to great artists and thinkers. Sneak O'Keefe or Chagall prints onto unadorned walls in public places, for instance. Memorize poems by Emily Dickinson and Hafiz, and slip them into your conversations when appropriate. Use Vivaldi's "Stabat Mater in C Minor" as your ring tone. Scrawl passages from Annie Dillard's "Teaching a Stone to Talk" on the walls of public lavatories.

- Rob Breznsy [freewillastrology.com](http://freewillastrology.com)

## This Cold War Is Not 'Foreign' It's Right Here: In Our Deeply Divided America!

**We have answers, but it means 'Choosing and Acting' to make it better!**

**We feel it**, this wrecking ball of renunciation at all depths of *'meaning'...us* buried in conspiracy theories, mirages of confusion, the worst part of this empires almost mortal wounding of our ability 'as a people' collectively, to keep our faith for creating enduring changes! Being as One, In Our Clarity, of all that's dear, humility of our sincerity what all we must keep intact for all sensitive human communicating.

**'What else makes our existence even possible?'**

**Disordering Rituals** teach us to go along, disrupted, **bleeding out our Care!** submerged in this stunning moment of deluding by this deadly corrosive systemic disease, poisoning of our greater consciousness, far worse than any widespread Covid epidemic, this muting of our sense of relating, our human abilities to create meaningful understandings and settle our minds, hearts, Spirits!

A lost soul, Trump, still with his distortions and massive lies, not just rabidly uprooting this empire, but humanity's very purposes...as he first attempted to crown himself our absolute ruler! This sordid mess now worsening in leading millions to repudiate their very own origins, their sacred **Ways of Life**, all beyond rulers whatsoever, in the spirit of grace and delight...of what real Freedom feels like - what 'Freedom Fighters' always have been doing!

There are so many forms of psychic, personal disordering, like the 100 to 200+ rapid fire images thrown at us in quick succession in every TV commercial, tucked right into every program we're watching. Every kind of version of this, our materialized overwhelming ordering of life... burying our deeper meanings, *us* gripped in huge disclaimers of who we really are, left in the hands of rulers to define every part of daily doings and...what to continue following.

A friend of mine, a loving Mother, she almost livid about vaccines, pointing out how some have sickened, not mentioning the more than half million dead, the millions suffering, she taking offense at the idea of wearing a mask, how hard it was for her to breathe and how terrible the waste she saw of masks thrown away. She reminded me of how we have too many people on Earth and how wolves have less of a litter when there is less food to maintain life. Yes true, as certain as it is part of our oldest teachings, to care for one's neighbors close and far away.

Seeing how our sensibilities being drawn away and leading directly to widespread acceptance of huge losses among us and all forms of life! All kinds of norms of practicing ignoring, of forgetting huge pieces of all nature's species, all their needs, as surely as with what we need.

**So little urgent care nor steadfast answers whatsoever! Precisely Why We Must Stand Up! Face this almost 'death grip' of mesmerism locking out our true identities, Being asked to accept some final decree of inevitability, seduced to forget the depth of what precious is what Love itself brings to our intrinsic Unity?!**

**Jack Nounnan**

**Earth First Forest Defense / Climate Crisis Humboldt**