

# Lessons Not Learned from History Can Kill You. How the US Dumps Its Allies

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

*The Kurds in Northern Syria have been abandoned by the United States military and left to the mercy/mercilessness of the invading Turks.*

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This is what's happening in N. Syria now. Most stable part of the country is being ruined. These armed groups are executing people on M4 Highway earlier today [pic.twitter.com/kw7s29NvIW](https://pic.twitter.com/kw7s29NvIW)

— Mutlu Civiroglu (@mutludc) [October 12, 2019](#)

Is it a surprise?

Tibet expert Thomas Laird tells of an old Tibetan guerrilla who had supplied intelligence about Chinese atomic testing that was, according to CIA sources, “dollar for dollar, some of the most valuable intelligence of the Cold War.” [1] Yet, according to Laird, the guerrilla cum-invaluable intelligence asset was subsequently left to languish in poverty and anonymity.

In the 1960s, the CIA promised the Tibetan guerrillas that the United States wanted to help expel the Chinese from Tibet. However, in the 1970s, support to the Tibetan guerrillas was suddenly cut off. [2]

The result was hundreds of guerrillas killed, left-behind American ordnance killed children, and former allies were left in poverty.

It is not an unusual story of the US abandoning an ally. South Vietnam was quickly left to fend for itself as Americans scurried to rooftops and clambered onto helicopters to escape. [3]

There is also the little known history of Korea which shared an enemy with the US during WWII: imperialist Japan. At the war's end, the general of the defeated Japanese, Abe Endo, surrendered the reins of self-government to Yo Un Hyung, a politician well regarded in both the south and north of Korea. Yo participated in the forming of People's Committees in all

Korean provinces and the Korean People's Republic arose. However, Japanese general Kozuki Yoshio convinced his American counterpart, general John Hodge, that the new government in Korea was communist. Consequently, the communist-phobic US abolished the government of the Korean People's Republic, and the United States Army Military Government was installed in the south of a truncated Korea. [4]

The abandonment of the Kurds is not a phenomenon attributable solely to president Donald Trump.

The US should never have been there in Syria in the first place. The Syrian government never granted the US permission to enter sovereign Syrian territory. Syrian president Bashar al-Assad had [made it known](#),

“Any foreign troops coming to Syria without our invitation or consultation or permission, they are invaders, whether they are American, Turkish, or any other one.”

The Kurds — vulnerable, desperate, and longing as they may be for sovereignty over claimed lands — decided to align with the US. Still, this begs the question: given the history of the US abandoning erstwhile allies, why would anyone trust the US to uphold its end of an alliance?

Consider whence Americans came to be. Were they not originally Europeans, for the most part ex-pat Brits, who fought against their mother country for greater control over their own affairs in the 13 colonies? And how was it that the 13 colonies transformed into a continent-wide 50 states? Wars of extermination against the Indigenous peoples, broken treaties, war with Mexico, the annexation of Hawai'i, the enslavement of Africans — what sort of national psyche would be expected to emerge from such a historiography? [5] The US Establishment seeks to depict the US as a beacon on the hill, an indispensable nation, and the land of the free. Yet the beacon's light illuminates an undeniable history of genocide, [6] unremitting racism, unremitting wars, and class war on its own citizenry.

Now, the Kurds have set aside any possible concerns about losing face and asked the [Syrian government to intervene](#).

The lesson: beware of forging alliances with dubious allies.

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Notes

1. Thomas Laird, *Into Tibet: The CIA's First Atomic Spy and His Secret Expedition to Lhasa*, location 160.
2. Laird, loc. 163.

3. See Earl Tilford, "[Abandoning Vietnam: How America Left and South Vietnam Lost Its War \(Book Review\)](#)," *HistoryNet*.

4. Young Park, *Korea and the Imperialists: In Search of a National Identity*, (AuthorHouse, 2009): 188-192.

5. The historical list of US acquired "possessions" is much longer and includes Puerto Rico, Guam, and Philippines from the US-Spanish War, the Canal Zone in Panama, and several Pacific Ocean islands, and the military occupation of the ethnically cleansed Chagos archipelago.

6. "Somehow, even 'genocide' seems an inadequate description for what happened, yet rather than viewing it with horror, most Americans have conceived of it as their country's manifest destiny." Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, (Beacon Press, 2014): 79. [Review](#).

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