

## **6 Ways Biden Bungled the Afghanistan Withdrawal**

On August 31, after 20 years of war with Afghanistan, the United States officially withdrew from the country after one of the worst military disasters of the last few decades. Despite the administration's efforts to blameshift, most Americans directly blame Biden for the chaos that ensued this summer.

The U.S. ended its presence only after 13 American troops, numerous persecuted Afghan Christians, and hundreds of former Afghan army members died as a direct result of Biden's decisions.

Here are just some of the ways Biden and his administration bungled the Afghanistan withdrawal.

### **1. Setting an arbitrary date of withdrawal for his own gain**

Though some argue that the military shouldn't have withdrawn in the first place, most can agree that rushing the withdrawal was a mistake, especially considering we've had a 20-year presence in the nation, without ever establishing a successful democratic government.

But Biden claims he inherited a "bad deal" with the Taliban from Trump, which set the withdrawal deadline at May 1. Knowing the U.S. military could not meet the deadline, the Biden admin negotiated a four-month extension, setting the withdrawal before the 20th anniversary of 9/11. Projecting a smooth and quick withdrawal, Biden expected this to be a good PR move. But of course, the death of 13 U.S. troops, tragic in its own right, would only become a detriment to his public appeal.

Had Biden originally extended the deadline past September, the military might have had the time to safely effectively withdraw troops, potentially saving many lives. But Biden chose to rush the withdrawal in order to gain much-needed public appeal from the 9/11 memorial day.

### **2. Withdrawing the military first**

When Biden announced that all 2,500 American troops would be pulled from Afghanistan, most assumed this would be the last step in the withdrawal. However, he removed the troops before the civilians, leaving thousands of Americans stranded without a safe passage to the airport.

Many of those civilians included persecuted Afghan Christians, most of whom have ["gone silent" since the Taliban takeover](#), as connections in other countries have lost contact.

It doesn't take an expert in military strategy to understand that the troops should be the last to be removed from a hostile nation. After realizing the danger civilians faced, Biden was forced to send 5,000 U.S. troops back into Afghanistan, twice the number of troops originally in the country, several of whom died in the [Kabul airport suicide bombing](#) along with approximately 200 Afghans.

### **3. Surrendering the Bagram air base**

In a middle-of-the-night withdrawal, the U.S. military abandoned the Bagram air base, cutting its electricity, without notifying the Afghan commander. He realized it had been abandoned almost [two hours after they had left](#).

The military and civilians were then left to rely on Kabul's Hamid Karzai International, a single-runway airport surrounded by mountains that sits in the middle of a densely populated city---not a particularly strategic position.

Biden claimed the decision to abandon Bagram was made to keep the military presence capped at 600-700 troops, according to [a press briefing](#), which would make holding both the embassy and the Bagram air base impossible.

Who determined this arbitrary number of forces? And why was Biden so keen on reducing the number of forces, even if it meant making a monumental strategic mistake?

When asked why he was willing to surrender Bagram, Biden dodged the question, blaming the Afghan army: "Let's assume the Afghan national force had continued to fight and they were surrounding Kabul. It would be a very different story."

### **4. Relying on the Afghan army**

American taxpayers have spent \$90 billion training the Afghan army, yet it crumbled at the first announcement of American withdrawal.

Biden believed the Afghan army could withstand the Taliban's attacks and based his strategy (or lack thereof) upon that presupposition. In fact, Biden did not even have a backup plan in case the Afghan army and government were to fall, which it did in a record 11 days.

Biden was repeatedly warned about the Afghan army's inability to hold off the Taliban. The CIA warned that Afghanistan would collapse, and their predicted worst-case scenario was "was pretty close to what happened," according to [one official](#). Yet he refuses to take responsibility.

### **5. Trusting the Taliban**

Biden has [a long history of negotiating with the Taliban](#), stemming from his role in the Obama administration. Furthermore, Biden's abandoning the Afghan army and the hasty military withdrawal both indicate his policy of nonhostility toward the Taliban. In fact, the [Biden admin will consider sending financial aid](#) to the Taliban, according to National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, despite U.S. sanctions and despite the Taliban's decades-long war crimes.

But Biden's trust in the Taliban has also directly influenced many American lives this summer. After the U.S. announced its withdrawal, the Taliban claimed it would ensure civilians' safe passage to the Kabul airport. However, countless reports of Taliban checkpoints deterring civilians demonstrate the opposite.

At the same time, the Taliban increased its presence in Kabul, making safe passage to the airport nearly impossible. The moment the last American aircraft departed, the Taliban seized the Kabul airport, only to find billions of dollars worth of military equipment.

## **6. Abandoning military equipment**

When the U.S. troops left Bagram without notifying Afghan allies, they cut the power, essentially signaling looters to take the remaining equipment before the Afghan army could access it, leaving them further ill-equipped and out-gunned against the Taliban. From the Bagram air base alone, the Taliban accrued [\\$85 billion worth of equipment and weapons](#), according to UN Ambassador Nikki Haley.

With its Kabul departure, the U.S. military abandoned another 170 pieces of equipment. And to be clear, this does not mean a few weapons and grenades. The military left 70 MRAPs, 23 Humvees, and 73 aircraft.

Some of the equipment was out of commission or destroyed in controlled blasts, so administration representatives are claiming that equipment is “useless” to the Taliban.

But out-of-commission, advanced weaponry is not “useless” at all. In fact, the Taliban can easily use this equipment to unlock U.S. defense secrets and create better weapons. Furthermore, the Taliban will likely sell the “unusable” equipment to China, their more technologically advanced partner.

## **Final thoughts**

Biden’s mishandling of the U.S. military withdrawal shows not only his lack of judgment and leadership abilities, but it is also deeply sinister. He has shown disrespect for the 13 U.S. lives lost, which were a direct result of his decisions. He has shown his incompetence in international affairs, and he has portrayed America as a weak and unreliable nation on the world stage.

The bungled Afghanistan withdrawal is on par with Saigon and the Bay of Pigs and is likely to be the beginning of disastrous international policies coming out of the Biden administration over the next few years.

Our military deserves better, and so do the American people.