

# **HERMIT HERALD**

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### **QUOTES FOR THE DAY**

**“I think he’s been wrong on nearly every foreign policy decision and national security issue over the past four decades.” Former Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates – 2014, referring to then vice president, Biden.**

**“We will not conduct a hasty rush to the exit. We’ll do it responsibly, deliberately and safely.” President Biden- April 2021**

**“The likelihood there’s going to be the Taliban overrunning everything and owning the entire country is highly unlikely.” President Biden- July, 2021**

**“It’s disastrous. It’s tragic, a country on the verge of becoming a humanitarian catastrophe. I would do that (bring back a**

**major troop presence). We are otherwise consigning a country of forty million to a medieval, theocratic, ultra conservative Islamist emirate. Al Qaida and ISIS will find sanctuaries there.” General David Petraeus, former Afghanistan commander and former director of the CIA. –August 13, 2021**

**“A responsible withdrawal needed more time and better preparation. History will record Mr. Biden, a supposed master of foreign policy for decades, as having failed in this most critical assignment.” Fred Kagan, military historian- August 14, 2021**

## **KABUL HAS FALLEN –IT’S ALL OVER**

**Jalalabad, Afghanistan’s second largest city has fallen. The Afghan military has abandoned Bagram Air Force Base, which would have been critical to U.S. interests in that part of the world, including Russia and China. The Taliban have taken the capital, Kabul. The U.S. has ordered the evacuation of all 4,000 embassy personnel within seventy-two hours. And, now, late Sunday, we learn the Afghan president has fled the country.**

**Nothing more cringe worthy than to watch distinguished former admiral, John Kirby, now spokesperson for the Pentagon, giving interviews saying how everything is on plan, in light of Biden's top military advisers having advocated a different direction for months.**

**Here's the sad thing- all military engagements have a political component, and Biden's decisions are informed almost entirely by the political, with little thought to the geopolitical. He thinks he has perfect political cover in his decision making. Two of the main three reasons he used for the current course of action were because, (1) only 12% of Americans indicated any sense of concern, or were following the situation in Afghanistan, and, (2) the majority of Americans have decreed, "No more foreign military entanglements."**

**One of the most pathetic things I have read (NY Times- 8/13) "American negotiators are said to be seeking assurances from the Taliban that they will not attack the embassy (Kabul) if they ever want to receive foreign aid in the event**

**that they take over the country's government." So now we are already considering giving aid to a Taliban government, if only they promise not to shoot down our evacuation helicopters? You can't make this stuff up!!!**

**It was just in April that Secretary of State, Blinken said, "It's very important that the Taliban recognize that it will never be legitimate and it will never be durable if it rejects a political process and tries to take the country by force."**

**Effectively pointing out that Blinken doesn't know what he is talking about, former Pakistani Ambassador to Washington, Hussain Haqqani, states, "The notion that the desire for international legitimacy outweighs someone's core beliefs is a fantasy that has led Americans into unrealistic expectations and erroneous policies before."**

**David Sanger writes in today's NY Times, "Mr. Biden will go down in history, fairly or unfairly, as the president who presided over a long-brewing, humiliating final act in the American experiment in Afghanistan."**

**Continuing, he notes, “It is Mr. Biden who may be remembered for his role in wildly overestimating the strength of the Afghan forces, and not moving fast enough when it became clear the scenarios he had been presented with were wrong.”**

## **THE CURTAIN COMES DOWN**

**Columnist, David Zucchino records, “Kabul’s streets were clogged to a standstill by cars and taxis loaded with luggage and personal items as thousands of Afghans rushed to the airport. Some passengers abandoned their vehicles and trudged by foot, lugging their baggage through rutted streets. Bank guards fired into the air to scatter throngs of Afghans trying to withdraw cash from a branch that had closed. Most shops were shuttered cutting Afghans off from food and other supplies. Families crammed personal mementos and clothing into suitcases, then abandoned their homes as they pleaded and offered bribes to secure flights out of the city.”**

**“These were the scenes the Biden administration had hoped to avoid for fear of**

**evoking comparisons to the desperate helicopter airlift of Americans and Vietnamese allies from a roof top in Saigon as the city fell to the North Vietnamese troops in 1975.”**

**AND FINALLY**

**CBS correspondent, Margret Brennan queried the president, “Don’t you bear some responsibility for the outcome if the Taliban ends up back in control and women end up losing their rights?”**

**The president’s response, “Do I bear responsibility? Zero responsibility.”**

**Too sad a day for further notes**

**Your faithful scribe,  
PB**

