

Reflections on Robert Spencer's 'Who Lost Afghanistan?'



by Phyllis Chesler

I will never forget how shamefully America pulled out of the Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan on July 1, 2021, in utter darkness, and without notifying our allies—and nearly two months later, as the whole world watched, how we left Kabul and Kabul Airport.

My Afghan “granddaughter” was on a flight out after many days of hell in the surging crowds when the human homicide bomber, Abdul Rahman Al-Logari, whom the Taliban had just let out of jail, blew up thirteen American Marines, and countless Afghan civilians. [Meena](#) saw the whole thing from her airplane window.

How could America’s departure from Afghanistan have been so mismanaged? Robert Spencer, in his new and important book, [Who Lost Afghanistan?](#), describes it as “Saigon-on-steroids,” a “nightmare that a horrified world witnessed.”

Spencer reminds us that President Biden promised that “we will not conduct a hasty rush to the exit. We’ll do it responsibly, deliberately, and safely. And we will do it in full coordination with our allies and partners.”

Spencer also quotes Biden’s Press Secretary, Jen Psaki who insisted that “the catastrophically mismanaged evacuation operation could not be termed ‘anything but a success.’”

Are we supposed to believe them, or our lying eyes?

Spencer’s book takes us back to 1998, to bin Laden’s statement

entitled “Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders,” and to 9/11, after which President Bush appeared with two trusted Muslim advisors, including [Nihad Awad](#), the co-founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, and [Abdurrahman Alamoudi](#), who is now in prison for financing Al-Qaeda. There they stood, together with Bush, while the President claimed that “these acts of violence against innocents violate the fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith...The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam...Islam is peace.”

True, President Bush also sometimes described Islam as “Islamofascism” and referred to “radical Islamic fundamentalists.”

But President Obama “extended and deepened (such) false claims about Islam. Obama said: “Not only were Islam and Western principles compatible in Afghanistan, but Islam was a core part of American society, which had enriched American society from the very beginning of the nation.”

Obama did not think we could ever defeat the Taliban (he was right)—and so he wanted to negotiate with them, manage them. His Vice-President, Joe Biden, is on record as having said: “Look, the Taliban per se is not our enemy.”

This controversy about the nature of Islam has been raging for a long time among the intelligentsia, governments, international bodies, armed forces, the media, and academia. Some ex-Muslims do not believe that Islam can be reformed. They—my very good friend, [Ibn Warraq](#), [Ayaan Hirsi Ali](#), [Nonie Darwish](#), [Yasmine Mohammed](#)—would be killed for having left Islam; [Taslima Nasreen](#) was mobbed and forced to live in exile as a dissident, [Salman Rushdie](#) had to live with police protection for many years and was recently nearly assassinated for having criticized Islam.

Muslim reformers such as [Dr. Zuhdi Jasser](#), [Soraya Deen](#), [Raheel Raza](#), [Asra Nomani](#), [Aliya Abbas](#), and my dear friend, [Imam](#)

[Seyran Ates](#), all believe that Islam can and must be reformed and that they are committed to helping Islam evolve, and become more democratic, enlightened, and women-friendly.

However, as has been said many times: While not all Muslims are Jihadist terrorists, all Jihadist terrorists are Muslims.

Therefore, in addition to Spencer's latest work, I strongly recommend Cynthia Farahat's brave, new book, [The Secret Apparatus: The Muslim Brotherhood's Industry of Death](#). Most civilians have no idea how well organized, how dangerous, and how powerful this century-old Brotherhood is; how involved it is with Iran and with Hamas's terror attacks against Israel; and how it has planned to Islamize the entire world by any means possible, especially by lying and deceiving the infidels.

Farahat is an Egyptian dissident who dared to argue for peace with Israel and for the separation of mosque and state. She was banned from Lebanon, landed on an Al-Qaeda hit list, received daily death threats, was nearly assassinated, and eventually immigrated to America. Like Spencer, Farahat criticizes the ways in which American foreign policy "appeases" Jihad and allows itself to be deceived.

In Steve Emerson's shocking documentary, [Jihad in America: The Grand Deception](#), we see Siraj Wahhaj, an imam of Al-Taqwa mosque in Brooklyn, humbly giving the invocation before Congress as the first Muslim clergyman to do so—and we then see him back at his Brooklyn mosque spewing venomous hatred towards America and non-Muslims. "This country is a garbage can," and he prays that American "crumbles and is replaced by Islam." We also see Alamoudi, now in jail for funding Al-Qaeda, publicly claiming that "we are against all forms of terrorism," and then exhorting his followers to transform America into a "Muslim country, even if it takes 100 years." On an FBI wiretap, we hear Alamoudi grumbling that "Al-Qaeda did not kill enough Americans in the African embassy

bombings.”

Although I was part of an international team that rescued 400 Afghan women, I do not believe that America is morally obligated to do that which cannot be done, namely, turn Afghanistan into a modern democracy, one that believes in individual rights, especially in women’s and children’s rights and in the separation of mosque and state. The rural regions of the country are impoverished and people who live there are unquestionably religious and often illiterate. Wars and occupations have made matters worse.

In addition, without foreign intervention, the country is indigenously swarming with woman- and infidel-haters, as well as with homosexual pederasts who [rape young boys](#). When one brave Marine, Dan Quinn, rescued a boy and beat the Afghan commander who had chained him to a bed—Quinn was relieved of his command.

But, I do not agree with Spencer that American and European boots on the ground accomplished nothing. For twenty years, girls and women obtained educations and became judges, lawyers, physicians, business owners, artists, diplomats, and psychologists; they also opened shelters for battered and raped women.

Is this enough to justify our expenditure of blood and treasure? I cannot answer this crucial question.

Spencer pulls together an enormous amount of information and he presents it quickly, deftly, and masterfully. It is actually an easy read.

I agree with the many military men whom Spencer quotes throughout who cannot understand why we did not find bin Laden sooner in Abbottabad, Pakistan where the Pakistani elite had been sheltering him; exactly why we stayed on as long as we did in Afghanistan; how could we have minimized or justified the “green-on-blue attacks: (Afghan soldiers trained and armed

by America) which resulted in the murder of 152 American soldiers and the wounding of 193 more; why we exchanged known terrorists for American deserter Bowe Bergdahl; and exactly why we left in so disorganized and cruel a manner.

I highly recommend both Spencer's work as well as that of Farahat.

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Order Robert Spencer's book: [Who Lost Afghanistan?](#)