

"Writing the truth
as I see it;
trying not to
offend
those who will
disagree."

The truth as I see it™

Idaho Common Sense™



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Can one person make a difference?

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A nation with over 300 million citizens, over 10 million illegal aliens, 1 President, 100 United States Senators, and 435 United States Representatives. Can one person make a difference? No. Not anymore. That time has long since past.

But, what if? What if one person could not look the other way? What if one person saw a duty and cared enough to speak up? What if one person dared to try? What if one person said, "I will get involved?"

That person is Charlie Wilson, one of the most unlikely United States Representatives Congress has ever seen. He said he fell in love with America at age 13 when he orchestrated the defeat of a local government official who had intentionally killed his dog. He saw a wrong and got involved, driving enough people to the polls to change the outcome of the election. He did not tell them how to vote, but he did tell them he thought they should know that the man killed his dog. Just one boy, just one person who got involved.

He was elected to the United States House of Representatives from Texas, serving 24 years. In 1989 he saw a news report about Russians killing Afghans. Russia had invaded Afghanistan and was slaughtering the Afghans, the United States providing little more than token aid. He had to get involved.

Actually, it is surprising that Charlie Wilson could even find the

time to get involved with a country few people ever heard of. His primary pursuits were quantities of alcohol and volumes of women, not always in that order.

He was outraged we were not doing more for the Afghans, saying "Afghanistan is the only place on earth where we are killing Russians." Well-read and well-educated, he understood the significance of Afghanistan and saw the possibility of gaining a Muslim ally in the Middle East. He saw both a duty and an opportunity.

Educated at the United States Naval Academy, he somewhat proudly graduated with the second highest number of demerits of any midshipman in its history, a bit disappointed he was not first. He was deceptively bright, deceptively articulate, and deceptively capable of backroom discussions.

He should not have been elected to the House of Representatives twelve times, but he was. He should not have been a womanizer and a heavy drinker, but he was. He should not have cared enough to get involved, but he did.

He should have understood one person cannot make a difference, but he didn't. He should have seen the insurmountable obstacles, but he didn't. He should have understood you cannot convince Israel to help provide weapons to Afghans, that Jews would not help Muslims, but he didn't.

The results of his determination? He watched as a defeated Russia

limped out of Afghanistan; humiliated by the Afghans he helped with over \$4 billion he got from the congressional subcommittee responsible for oversight of CIA operations.

Pakistani dictator Zia ul-Haq was asked by a 60 Minutes correspondent how the Afghans won the war. He answered simply, "Charlie did it."

Charlie Wilson loved America. He loved democracy. He believed he could make a difference. He learned that at age 13 and never forgot the power of one voter, one person.

Charlie Wilson believed he had no choice. He believed if he did not get involved, if he did not take a chance, if he did not help, if he did not ..., then no one would.

Charlie Wilson was one man with significant character flaws. But he was one man who believed America was the country of "I can," not the country of "I can't." That was 20 years ago.

One person can make a difference. One person can change history, can help bring down an "evil empire." One person can offer hope. One person can stand up and say, "I am proud to be an American, and I can..."

Are you the next Charlie Wilson?