

Afghanistan

By one account, approximately 450 Americans are still trapped in Afghanistan [1]. This comes as acts of terrorism continue. For instance, at least 19 people were killed by two explosions in the capital, Kabul [2]. The attack was directed against the Sardar Mohammad Dawood Khan military hospital [3]. The Taliban now controlling Afghanistan blamed ISIS-K for the attack [4]. Elsewhere, in Jalalabad, a roadside bomb explosion killed at least two people [5].

Back in August, the Taliban indicated they wanted a peaceful transition [6]. However, early on there were indications of brutal killings [7]. Nevertheless, some have wondered if the Taliban will renounce terrorism. Perhaps their actions answer this question. For instance, one report indicates the Taliban will reward the families of suicide bombers with money and land [8]. In another example, a Taliban commander who ran suicide bombers in Kabul is now the police chief for that city [9]. Another report indicates the Taliban beheaded a female volleyball player and posted the images to social media [10]. In another instance, three people were shot and killed for playing music at a wedding [11]. In the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif, four women lured into believing they were evacuating Afghanistan were instead killed [12]. In any case, the outlook for women in Afghanistan appears to be more restricted. Case in point, Al-Qaeda warned women to be traditional; not feminist [13].

1. Blitzer, Ronn, Fox News, Pentagon confirms nearly 450 Americans trapped in Afghanistan, October 26, 2021.
2. MSN/Al Jazeera, *Afghanistan: Deadly blasts near military hospital in Kabul*, November 2, 2021.
3. Epstein, Jake, Business Insider, *Explosions and gunfire rocked a Kabul hospital in Afghanistan, leaving at least 15 people dead*, November 2, 2021.

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World News

China continues to advance its military technology. Case in point, the communist giant launched a nuclear capable hypersonic missile into orbit [1]. The Chinese test reportedly caught the US off guard [2]. If true, this would suggest the US intelligence capability on Chinese activities is waning. Moreover, China's 355 ship navy is the largest on Earth [3].

One advantage of having a monopoly is price control. For instance, China has near control of the magnesi-

um industry and is now driving the cost skyward [4]. This comes as China's total trade surplus was \$84.54 billion in October [5].

One aspect of China's military expansion is how ill-informed the Western Media project the threat. Case in point, one piece suggest China may get 1,000 nuclear warheads by the year 2030 [6]. However, how would the media know the number of warheads in China's inventory today?

Another aspect of Chinese journalism is news must be favorable to the communist

government. For example, journalist Zhang Zhan, who provided critical reporting on COVID-19, is reportedly near death in a Chinese prison [7].

1. Moore, Mark, New York Post, *China says new hypersonic missile a blow to US 'strategic superiority'*, October 17, 2021.
2. Makichuk, Dave, Asia Times, *Beijing's hypersonic feat stuns US intel chiefs*, October 18, 2021.

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Special points of interest:

- DJIA, S&P 500, and Nasdaq record highs
- 4.6% October Unemployment Rate
- 61.6 Labor Force Participation Rate

*He who tampers with the
currency robs labor of its
bread.—Daniel Webster*

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3. Shelbourne, Mallory, USNI, *China Has World's Largest Navy With 355 Ships and Counting, Says Pentagon*, November 3, 2021.
4. Ma, Jess, and Tan, Su-Lin, South China Morning Post, *China's power crisis sends magnesium prices skyward, choking supply chain and leaving Europe desperate*, October 28,

(Continued from page 1)

4. CBS News, *Taliban blames ISIS-K for deadly attack on hospital in Afghanistan's capital*, November 2, 2021.
5. Stars and Stripes/AP, *Roadside bomb targets Taliban, kills 2 in Afghanistan ISIS hub*, November 3, 2021.
6. Reuters, *Taliban wants peaceful transition of power in days*, August 15, 2021.
7. Turak, Natasha, CNBC, *Taliban's pledge of peaceful leadership is quickly coming undone amid reports of beatings, deaths*, August 19, 2021.
8. McFall, Caitlin, Fox News, *Taliban to reward suicide bombers' families with cash, land*, October 19, 2021.
9. Shah, Saeed, Wall Street Journal, *Taliban Commander Who Launched Bombings in Kabul Is Now a Police Chief in Charge of Security*, October 20, 2021.
10. Brown, Lee, New York

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- 2021.
5. Lee, Amanda, South China Morning Post, *China trade: export growth above expectations in October*, November 7, 2021.
6. Martinez, Luis, and Seyler, Matt, ABC News, *China could have 1,000 nuclear warheads by 2030: Pentagon*, November 3, 2021.
7. Shoaib, Alia, Business Insider, *Chinese journalist*

imprisoned for her groundbreaking coverage of the Wuhan COVID-19 pandemic is 'close to death,' reports say, November 6, 2021

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- Post, *Taliban beheaded female volleyball player, posted photos online, coach says*, October 21, 2021.
11. Steinbuch, Yaron, New York Post, *Three shot dead at Afghanistan wedding reception over music being played*, November 2, 2021.
12. AFP, *Four women, including activist, killed in northern Afghanistan*, November 6, 2021.
13. Klein, Melissa, New York Post, *Al-Qaeda to women: be traditional, not a feminist*, November 6, 2021.

Terrorism

Terrorism is not limited to actual attacks but includes threat of violence. Case in point, malls and shopping centers in the Northern Virginia are were put on alert for an expected ISIS attack [1].

Unfortunately, the US infrastructure is vulnerable to terrorist attacks. For example, information has been revealed that back in July, 2020, there was an attempted drone attack against a Pennsylvania substation [2]. The drone was devoid of markings and contained two copper attached 4-foot nylon ropes that appear to be designed to short circuit power lines [3].

Afghanistan is not the only center for ongoing terrorism.

For instance, in an area (southwest Niger) overrun by an affiliate of the Islamic State (IS), gunmen killed at least 69 people [4]. A 27-year-old Syrian man was arrested in Seubersdorf, Germany, for allegedly stabbing three people on a train [5]. A bombing near the entrance of Yemen's Aden airport killed at least six people [5].

1. Barr, Luke, and Date, Jack, KABC, *Police identify potential ISIS-linked threat to Virginia shoppers; increase presence at malls*, October 30, 2021.
2. ABC News, *Intelligence bulletin reveals plot against U.S. electrical grid using drone*, November 3, 2021.

3. Wired, *A Drone Tried to Disrupt the Power Grid. It Won't Be the Last*, November 5, 2021.
4. Lonas, Lexi, *The Hill, Dozens killed in Niger attack*, November 4, 2021.
5. AP, *Knife attack on German train severely injures 3 people*, November 6, 2021.
6. Reuters, *Explosion near Yemen's Aden airport kills at least six – sources*, October 30, 2021.

*Gentlemen, when the
enemy is committed to a
mistake we must not
interrupt him too soon.—*

Horatio Nelson

Economy

The stock market indexes continue to set record highs. On October 21, the S&P 500 closed at a new record high [1]. Then, on October 22, the Dow Jones Industrial Average (Dow) closed at a new record high [2]. On October 25, both the S&P 500 and the Dow set new record highs [3]. Then again on October 26, the Dow and S&P 500 hit new record highs [4]. On October 21, both the Nasdaq and S&P 500 closed at new record highs [5]. Then on October 28, all three indexes closed at record highs [6]. November 1 started with the three indexes again setting new record highs [7]. The three indexes continued setting records on November 2 with the DJIA ending above 36,000 for the first time [8]. The three indexes continued record closes on November 3 [9]. On November 4, the DJIA paused but the S&P 500 and Nasdaq closed at record highs [10]. On the last trading day of this newsletter (November 5) the three indexes again closed at record highs [11].

Disappointing economic growth. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at a 2.0% annual rate for the third quarter [12]. That is, the GDP only grew by 0.5% during the quarter. However, the unemployment rate for October fell to 4.6% and the labor force participation rate unchanged at 61.6% [13].

For the week ending October 16, the number of first-time unemployment claims, reported by the Department of Labor, was 290,000 [14]. For the week ending October 23, the

number reported was 281,000 [15]. Finally, for the week ending October 30, the number reported was 269,000 [16].

1. Sanyal, Shreyashi, et. al., Reuters, *S&P 500 climbs to record closing high; IBM weighs on the Dow*, October 21, 2021.
2. Valetkevitch, Caroline, Reuters, *Dow posts record closing high, stocks gain for 3rd week; dollar dips*, October 22, 2021.
3. McCormick, Emily, Yahoo Finance, *Stock market news live updates: S&P 500, Dow set record highs ahead of Big Tech earnings*, October 25, 2021.
4. Decambre, Mark, MarketWatch, *Dow, S&P 500 book back-to-back record closes but stock market's gains fade in Tuesday's final minutes*, October 26, 2021.
5. Denton, Jack, and Sonenshine, Jacob, Barron's, *S&P 500, Nasdaq Hit Record Highs. Growth Worries Boosted Tech Stocks*, October 28, 2021.
6. Garber, Jonathan, FOX Business, *Stocks hit records to wrap winning October*, October 29, 2021.
7. Denton, Jack, and Sonenshine, Jacob, Barron's, *The Dow Rises to a Record High—and What Else Is Happening in the Stock Market Today*, November 1, 2021.
8. Watts, William, MarketWatch, *Dow closes above 36,000 for first time as investors await Fed decision*, November 2, 2021.
9. Klebnikov, Sergei, Forbes, *Stocks Hit Fresh Records After Fed Says It Will Taper Pandemic Stimulus*, November 3, 2021.
10. McEnery, Thornton, MarketWatch, *S&P 500, Nasdaq close at fresh records, supported by Fed's patient stance*, November 4, 2021.
11. Watts, William, MarketWatch, *Major stock indexes end at records after strong jobs report*, November 5, 2021.
12. Cox, Jeff, CNBC, *Economic growth rate slows to 2% on a sharp slowdown in consumer spending*, October 28, 2021.
13. Mutikani, Lucia, Reuters, *Strong U.S. payrolls brighten economic outlook; millions still missing from workforce*, November 5, 2021.
14. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, October 21, 2021.
15. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, October 28, 2021.
16. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, November 4, 2021.

The problem with socialism is that you eventually run out of other peoples' money.—Margaret Thatcher
