

Making Peace in War: Stories from Civilians on Helmunds Front Line



The Afghanistan War as youve never seen it; through the eyes of the civilians sent to bring peace. Praise For Making Peace in War: Essential reading for anyone who wants to understand what Britains Afghan War felt like for the British civilians building peace alongside the troops on the front line. Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles. Former UK Ambassador to Afghanistan. Its value is that of the frank, open and sometimes emotional testimony of a series of witnesses to the hubris, miscomprehension and farce that has marked the international involvement in Afghanistan over the last decade. Jason Burke. Guardian Correspondent. In 2006, the British took on responsibility for stabilising the most unsettled province in Afghanistan. Helmand renowned for its unforgiving deserts, its record breaking poppy production and its ancient tribal culture of honour and revenge. Early efforts relied on a purely military approach to counter-insurgency the classic clear-hold build. But it soon became clear that the future of Helmand and indeed the future of Afghanistan would depend on whether these ancient tribes chose to support the fragile, newly elected Government in Kabul or extend their support and protection to the cabal of insurgents, petty warlords and the narcotics industry. From early 2008, a number of brave and intrepid civilians were posted to outlying districts, tasked with persuading tribal leaders to support local government and persuading local government to desist from bribery, extortion and corruption. Armed with little more than common sense and a willingness to listen and learn, these merry few worked tirelessly to promote new relationships based on trust and common interest. By 2012, there was much less support for those who sought to de-stabilise the province in pursuit of vested interest and much more confidence in a future based on a fairer process of give

and take between governors and governed. These are the unique stories of these quiet, unsung heroes of the battle for the hearts and minds of the Helmandis. They are the stories of the peace-makers, plying their trade in the midst of a war.

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