

Continuing to Try to Save Afghan Women "the Only Thing We Can Do"

by Phyllis Chesler



We now know that the stubborn, almost incomprehensible way in which President Biden pulled out of Afghanistan was [military](#) [advice](#) [members of Parliament](#). Women must [have been told](#) to remain indoors. The media [is not allowed](#). [stoning](#), and [cannot shave](#) their beards.

But there's more, much more.

Because the Taliban [on the run](#). The criminals whom they imprisoned are hunting them down, vowing revenge, swearing to do to them what they did to their murdered wives or to raped children. Six women judges, out of 220 women judges now in hiding, spoke with the BBC.

"One (judge), Masooma, said a man she sentenced for murdering his wife told her: 'I will find you and have my revenge.'...one judge said she had received 'more than 20 threatening phone calls from former inmates who have now been released.'"

There's still more.

The Taliban have begun to shut off the internet in specific neighborhoods. This will render communication with the outside world impossible or intermittent. There will be far fewer pleas for rescue, location information, and a diminished ability to be guided (via the "digital Dunkirk") through the streets to the airport and to the right gates.

My friend and colleague [created](#) a small, ad hoc,

grassroots [have the tools](#) to weed out Islamists, terrorists, and extreme tribal misogynists and either send them packing or successfully re-educate them?

Bayat was working on a Master's degree in business administration when the Taliban took over.

But even though she worked at the U.S. Embassy, she said, "we were not helped by the Americans. It was a group of French people who helped us. After we (failed to get through) the crowds, we were taken by car to the entrance gate. I said to myself: 'Maybe I die and maybe I will taste freedom.' The possibility of death was very high, but we were saved."

I asked if she thought it was a good idea to keep exposing the Taliban while she is here, safely in America, when it might put other women who are still trapped at greater risk?

"We should go public in America, talk, make forums, hold debates about the Taliban," Bayat said. "It is the only thing we can do for Afghan women from here. The Taliban is going to punish women anyway for any reason."

Despite the horrors brought on by the way in which the Americans withdrew, she holds out some hope for her country's future.

"American education has changed the society. Afghan women can't even breathe in the current situation. Several generations have experienced freedoms."

Because of that, Bayat does not believe that the majority of Afghans can return to the 7th or 8th century.

I hope she's right, but I doubt it.

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