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QUOTE FOR THE DAY

“Look, we were in that war for twenty years. The Afghans are going to have to be able to do it themselves with the Air Force they have.” And, separately, “The mission hasn’t failed - yet.” President Biden

SEEMS LIKE AMERICA IS OK WITH THAT

One of the president’s three stated reasons for pulling out of Afghanistan is that pollsters tell him only about 12 % of Americans are paying any attention to what is happening there. We further learn that a sizeable percentage of both Republicans and Democrats in Congress approve of our getting out from under our longest war.

Then, in a July 7th NY Times article we learn that, “Disparate groups of ex-soldiers join forces to give political cover for an Afghan

exit.” Well, yes, but with caveats, as noted by Representative Jason Crow, Democrat of Colorado, and a former Army Ranger. In pulling out, “We must do so in a way that keeps our promises to our allies, protects the women and children of Afghanistan and ensures a safer and more secure world.” How about – none of the above?

As columnist Eric Schmitt writes, “To listen to the White House and Pentagon, the exit of the last American combat troops from Bagram Air Base is not the end of the mission in Afghanistan. At least that was the signal given to the Afghans.”

Continuing, “The United States military will still help Afghan forces, just by teleconference from afar. Armed Air Force drones will still hunt Qaeda and Islamic State terrorists, just from bases eight hours away in the Persian Gulf. The Biden administration still plans to provide the Afghan government more than \$3 billion in security assistance, just with not as much oversight in the country to prevent corruption.”

General Kenneth McKenzie says of the effort to continue supporting Afghanistan militarily, “It’s going to be extremely difficult to do, but it is not impossible.” That’s Administration politispeak for, “ Afghanistan is toast”.

Intelligence analysts predict that the country could fall to the Taliban within six months. Like McKenzie, a number of other U.S. Generals, including Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General, Mark Milley, give weak assurances that there is some chance the Afghan government may prevail over the Taliban. All at the same time that the Taliban has seized more than a quarter of the country’s 421 districts just since early May, and claim to now control 85% of the land.

So, dear readers, here’s the deal: In the territories the Taliban have already conquered, girls can no longer go to school and women cannot work. On the Afghan government side of the equation, within a month or two the Afghan Air Force will be out of business. All their mechanical support was provided by U.S. contractors- now departed. The Afghans apparently don’t know a screw

from a nut. Afghan fighting troops, with poor morale, are surrendering by the hundreds, turning over valuable military equipment to the Taliban.

History informs us of the two abortive adventures over many years by the English, and the failure of the Russians, as well, to take control of Afghanistan. Recall, however, the only reason the Russians had to leave Afghanistan was because the U.S. gave the Mujahedin shoulder fired stinger missiles to shoot down Russian aircraft thanks to U.S. congressman, Charlie Wilson and others.

Point being, we now grandly say, “We’re not in the nation building business and we’ve fought this war too long.” You never like to see the loss of American lives, but we have lost fewer lives (2,300) in 20 years than we lose in a single year due to military accidents. We are not only giving up on a government and country we could easily still support, but have lost a strategic geographical location. Florida congressman, Michael Waltz, said, “As our only base (Bagram), between Russia, China and Iran, it’s a huge strategic asset. Why are we just

giving it away?" As we leave, the Chinese are announcing major new "belt and road" initiatives in Afghanistan. Countries around the world have to wonder what the U.S. means when we say, "We have your back."

I feel sorry for, but at the same time am disappointed in the numerous General rank officers overseeing our efforts in Afghanistan. There is no question in their press releases that they are uncomfortable with the president's decision, but are forced to acquiesce- hate to lose that prestige and handsome uniform by resigning in protest.

We are going to see some very unhappy news from Afghanistan going forward. As retired General Jeffrey Schlosser, who commanded U.S. forces in Eastern Afghanistan said, "The broader population in America has forgotten about Afghanistan unless they lost someone they knew there. The vast majority of Americans aren't paying attention." I'm in a significant minority on this issue, but I think we're making a huge mistake.

“THE BIGGEST THREAT TO AMERICA IS AMERICA ITSELF.”

That is the contention of columnist, Nicholas Kristof. In support of that view he delves into several aspects of American life, but the primary focus is on education.

He points out that twenty percent of 15 year olds can't read at the level of a ten year old. From a separate international survey we learn that, of the industrialized nations the U.S. ranks 13th in reading, 18th in science and 37th in math. What can the competitive posture of America be in the future with such a poorly educated populace. President Biden wants everyone to be entitled to two free years of community college. Isn't that putting the cart before the horse? How about as many extra years in high school as necessary to attain 12th grade reading and math levels?

According to Kristof, a recent World Bank assessment of competitiveness ranks the U.S. number 35 out of 174 countries. He states, “As I see it, the greatest threat to America's future

is less a surging China or a rogue Russia, than it is our underperformance at home.”

Interestingly, this all comes into focus in the reporting on a seemingly unrelated issue. Ms. Zyahna Bryant, a student at UVA, has been instrumental in the recent removal of the statues of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson from public display in Charlottesville. She said, “The statues coming down is the tip of the iceberg. There are larger systems that need to be dismantled. Educational equity is a good place to start.”

Well said, but how do we get there? Isn't the inequity in education a reflection of racism, intended or not? Without proper education, is it racism or a lack of competency that keeps minorities down? I'm not a social scientist, but can say with certainty that a lack of education is hurtful to the advancement of anyone; race religion, ethnic origin etc.

So who is to blame for our mediocre school systems- make that abysmal- primarily in our larger cities? Is it the teachers, the school boards, the lack of family structure, city

officials, state government leaders, long term Democrat or Republican failed leadership, or, as Dr. Shelby Steele points out, when only 17% of blacks make it to high school graduation, where is the path to success from there? And, since the problem is well recognized, why isn't something being done?

Pope Francis said, "When no one is to blame, everyone is to blame." Perhaps he should have acknowledged that this wasn't exactly original thought, as the famous psychologist, William Schutz (1925-2002) said, "Everyone is responsible and no one is to blame."- makes it really easy to do nothing- right?

WHEN NOT TEACHING READING AND MATH

Arch Democrat/liberal, James Carville, thinks the Democrats, many of whom are supporters of the "wokeness" movement, had better lighten up on their rhetoric coming into the midterms. The largest voting group in the U.S. is neither Democrat nor Republican, but Independent, and Carville cautions about a major back lash against wokeness and cancel culture campaigns which are not being well

received by the Independents. And so, we have today's most current example.

As noted in a recent article by columnist, Christopher Rufo, "More than two dozen school districts across the U.S. are recommending a book titled, "Not My Idea" that suggests being white is a deal with the devil. It is being recommended for students as young as pre-school and includes passages such as, "Whiteness is a bad deal. It always was."

On one page there is a depiction of a red tailed devil made of money offering a contract binding you to whiteness. The contract, which the reader is encouraged to sign (figuratively or literally) reads: "CONTRACT" Binding you to whiteness - you get:

>stolen land

>stolen riches

>special favors

Whiteness gets:

To mess endlessly with the lives of your friends, neighbors, loved ones and all fellow humans of COLOR.

YOUR SOUL, sign below

So there we have it, dear reader, just one more attempt to keep us at each other's throats and indoctrinate young impressionable children.

SO HOW ABOUT THIS?

Went to see the movie, "Summer of Soul" the other day, an all black musical, similar to Woodstock, held the same year, in Morris park, NY with 300,000 attendees. The film canisters had only recently been found and turned into a two- hour documentary. How uplifting! What a celebration of black culture and music. What a reception this movie gets- an audience approval of 98%. Promoting understanding and appreciation for black society does so much more for race relations than teaching your seven year old that she/he has a pact with the devil.

Your faithful scribe,

PB

