

By Debra Sweet

The political and military leaders who run the U.S. have real problems in the Middle East. Twenty years of their "war on terror" has failed to establish U.S. control over the region and only spread and strengthened Islamic fundamentalism. Just one of their justifications for attacking Afghanistan - to exact revenge for 9/11 - was true, though completely unjustified. The others, to establish "democracy," to "save the women," to end "terrorism," were always designed to satisfy those who think "America equals the good guys."

Biden has been forced to conclude that the U.S. can't "win" this war. The U.S. entered in 2001 with almost no translators who spoke local languages, ignorantly killed local forces who were trying to *aid* the U.S., tortured and killed prisoners at the notorious U.S. airbase in Bagram and killed hundreds of civilians in night raids and with drones. ["We were devoid of a fundamental understanding of Afghanistan — we didn't know what we were doing,"](#)

Douglas Lute, a three-star Army general who served as the White House's Afghan war czar during the Bush and Obama administrations, told government interviewers in 2015. He added:

["What are we trying to do here? We didn't have the foggiest notion of what we were undertaking..."](#)

This aggressive, imperialist war has been a disaster for the people of Afghanistan. For one example, women in Afghanistan still have one of the highest maternal death rates on the globe.

The withdrawal of US troops this year is being called the "end" of the war. Notwithstanding that U.S. intervention has increased the danger of Taliban control and interference by Pakistan, it appears true only insofar as regular U.S. military deployment in the country. In fact, U.S. plans to control the region will continue with large air bases surrounding Afghanistan (and Iran). The role of private contractors, the CIA, non-public military programs, backed up by the biggest pile of nukes, will continue to menace Afghanistan.



U.S. and NATO military bases in the Middle East and Central Asia. The map shows the locations of U.S. and NATO military bases in the Middle East and Central Asia. The map shows the locations of U.S. and NATO military bases in the Middle East and Central Asia. The map shows the locations of U.S. and NATO military bases in the Middle East and Central Asia.