

Book Review

CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR: THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF THE LARGEST COVERT OPERATION IN HISTORY¹

REVIEWED BY MAJOR ERIC D. MAGNELL²

*If there is a single man who has played a part [in the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan] that shall be recorded in history in golden letters, it is that right honorable congressman, Charles Wilson.*³

The U.S. media has largely overlooked the extent to which the unlikely partnership of U.S. Congressman Charlie Wilson and CIA agent Gust Avrakotos forced a reluctant U.S. administration to support the Afghan insurgency against the Soviet Union in the 1980s. In *Charlie Wilson's War*, George Crile provides an overdue and exciting narrative history of that support and attempts to explain how the largest CIA operation in history unwittingly led to the attacks of September 11, 2001.⁴

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan on Christmas Eve, 1979.⁵ The Soviets had decided that the communist government in Kabul was incapable of overcoming the mounting Afghan tribal insurgency, and that direct intervention was required to secure the Soviet Union's southern border.⁶ Over the next ten years, the Soviet Red Army would lose almost 28,000 soldiers while fighting the Muslim "holy warriors," known as mujahideen.⁷ By 1988 the Soviets recognized the futility of their efforts to subdue the Afghan tribal insurgency and withdrew from Afghanistan in disgrace and despair.⁸

Crile proclaims this book to be "the missing chapter in the politics of our time, a rousing good story that is also a cautionary tale" of unintended consequences.⁹ Throughout the book the author presents and supports three arguments: (1) without massive U.S. aid, the Afghan mujahideen would have been defeated by the Soviet Red Army; (2) this substantial U.S. assistance would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of Charlie Wilson and his friend Gust Avrakotos; and (3) after the Soviet threat ended, the U.S. government ignored the now heavily-armed and largely fundamentalist Muslim mujahideen while the Afghans provided support and sanctuary for the growing Al Qaeda organization directly responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

The author's extensive first-hand sources and engaging prose successfully entertain and inform the reader. Crile's depiction of Wilson and Avrakotos's adventures in Afghanistan seems ready made for a movie script and could be mistaken for a spy thriller if the reader was not reminded so often that it was a true story. Unfortunately, however, the narrative lacks substantial analysis that could provide real lessons learned on how to prevent or respond to similar situations in the future. This absence of useful criticism and analysis diminishes the book's impact as a "cautionary tale."

A Rousing Good Story

George Crile is particularly well qualified to provide this missing chapter of American history. While a producer for the CBS news show *60 Minutes*, Crile covered the Afghan conflict and made multiple trips to the Middle East with Wilson

¹ GEORGE CRILE, *CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR: THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF THE LARGEST COVERT OPERATION IN HISTORY* (2003).

² U.S. Army. Written while assigned as a student, 55th Judge Advocate Officer Graduate Course, The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, U.S. Army, Charlottesville, Va.

³ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 498 (quoting Pakistani president Zia ul-Haq's statement to Harry Reasoner during an interview for *60 Minutes*. *60 Minutes: Charlie Did It* (CBS television broadcast July 30, 1991)).

⁴ CRILE, *supra* note 1.

⁵ JOSEPH J. COLLINS, *THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN: A STUDY IN THE USE OF FORCE IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY* 77 (1986).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at iv.

⁸ *Id.* at ix.

⁹ *Id.* at x.

and Avrakotos.¹⁰ He accompanied Wilson into Afghanistan in 1988 and produced a *60 Minutes* story about Wilson's involvement and responsibility for the Soviet defeat.¹¹ Rather than slowing the narrative down by including large amounts of historical research and analysis, the author based the book almost entirely on interviews with the individuals involved in the events. In his source notes, Crile recognizes over 150 people who provided information for the book, but references no documents or papers.¹² His relationships with the key players in the story provide him with an intimate perspective that allows him to tie the unique characters and disparate events into a narrative whole. The result is a compelling story that flows easily and is incredibly entertaining.

The book's anti-hero is Charlie Wilson, a congressman who would probably not survive more than one term in the current polarized political environment. A Democrat from a Bible-belt district in eastern Texas, Wilson staunchly supported liberal social causes¹³ while at the same time advocating a hard-line anti-communist foreign policy.¹⁴ Apart from his political beliefs, Wilson was well-known in Congress as a womanizing alcoholic whose playboy lifestyle and partying habits earned him the nickname, "Good-Time Charlie" from Washington gossip columnists.¹⁵

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Wilson wielded influence over the budgets of all of the executive agencies.¹⁶ As a member of the Defense Appropriations sub-committee, Wilson traveled all over the world at the government's expense on "fact-finding" visits to countries receiving U.S. defense aid.¹⁷ Wilson became a supporter of the Afghan mujahideen after visiting Pakistan on one of these official trips in the fall of 1982.¹⁸ The Pakistanis took Wilson to Peshawar in northwest Pakistan, which served as the staging area and base for the Afghan mujahideen leadership.¹⁹ Wilson met the mujahideen leaders and was so impressed with their strength of will and conviction to defeat the Soviets that he immediately promised them that he would provide as much assistance as he could.²⁰ Wilson was also driven by an intense hatred of the Soviets for what he perceived as their role in the U.S. defeat in Vietnam.²¹ He returned from Pakistan and immediately set out to determine what the administration was doing to support the mujahideen and what he could do to increase that support.²² As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Wilson was able to ensure that the mujahideen received enough support from other legislators so long as he was willing to support their own pet projects.²³ Wilson also appealed to his fellow Congressmen's sense of honor and morality by repeatedly referring to Afghanistan as the one morally unambiguous cause that the United States had supported since World War II.²⁴ Congress appropriated increasing amounts of money for the CIA to use specifically for the mujahideen²⁵ pursuant to Wilson's requests. These

¹⁰ *Id.* at 525.

¹¹ *Id.* at 509.

¹² *Id.* at 525–31.

¹³ *Id.* at 28 (including abortion rights, the Equal Rights Amendment, Medicaid, and a minimum-wage bill).

¹⁴ *Id.* at 34.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 12.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 77 (stating that the House Appropriations Committee had fifty members and that "[t]he committee's power is so great that its twelve subcommittee chairmen are known collectively as the 'College of Cardinals'").

¹⁷ *Id.* at 97, 188–93 (stating that these so called fact-finding missions were often referred to as "junkets" and Crile explains that Wilson considered them one of the best perquisites for a member of the House of Representatives because they involved, in Crile's words, "first-class, all-expenses-paid trips to exotic places, where the American embassy and the host government treated him like visiting royalty.").

¹⁸ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 114. See also DIEGO CORDOVEZ & SELIG S. HARRISON, *OUT OF AFGHANISTAN: THE INSIDE STORY OF SOVIET WITHDRAWAL* 156 (1995).

¹⁹ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 110.

²⁰ *Id.* at 111.

²¹ MOHAMMAD YOUSAF & MARK ADKIN, *THE BEAR TRAP: AFGHANISTAN'S UNTOLD STORY* 63 (1992).

²² CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 133–35.

²³ *Id.* at 214–15.

²⁴ *Id.* at 513.

²⁵ CORDOVEZ & HARRISON, *supra* note 18, at 157 ("Wilson literally forced the CIA to expand the Afghan program The \$30 million that had initially been requested by the CIA shot up to \$120 million [in 1984] . . . \$250 million in 1985, \$470 million in 1986, and \$630 million in 1987.").

appropriations were granted despite the fact that the CIA did not ask for, or want, the money and the administration was openly hostile to supporting the mujahideen.²⁶ Wilson's desire to exact revenge from the Soviets for Vietnam drove him to become the primary advocate for the Afghans in Congress, but to be effective, Wilson needed an ally within the executive branch. Wilson needed strong relationships with Afghan supporters within the CIA to effectively use the monies he continued to appropriate.

Gust Avrakotos was a "blue collar" CIA agent who, through hard work and a tough attitude, had worked his way into the upper echelons of the CIA despite lacking the Ivy League pedigree usually considered essential for advancement within the Agency.²⁷ Crile's admiration for Avrakotos is clear throughout the book, and it is apparent that Avrakotos is the kind of agent Crile believes the CIA should have more of. As Chief of the CIA's South Asia Operations Group,²⁸ which included Afghanistan, Wilson needed Avrakotos's help to make Congress' monetary support for the mujahideen translate into real progress; and Avrakotos needed Wilson to keep the money flowing.²⁹ It was Wilson's rough demeanor that immediately attracted Avrakotos and Crile explains that it was Wilson's "James Bond Syndrome" that drew the two together.³⁰ Avrakotos was a strong anti-communist who believed the Soviet presence had to be challenged on the ground wherever they were active, especially in Afghanistan.³¹ In the early 1980s, the CIA leadership focused the agency's efforts on providing assistance to the anti-communist rebels who were fighting the communist government in Nicaragua.³² The general consensus within the CIA was that the Afghan mujahideen were incapable of defeating the Soviets and that their insurgency would fail in the face of brutal Soviet air attacks.³³ Despite this analysis, when Avrakotos was put in charge of the CIA's Afghan program he became determined to do everything possible to ensure the mujahideen had what they needed to end the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.³⁴ Although the CIA had discouraged funding increases for the Afghan insurgency,³⁵ Avrakotos eagerly accepted all the money Wilson was able to appropriate and Wilson relied on Avrakotos to tell him exactly what the Afghans needed to defeat the Soviets.³⁶

Avrakotos' close relationship with Charlie Wilson violated CIA rules against direct contact with congressmen,³⁷ as well as federal statutes against direct lobbying by government agencies.³⁸ This illicit cooperation between a legislator and an executive agent enabled Wilson to dramatically increase congressional support for the mujahideen.³⁹ As Crile describes the unlikely series of events that led to full U.S. involvement with the mujahideen, it becomes apparent that what was most important to the success of the Wilson and Avrakotos' conspiracy was their willingness to "buck" the system by circumventing, ignoring, or simply running roughshod over bureaucratic and legal obstacles.⁴⁰ For Avrakotos, the law, and

²⁶ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 216.

²⁷ *Id.* at 49.

²⁸ *Id.* at 157.

²⁹ *Id.* at 256–60.

³⁰ *Id.* at 32. Crile quotes Avrakotos as explaining the crude but strong bond he shared with Wilson, "As I saw it, the tie that bound us together was chasing pussy and killing Communists." *Id.*

³¹ *Id.* at 58.

³² CORDOVEZ & HARRISON, *supra* note 18, at 158 (quoting Wilson during an interview with the author, "Casey was not against [funding the Afghanistan program]. . . . He liked the Afghan program, and he hated the Russians, but he didn't believe at that stage that the Afghans could win. His heart was in Nicaragua, and he was preoccupied with the mining of the harbors and the contras.").

³³ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 123.

³⁴ *Id.* at 256–60.

³⁵ *Id.* at 135.

³⁶ *Id.* at 261.

³⁷ *Id.* at 259.

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ *Id.* at 271.

⁴⁰ *Id.* at 167.

the CIA lawyers who intended to enforce it, were part of the problem.⁴¹ Without this close relationship between two maverick spirits, the institutional inertia and bureaucracy of the executive branch would have successfully stifled support for the mujahideen.

Crile depicts both Wilson and Avrakotos as courageous anti-heroes who ensure the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan by personally overcoming bureaucratic obstacles and accomplishing the tasks they perceive as necessary regardless of legal or moral consequences.⁴² However, the somewhat distorted sense of honor and integrity displayed by Wilson and Avrakotos should serve as a warning to judge advocates about the risks of ignoring laws and regulations in order to achieve a “greater good.” Wilson and Avrakotos used whatever means possible to achieve their goal of defeating the Soviets in Afghanistan and Crile seeks to explain how these actions inadvertently lead to the rise of the Taliban and Al Qaeda and, eventually, to the September 11 attacks.⁴³

While the author provides an exceptionally rich and exciting narrative, his approach does not elicit lessons learned because he fails to incorporate a critical analysis of events. First-hand accounts of events rarely depict the storyteller in a bad light. Charlie Wilson readily told Crile about the bad decisions he made in his personal life,⁴⁴ but not once does Crile criticize, or even question, Wilson’s willingness to violate regulations and break federal law to support the mujahideen.⁴⁵ The author explains that “the core interviews [for this book] were conducted in the enchanted light of a Cold War fairy tale come true during the early 1990s.”⁴⁶ Perhaps it is this “enchanted light” that causes Crile to ignore the legal and moral issues of Wilson’s and Avrakotos’ excesses, but, blinded in this way, he becomes an apologist for those who believe that the ends justify the means.

A Missing Chapter in the Politics of Our Time

Charlie Wilson’s War raises relevant and timely questions about the system of checks and balances within the U.S. government, as well as the professional ethics of elected officials and the role of the media in political debates.⁴⁷ Crile exposes a world of power politics that may appear alien to idealists who believe, or hope, that elected politicians will pursue the best interests of their country and constituents while adhering to ethical and legal standards.

Although conduct of foreign affairs has traditionally belonged to the executive branch of the U.S. government, the Constitution gives Congress very specific foreign affairs authority.⁴⁸ Disputes between Congress and the President concerning the extent and balance of their relative foreign affairs powers have generally concerned executive encroachment on what Congress considers its areas of authority.⁴⁹ The Constitution gives Congress several foreign affairs roles, most directly in authority to declare war and issue letters of marque and reprisal, but also in the Senate’s treaty-making powers.⁵⁰ The House of Representatives has no direct role in the day-to-day conduct of foreign affairs. Alexander Hamilton, in *The Federalist Number 75*, explained that the Constitution intentionally gives the House no direct foreign affairs role.⁵¹ Despite

⁴¹ *Id.* at 166–68.

⁴² CRILE, *supra* note 1.

⁴³ *Id.* at 519–23.

⁴⁴ *Id.* at 136 (describing the events in a Las Vegas hotel room that would lead to his investigation for cocaine use); *id.* at 184 (describing Wilson’s hit and run accident).

⁴⁵ *Id.* at 6 (noting that both Wilson and Avrakotos acknowledge they eagerly broke the rules to achieve their goal of defeating the Soviets).

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 525.

⁴⁷ CRILE, *supra* note 1.

⁴⁸ LAURENCE H. TRIBE, *AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW* § 4-2 (1988); *see also* LOUIS HENKIN, *FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE US CONSTITUTION* 24 (1972).

⁴⁹ *See* *United States v. Curtiss-Wright Export Corporation*, 299 U.S. 304 (1936); *see also* PETER IRONS, *WAR POWERS: HOW THE IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY HIJACKED THE CONSTITUTION* (2005), LOUIS FISHER, *PRESIDENTIAL WAR POWER* (2004).

⁵⁰ U.S. CONST. art. 2, § 2, cl. 2; *see also* THE AMERICAN LAW INSTITUTE, *RESTATEMENT OF THE LAW (THIRD): THE FOREIGN RELATIONS LAW OF THE UNITED STATES* vol. 1, ch. 2, § 312, cmt. j, at 175 (1986).

⁵¹ THE FEDERALIST NO. 75 (Alexander Hamilton) (Gary Wills ed., 1982) (Hamilton writes, “Accurate and comprehensive knowledge of foreign politics; a steady and systematic adherence to the same views; a nice and uniform sensibility to national character; decision, SECRECY, and despatch[sic], are incompatible with the genius of a body so variable and so numerous.”).

this lack of constitutional authority, Charlie Wilson used his position on the House Appropriations Committee not only to dictate to the CIA how they should provide support to the Afghan mujahideen,⁵² but also to conduct secret negotiations with Egypt,⁵³ Israel,⁵⁴ and Pakistan.⁵⁵ As a congressman, Wilson used the “power of the purse” to set U.S. foreign policy with respect to Afghanistan, violating the spirit, if not the letter, of the law.⁵⁶

The House of Representatives’ only constitutional role in foreign affairs is to appropriate or withhold funds and to provide oversight of executive branch activities.⁵⁷ However, in *Charlie Wilson’s War*, Crile poses the question of when does congressional oversight become congressional interference in an executive branch function. Should the executive branch always have the primary role in determining U.S. foreign policy even if it is sometimes inefficient and mired in bureaucracy? Or should U.S. foreign policy be dictated by the maxim “[t]hem that has the gold makes the rules” that hung prominently in the House Appropriations Committee room?⁵⁸ The appropriations to support the Afghan mujahideen marked the first time in the U.S. Foreign Policy arena that Congress did more than simply approve or dispute the amount of money the government requested for a foreign policy agenda. It was unprecedented for Charlie Wilson to actually throw money at a reluctant CIA in order to expand a covert operation.⁵⁹ Likewise, the extent to which the U.S. media allowed the CIA to operate unquestioned in Afghanistan was unheard of at a time when the CIA was under intense scrutiny for its activities in Central America.

In describing the media at the time, Crile states, “one of the great mysteries of this entire history [is] that virtually no one in the press . . . seemed to care that the CIA was running the biggest operation in its history”⁶⁰ Crile is correct that the true story of the massive U.S. involvement in the Afghan war went largely unnoticed in the American press. However, the entire story was reported at different times by various sources, and the complete picture could have been pieced together if an enterprising journalist ever decided to do so. A 1985 Washington Post article by Bob Woodward sets forth Wilson’s role in repeatedly increasing military assistance to the mujahideen, as well as his efforts to purchase expensive Swiss anti-aircraft weapons to help them defend against Soviet helicopters.⁶¹ But, in contrast to stories about the CIA involvement in arming the Nicaraguan Contras,⁶² the individual news reports did not generate any media fervor about the secret deals, and the story died. Crile cannot explain why the press failed to investigate the secret dealings behind the Afghan war the same way they delved into the U.S. role with the Nicaraguan Contras, but he suggests that Wilson’s and Avrakotos’s relative obscurity, as well as the media’s preoccupation with the Iran-Contra scandal, played a large part.⁶³

⁵² CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 127, 207, 217.

⁵³ *Id.* at 146.

⁵⁴ *Id.* at 142.

⁵⁵ *Id.* at 132.

⁵⁶ 18 U.S.C. § 953 (2000).

⁵⁷ U. S. CONST. art. I, § 7, cl. 1.

⁵⁸ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at 175.

⁵⁹ *Id.* at 214.

⁶⁰ *Id.* at 423.

⁶¹ See Bob Woodward & Charles R. Babcock, *U.S. Covert Aid to Afghans on the Rise: Rep. Wilson Spurs Drive for New Funds, Antiaircraft Cannon for the Insurgents*, WASH. POST, Jan. 13, 1985, at A1.

⁶² See, e.g., Hedrick Smith Washington, *Reagan Takes a Break from the Furor over Central America*, N.Y. TIMES, Apr. 22, 1984, at sec. 4, 1; Margaret Shapiro, *House Votes to Aid Contras: Turnabout Gives Major Boost to Reagan’s Nicaragua Policy*, WASH. POST, June 13, 1985, at A1; Richard Harwood, *Contras’ Private Pipeline Pumps at U.S. Behest: That Reagan Backs Shipments Is No Secret*, WASH. POST, Oct. 19, 1986, at A1; Dan Morgan & Walter Pincus, *CIA Tied to Contra Aid After Ban: Owen, North’s Latin Contact, Says Agency Gave Military Assistance*, WASH. POST, May 20, 1987, at A1.

⁶³ CRILE, *supra* note 1, at x (“If the campaign had different authors, men more associated with shaping foreign policy or waging wars, it might have surfaced earlier or been the subject of debate.”); *id.* at 467 (“Rarely can the government and the press handle more than one great scandal at a time.”).

A Cautionary Tale

While Crile introduces the book as a cautionary tale, it isn't until the epilogue that he attempts to draw lessons from Wilson's actions.⁶⁴ Here, Crile suggests that there were many early opportunities for the United States to recognize and stop the growing threat from militant Islam.⁶⁵ While he does not say it directly, throughout the epilogue Crile implies that the U.S. government erroneously remained focused on the threat from the Soviet Union and naively supported radical mujahideen under the theory that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."⁶⁶ After the Soviet withdrawal, the mujahideen credited Allah for their victory and promptly forgot about the billions of dollars in assistance that the infidels in the United States had sent them.⁶⁷ Crile suggests that U.S. support "set in motion the *spirit* of jihad and the belief in our surrogate soldiers that, having brought down one superpower, they could just as easily take on another."⁶⁸ The result, according to Crile, is the current Global War on Terror.⁶⁹

Perhaps no one in the U.S. government in the mid-1980s considered the mujahideen a genuine threat to U.S. interests. The CIA certainly did not,⁷⁰ even though the Agency had been warned as early as 1985 that they were supporting dangerously fundamental mujahideen leaders.⁷¹ Even if the CIA considered the mujahideen a credible threat to the United States, the Soviet Union posed a more pressing and immediate threat and the radical mujahideen were expedient and effective allies. The U.S. government could not foresee the rapid advances in globalization and technology that would allow an isolated group based in remote Afghanistan to spread a radical message around the world and then attack the very heart of the world's only remaining superpower.

Conclusion

Charlie Wilson's War fills a gap in our nation's recent history, but the reader should not expect more than an engaging narrative of action and drama. It is told from the point of view of the protagonist "anti-heroes" and as such implies approval of Wilson's and Avrakotos' actions. Crile assumes, just as Wilson and Avrakotos did, that supporting the mujahideen was the best course of action for the U.S. government to take. By refusing to criticize Wilson and Avrakotos, the author implicitly endorses their conduct, even turning them into unrecognized heroes.⁷² He seems to suggest that the country needs more rogue congressmen and maverick government agents who are willing to step outside the law to accomplish what they perceive to be the best interests of the country.

Unfortunately, any analysis seems somewhat disconnected from the narrative. Crile initially states that *Charlie Wilson's War* is a cautionary tale,⁷³ but he fails to explicitly caution against anything. If anything, his lesson is that U.S. decision-makers should be more careful about whom they choose as allies. He refuses to pass judgment on the events and the characters; this lessens the impact of his cautionary epilogue. The focus of the book is the narrative of Wilson and Avrakotos and readers are left to perform their own analysis on how the U.S. government should behave towards erstwhile allies and potential enemies.

⁶⁴ *Id.* at 507–23.

⁶⁵ *Id.* at 212, 520–21.

⁶⁶ *Id.* at 507–23.

⁶⁷ *Id.* at 521.

⁶⁸ *Id.* at 522.

⁶⁹ *Id.* at 507–23.

⁷⁰ *Id.* at 521.

⁷¹ *Id.* at 212.

⁷² *Id.* at 498 (quoting Pakistani President Zia ul-Haq's statement to Harry Reasoner during an interview for *60 Minutes*. *60 Minutes: Charley Did It* (CBS television broadcast July 30, 1991)).

⁷³ *Id.* at x.

Fifteen years in the making, by the time the 9/11 attacks occurred, Crile had completed the majority of the book and then, after the terrorist attacks, apparently decided to make the narrative more relevant to current events by drawing connections between U.S. support for the mujahideen and the growth of Al Qaeda.⁷⁴ This is obviously a last-minute change, reflected only in the introduction and the epilogue, and the book lacks the critical analysis suggesting what the United States could, or should, have done differently to prevent the September 11 attacks. Overall, this addition distracts the reader into looking for a message that is not present in the text, but does not detract excessively from the enjoyable main story.

If you are looking for a detailed history of the growth of Islamic terrorism, there are many other books that will provide more detailed analysis.⁷⁵ But for the reader that is interested in an enjoyable, thoroughly documented, and insightful history, and who waits to read the book before the movie is released, *Charlie Wilson's War* is difficult to pass up.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ *Id.* at 509–23.

⁷⁵ See, e.g., CHARLES W. KEGLEY, *THE NEW GLOBAL TERRORISM: CHARACTERISTICS, CAUSES, CONTROLS* (2002); LORETTA NAPOLEONI, *MODERN JIHAD: TRACING THE DOLLARS BEHIND THE TERROR NETWORKS* (2003); MARK A. GABRIEL, *ISLAM AND TERRORISM: WHAT THE QURAN REALLY TEACHES ABOUT CHRISTIANITY, VIOLENCE AND THE GOALS OF THE ISLAMIC JIHAD* (2002); RAY TAKEYH & NIKOLAS K. GVOSDEV, *THE RECEDING SHADOW OF THE PROPHET: THE RISE AND FALL OF RADICAL POLITICAL ISLAM* (2004). An Amazon.com search on 4 Oct. 2007 listed over 1600 books specifically dealing with the causes of terrorism.

⁷⁶ It is a story that lends itself to dramatization and Hollywood has seen fit to turn it into a motion picture. The movie, starring Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts, is scheduled for release on 25 December 2007.