



Dirty Diplomacy: The Rough and Tumble Adventures of a Scotch Drinking, Skirt Chasing, Dictator Busting and Thoroughly Unrepentant Ambassador Stuck on the Frontline of the War Against Terror

Craig Murray

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With all the pace and drama of a political thriller, "Dirty Diplomacy" is a riveting account of a young, fast-living ambassador's battle against a ruthless dictatorship in Central Asia and the craven political expediency in Washington and London that eventually cost him his job. Craig Murray is no ordinary diplomat. He enjoys a drink or three, and if it's in the company of a pretty girl, so much the better. Murray's scant regard for the rules of the game also extends to his job. When, in the first few weeks of his posting to the little-known Central Asian Republic of Uzbekistan, he comes across photographs of a political dissident who has literally been boiled to death, he ignores diplomatic nicety and calls it for what it is: torture of the cruelest sort.

Murray soon discovers that this is no one-off incident: fierce abuse of those opposing the government is rife. It's not long before he is tearing around the country in his embassy Land Rover, shaking off Uzbek police tails and crashing through roadblocks to meet with dissidents and expose their persecutors. He even confronts the despotic president, Islom Karimov, face-to-face.

But Murray's bosses in London's Foreign Office, ever mindful of their senior partners in Washington, don't want to upset the applecart. Karimov is an ally in the newly announced Global War on Terror. His country is host to a big American air base. The last thing they need is a battling young diplomat stirring things up. In Craig Murray, that's exactly what they've got...

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Date : Published October 16th 2007 by Scribner

ISBN : 9781416548010

Author : Craig Murray

Format : Hardcover 368 pages

Genre : Autobiography, Memoir, Nonfiction, History, Cultural, Asia, Politics

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From Reader Review Dirty Diplomacy: The Rough and Tumble Adventures of a Scotch Drinking, Skirt Chasing, Dictator Busting and Thoroughly Unrepentant Ambassador Stuck on the Frontline of the War Against Terror for online ebook

Scotus says

an excellent example of someone who would not toe the government line - and paid dearly

Claire says

I found Murray much too crass, but this is something I was already suspecting from the title. He cites a few books I have read and enjoyed in his bibliography, but that doesn't redeem him enough.

If curious about Uzbekistan, British ambassadorship, and interacting with Muslims, here's a 2006 book on it, but it's not pretty.

Interzone says

Excellent read. It will be outdated soon though. Recommend for everyone concerned with Foreign Policy. Gives great info inside Islam Karimov's regime.

Johnathan says

Muito bom! Tem uma sequência e uma linguagem bem coloquial. Não fugiu do tema principal que foi da vida mais pessoal do profissional. Mas bem interessante.

Michael T. says

When you mention Uzbekistan to most educated people today they will know, at very least, that it has a horrible human rights record. That knowledge is due largely to the actions & advocacy of Craig Murray (the author of Dirty Diplomacy), the British ambassador to Uzbekistan between 2002 and 2004. Those dates are significant. The post 9-11 build up to the invasion of Iraq was underway when Ambassador Murray arrived at his new post in Tashkent. Britain had decided to back the Bush administrations plans, and majority Muslim nations willing to support those plans, like Uzbekistan, were key. The autocratic rule of Islam Karimov, whose security forces were known to torture detainees to death, sometimes by submerging them alive in boiling water, were deemed to be highly inconvenient to these plans. But Ambassador Murray would not turn a blind eye. And because, in an attempt to shame & silence him, many details of Murray's less than perfect personal life were used, what we get in his narrative is a "warts & all" portrait of the man, a bit like,

on a smaller scale, another Oskar Schindler. Highly recommended.

Heather says

Written from a British Ambassador and sheds some light on lots of issues with the war on terror, government corruption (not just of those in Central Asia but also the US & UK & Russia). Leaves you wanting to know more and having more questions...

Igor Trabuco says

Diplomacia Suja é um dos livros sobre política mais contundentes que li. Mostra os bastidores da diplomacia britânica, de um ponto de vista privilegiado, já que Murray conta uma história real. Um livro que mostra que os fins, definitivamente, não justificam os meios.

Hubert says

Somewhat fascinating read from a former British ambassador to Uzbekistan. Best at relating nutty anecdotes of facade of Uzbek attempts at economic reform in order to receive international aid.

David says

very informative, and a good overall intro into the history and politics of central asia. i know people who have worked with murray, though, and they pretty much unanimously agree that he is a pompous arrogant self righteous womanizing alcoholic. and not in a good way.

Unwisely says

I don't even know what book I was looking for when I picked up this one and Blood Makes the Grass Grow Green: A Year in the Desert with Team America, but these were good random finds.

Ignore the hyperbolic (American edition) title, and you'll read rather a lot about running a British embassy in a horribly messed up country (Uzbekistan) in the mid-2000s. But, wow, it was hard to put down. I thought I knew something about central Asia but I am not sure it was very much. I certainly didn't realize what a hellhole Uzbekistan was.

Mr. Murray stands up for human rights in the appalling dictatorship, which the American (Bush Jr) government was at that point pointing too as a shining beacon of hope, because they wanted allies. It, to put it mildly, was not that. (Go read their Wikipedia page, or at least the human rights section. As of 9 May 2016, it is claiming that approximately 4% of its population lives in slavery. 4%! 2016!)

By doing his job (and standing up to the pressure), Murray makes some (small) progress. For his trouble, his own government tries to get him fired (on somewhat questionable grounds). Is he perfect? By no means. I'm sure the book he wrote about himself, he took pains to paint him in the most flattering light, but, even apart from that the book was fascinating. (Samarkand! Law lords! Morality! Decency!)

For someone who knows a lot about the region, none of this will come as a surprise but to someone who's as ignorant as myself, it was pretty great.

Fleming Voetmann says

Interesting at times, important but minor contribution to the Bush-Blair legacies ; but also a bit too long

Bader says

I finally finished it.

I'll come back with better review. I just recommend it for every one.

Seulky says

Irreverent (I sense a theme in my books this year). But, fascinating. Depressing. Unrelenting.

Slinen says

This is why I want to become a diplomat. A British diplomat discovers that all is not as well in Uzbekistan as the Bush administration would have us believe. As partners in the war on terror, the Uzbek government is a valuable ally. But there is a very real danger that ignoring their human rights violations and overall disdain for democracy or civil freedoms will land us with a repeat of the Noriega nightmare.

History can tell us something, as long as we are listening, is the author's argument. And I love Murray's hell be damned attitude and his unexpected commitment to what is right and good.

Robert says

Craig Murray is too ballsy for his own good. That's exactly what we need in the world of international relations! This guy is now officially one of my heroes. Smart, fearless and funny, Murray gives an honest assessment of how political cynicism and delusional thinking have threatened to defeat any real progress in the "War on Terrorism". Meet the new boss, same as the old boss. This book is a must read for everyone interested in current geopolitics.
