

Afghanistan

Some potential terrorists may be emboldened by the perception that the US surrendered to the Afghan Taliban. For example, on August 11, some reports were cautioning that the Taliban could take over Afghanistan within 90 days [1]. However, on August 15, the Taliban entered the Afghan capital and the US evacuated its embassy [2]. This came after the US, over the past two decades, provided \$84 billion in training and weapons for the Afghan military [3]. It should be noted, that while the Taliban control most of Afghanistan, there remain pockets of resistance [4].

Following their victory, the Taliban promised to provide security around the Kabul airport [5]. However, President Biden warned of a potential attack by the ISIS-K terrorist group [6]. We then learned the head of the CIA met with the Taliban leader to discuss the evacuation of people through the airport [7]. Next came news on August 26 of a suicide attack at the airport [8]. Later, reports indicated at least 12 US military servicemen were killed (later revised to 13) in the attacks [9]. President Biden blamed ISIS-K [10]. Later ISIS-K did claim responsibility for the attack [11].

The terrorism fallout is not confined to Afghanistan. Case in point, the Taliban in Pakistan has ramped up terrorist attacks in Pakistan [12]. Then there was a ISIS inspired terrorist attack in New Zealand where the attacker used a knife to wound six people [13]. As it turned out, that terrorist was released from prison two months before the attack [14].

Globally, the role of China and the Taliban is likely to strengthen. For instance, China is keeping its embassy in Kabul open [15]. Additionally, the Taliban indicated their support for China's belt and road initiative; referring to the communist giant as a trustworthy friend [16]. In summary, by one assessment, China appears to be the strategic winner of the Taliban victory in Afghanistan [17].

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World News

The threats from China to conquer Taiwan are causing concerns in Asia. For instance, Japan and Taiwan planned to hold security talks [1]. Additionally, Japan is preparing for possible conflict [2]. China also sent bombers into Taiwan's air space [3]. Meanwhile, China is testing new missiles that appear designed for invading Taiwan [4]. This comes as a senior US military official warned that China will soon surpass Russia as the greatest nuclear weapons threat [5]. China continues to assert

its power over contested waters. For example, China passed a new maritime law requiring Chinese pilots to board various types of foreign vessels traveling through Chinese claimed waters [6].

Former senator, John Kerry, went to China in the hope of getting a commitment on climate change. Unfortunately, China indicated it will follow its own plan [7]. However, China did indicate that world powers must take responsibility for the environment [8].

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Special points of interest:

- 13 US Servicemen Killed
- Taliban now control Afghanistan
- Stock indexes record highs

World News

(Continued from page 1)

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Afghanistan

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The quickest way of
ending a war is to lose it—
George Orwell

Terrorism

One of the main reasons for the US involvement in Afghanistan was to counter al Qaeda terrorists. Now that the Taliban has assumed control of the country, its members have emptied prisons. One release includes al Qaeda and Islamic State (IS) terrorists [1].

Pakistan borders Afghanistan and is another hotbed for terrorists. For example, 12 people were killed in a grenade attack in the southern part of Pakistan [2]. Then at least three people were killed during a bombing of a Shiite procession [3].

In Burkina Faso, Africa, Islamic militants attacked a convoy, killing dozens of people [4]. Elsewhere, an Al Shabaab Islamist terrorist killed four people in Tanzania's main city Dar es Salaam [5].

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*Yesterday is not ours to
recover, but tomorrow is
ours to win or lose—Lyndon
B. Johnson*

Economy

On the first trading day of this newsletter, both the Dow and S&P 500 stock indexes set new record highs [1]. The Nasdaq and S&P 500 hit new record highs on August 23 [2]. Fresh record high closes were seen again on August 24 [3]. Then again, on August 25, the S&P 500 and Nasdaq composite hit new record highs [4]. The two indexes continued record closes on August 27 [5]. The Nasdaq Composite again closed at a new record high on September 1 [6]. On the final trading day of this newsletter (September 3), the Nasdaq again closed at a record high [7].

The unemployment numbers show some improvement. The unemployment rate fell from 5.4% to 5.2% [8]. For the week ending August 14, the number of first-time unemployment claims was 348,000 [9]. For the week ending August 21, the number reported was 353,000 [10]. Finally, for the week ending August 28, the number reported was 340,000 [11].

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7. McCormick, Emily, Yahoo Finance, *Stock market news live updates: Stocks mixed, Nasdaq sets record close after August payrolls disappoint*, September 3, 2021.
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11. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, September 2, 2021.

As for the United States' future in Afghanistan, it will be fire and hell and total defeat, God willing, as it was for their predecessors - the Soviets and, before them, the British.—Mohammed Omar
