



# How To Lose a War

*The Story of America's Intervention in Afghanistan*

Amin Saikal

In 1958, Richard Nixon described Afghanistan as 'unconquerable'. On 15th August 2021, he was proven right.

After twenty years of intervention, US and NATO forces retreated, enabling the Taliban to return to power. Tens of thousands were killed in the long, unwinnable war, and millions more were displaced – leaving the future of Afghanistan hanging in the balance.

Leading expert Amin Saikal traces the full story of America's intervention, from 9/11 to the present crisis. After an initial swift military strike, the US became embroiled in a drawn-out struggle to change Afghanistan but failed to achieve its aims. Saikal shows how this failure was underlined by protracted attempts to capture Osama bin Laden, an inability to secure a viable government via "democracy promotion" efforts, and lack of wider strategy in the "war on terror".

*How to Lose a War* offers an insightful account of one of the US's most significant foreign policy failures – and considers its dire consequences for the people of Afghanistan.

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**Amin Saikal** is emeritus professor and founding director of the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies at the Australian National University, and adjunct professor at the University of Western Australia. He is an Afghanistan and Middle East specialist, and author of *Iran Rising*, *Zone of Crisis* and *Modern Afghanistan*.

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