



## UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

An independent institution established by Congress to strengthen the nation's capacity to promote peaceful resolution to international conflicts

### **New Edition of *How We Missed the Story* by Roy Gutman**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Kay Hechler, 202-429-3816

(Washington)—The United States Institute of Peace is pleased to announce the second edition of *How We Missed the Story: Osama bin Laden, the Taliban, and the Hijacking of Afghanistan* by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and former Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow Roy Gutman.

Using original research and personal interviews, Gutman expands upon his first edition and recounts over twenty years of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, from 1989 to 2012. He details the withdrawal of American support once the Soviet occupation ended and the security vacuum that incubated internal wars, armed militants, and radical jihadism. Identifying missed opportunities, Gutman describes how the U.S. and international counterterrorism response to 9/11 and efforts to combat extremism in the region affected efforts to create a stable Afghanistan. Gutman also highlights the missed opportunities for the media to report on the conditions in Afghanistan and the need for journalists to interview civilians, refugees, and people on the ground.

With the lead-up to the Afghanistan presidential election and the end of America's military presence in the country, this volume will be a valuable resource for policymakers considering long-term U.S. interests in Afghanistan and scholars seeking to understand the roots of conflict in the region.

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Roy Gutman, a former senior fellow at the United States Institute of Peace (2002–03), is a prize-winning journalist who has reported on international affairs for more than three decades. He is currently Middle East correspondent for McClatchy newspapers.

Previously, he served as McClatchy's Baghdad bureau chief and before that as foreign editor. He has also been diplomatic correspondent for *Newsweek* and director of American University's Crimes of War Project.

He won a Pulitzer Prize for international reporting on the 1993 war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Gutman has also been awarded the George Polk Award for foreign

reporting, the Selden Right Award for investigative reporting, the Hal Boyle award of the Overseas Press Club, the Heywood Broun Award of the Newspaper Guild, and a Human Rights in Media award from the International League for Human Rights. He was co-winner of the Edgar Allen Poe award of the White House Correspondents' Association in 2002 and the National Headliners First Prize for Magazines and the Society of Publishers in Asia award in 2003.

Gutman is also the author of *Banana Diplomacy: The Making of American Policy in Nicaragua 1981-1987* (Simon & Schuster 1988) and *A Witness to Genocide: the 1993 Pulitzer Prize Winning Dispatches on the 'Ethnic Cleansing' of Bosnia* (Macmillan 1993). *Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know* (W.W. Norton 1999) was co-edited with essayist David Rieff.

## **ABOUT THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE**

The United States Institute of Peace is an independent, nonpartisan conflict management center created by Congress to prevent and mitigate international conflict through nonviolent means. USIP saves lives, increases the government's ability to deal with conflicts before they escalate, reduces government costs, and enhances national security. USIP is headquartered in Washington, DC. To learn more, visit [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org).

**How We Missed the Story, Second Edition**  
**Osama bin Laden, the Taliban, and the Hijacking of Afghanistan**  
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### **Praise for *How We Missed the Story, Second Edition***

“In the second edition of *How We Missed the Story*, Roy Gutman updates the already compelling case he made for the necessity for U.S. leaders to understand the culture and history of Afghanistan before the invasion of 2001. Those in the highest reaches of America’s foreign policy establishment will find it an essential guide to avoiding the blunders of the past. Academics will embrace it as essential reading for our next generation of leaders. And the public will at last have an explanation of why we were not able to win our nation’s longest war.”

—Bill Belding, School of International Service, American University

### **Praise for the first edition**

“Broadly critical but fair-minded. It is also an essential text for understanding a part of American history that has been, as Afghanistan itself for too long was, swept aside.”—*Choice*

“Based on extensive research and interviews, Gutman succeeds in dissecting the events and explaining the relevance of the seemingly endless tales of woe in Afghanistan. . . . The value of the book is as a case study of what happens if there is a lack of coherent, consistent, general foreign policy supported by specific policies for dealing with various trouble spots. Such policies are imperative to any president who seeks to provide true national security rather than the illusion of security.”—*Digest of Middle East Studies*

“A carefully researched and well-documented account of the rise of the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan. Reading it now drives home how much went unreported at the time, and what horrors occurred during the years of civil strife in the country prior to 9/11. It was a case not of one missed story, but of a multitude of missed stories, and in this respect Gutman adds an abundance of empirical detail.”—*European Journal of Communication*

“A painstakingly researched book with a great many interviews and references to documentation. And it has the virtue of keeping the narrative tightly focused on a central theme: how the U.S. failure to exert influence in Afghanistan allowed Osama bin Laden to turn it into a base of operations from which to plan his terrorist campaign against the United States. Gutman’s work deserves serious attention in the current debate over U.S. policy choices for Afghanistan.”

—*Middle East Policy*

“A searching critique of U.S. policy in Afghanistan after the departure of Soviet troops in 1989, it traces the policy shifts in Washington and especially the loss of focus that assisted the rise of the Taliban. Gutman’s central claim, that the inability of the U.S. to prevent the September 11 attacks was not so much an intelligence or military failure as a strategic foreign policy failure, will not make comfortable reading.”—*New York Review of Books*