# The Back Channel





A MEMOIR OF AMERICAN
DIPLOMACY AND
THE CASE FOR ITS RENEWAL

William J.
Burns

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Over the course of more than three decades as an American diplomat, William J. Burns played a central role in the most consequential diplomatic episodes of his time—from the bloodless end of the Cold War to the collapse of post–Cold War relations with Putin's Russia, from post–9/11 tumult in the Middle East to the secret nuclear talks with Iran.

In The Back Channel, Burns recounts, with novelistic detail and incisive analysis, some of the seminal moments of his career. Drawing on a trove of newly declassified cables and memos, he gives readers a rare inside look at American diplomacy in action. His dispatches from war-torn Chechnya and Qaddafi's bizarre camp in the Libyan desert and his warnings of the "Perfect Storm" that would be unleashed by the Iraq War will reshape our understanding of history—and inform the policy debates of the future. Burns sketches the contours of effective American leadership in a world that resembles neither the zero-sum Cold War contest of his early years as a diplomat nor the "unipolar moment" of American primacy that followed.

Ultimately, The Back Channel is an eloquent, deeply informed, and timely story of a life spent in service of American interests abroad. It is also a powerful reminder, in a time of great turmoil, of the enduring importance of diplomacy.

#### 作者介绍:

William J. Burns is president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He retired from the U.S. Foreign Service in 2014 after a thirty-three-year diplomatic career. He holds the highest rank in the Foreign Service, career ambassador, and is only the second serving career diplomat in history to become deputy secretary of state. Prior to his tenure as deputy secretary, Ambassador Burns served from 2008 to 2011 as undersecretary for political affairs. He was ambassador to Russia from 2005 to 2008, assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs from 2001 to 2005, and ambassador to Jordan from 1998 to 2001. Ambassador Burns earned a bachelor's degree in history from La Salle University and master's and doctoral degrees in international relations from Oxford University, where he studied as a Marshall Scholar. He and his wife, Lisa, have two daughters.

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### 评论

A truly remarkable book by one of the greatest diplomats in his generation

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## 书评

美国前副国务卿、卡内基国际和平基金会主席 威廉·伯恩斯 美国总统唐纳德·特朗普(Donald Trump)提议"做笔大的交易",让朝鲜答应立即开启全面无核化,朝鲜最高领导人金 正恩(Kim Jong Un)已经拒绝了。如今特朗普需要做出一个选择:是加倍下注,还是接受"关于可能的 艺术"…

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