

**KING'S COUNSEL: A MEMOIR OF WAR, ESPIONAGE,  
AND DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST<sup>1</sup>**

REVIEWED BY MAJOR CHARLES C. MCLEOD, JR. \*

I. Introduction

Passed on November 22, 1967, United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 242 calls for an end to Israeli occupation of Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian territory and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every State in the area.<sup>2</sup> Amid revolutionary uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa, President Barack Obama appeared before the Department of State and delivered his “Arab Spring” speech of May 19, 2011, issuing, among other things, an explicit call for Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.<sup>3</sup> The president’s desired end state would result in “a viable Palestine and a secure Israel” including a specified task that “negotiations should result in two states, with permanent Palestinian borders with Israel, Jordan, and Egypt . . . based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps.”<sup>4</sup> The words were no sooner uttered than State Department officials began to wring their hands,<sup>5</sup> foreign dignitaries gasped,<sup>6</sup> and political pundits clamored for specificity. The point of contention? Seemingly innocuous

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\* Judge Advocate, U.S. Marine Corps. Student, 60th Judge Advocate Officer Graduate Course, The Judge Advocate General’s Legal Center & School, U.S. Army, Charlottesville, Virginia.

<sup>1</sup> JACK O’CONNELL WITH VERNON LOEB, *KING’S COUNSEL: A MEMOIR OF WAR, ESPIONAGE, AND DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST* (2011).

<sup>2</sup> S.C. Res. 242, U.N. Doc. S/RES/242 (1967).

<sup>3</sup> *Obama Announces “New Chapter” in U.S. Mideast Diplomacy*, CNN.COM, May 19, 2011, [http://articles.cnn.com/2011-05-19/politics/obama.mideast\\_1\\_president-barack-obama-arab-spring-major-policy-speech?\\_s=PM:politics](http://articles.cnn.com/2011-05-19/politics/obama.mideast_1_president-barack-obama-arab-spring-major-policy-speech?_s=PM:politics).

<sup>4</sup> Barack Obama, President, U.S., Keynote Address at the United States Department of State: A Moment of Opportunity (May 19, 2011) [hereinafter Obama].

<sup>5</sup> Jay Solomon, *Israeli Leader, Obama Clash*, WALL ST. J., May 21, 2011, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704904604576335071093979138.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Many articles have documented the Israeli reaction to President Obama’s address. See, e.g., *Obama: 1967 Lines With “Swaps” Means Different Israeli Border Than in 1967*, FOXNEWS.COM, May 22, 2011, <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/05/22/ears-obama-israel-lobby-conference>; Dan Murphy, *What’s So “Shocking” About Obama Mentioning 1967 Borders?*, CHRISTIAN SCI. MONITOR, May 20, 2011, available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Backchannels/2011/0520/What-s-so-shocking-about-Obama-mentioning-1967-borders>; and Uri Friedman, *What Obama Meant by “1967 Lines” and Why It Irked Netanyahu*, ASSOCIATED PRESS, May 20, 2011, available at <http://www.theatlanticwire.com/global/2011/05/what-obama-meant-1967-lines-why-irked-netanyahu/37977>.

language may have signaled a significant shift in the United States' position in Middle East peace negotiations for the first time in more than four decades.<sup>7</sup>

In *King's Counsel*, Jack O'Connell<sup>8</sup> draws from his experiences as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operative and station chief in the Middle East; advisor, attorney, and diplomatic counselor to King Hussein bin Talal<sup>9</sup> of Jordan; and stakeholder to the shuttle diplomacy<sup>10</sup> that resulted in UNSCR 242,<sup>11</sup> in order to memorialize one man's unyielding quest for peace in an uncertain and volatile region. O'Connell's background is significant, as he "had a closer relationship with King Hussein than any other American official before or after, one that was based on mutual respect and absolute trust."<sup>12</sup> Broadly, O'Connell's purpose in writing *King's Counsel* was to provide a historical account of King Hussein's political betrayals by Arab, Israeli, and American officials and "to tell the world why peace [in the Middle East] had failed."<sup>13</sup> More specifically, O'Connell's purpose in writing *King's Counsel* is to fulfill a promise to King Hussein to depict the Jordanian perspective regarding Arab-Israeli relations. In Jordan's eyes, Israel returned control of the Sinai to Egypt, its main enemy, and announced its willingness to return the Golan Heights to Syria, yet remained unwilling to make peace with Jordan on the same basis because of historic, religious, and nationalist interests in East Jerusalem and the

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<sup>7</sup> Solomon, *supra* note 6, at 2.

<sup>8</sup> The author was a former naval officer and CIA officer. He received a baccalaureate in Foreign Service and juris doctor from Georgetown University, a master's in Islamic law as a Fulbright Fellow at the Punjab University in Lahore, Pakistan, and a doctorate in international law from Georgetown. *See, e.g.*, O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at ix–xii, and T. Rees Shapiro, *Jack O'Connell, 88, Dies; Diplomatic Adviser to Jordan's King Hussein*, WASH. POST, Jul. 18, 2010, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/17/AR2010071702682\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/17/AR2010071702682_pf.html).

<sup>9</sup> *Biography – His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal*, <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/biography.html> (last visited Sept. 5, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Within the context of diplomacy and international relations, shuttle diplomacy is action in which an outside party serves as an intermediary between principals in a dispute. The intermediary successively travels from the working location of one principal to that of another, and principal-to-principal contact is thus avoided. Shuttle diplomacy is often used when a principal refuses to recognize a party to mutually desired negotiations. *See, e.g.*, GEORGE LENCZOWSKI, *AMERICAN PRESIDENTS AND THE MIDDLE EAST* 131 (1990).

<sup>11</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 68–74.

<sup>12</sup> AVI SHLAIM, *LION OF JORDAN: THE LIFE OF KING HUSSEIN IN WAR AND PEACE* 230 (2007).

<sup>13</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at xviii

West Bank.<sup>14</sup> While the subject matter of *King's Counsel* has been studied extensively, O'Connell's proximity to the king for more than 35 years provides the reader with exclusive details and behind-the-scenes insight to political maneuvering in the Middle East from 1963 to 1999.

Though it shares its central theme with a number of works,<sup>15</sup> what distinguishes *King's Counsel* from other contemporary accounts of "the father of modern Jordan"<sup>16</sup> is the author's unique perspective based on his shared adversity with King Hussein through the most trying of times.<sup>17</sup> In the summer of 1958, O'Connell, an agent with the CIA, was assigned to Amman, the capital of Jordan, when he first met King Hussein. Despite being a western outsider, from 1963 to 1971, O'Connell earned the king's trust throughout his assignment as the CIA station chief in Amman, during which time he stood shoulder to shoulder with King Hussein as Israeli warplanes bombed the palace.

Following his resignation from the CIA in 1972, O'Connell was retained both as Jordan's American legal and diplomatic counsel and King Hussein's personal advisor. In this capacity, O'Connell prepared position papers for the king and his aides; wrote the king's speeches delivered in the United States; and, as directed by the king, served as principal advisor on Jordanian matters of state and foreign affairs, including the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Camp David Accords, and ceding of the West Bank to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). It is O'Connell's direct exposure to the heart of Jordanian politics that bolsters the author's credibility throughout the book while it simultaneously undercuts his objectivity. Accompanied by tales of violence and cloak and dagger diplomacy, the military reader will appreciate O'Connell's perspective and find modern application for some of the premises advanced by the book. In the end, the reader will find *King's Counsel* adds chilling color and texture to the fabric of Arab-Israeli relations.

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<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at xvii, 247.

<sup>15</sup> Many books document King Hussein's attempts to solidify Arab-Israeli relations following the Six-Day War. *See, e.g.*, SHLAIM, *supra* note 13 and NIGEL ASHTON, KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN: A POLITICAL LIFE (2008).

<sup>16</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 247.

<sup>17</sup> O'Connell recounts the life and exploits of King Hussein, describing the irrepressible optimism, persistence, and keen political instincts that enabled him to become the United States' most reliable Middle East ally. Despite coup attempts, decisive military defeat and loss of territory, civil war, unpopular support for Saddam Hussein, and remaining the only Arab leader unwilling to join the United Nations coalition to liberate Kuwait, King Hussein's relations with the United States and the West recovered completely. *Id.* at 248.

## II. Piecing Together A Patchwork Quilt: Tenuous Connections in *King's Counsel* Between Historical Fact and Subjective Conjecture

While *King's Counsel* is not an objective account of Middle Eastern relations or American diplomatic intervention in the region, the reader may find it was never meant to be. Commissioned by King Hussein in the early 1990s to engage a respected American author to tell his story of the vain quest for peace in the Middle East, O'Connell finds himself obligated to write *King's Counsel* by default due to the untimely passing of two predetermined authors and King Hussein himself. As the author recounts, "not to tell the story would cheat history, break a trust with the king, and probably evade an ethical duty."<sup>18</sup> Although the author presents facts that support his conclusion, the subjective manner in which it is done occasionally reads like tabloid reportage, and throughout the text, the author depicts several prominent American statesmen as subservient to Israel<sup>19</sup> or purposefully deceptive in their support for the country.<sup>20</sup> For the most part, O'Connell provides a logical interpretation of events, but his occasional speculative digressions and sometimes conspiratorial premises may hamper the reader's ability to clearly differentiate between conjecture and historical accuracy.

Fighting on multiple fronts against the combined might of three Arab armies, Israel won a war in merely six days and occupied territory in Egypt, Syria, and Jordan.<sup>21</sup> In particular, on June 5, 1967, Israel delivered a stunning opening blow in the Six-Day War.<sup>22</sup> Within several hours, Israeli air strikes devastated opposing air forces and suppressed many maneuver elements.<sup>23</sup> Upon cessation of military activities, the three nations called for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces and the return of all seized territory. Israel continued to maintain possession of the territories, and in September 1967, the Khartoum Arab Summit announced there would be no recognition, no negotiation, and no peace

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<sup>18</sup> *Id.* at xx.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.* at 234–35.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at xix.

<sup>21</sup> Jordan had previously executed the Arab Mutual Defense Pact with Egypt, and King Hussein considered the political price of withholding military support from Egypt would result in Jordan's ostracism in the Arab world. *Id.* at 57. Within sixty hours of launching his forces in support of Egypt, King Hussein lost "much of his army, the whole of his air force and half of his territory." SHLAIM, *supra* note 13, at 254.

<sup>22</sup> *Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America—The Six-Day War*, <http://www.sixdaywar.org/war.asp> (last visited Dec. 27, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*

with Israel.<sup>24</sup> On November 22, 1967, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 242, calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied since June 1967. Once this resolution was announced, nearly every negotiation between Israel and Jordan centered specifically on trading land for peace.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, American presidential policy statements about these negotiations have remained conspicuously ambiguous.

From the start, O'Connell stimulates the reader with many of the action-packed scenes one would expect of a spy memoir—a nearly compromised deep cover visit to Egypt in the 1950s; clandestine operations to bug the Soviet Ambassador to Jordan's desk in the 1960s; and a close call as the PLO firebombed his residence in Amman in the 1970s. Despite these engaging scenarios, the reader is ultimately left unsatisfied by the lack of background information provided by the author about the heart of the issue: the state of Arab-Israeli relations previous and subsequent to the Six-Day War.<sup>26</sup> Instead, *King's Counsel* follows the sequence of events in which O'Connell transitions from one CIA assignment to another until conflict arises among Israel, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. The author's straightforward approach does not produce a deliberate, comprehensive history of the Middle East or Jordanian-Israeli relations that would help a reader understand the nature of the conflict within an accurate historical and political framework.

Additionally, the narrative is filled with anachronisms interspersed with facts and questionable information, making it often unclear as to whether information was redacted prior to publishing a narrative that remained in compliance with CIA rules of confidentiality. Finally, unfounded assertions unnecessarily complicate the author's assessment of Jordanian peace efforts. For instance, O'Connell unequivocally states that he believes former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger instigated the 1973 Yom Kippur War,<sup>27</sup> and that President Johnson, President Nixon, and Harrison M. Symmes, former Ambassador to Jordan, were

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<sup>24</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 64–66.

<sup>25</sup> *Id.* at 63.

<sup>26</sup> In stark contrast to other works, *King's Counsel* contains no notes, maps, tables, photographs, illustrations, chronologies, or appendices. Though O'Connell's credentials are impeccable and his first-hand knowledge of events is unquestionable, his presentation of the material lacks formality and relegates the reviewer—and potentially the military reader—to research alternative sources for clarification.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.* at xix.

collectively indifferent to the Middle East peace process.<sup>28</sup> O'Connell also incorrectly assumes that the reader understands basic pre-1967 Middle East geography, Jordanian-Israeli relations, and the history of Palestinian displacement in the region. This untenable assumption, coupled with the author's stream of consciousness writing style that was often steeped with his foreign policy expertise, forces the reader to conduct independent research in order to better understand the author's detailed analysis.

The author also relies heavily upon primary sources, most derived from his personal involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process spanning the Johnson,<sup>29</sup> Ford,<sup>30</sup> Carter,<sup>31</sup> Reagan,<sup>32</sup> George H. W. Bush,<sup>33</sup> and Clinton administrations,<sup>34</sup> coupled with his expectation that resolution could occur during the George W. Bush<sup>35</sup> and Obama administrations.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, the author provides details from events and conversations that transpired twenty, thirty, and forty years before, including discussions with Secretary of State George P. Shultz to

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<sup>28</sup> *Id.* at 91–93.

<sup>29</sup> President Johnson argued a return to pre-1967 borders was not a prescription for peace but for renewed hostilities. Instead, he advocated Israeli security against terrorism, destruction, and war. *Id.* at 71–74.

<sup>30</sup> President Ford wrote to Israeli prime-minister Yitzhak Rabin that, “[t]he U.S. has not developed a final position on the borders. Should it do so it will give great weight to Israel’s position that any peace agreement with Syria must be predicated on Israel remaining on the Golan Heights.” Solomon, *supra* note 6, at 2.

<sup>31</sup> President Carter, following the Camp David peace negotiations, suggested a framework for further talks based on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 242 without directly referring to pre-1967 borders. O’CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 142–43.

<sup>32</sup> President Reagan discouraged a return to Israeli pre-1967 borders, as “the bulk of Israel’s population lived within artillery range of hostile armies.” Solomon, *supra* note 6, at 2.

<sup>33</sup> The George H. W. Bush administration co-sponsored peace negotiations with the Soviet Union and included the Israelis, Syrians, Lebanese, Jordanians, and Palestinians based on UNSCR 338, a cessation of the 1973 Yom Kippur hostilities and a call for the implementation of UNSCR 242. O’CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 184.

<sup>34</sup> President Clinton endorsed a lasting peace achieved through territorial swaps, without mentioning pre-1967 borders. Solomon, *supra* note 6, at 2.

<sup>35</sup> President George W. Bush wrote to Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon that realities on the ground prevent a complete return to pre-1967 boundaries and all previous peace talks have reached the same conclusion. The administration, nevertheless, encouraged Israeli-Jordanian border changes. *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> O’Connell asserts that President Obama, the constitutional law professor and Christian son of a Kenyan Muslim, “is the ideal guy to bring about real change in the Middle East.” O’CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 238.

revitalize the peace process in December 1982;<sup>37</sup> conversations with King Hussein about the King's political options during the PLO occupation of Amman and the Syrian invasion of Jordan in 1970;<sup>38</sup> and exchanges with Arthur J. Goldberg, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, in November 1967 throughout the development of UNSCR 242.<sup>39</sup> Though loosely organized chronologically, O'Connell's unrelated anecdotes, conspiratorial speculation, and gratuitous digressions are sprinkled liberally throughout the text.

In fact, the reader might expect Vernon Loeb, O'Connell's co-author and local editor for the Washington Post, to have done more to edit, arrange, and better organize *King's Counsel*. Although the author's conclusions are conveyed relatively clearly, one cannot help but detect a partisan approach to the subject matter. O'Connell fails to recognize his close relationship with King Hussein and, at times, the direct involvement in matters of prolific consequence that degrade the author's ability to provide an objective account of events and detract from a straightforward examination of controversial issues that remain the subject of bitter international debate.

### III. *King's Counsel* and Renewed Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiations

In addition to touching off a veritable firestorm in the mainstream media and diplomatic circles by endorsing pre-1967 Israeli borders, President Obama's May 19, 2011, speech—A Moment of Opportunity<sup>40</sup>—provided an overview of three major issues. First, it indicated America's changing Middle East policy in the wake of the Arab Spring<sup>41</sup> that began in Tunisia on December 10, 2010, and a reversal of President Obama's February 2010 estimate for his administration to restart the Middle East peace process—a calculation significantly criticized by O'Connell in his book.<sup>42</sup> Second, the speech

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<sup>37</sup> *Id.* at 146–49.

<sup>38</sup> *Id.* at 95–105.

<sup>39</sup> *Id.* at 69–74.

<sup>40</sup> Obama, *supra* note 5.

<sup>41</sup> The Arab Spring, also known as the Arab Awakening, describes the pro-democracy rebellions and protests that have occurred throughout the Middle East and North Africa since December 2010. See Gary Blight, Sheila Pulham & Paul Torpey, *Arab Spring: An Interactive Timeline of Middle East Protests*, THE GUARDIAN, Nov. 29, 2011, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline>.

<sup>42</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 240.

announced support for political and economic reform in the Middle East, which O'Connell asserts will not only strengthen Arab countries individually, but also unite them even more than the Khartoum Arab Summit of 1967.<sup>43</sup> Finally, the president recognized that the demands for greater political and economic opportunity in Arab nations could be used as a catalyst for Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. In his book, O'Connell similarly endorses the promises expressed by the Arab peace initiative: that all twenty-two Arab nations would make peace with Israel and recognize its right to exist in exchange for full implementation of UNSCR 242.<sup>44</sup>

The Obama administration focused on the “democratic wave”<sup>45</sup> sweeping the Middle East and North Africa to justify its expectation that peaceful coexistence in the Middle East and consonance with UNSCR 242 was possible. Although the administration contended that negotiations based on territory and security would result in “a lasting peace that ends the conflict and resolves all claims,”<sup>46</sup> several significant obstacles were largely ignored. Most notably, the May 2011 agreement between Fatah and Hamas, in which the two Palestinian factions agreed to form an interim government to negotiate peace with Israel,<sup>47</sup> was largely disregarded when the Obama administration concluded “how hard [resuming peace negotiations] will be.”<sup>48</sup> Further, the president acknowledged years of steadfast American support for Israel and claimed it was “precisely because of [this] friendship, it’s important that we tell the truth: The status quo is unsustainable, and Israel too must act boldly to advance a lasting peace.”<sup>49</sup>

The bold action President Obama prescribed “will involve two states for two peoples: Israel as a Jewish state and the homeland for the Jewish people, and the state of Palestine as the homeland for the Palestinian people, [with] each state enjoying self-determination, mutual recognition, and peace.”<sup>50</sup> More specifically, the president explained that:

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<sup>43</sup> *Id.* at 245.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.* at 241.

<sup>45</sup> Obama, *supra* note 5, at 3.

<sup>46</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>47</sup> Maggie Michael, *Fatah, Hamas Reconciliation Pact Ends Four-Year Rift*, HUFFINGTON POST, May 4, 2011, available at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/04/fatah-hamas-reconciliation-deal\\_n\\_857336.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/04/fatah-hamas-reconciliation-deal_n_857336.html).

<sup>48</sup> Obama, *supra* note 5, at 6.

<sup>49</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>50</sup> *Id.* at 5–6.

[t]he United States believes that negotiations should result in two states, with permanent Palestinian borders with Israel, Jordan, and Egypt, and permanent Israeli borders with Palestine. We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states. The Palestinian people must have the right to govern themselves, and reach their full potential, in a sovereign and contiguous state.<sup>51</sup>

While President Obama's speech and *King's Counsel* both resonate with hopes for peaceful resolution to Israel's occupation of the West Bank, cessation of "illegal" settlement construction, and affording refugees the right of return, both also fail to provide a deliberate plan to accomplish such goals. Additionally, neither Obama's speech nor O'Connell's book provides a meaningful assessment on the bleak consequences such a "peace" would have on effective border security and continued acts of terrorism against Israeli civilians.

Although *King's Counsel* does analyze failed peace initiatives and discusses the potential for successful negotiations, the author improperly focuses more on the personalities and motives of bureaucrats with vested interests in the outcome of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations rather than the settlement process itself. O'Connell's overemphasis on the interaction between multiple personalities and state governments, coupled with his preconceived notion that ominous Israeli and American intentions stymied the peace process, leads the author to three erroneous conclusions.

First, O'Connell implies Israel cannot be persuaded to accept a meaningful peace.<sup>52</sup> Second, O'Connell suggests a meaningful peace is possible, but ignores the fact that major elements within a divided Palestinian movement clearly challenge Israel's right to exist.<sup>53</sup> Third, the author's anticipation that each administration in the Middle East—some of which are clearly unstable regimes—would agree to a lasting

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<sup>51</sup> *Id.* at 6.

<sup>52</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 240–41.

<sup>53</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, *Obama, Netanyahu, and the Future of U.S.-Israeli Relations*, CTR. FOR STRATEGIC AND INT'L STUD., May 15, 2011, available at <http://www.csis.org/publication/obama-netanyahu-and-future-us-israeli-relations>.

peace with Israel and abide by the terms of an international agreement is unrealistic, misplaced, and fundamentally flawed.

Surprisingly, O'Connell only tangentially addresses what appears to be the three most significant points in a potential Arab-Israeli settlement. The author fails to acknowledge trading territory for peace<sup>54</sup> would be an attempt to trade terrorism for settlements.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, though glossed over in the final pages of *King's Counsel*, demographics make a major Palestinian return highly improbable, if not impossible. Finally, O'Connell disregards the considerable logistic, economic, and civic challenges associated with the creation of a Palestinian state, or allowing Israel to maintain much of the land gained in its 1967 conquest.<sup>56</sup>

In 1999, O'Connell was introduced to Efraim Halevy, head of the Mossad,<sup>57</sup> when O'Connell met the Israeli delegation that attended King Hussein's funeral. Like O'Connell, Halevy was highly regarded for solving more than one impasse to Jordanian-Israeli peace accords. Upon meeting O'Connell, Halevy complimented him for his service to King Hussein and Jordan. In response, O'Connell stated:

I would like to say the same thing to you, but I was with the King for forty years, and all he wanted to do was make peace with Israel, that's all he really wanted to do, and he spent most of his time trying. I just happened to be at his side while he was trying. You could have made peace with him, in a real sense, any time along the line, and you never did. And I hold you responsible for that. You could have saved the whole area a lot of trouble if you had just not been so selfish and made peace with Jordan. You had a leader here with his hand out, and so I can't say the same thing to you that you said to me—I think you blew it.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 241–42.

<sup>55</sup> Cordesman, *supra* note 54, at 2.

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> The Institute for Intelligence and Special Operations, otherwise known as the Mossad, is the agency appointed by the Israeli government to collect information, analyze intelligence, and conduct special, covert operations. See *About Us—State of Israel, Israel Secret Intelligence Service*, [http:// www.mossad.gov.il/Eng/AboutUs.aspx](http://www.mossad.gov.il/Eng/AboutUs.aspx) (last visited Dec. 27, 2011).

<sup>58</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 211.

Despite advising King Hussein throughout the failed peace process and having witnessed firsthand the changing political landscapes of the Middle East and Washington, D.C., O'Connell fails to acknowledge his own partiality for his former client,<sup>59</sup> his bias against Israel,<sup>60</sup> or his skepticism toward American intervention.<sup>61</sup> The author's overall ability to address Middle East relations with a predominantly objective lens may leave the reader convinced that there are no issues with the author's academic integrity. However, such sentiments are clearly born from both the diplomacy that took place before the Six-Day War and O'Connell's own personal experiences during the conflict.

Through its analysis of peripheral activities that impacted various American presidential administrations' positions on the Arab-Israeli peace process, *King's Counsel* effectively highlights the basis for the diplomatic conflagration caused by President Obama's explicit call for 1967-based Israeli borders. Remarking on Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's comment in February 2010 that the pre-1967 Israeli borders should be used as a starting point for peace negotiations, O'Connell observed that "[t]he very fact that [Clinton's] remark caused a stir shows how far we've come, or regressed."<sup>62</sup>

#### IV. Conclusion

In spite of its weaknesses, *King's Counsel* provides an opportunity for the military reader to assume an Arab view of the Middle East dilemma. With few servicemembers today understanding the genesis of Palestinian upheaval in and around Israel, O'Connell examines the virtual annexation of territory that has doomed most attempts at accommodation between Israel and Jordan.<sup>63</sup> With uncharacteristic optimism, O'Connell consistently focuses the reader's attention not on the tensions between Israel and Jordan, but rather on the continuing dialogue between them.<sup>64</sup> His clear articulation of King Hussein's perspective toward failed peace negotiations with Israel delivers an unbalanced, yet entertaining and insightful, read.

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<sup>59</sup> *Id.* at 212–13.

<sup>60</sup> *Id.* at 238.

<sup>61</sup> *Id.* at 237.

<sup>62</sup> *Id.* at 240.

<sup>63</sup> SHLAIM, *supra* note 13, at 261.

<sup>64</sup> O'CONNELL, *supra* note 1, at 85–91.

Military readers seeking a deliberate and comprehensive explanation of Middle East diplomacy would be best served reading another title. For those with a historical understanding of the region and a penchant for international intrigue, *King's Counsel* deftly illustrates that the political sensitivities associated with Arab-Israeli relations are as relevant today as they were in June 1967.