

# Joe Biden Is a Total Failure

by Conrad Black



**As cant and emotionalism subside**, it is becoming possible to give a clear and fair assessment of the performance of the Biden Administration and of the president himself: a total failure.

The shortfall of 500,000 in the expected net new job figures for August shows that stagflation is upon us: employers are afraid to hire employees as they normally would coming out of the COVID recession because they don't know if they will be able to afford them. Hourly pay scales are increasing at 7.5 percent, new car prices at 10 percent, rental accommodation at 12 percent, and new homes at 20 percent, all well ahead of the official rate of inflation, contrary to the smug assurances of Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and even some Federal Reserve spokespeople, that inflation was a mere bubble.

Historically, the only sustainable way of fighting stagflation has been to counter inflation with increased supply and achieve that goal and the corresponding non-inflationary increase in demand through the encouragement of demand in the tax system. The present administration is committed to raising taxes and to colossal spending increases, which will exacerbate both stagnation and inflation.

After 13 years of negligible interest rates, there isn't much that's useful left in the toolbox. The inflation of the sort that is already building up historically has been attacked by reducing demand and sharply increasing interest rates. Any such policy now would produce a disaster that would be a fiscal and monetary replication of the debacle in Afghanistan. Not since Herbert Hoover prescribed higher taxes, higher tariffs, and a shrinkage of the money supply as the remedy for

the Great Depression has an American administration more poorly judged the policy prescriptions necessary to fight deteriorating economic conditions.

Biden's answer to the surge in violent crime rates across urban America is pious lectures about guns, which incites both the anti-gun Left and the huge number of Americans (who consider their guns security against what otherwise would be a riptide of crime) to believe that guns are about to be confiscated unconstitutionally. The answer to crime rates is not in the suppression of access to guns for responsible citizens, as criminals always have guns; the answer is in greater numbers of better-trained police personnel and longer sentences for violent criminals.

The open artery at the southern border where the nodding Homeland security secretary, Alejandro Mayorkas, repeated for six months that "the border is closed" saw 1.2 million people swarm illegally into the United States, many thousands of them on live television. Mayorkas has been overheard to say that the status of the border is "unsustainable," but this assessment seems not to have reached Washington. All of these problems—stagflation, violent urban crime, and a flood of illegal immigrants—appear to be worsening, not improving, while the Democratic leaders in the Congress pursue their socialist and authoritarian objectives as best they can. Which will not be very efficiently, as their party's standing plummets in public esteem.

As the smoke clears from above the disaster in Afghanistan, it is possible to assess the administration's performance dispassionately: the president lied to the country about conditions in Afghanistan and in the [infamous July 23 conversation](#) with Afghan president Ashraf Ghani, he urged a policy of misinformation to conceal the erosion of the military balance from the American public. He promised to extract all Americans and failed to do so. He said the war was over; it is a war on terror and of course it is not over and

may now be expected to escalate. He falsely attempted to blame former Presidents Bush, Obama, and Trump, who all have some mistakes to answer for but are in no way responsible for this debacle.

This overhasty replication of the churlish departure from Iraq by Obama and Biden, which resuscitated terrorist rule in much of Iraq, has severely diminished whatever may have been accomplished by 20 years of NATO's presence in Afghanistan. It is a self-inflicted setback in the war on terror. The NATO countries went to Afghanistan out of loyalty to the United States after 9/11, and have been left in the lurch. The most successful alliance in history is almost in tatters, as the British House of Commons declared its "contempt" for Biden, an unprecedented assertion about an American leader. Among other things, Biden's negligence is responsible for abandoning \$85 billion of sophisticated military equipment in the hands of the country's enemies. The war is far from over.

The Democratic media, which waffled badly as the Afghan disaster unfolded, is trying to put Afghanistan into the past, naturally, as if it were a hurricane or a forest fire. They will not waffle out of this that easily; there are already reports of six planeloads of detained Americans, and Biden has left hundreds of hostages behind. In Tehran in 1979, the American hostages were seized from the U.S. embassy illegally. The current situation is a much more dangerous condition, and the feeble Biden-Blinken response was that Americans had been warned to leave, even as they were assured that the military condition was not worrisome.

Indicative of the severity of the administration's problems is that the leak of the contents of the conversation with Ghani show that there are people in this administration, as there were in Trump's and Nixon's, who wanted to bring it down, even with illegal leaks. Trump had the excuse of taking over a White House full of Democrats. With Biden, even Democrats are disgusted and alarmed at the extent of his administration's

shortcomings. These internal indiscretions may indicate that there is some chance that the U.S. attorney in Delaware will open up the extent of the Biden family skulduggery in financial relations with several countries, centering on the president's flamboyantly beleaguered son Hunter.

While Biden was riding high in the polls, the usual cynicism that is justified over the integrity of American prosecutors, especially in political cases, was particularly apposite where the question was the exposure of improprieties by the president with his son in rendering services of access to foreign governments. The leak of the July 23 conversation with President Ghani indicates that any such inhibitions are falling away. This is occurring as the one great achievement of the Biden Administration is, like the rest of its record, disintegrating: it was supposed to be a time of calm and professionalism; the return of the adults, the return of normalcy. This cascade of fiascos is not normalcy—is far from what was promised, and is not, as the crashing opinion polls demonstrate, acceptable.

The Afghanistan disaster has surely taken out what little fetid wind was left in the sails of Nancy Pelosi's Trump-hate, January 6 committee. Instead of a Monrovia "era of good feelings," America is having and executing a time of increasing unease over bad policy failings in every important field, ostensibly presided over by an opinionated but incoherent man approaching the last extremity of cognition adequate to hold such a great office. It cannot go on like this and it won't.

Joe Biden is not up to the job. Barring a miracle (and they do occur sometimes), he will not go on for three-and-a-half years. The powers that be in the Democratic Party appear already to be trying to shuffle the vice president out of the deck and bring in someone who might be able to hold the commanding heights of American government through what is building up to be a broad consensus for radical changes of

personnel and policy.