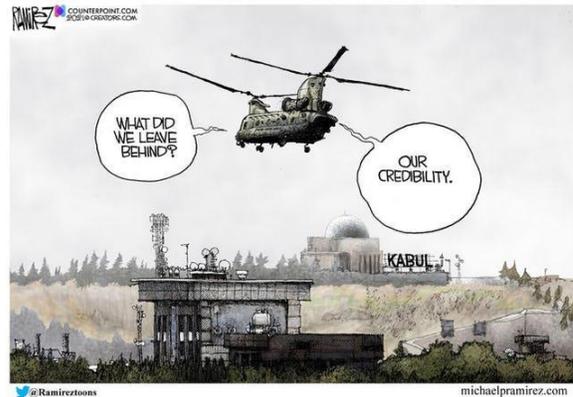


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Terrorism will follow us home

Steve Bakke  September 10, 2021



The Afghanistan withdrawal had the flavor of “surrender and escape.”

A careful plan wouldn't have withdrawn military personnel before the evacuation was completed. A thoughtful plan would have recognized the vulnerability of Afghan forces, and wouldn't have rushed to close the high capacity, sophisticated, and more easily defended Bagram air base.

With a thoughtful plan, we wouldn't have allowed the Taliban to gain powerful military status, simply by confiscating sophisticated weapons. A careful plan wouldn't have permitted records and biometric data for our Afghan employees and U.S. citizens to fall into terrorist hands. Lives will be lost.

A thorough plan would have provided adequate troops for airport security. The United States didn't have adequate military resources to take control of the situation. We naively relied on the Taliban to support our best interests.

A responsible plan would have kept us in charge of our own destiny, and lives would have been spared.

Prior to withdrawal, our goal of denying terrorists safe sanctuary was being achieved. We had reached a reasonable balance of peace, safety, and cost. A relatively small contingent could have maintained the existing equilibrium, and denied terrorists a sanctuary country.

Our leadership has exhibited weakness and uncertainty in recent events. Our adversaries are encouraged. Our allies are disappointed and perhaps afraid. Evil has gained ground. Sad things and bad things will now be inflicted on the Afghan people.

We thought we ended something, but the war on terror continues. It will follow us home.