

VFW Expresses Condolences, Frustration Over Operations in Afghanistan

The following is a message from VFW National Commander Fritz Mihelcic

Aug 26, 2021

On behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, we are saddened and angered at hearing the news of the tragic loss of American and Afghan lives in the cowardly attack outside of Kabul airport today. So far, twelve U.S. service members died and fifteen were wounded standing up for one of the most fundamental principles of our military - 'leave no one behind.' They were deployed with the urgent mission of bringing home American citizens and offering safe passage to our Afghan allies in one of the most dangerous areas on earth, during one of the largest evacuations in human history. We honor the sacrifices of our comrades and send our prayers and condolences to the Gold Star families and the Afghan families alike grieving their loved ones lost in this reprehensible act of terrorism.

While we have all watched the collapse of Afghanistan in bewilderment, we can no longer hold back our frustrations over the dire situation our U.S. service members, U.S. citizens, Afghan and NATO allies are currently in. How is it that we placed our trust, the security of our operations and the lives of our nation's sons and daughters in the hands of the violent extremists we have been fighting against for the past twenty years? It is understandable an evacuation of this magnitude, under these circumstances, on this timeline would have some significant challenges, but this cannot be what right looks like.

We firmly believe in leaving the politics to the politicians, but the time for Congress to act, and act decisively, is now. We demand Congress follow through with investigating what led us to this point and bring forth swift answers to the public. We deserve to know, and our

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leaders owe those answers not only to the American people who elected them to office, but also to the families who are searching for some solace as they mourn the flag-draped coffins returning from Afghanistan.

To our brave men and women, thank you for everything you are doing on behalf of our nation. Continue to look out for one another and stay focused on your mission. We have your backs here at home.