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Journalist Revisits America's Endless War in Afghanistan

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. Award-winning journalist Douglas A. Wissing's poignant and eye-opening journey across insurgency-wracked Afghanistan casts an unstinting spotlight on greed, dysfunction, and predictable disaster while celebrating the everyday courage and wisdom of frontline soldiers, idealistic humanitarians, and resilient Afghans.

As Wissing hauls a hundred pounds of body armor and pack across the Afghan warzone in search of the ground truth, US officials frantically spin a spurious victory narrative, American soldiers try to keep their body parts together, and Afghans try to stay positive and strain to figure out their next move after the US eventually leaves. As one Afghan technocrat confided to Wissing, "I am hopeless—but optimistic."

"A scathing dispatch from an embedded journalist in Afghanistan," writes *Kirkus Reviews*. "Pungent, embittered, eye-opening observations of a conflict involving lessons still unlearned." *New York Times*-bestselling author Alex Berenson writes, "When historians of the future try to explain how the United States could have accomplished so little in Afghanistan despite spending so much blood and treasure, this trenchant and honest book will be a crucial source."

Along with a deep inquiry into the 21st-century American way of war and an unforgettable glimpse of the enduring culture and legacy of Afghanistan, *Hopeless but Optimistic* includes the real stuff of life: the austere grandeur of Afghanistan and its remarkable people; warzone dining, defecation, and sex; as well as the remarkable shopping opportunities for men whose job is to kill.

"Douglas Wissing is a powerful and courageous journalist worth reading on the war in Afghanistan," said Peter Van Buren, former US diplomat and author of *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the War for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People*. "Wissing has been on the ground, and knows his topic well. Over the years, few have spoken truth to power about America's endless wars better."

Douglas A. Wissing is author of eight books, including *Funding the Enemy: How US Taxpayers Bankroll the Taliban* and *Pioneer in Tibet: The Life and Perils of Dr. Albert Shelton*. He has written for the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Foreign Policy*, *National Defense*, *American Legion*, CNN.com, Fox.com, GlobalPost and Salon.com, among other publications.

Book Information—Hopeless but Optimistic: Journeying through America's Endless War in Afghanistan

By Douglas A. Wissing

190 pages, 6 x 9, 8 b&w illus., 1 map

Cloth ISBN 978-0-253-02285-1 \$30.00

Ebook ISBN 978-0-253-02333-9 \$29.99

Publication Date: August 15, 2016

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