

An Open Letter to the President of the United States

by Phillip W. Weiss

Joseph Biden, President

United States of America

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue

Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Your decision to end the US involvement in Afghanistan is a disaster. It is a defeat that is reverberating around the world. It is the worst humiliation the US has ever suffered. It immediately eroded trust in the US around the world, has emboldened our enemies (meaning those nations and regimes that we have identified as adversaries), confounded our allies (presuming that we even have allies), and has greatly increased our vulnerability to terrorist attack, both inside and outside of the United States. What makes matters even worse, however, is that our humiliation will not end anytime soon. According to news reports, the spectacle of the US exit, under the auspices of the Taliban, the very same group that the US expended over ONE TRILLION DOLLARS to defeat, is slated to continue for days and even weeks while the US struggles and scrambles to evacuate the thousands of Americans who are now stuck in the country. If they become hostages, this could turn our defeat into an outright nightmare, the proportions of which will dwarf the disaster of the 1979 storming of the American

Embassy in Teheran, which took the US 444 days to resolve, and expand the scope of the defeat to a magnitude comparable to the fall of Bataan and Corregidor, the fall of Singapore, the British defeat at Tobruk, the fall of France in 1940, the German defeat at Stalingrad, and Russia's defeat in the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War. These are the kind of disasters that no nation experiences without incurring major damage. While you were not wrong in wanting to clean up the mess you inherited in Afghanistan, the way you are cleaning it up is making the mess exponentially worse. Now the dice are cast. Maybe you could have done things differently to produce a less painful outcome. We will never know. One thing, however, is certain: you cannot evade your responsibility for creating this unfolding disaster. This is a burden that you alone must bear. No amount of finger pointing can change that fact. As you yourself said, borrowing a phrase coined by a previous president, the buck stops with you. Frankly, I cannot understand how you can even stay in office. Your own party is turning against you on this matter, just like they turned against the governor of New York when his actions transformed him into a political liability. It is no shame to suffer a defeat if one puts forth their best effort. It is a shame when that defeat is humiliating, when the vanquished is forced to "eat crow" and whine like a bully who has had his nose tweaked. It is obvious that today the United States is much weaker than it was in 1990 when it won a major war in three days and in 2003 when it trounced the Hussein regime and occupied Baghdad. In Afghanistan all of our massive military, political, cultural and financial resources that we poured into that country proved

to be no match for an adversary who, unlike us, refused to give up and now has prevailed. Now after twenty years, we are back to square one. We have moved our token around the game board and now have returned to starting line, discouraged and defeated, but at least we are still in the game. Or are we?

Sincerely,

Phillip W. Weiss

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