

SETTING THE DESERT ON FIRE¹

REVIEWED BY MAJOR JENNIFER CLARK²

I. Introduction

On 14 February 2003, about a year and a half after the terrorist attacks of 11 September, Osama bin Laden gave a speech that looked back upon the Arab revolt of 1916–1918. He stated:

As I speak, the blood of Muslims continues to be shed in vain . . . and our children are dying because of the American sanctions in Iraq. As I speak, our wounds have yet to heal . . . from the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 between France and Britain, which brought about the dissection of the Islamic world into fragments. The Crusaders' agents are still in power to this day, in light of a new Sykes-Picot agreement, the Bush-Blair axis, which has the same banner and objective, namely the banner of the Cross and the objective of destroying and looting of our beloved Prophet's *umma*.³

James Barr, author of *Setting the Desert on Fire*, notes bin Laden's speech at the end of the book.⁴ After reading the book, audiences will undoubtedly be left with a feeling that they now have some insight into the roots of modern-day turmoil in the Middle East, and insight into those who express sentiment similar to bin Laden's. It is important to read this book in the context of the current situation in the Middle East, to gain an appreciation of the author's main purpose of the book, which is to show that the Arab revolt from 1916–1918 has left lasting effects that reverberate today throughout the world—especially in the desert.

This review gives a background of the book and then focuses on the three themes woven throughout it that support Barr's main purpose. The first theme is a lesson on the importance of understanding the culture and geography of a foreign land while fighting there. Next, is a look at the consequences of Britain's deceptive dealings with the Arabs. The last topic is a consideration of the effects of Western aid to insurgent aggression.

II. Background

Barr, an Oxford scholar and a historian, spent four years researching this book and traveling the unforgiving desert to the areas of battle.⁵ This book is well organized chronologically, and very well supported by private letters from the British and the Arabs, diaries, photographs, archives, and numerous books and articles.⁶ Although a historical compilation, this book read like an adventure novel. Barr brought the players to life with humorous anecdotes and detailed descriptions that he was able to draw from personal letters and diaries. His placement of maps and a legend of key figures at the beginning of the book made it easier to keep track of all the people and places that touched the revolt.

Setting the Desert on Fire takes us on a journey from 1916 to 1918 that centers on T.E. Lawrence—better known as “Lawrence of Arabia”—a brilliant British intelligence officer. Lawrence was a natural leader, “a strategist of genius”⁷ where “one [would have] that feeling that things [could] not go wrong while he [was] there.”⁸ Lawrence held the Arabs and British officials together through many disagreements.⁹

¹ JAMES BARR, *SETTING THE DESERT ON FIRE* (2008).

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³ *MESSAGES TO THE WORLD: THE STATEMENTS OF OSAMA BIN LADEN* 187 (Bruce Lawrence ed., London 2005).

⁴ See BARR, *supra* note 1, at 323.

⁵ *Id.* at inside back cover.

⁶ *Id.* at 204. Barr even analyzed Lawrence's diary through an electrostatic detection apparatus to try to see what was written on a missing page. *Id.* He was unsuccessful and the page still remains a mystery. *Id.*

⁷ *Id.* at 317 (quoting BASIL LIDDELL HART, *T.E. LAWRENCE IN ARABIA AND AFTER* 438 (1934)).

⁸ *Id.* at 269 (quoting Diary of Robin Buxton, 16 Aug. 1918, in JEREMY WILSON, *LAWRENCE OF ARABIA: THE AUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY OF T.E. LAWRENCE* 537 (1989)).

⁹ See, e.g., *id.* at 259–60 (showing Lawrence's involvement in the discussions between the British and the Syrians).

Britain's priority in the Middle East at the start of World War I was to protect its sea route through the Suez Canal.¹⁰ Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire just declared their support for Germany and Austro-Hungary, and declared a jihad against Britain and France.¹¹ The British government therefore devised a plan to take the Ottomans out of the fight.¹² This plan consisted of leading an Arab revolt against the Turks and replacing the current Ottoman sultan with the emir of Mecca, Sharif Husein.¹³

The first uprising occurred in June of 1916 at Mecca and ended with the capture of Damascus in September of 1918. The British and Arabs focused their efforts in this "secret war" by targeting and destroying portions of the approximately thousand-mile long Hijaz Railway the Ottomans had constructed with supplies from the Germans.¹⁴ The British, with Lawrence's help, recruited various Arab tribes in the region to aid in this mission.¹⁵

T.E. Lawrence admired the Arabs as a result of working with them on archaeological digs.¹⁶ He was a staunch advocate for Arab independence and made it his goal to prevent French influence.¹⁷ Lawrence deeply venerated one of Husein's sons, Sharif Feisal ibn Husein, and steered him to become king of Iraq.¹⁸ Lawrence and Feisal worked closely together during the two years of the Arab war, and their successful relationship can be attributed to Lawrence's strong commitment to assimilate himself into Feisal's culture—a lesson from the book.

III. Winning a Conflict on Foreign Soil Requires Understanding Culture and Geography

The Arabs were victorious against the Turks due to the leadership of, and monetary aid from, the British.¹⁹ The British succeeded due to the recruitment of tribesmen to carry out the fight.²⁰ T.E. Lawrence was the person that linked the two worlds together.

Setting the Desert on Fire does an excellent job of showing Lawrence's leadership and genius in assimilating himself into Arab culture. The book also subtly shows Lawrence's veracity and lack of professionalism that made him unique.²¹ Unlike most other British officers involved in the revolt, Lawrence shed his khakis (at Feisal's request) for Arab robes.²² He

¹⁰ *Id.* at 16.

¹¹ *Id.* at 18.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *See id.*

¹⁴ *Id.* at 2.

¹⁵ *See id.* at 32–33, 86–87.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 11. Lawrence was a medieval historian and worked with Arab laborers on several archaeological digs in Syria. *Id.* The author accounts that Lawrence would get so excited on digs, he would fire his pistol in the air when he uncovered an interesting find. *Id.* "The experience left him with a deep admiration for the Arabs, who were clearly enthusiastic in turn: Lawrence gained a reputation for 'getting on very well with natives.'" *Id.* (quoting JEREMY WILSON, LAWRENCE OF ARABIA: THE AUTHORISED BIOGRAPHY OF T.E. LAWRENCE 138 (1989)).

¹⁷ *See id.* at 103, 136, 145.

¹⁸ *Id.* at 71, 314–15. Lawrence felt Feisal was the leader that could take the Arabs to Damascus, and stated, "I felt at first glance that [Feisal] was the man I had come to Arabia to seek." *Id.* at 71.

¹⁹ *See id.* at 89, 117, 322. "The British joked at the time that the Bedu could smell gold on the wind, for the tribesmen were obsessed by the metal." *Id.* at 89.

²⁰ *See id.* at 322.

²¹ While T.E. Lawrence is venerated for his bravery and accomplishments, he often had an unprofessional and almost mutinous attitude toward authority. In 1916, one senior officer accounted:

I had assumed [Lawrence] was one of the military officers sent over and was a little astonished when a small, untidily dressed and most unmilitary figure strolled up to me . . . hands in pockets and so without a salute: "I am going over to Port Sudan in this ship."

Id. at 73 (quoting EARL OF CORK & ORRERY, MY NAVAL LIFE 99 (1942)). Lawrence also communicated to his superiors that all was going well with the Arabs when in actuality he was having problems of treachery. *Id.* at 169. "Lawrence had no qualms about lying to his superiors when it was expedient for him to do so." *Id.* Lawrence, himself, admitted to a friend in a letter, "I don't like responsibility, and I don't obey orders." *Id.* at 261 (quoting Letter from T.E. Lawrence to Richards, in THE LETTERS OF T.E. LAWRENCE 243–46 (David Garnett ed. 1938)).

²² *See id.* at 80.

ate, slept, suffered serious illness, and traveled the treacherous desert with the Arabs during the entire time of the revolt.²³ He gained the confidence of Feisal that “sealed his reputation as indispensable” and made him of “inestimable value.”²⁴ Lawrence was even mistaken for an Arab by fellow British soldiers.²⁵ Lawrence’s lasting advice was, “[g]et to know [the Arab’s] families, clans and tribes, friends and enemies, wells, hills and roads. If you wear Arab things at all, go the whole way. Leave your English friends and customs on the coast, and fall back on Arab habits entirely.”²⁶

Importantly, Lawrence understood the tribesmen he was working with, and this allowed the British to accomplish their mission.²⁷ Lawrence’s influence can be seen in one particular excerpt. The tensions between the Arabs and British soldiers in camp were increasingly mounting, and several British soldiers were about to deal with the Arabs using hand grenades.²⁸ Lawrence stood in the middle of the camp, flung back his cloak and raised his hand.²⁹ One soldier accounted that “[i]mmediately the firing ceased, the hubbub died down and we had a peaceful night.”³⁰

Lawrence’s knowledge of the geography proved invaluable as well. In early 1917, Lawrence met with a French commander who suggested to Lawrence that the British join in a French attack of the port at Aqaba.³¹ Lawrence knew Aqaba was surrounded by cliffs that would give the Turks the advantage of picking off any soldier that came to the port, and so he managed to get Feisal to oppose the plan, and likely saved lives.³²

This lesson taken from the Arab revolt holds true today. The success of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations in Iraq and Afghanistan depends on understanding the society, culture, and geography of the host nation. This principle is emphasized in Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*.³³ The FM states:

In most COIN operations . . . , insurgents hold a distinct advantage in their level of local knowledge. They speak the language, move easily within the society, and are more likely to understand the population’s interests. Thus, effective COIN operations require a greater emphasis on certain skills, such as language and cultural understanding, than does conventional warfare. The interconnected, politico-military nature of insurgency and COIN requires immersion in the people and their lives to achieve victory. . . . Without this understanding of the environment, intelligence cannot be understood and properly applied.³⁴

Successful leaders know the “people, topography, economy, history, and culture,” as well as “every village, road, field, population group, tribal leader, and ancient grievance within” their area of operations.³⁵ Judge Advocates, to be effective advisors to these commanders, need to have as much knowledge in these areas as they can. While only our specially trained

²³ See *id.* at 116–17, 142–45.

²⁴ *Id.* at 105.

²⁵ See *id.* at 229. At Bir Salem, a British corporal guard arrested Lawrence having mistook him for a “short and unusually ruddy ‘Arab.’” *Id.* “‘It often happens,’ sighed Lawrence. It was the second time that day he had been stopped.” *Id.* (quoting Hogarth Papers, Hogarth to “Billy,” (Feb. 25, 1918) (Middle East Ctr., Oxford))

²⁶ *Id.* at 142 (quoting T.E. Lawrence, Twenty-seven Articles, ARAB BULL. No. 60 (20 Aug. 1917) (Nat’l Archive, London, FO 882/26)).

²⁷ See *id.* at 125. The author accounts:

[Lawrence knew] his role was to steer [the Bedu tribesmen], and not to command. He knew that there was no way of changing the Bedu’s unique style of fighting. . . . [T]he tribesmen would always rather flee and live to fight another day unless their honor was at stake. To force them to stand and fight . . . would lead to casualties that would break the tribesmen’s brittle morale

Id. (citing Clayton Papers, 470/6, Wilson to Clayton (Jan. 16, 1917) (Sudan Archive, Durham)).

²⁸ See *id.* at 264.

²⁹ *Id.*

³⁰ *Id.* (quoting Laurence Moore, in GEOFFREY INCHBALD, THE IMPERIAL CAMEL CORPS 131–32 (1970)).

³¹ See *id.* at 102.

³² See *id.*

³³ U.S. DEP’T OF ARMY, FIELD MANUAL 3-24, COUNTERINSURGENCY pp. 1-22 to 1-23 (15 Dec. 2006) [hereinafter FM 3-24].

³⁴ *Id.* para. 1-125.

³⁵ *Id.* para. 7-7. This instruction is almost identical to Lawrence’s advice quoted previously in this section.

military go as far as T.E. Lawrence did, the more cultural and geographical knowledge leaders and their advisors have before arriving overseas, the greater the chances are for success.

The danger exists of assimilating too far into another's culture. Both the Arabs (with Lawrence fighting with them) and Turks committed numerous law of war violations³⁶ that today would guarantee a court-martial for an American servicemember. While it is important to understand the culture of a host nation, leaders must know their boundaries within laws, rules, and regulations, because they may not be the same boundaries the host nation follows.³⁷

Another part of understanding the culture of a host nation is garnering the people's trust. *Setting the Desert on Fire* revealed that the British had significant problems in this area during, and in the aftermath of, the revolt.

IV. Effects of Western Deception

Setting the Desert on Fire focuses on two underhanded British negotiations during the Arab revolt. The effects of these negotiations are still prevalent. The first involves Sir Henry McMahon's dealings with Sharif Husein.

London tasked McMahon, high commissioner in Egypt at the time, to negotiate with Husein.³⁸ Unfortunately, McMahon did not give much thought to Husein's demands of complete independence of the Arabian Peninsula in exchange for Arab support.³⁹ McMahon purposely made vague promises to the Arab leader.⁴⁰ This caused confusion in interpretation over twenty years later.⁴¹

The clear intent of this communication was to secure the Arabs for the British cause by letting them think they would end up autonomous, while concurrently avoiding commitment of the British government to such an agreement.⁴² This backfired on the British in the 1930s when the influx of Jewish immigrants into Palestine aggravated the Arabs who felt that McMahon had offered the land to them.⁴³ Effects of this conflict, born from the Arab revolt, have been seen in the media for

³⁶ The Arabs would leave the dead on the battlefield. BARR, *supra* note 1, at 98. One British soldier accounted after a battle that "[t]he dead were still lying about, the houses had been ransacked from roof to floor, paper everywhere, boxes and cupboards cut open and even the mattresses cut open to find hidden treasure." *Id.* at 99 (quoting ARAB BULL. No. 41 (Feb. 6, 1917) (Nat'l Archive, London, FO 882/27)). "The Arabs had moved from house to house, shooting and looting . . ." *Id.* at 99 (citing N.N.E. BRAY, SHIFTING SANDS 123 (1934)). One night, as Lawrence settled down from a mission to Wadi Ais, a Moroccan tribesman shot and killed an Ageyl tribesman as a result of an escalating blood feud. *Id.* at 116-17. Lawrence, feeling that the only way to prevent the feud from escalating even further was to kill the Moroccan himself, as a foreigner, shot the man in a dank gully. *Id.* at 117. "Lawrence gingerly shot him once, twice, a third time before [the Moroccan] finally stopped moving." *Id.* (British Library Add 4595, f. 22). Probably the most horrific account of violations in the book was the Turkish massacre of the village of Tafas. *Id.* at 292. Lawrence and the Arab tribesmen witnessed a little girl, about four years old and covered in blood, try to scream to them before she died. *Id.* They also found a pregnant woman who had been stripped and nailed by a bayonet over a mud wall. *Id.* The Arabs were outraged and chased after the disappearing Turkish Soldiers and fought them savagely. *Id.* at 293. The Arabs took no prisoners alive. *Id.*

³⁷ The field manual on counterinsurgency discusses social norms of a host nation, and states, "Some norms that may impact military operations include . . . [t]he requirement for revenge if honor is lost," and "local business practices, such as bribes and haggling." FM 3-24, *supra* note 33, para. 3-35. It is important to learn a host nation's allowable practices to establish boundaries from the start of operations.

³⁸ BARR, *supra* note 1, at 25.

³⁹ *Id.* at 318. McMahon is quoted as saying:

I do not for one moment go to the length of imagining that the present negotiations will go far to shape the future form of Arabia or to either establish our rights or bind our hands in that country. What we have to arrive at now is to tempt the Arab people onto the right path, detach them from the enemy and bring them on to our side.

Id. (quoting Sir Henry McMahon, in ELIE KEDOURIE, IN THE ANGLO-ARAB LABYRINTH 119 (1976)).

⁴⁰ *Id.* at 25.

⁴¹ See *id.* at 29-30, 320-21. Britain's foreign secretary, Edward Grey, told McMahon that during negotiations, McMahon must make very clear to both the French and the Arabs, what the British were offering. *Id.* at 29. McMahon ignored this and deliberately made vague representations to Husein, particularly regarding Palestine. *Id.*

⁴² See *id.* at 25-30, 318.

⁴³ See *id.* at 320-21. What exactly McMahon promised was never resolved, and the British eventually stated since the French had a claim in Palestine, Britain could not have promised it to Husein. *Id.* The author finds this incredulous since the British policy during the war was to undermine French influence. *Id.* at 322. In 1917, the British had issued the Balfour Declaration that declared Palestine as a national home for the Jewish people, and made it understood nothing was to prejudice the rights of non-Jewish communities in Palestine. *Id.* at 207-08. This caused much consternation in the region.

the past several decades.⁴⁴

The second negotiation was the Sykes-Picot agreement⁴⁵ (mentioned in bin Laden's speech at the beginning of this review). Sir Mark Sykes, a member of the British Parliament spent the winter of 1915–1916 negotiating a clandestine agreement with French consul, Francois Georges-Picot, to divide up the Ottoman Empire; this product would be known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement.⁴⁶ The agreement divided Arabia into northern and southern areas of either British or French control, to include the area that McMahon had just committed to Husein.⁴⁷ Importantly, Sykes secretly promised Syria and Lebanon to the French.⁴⁸ Lawrence was astonished when he discovered these details of the Sykes-Picot agreement.⁴⁹

The British government again put themselves in a quandary, and one British official described it, stating, "If we keep our part with the French the Arabs will rightly say we have sold them If we don't keep our pact with France the world will say 'Oh Yes! England land grabbing again.'"⁵⁰ The French eventually got Syria, and the land promised to Husein started to disappear.⁵¹ One criticism of the book is that *Setting the Desert on Fire* reads very sympathetically to the Arab plight, but glosses over the British government's reasons for their actions, except to imply they were all self-serving.⁵²

These two secret negotiations caused the Arabs to feel betrayed, and still have effects today.⁵³ When a country steps onto foreign soil, its leaders must win the trust of the host nation. This principle is just as important now, and we bring it into our military operations as instructed in Field Manual 3-24, The manual states:

[United States] agencies . . . should avoid making unrealistic promises. In some cultures, failure to deliver promised results is automatically interpreted as deliberate deception, rather than good intentions gone awry. . . . In the end, victory comes, in large measure, by convincing the populace that their life will be better under the [host-nation] government than under an insurgent regime.⁵⁴

While we cannot change the past that *Setting the Desert on Fire* explored, the military and civilian leadership of today can ensure that unrealistic promises—whether big or small—are avoided. *Setting the Desert on Fire* gives the reader an understanding of why Arab distrust of Western powers exists still today, and an understanding of the roots of Middle Eastern conflict—in particular, Palestine. Not only has Britain's deception in the 1920's had lasting effects throughout the world, so has its aid to the insurgent revolt.⁵⁵ Barr discusses this in the epilogue of his book.⁵⁶

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Ken Ellingwood & Richard Boudreaux, *Jerusalem: Struggle for the Holy City, Part One: Dueling Visions: A Holy City Still Divided*, L.A. TIMES, June 3, 2007, at A1 (summarizing the violence between the Arab and Jewish states since the 1967 Middle East War); Steven Erlanger, *A Life of Unrest*, N.Y. TIMES, July 15, 2007, at MM42 (describing the current, brutal state of Gaza).

⁴⁵ See BARR, *supra* note 1, at 30.

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ *Id.* at 31.

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ See *id.* at 136.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at 306 (quoting Stirling Papers, Stirling to his sister (Nov. 5, 1918), Imperial War Museum, London).

⁵¹ See *id.* at 313.

⁵² For a different perspective of the revolt, see EFRAIM KARSH & INARI KARSH, *EMPIRES OF THE SAND: THE STRUGGLE FOR MASTERY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, 1789–1923*, at 191–94 (1999). This book describes Husein as a double-dealer for British gold, and the creation of his own kingdom.

⁵³ See KUWAITI MINISTRY OF AWQAF AND ISLAMIC AFF., *ARAB PERCEPTIONS OF THE WEST* 34 (Gabrielle Mogannam et al. eds., 2006), available at <http://islamperceptions.org/Arab%20Perception%20of%20the%20West.pdf> (stating that the Western image problem is deeply rooted in the Arabs' historical experience with the West, and that Arab public perceptions of American and British policies in the Middle East are those of hypocrisy); see also *id.* at 43 (explaining that historically, Arabs have perceived their experience with the West as a struggle with mistrust—from European colonialism to current military presence in Iraq and Palestine).

⁵⁴ FM 3-24, *supra* note 33, para. 1-139.

⁵⁵ See generally Rashid Khalidi, *International Law and Legitimacy and the Palestine Question*, 30 HASTINGS INT'L & COMP. L. REV. 173 (2007) (discussing Palestine's long-term struggles with Western powers that have followed shortsighted policies Khalidi describes as "lip service to the principle of self-determination").

⁵⁶ See BARR, *supra* note 1, at 314–23.

V. Effects of Western Aid to Insurgent Aggression.

At the end of his book, to emphasize the lasting effects of Western aid to insurgent aggression, Barr draws a parallel between the British support to the Arab revolt, and past U.S. support to Afghanistan. He states:

Just as Husein was armed by the British government in 1916, Osama bin Laden was one of those armed by the U.S. government in the 1980s to fight a war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. The supply of gold and guns to both recipients has had disturbing and unforeseen consequences: such are the dangers of war by proxy.⁵⁷

“War by proxy” is a curious term for Barr to use. “Proxy” means to act on another’s behalf for a presumably mutual interest.⁵⁸ However, throughout the book, Barr highlights the British government’s deception. Therefore, while both sides aimed for the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the two sides were ultimately fighting for divergent interests.

What Barr does though, is make it clear to the reader that the British self-serving plan of using the Arabs to bring down the Ottoman Empire turned out to be a series of decisions that caused significant unrest within the Arab population.⁵⁹ *Setting the Desert on Fire* explored the Arabs’ increasing dependence on British money and supplies, and the acknowledgement of both Husein and Feisal of their dependency.⁶⁰ The book gives great insight on how British aid to this guerilla war set the stage for future conflict in the Middle East. However, the book lacks discussion of beneficial aspects, which could be seen as Arab independence, the experience of victory, money for the tribes, and the receipt of then modern-day weapons and equipment. The book also fails to address whether the British (besides Lawrence) knew of the law of war violations that occurred during the revolt, and if so, how the leaders reacted to it.⁶¹

Going back a couple of decades, one can also see effects that Barr mentioned of U.S. aid to the Mujahedeen, in particular the rise of the Taliban.⁶² While today in the Middle East, Western powers focus on aiding countries in *countering* insurgents, Barr hints that this effort may cause history to repeat itself. In Iraq, Western policymakers must ensure that Arab leaders do not lose their legitimacy (again) through foreign influence.⁶³ Barr states, “[T]o the Arabs today the British role behind their uprising ninety years ago remains unforgotten, and largely unforgiven.”⁶⁴

VI. Conclusion

Setting the Desert on Fire was an easy-to-read, informative book that would satisfy both the novice and seasoned historian of the Middle East. Barr takes the reader on an entertaining journey through a critical period in the birth of the Arab nations. Lawrence of Arabia stated, “[T]he rebellion of the Sherif of Mecca came to most as a surprise, and found the Allies unready. It aroused mixed feelings and made strong friends and strong enemies, amid whose clashing jealousies its affairs began to miscarry.”⁶⁵ This book showed the revolt was wrought with deception, lack of supplies, brutal bloodshed, and numerous law of war violations from both sides.⁶⁶ Through it all, the reader learns the importance of understanding a foreign

⁵⁷ *Id.* at 322–23.

⁵⁸ See WEBSTER’S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY 1083 (3d ed. 1988) (defining “proxy” as empowered to act for another).

⁵⁹ See BARR, *supra* note 1, at 310–13.

⁶⁰ See *id.* at 139, 310–11.

⁶¹ The book does show Lawrence’s internal struggle when he shot the Moroccan, *id.* at 117, and that he tried to stop the Arabs from massacring the Turkish and German prisoners after the destruction of the village in Tafas. *Id.* at 117, 293.

⁶² See MARK HUBAND, WARRIORS OF THE PROPHET: THE STRUGGLE FOR ISLAM 14–16 (1998) (explaining how the CIA secretly sent weapons through Pakistan to aid the Mujahedeen in countering the Soviet forces in Afghanistan). The Mujahedeen were successful; however, the Taliban emerged in response to the growing chaos in southern Afghanistan that was under Mujahedeen control. See *id.*

⁶³ See Andrew J. Bacevich, *Surge to Nowhere*, WASH. POST, Jan. 20, 2008, at B1 (commenting on the effects of the Iraq War). The president’s goal was to start a global democratic revolution from “Damascus to Tehran,” which was much like the British goal in 1916 of eliminating Ottoman control from Medina to Damascus. See *id.*

⁶⁴ BARR, *supra* note 1, at 323.

⁶⁵ T.E. LAWRENCE, SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM 9 (Wordsworth ed. 1997) (1935).

⁶⁶ See *supra* Parts III–V.

nation's culture, and by looking back at British deception and effects of British aid to the insurgents, *Setting the Desert on Fire* gives great insight into current unrest in the Middle East.