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Tears of empire

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It happened with a suddenness that was stunning. The Taliban taking town by town, village by village, province by province until Kabul itself toppled all without virtually firing a shot. The sudden fall of the capital caused the falling of alligator tears by the US political class, many of whom demanded that more troops be sent ostensibly to prevent Imperial embarrassment.

Forgotten, of course, was the 20 year project that armed, funded and allegedly trained an army by the Americans. The U.S. trained troops faced with the prospect of fighting the Taliban melted away faster than the ice cream on a summer sidewalk. The Late Palestinian intellectual Edward Said in a 2003 article taught the following lesson:

“Every empire” he wrote, “however tells itself and the world that it is unlike all other empires, that its mission is not to plunder and control, but to educate and liberate. These ideas are by no means shared by the people who inhabit that empire, but that hasn’t prevented the U.S. propaganda and policy apparatus from imposing its Imperial perspective on Americans, whose sources of information about Arabs and Islam or woefully inadequate.”

– The late scholar Edward Said.

When the Afghanistan War began, it was called “Operation Enduring Freedom”

When the Iraq war began several years later, it was called operation “Iraqi Freedom.”

You can call it what you will but is either nation freer? And what endures after decades of war besides immense loss?



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