

peace to end all peace

peace to end all peace is a phrase that resonates deeply within the corridors of history, diplomacy, and international relations. It evokes both the hope for ultimate tranquility and the often harsh reality of conflicts that challenge the very notion of lasting peace. Throughout history, the pursuit of peace has been an enduring quest, yet paradoxically, many of the efforts designed to establish peace have led to further turmoil. This article explores the complex layers behind the idea of “peace to end all peace,” examining its origins, the historical cycles of peace and conflict, and the lessons we can learn to forge a more sustainable and genuine peace in the modern era.

Origins and Historical Context of the Phrase

The Term's Origin and Its Literary Roots

The phrase “peace to end all peace” gained prominence through the title of a seminal book by British historian David Fromkin, published in 1989. In his work, Fromkin critically examines the aftermath of World War I and how the peace treaties, particularly the Treaty of Versailles, set the stage for future conflicts. The phrase encapsulates the paradoxical nature of peace agreements that are intended to bring stability but often sow the seeds for subsequent upheaval.

While the phrase in this exact form is modern, its conceptual roots stretch back centuries. Historically, treaties and peace accords have frequently been seen as temporary solutions, often failing to address underlying grievances, leading to cycles of violence and retaliation.

The Impact of World War I and the Concept of the “Peace to End All Peace”

World War I marked a pivotal moment in global history, with unprecedented destruction and loss of life. The subsequent peace negotiations aimed to create a new world order; however, many historians argue that the peace established was superficial, lacking mechanisms to ensure long-term stability.

The phrase “the war to end all wars” was popularized after WWI, reflecting the hope that the catastrophic conflict would serve as a final, devastating lesson that would prevent future wars. Ironically, this hope was shattered when World War II erupted just two decades later, illustrating how peace agreements often fail to address deeper issues.

The Cycle of Peace and Conflict in History

Peace Treaties and Their Often Short-Lived Nature

Throughout history, treaties and accords have frequently served as temporary halts to violence. Examples include:

- The Treaty of Tordesillas (1494): Dividing the New World, but not resolving underlying colonial tensions.
- The Treaty of Westphalia (1648): Ending the Thirty Years' War but setting the stage for future conflicts in Europe.
- The Treaty of Versailles (1919): Reshaping Europe post-WWI but fostering resentment that contributed to WWII.

These treaties often failed to address root causes such as economic disparities, ethnic tensions, and political grievances.

The Role of Power Dynamics and Imperial Ambitions

Power struggles among nations and empires have historically undermined peace efforts. When victorious states impose punitive measures or fail to incorporate all stakeholders, resentment and unrest tend to persist. Examples include:

- Post-World War I Germany's grievances over the Treaty of Versailles.
- The Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union leading to proxy conflicts despite efforts at diplomacy.

These dynamics highlight how peace is often fragile in the face of competing interests.

Lessons Learned from Past Failures

Addressing the Root Causes of Conflict

One of the most critical lessons is that superficial peace agreements rarely hold. Sustainable peace requires:

- Addressing economic inequalities
- Resolving ethnic and cultural tensions
- Ensuring political representation and justice

Ignoring these factors often results in peace that is fragile and temporary.

The Importance of Inclusive Diplomacy

Inclusive negotiations that involve all relevant stakeholders—especially marginalized groups—are more likely to produce enduring peace. Excluding key parties often leads to resentment and future conflicts.

Building Institutions for Peace and Conflict Resolution

Strong international and national institutions dedicated to conflict resolution and peacebuilding are vital. Examples include:

- The United Nations and its peacekeeping missions
- Regional bodies like the African Union and the European Union

These institutions aim to mediate disputes and promote dialogue.

The Modern Quest for Genuine Peace

Strategies for Achieving Lasting Peace

Modern peacebuilding emphasizes several strategies:

1. **Diplomacy and Dialogue:** Facilitating open communication among conflicting parties.
2. **Reconciliation Processes:** Healing societal divisions through truth commissions and acknowledgment.
3. **Economic Development:** Reducing disparities that often fuel conflicts.
4. **Justice and Accountability:** Addressing crimes and grievances to foster trust.

Challenges in the 21st Century

Despite advancements, achieving “peace to end all peace” remains elusive due to:

- Globalized conflicts and transnational threats such as terrorism and climate change.
- Persistent nationalism and populism undermining multilateral efforts.
- The rise of cyber warfare complicating traditional peacekeeping roles.

These challenges require innovative approaches and sustained international cooperation.

The Role of Individuals and Civil Society in Promoting Peace

Grassroots Movements and Peacebuilding

Individuals and communities play a vital role in fostering peace. Grassroots movements can:

- Promote intercultural understanding
- Advocate for justice and human rights
- Support reconciliation efforts in post-conflict societies

Education and Peace Awareness

Educational initiatives that teach conflict resolution, empathy, and global citizenship help cultivate a culture of peace.

Conclusion: Can There Be a Peace to End All Peace?

The quest for a peace that truly ends all conflicts is a noble but complex pursuit. History teaches us that peace is not simply the absence of war but a dynamic process requiring commitment, justice, and understanding. While complete and everlasting peace may remain an aspirational goal, incremental progress—driven by inclusive diplomacy, addressing root causes, and fostering global cooperation—can move us closer to a world where peace endures. Recognizing the lessons of the past and actively working toward equitable and sustainable solutions are essential steps in this ongoing journey. Ultimately, peace to end all peace is not just an end state but a continuous effort, requiring vigilance, compassion, and resilience from all sectors of society.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main thesis of 'Peace to End All Peace' by David Fromkin?

'Peace to End All Peace' argues that the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent arbitrary division of its territories by European powers after World War I laid the groundwork for many modern Middle Eastern conflicts.

How did the decisions made during the Treaty of Sèvres influence the Middle East?

The Treaty of Sèvres partitioned the Ottoman Empire, creating mandates and borders that disregarded local ethnic and religious groups, leading to long-term instability and conflicts in the region.

Why is 'Peace to End All Peace' considered an important book in Middle Eastern history?

It provides a detailed analysis of the geopolitical decisions and colonial ambitions post-World War I that shaped the modern Middle East, offering insights into the roots of ongoing conflicts.

In what ways does Fromkin critique Western powers' role in Middle Eastern affairs?

Fromkin criticizes Western powers, especially Britain and France, for their imperialistic policies, secret agreements, and disregard for local populations, which contributed to regional instability.

What impact did the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire have on Arab nationalism?

The dissolution fueled Arab nationalist movements, as Arabs sought independence and self-determination, often feeling betrayed by promises made by Western powers during World War I.

How does 'Peace to End All Peace' relate to contemporary Middle Eastern conflicts?

The book shows that many current issues, such as border disputes and identity conflicts, have roots in the post-World War I decisions and mandates established by colonial powers.

What were some key secret agreements discussed in 'Peace to End All Peace'?

The book discusses agreements like the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which secretly divided Ottoman lands between Britain and France, bypassing Arab leaders and populations.

How has 'Peace to End All Peace' influenced modern historical and political analysis of the Middle East?

It is regarded as a seminal work that highlights the importance of understanding colonial legacies and diplomatic decisions in analyzing current Middle Eastern issues.

Additional Resources

Peace to End All Peace is a phrase that resonates deeply within the annals of 20th-century history, encapsulating a complex and often controversial narrative about the aftermath of World War I and the subsequent peace settlements. This expression, also the title of a seminal book by historian David Fromkin, critiques the harsh and often imprudent decisions made by Western powers in shaping the Middle East after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. In this review, we will explore the core themes, historical significance, and implications of Peace to End All Peace, analyzing its

insights, strengths, and limitations.

Introduction to Peace to End All Peace

The phrase itself is laden with irony and forewarning. It suggests that the peace established after World War I was anything but lasting or truly peaceful. Instead, it set the stage for decades of conflict, instability, and geopolitical upheaval in the Middle East. David Fromkin's book meticulously details how the decisions made by Britain, France, and other Allied powers in the aftermath of the war sowed the seeds for future turmoil.

The central argument posits that the post-war treaties, especially the Treaty of Sèvres and the Treaty of Lausanne, along with the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement, disregarded the aspirations of the local populations and ignored the complex social, religious, and ethnic fabric of the region. The result was a patchwork of mandates and borders that were often arbitrary and oppressive, leading to a persistent cycle of conflict.

Historical Context and Background

Understanding Peace to End All Peace requires a grasp of the geopolitical landscape after World War I. The Ottoman Empire, which had been a dominant power in the Middle East for centuries, was dismantled following defeat in the war. The victorious Allies aimed to carve up the empire's territories for strategic and economic gains.

The Fall of the Ottoman Empire

- The Ottoman Empire's decline was a gradual process, but the war accelerated its collapse.
- The empire's defeat led to the loss of its Arab provinces, which had been under Ottoman control for centuries.
- The Arab revolt, supported by the British, sought independence but was ultimately betrayed by the secret agreements made among the Allies.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement and Secret Deals

- A clandestine agreement between Britain and France that divided Ottoman lands into spheres of influence.
- This agreement conflicted with promises made to Arab leaders for independence, notably the McMahon-Hussein correspondence.
- The revelations of these secret deals fueled Arab disillusionment and resentment.

The Post-War Peace Settlements and Mandates

The peace settlements aimed to stabilize the region but often did so at the expense of local populations.

The Treaty of Sèvres (1920)

- Officially dismantled the Ottoman Empire.
- Carved out zones of influence controlled by Britain and France.
- Proposed the establishment of a Kurdish state, which was never realized.
- Faced fierce resistance from Turkish nationalists, leading to its annulment.

The Treaty of Lausanne (1923)

- Replaced Sèvres and recognized the sovereignty of the modern Turkish state.
- Redrew borders, notably abandoning the plan for an independent Arab state.
- Marked the end of the Ottoman Empire and established the boundaries of modern Turkey.

The League of Nations Mandates

- Mandates system entrusted Britain and France with administering former Ottoman territories.
- Britain received Iraq, Palestine, and Transjordan.
- France obtained Syria and Lebanon.
- These mandates often ignored the wishes of the local populations, leading to unrest and resistance.

Impact and Consequences of the Peace Settlements

The decisions made during this period had profound and long-lasting impacts on regional stability.

Creation of Arbitrary Borders

- Borders drawn without regard to ethnic, religious, or tribal considerations.
- Led to the marginalization of various groups and the rise of nationalist movements.
- Set the groundwork for future conflicts, including the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Emergence of Nationalist Movements

- Arab nationalism grew in opposition to Western mandates and control.
- Leaders like T.E. Lawrence and others influenced Arab independence movements.
- The Balfour Declaration (1917) promised a Jewish homeland, further complicating regional dynamics.

Persistent Instability and Conflict

- Mandate policies often favored colonial interests over local aspirations.
- Resistance movements evolved into insurgencies.
- The region's modern conflicts can be traced back to these early post-war decisions.

Critical Analysis of Peace to End All Peace

David Fromkin's work is both detailed and compelling, offering a nuanced critique of the post-World War I peace process. Its strengths and limitations merit careful consideration.

Strengths and Features

- Comprehensive Historical Narrative: The book provides a meticulous account of diplomatic negotiations, secret agreements, and political maneuvers.
- Insight into Colonial Politics: It highlights how imperial ambitions shaped the mandates and borders, often neglecting local realities.
- Illumination of Consequences: The work convincingly links early 20th-century decisions to ongoing regional conflicts.
- Engaging Writing Style: Fromkin's narrative is accessible, making complex diplomatic history engaging for a broad audience.

Critiques and Limitations

- Focus on Western Perspectives: The book primarily examines the actions and motivations of Britain, France, and other Western powers, sometimes underrepresenting local voices.
- Limited Focus on Arab and Ottoman Perspectives: While providing some insight, it could delve deeper into the perspectives of Arab leaders, Turkish nationalists, and other regional actors.
- Deterministic Tone: Some readers might interpret the narrative as overly deterministic, suggesting that the post-war settlements inevitably led to conflict, potentially underplaying other factors like internal regional dynamics.
- Lack of Prescriptive Solutions: The book details what went wrong but offers limited discussion on alternative solutions or contemporary lessons.

Relevance and Contemporary Implications

The themes explored in *Peace to End All Peace* remain profoundly relevant today. The borders drawn a century ago continue to influence regional conflicts, sectarian divisions, and nationalist movements.

Lessons from History

- The importance of respecting local populations' aspirations in peace negotiations.
- The dangers of imposing arbitrary borders without regard to ethnic, religious, or tribal realities.
- The long-term consequences of colonial mandates and imperial overreach.

Modern Parallels

- Ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and Palestine echo the unresolved issues of mandates and borders.
- The debate over self-determination versus colonial interests remains pertinent.
- International diplomacy can learn from the mistakes highlighted in Fromkin's analysis to foster more equitable and sustainable peace agreements.

Conclusion: The Legacy of Peace to End All Peace

Peace to End All Peace offers a compelling, richly detailed critique of the post-World War I peace process, emphasizing how imperial ambitions, secret diplomacy, and neglect of local voices led to enduring regional instability. Its insights underscore the importance of thoughtful, inclusive diplomacy and serve as a cautionary tale about the unintended consequences of geopolitical decisions.

While it excels in documenting the historical narrative and providing critical analysis, it could benefit from a broader inclusion of regional perspectives and alternative viewpoints. Nonetheless, the book's enduring relevance makes it an essential read for anyone interested in understanding the roots of modern Middle Eastern conflicts and the perils of neglecting the complex realities of a diverse region.

In sum, Peace to End All Peace reminds us that peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, understanding, and respect for sovereignty—lessons that remain vital as the world continues to grapple with conflicts rooted in historical decisions.

[Peace To End All Peace](#)

peace to end all peace: A Peace to End All Peace David Fromkin, 2010-08-03 Published with a new afterword from the author—the classic, bestselling account of how the modern Middle East was created The Middle East has long been a region of rival religions, ideologies, nationalisms, and ambitions. All of these conflicts—including the hostilities between Arabs and Israelis, and the violent challenges posed by Iraq's competing sects—are rooted in the region's political inheritance: the arrangements, unities, and divisions imposed by the Allies after the First World War. In A Peace to End All Peace, David Fromkin reveals how and why the Allies drew lines on an empty map that remade the geography and politics of the Middle East. Focusing on the formative years of 1914 to 1922, when all seemed possible, he delivers in this sweeping and magisterial book the definitive account of this defining time, showing how the choices narrowed and the Middle East began along a

road that led to the conflicts and confusion that continue to this day. A new afterword from Fromkin, written for this edition of the book, includes his invaluable, updated assessment of this region of the world today, and on what this history has to teach us.

peace to end all peace: A Peace to End All Peace David Fromkin, 1990 In our time the Middle East has proven a battleground of rival religions, ideologies, nationalisms, and dynasties. All of these conflicts, including the hostilities between Arabs and Israelis, come down, in a sense, to the extent to which the Middle East will continue to live with its political inheritance: the arrangements, unities, and divisions imposed upon the region by the Allies after the First World War. Here, author Fromkin reveals how and why the Allies came to remake the geography and politics of the Middle East, drawing lines on an empty map that eventually became the new countries of Iraq, Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon. Focusing on the formative years of 1914 to 1922, when all—even an alliance between Arab nationalism and Zionism—seemed possible, he raises questions about what might have been done differently, and answers questions about why things were done as they were.--From publisher description.

peace to end all peace: A Peace to End All Peace David Fromkin, 2009-07-21 Published with a new afterword from the author—the classic, bestselling account of how the modern Middle East was created The Middle East has long been a region of rival religions, ideologies, nationalisms, and ambitions. All of these conflicts—including the hostilities between Arabs and Israelis, and the violent challenges posed by Iraq's competing sects—are rooted in the region's political inheritance: the arrangements, unities, and divisions imposed by the Allies after the First World War. In *A Peace to End All Peace*, David Fromkin reveals how and why the Allies drew lines on an empty map that remade the geography and politics of the Middle East. Focusing on the formative years of 1914 to 1922, when all seemed possible, he delivers in this sweeping and magisterial book the definitive account of this defining time, showing how the choices narrowed and the Middle East began along a road that led to the conflicts and confusion that continue to this day. A new afterword from Fromkin, written for this edition of the book, includes his invaluable, updated assessment of this region of the world today, and on what this history has to teach us.

peace to end all peace: *A Peace to End All Peace* David Fromkin, 1989 The critically acclaimed New York Times bestselling account of how the modern Middle East came into being after World War I, and why it is in upheaval today In our time the Middle East has proven a battleground of rival religions, ideologies, nationalisms, and dynasties. All of these conflicts, including the hostilities between Arabs and Israelis that have flared yet again, come down, in a sense, to the extent to which the Middle East will continue to live with its political inheritance: the arrangements, unities, and divisions imposed upon the region by the Allies after the First World War. In *A Peace to End All Peace*, David Fromkin reveals how and why the Allies came to remake the geography and politics of the Middle East, drawing lines on an empty map that eventually became the new countries of Iraq, Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon. Focusing on the formative years of 1914 to 1922, when all—even an alliance between Arab nationalism and Zionism—seemed possible he raises questions about what might have been done differently, and answers questions about why things were done as they were. The current battle for a Palestinian homeland has its roots in these events of 85 years ago.

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peace to end all peace: *The Hidden History of the Balfour Declaration* Sahar Huneidi, 2019-06-27 Contained on a single page, the Balfour Declaration was sent by Arthur Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, to Lord Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community, in November 1917. It read, in part, "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." This brief missive was to be critical in determining the history of the Middle East, from the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 to the present day. And yet, despite its importance, the true origins of the Declaration remain obscure. The Declaration, Sahar Huneidi observes, was a work of carefully crafted ambiguity. It was this deliberate openness that allowed the British government, years later, to reshape its meaning, and even the history of its drafting, to support specific foreign policy ends. This process, Huneidi argues, was facilitated by a subsequent document: a little-known, handwritten memo by the Under-Secretary of the Colonial Office, William Ormsby-Gore, recounting from memory discussions surrounding the Declaration's drafting. Employing careful detective work and a rich knowledge of the subject matter, Huneidi reveals how, faced with a paucity of official records, Ormsby-Gore's account became the basis for a decision on Palestine that had devastating consequences for the stability of the region. This concise, eloquent book provides a vivid case study of the rewriting and repurposing of history, and compellingly recontextualizes the ongoing struggles of Israel-Palestine. Sahar Huneidi has a BA in Political Science from the American University of Beirut, and a Ph.D. from the University of Manchester, where her thesis formed the basis of her subsequent published work on Herbert Samuel. She has contributed numerous articles to academic journals and has edited studies on Israel/Palestine. She has also received diploma certificates in art history from Christie's Education. She is the director of East & West Publishing and lives mainly in London.

peace to end all peace: *Summary of David Fromkin's A Peace to End All Peace* Milkyway Media, 2024-02-06 Get the Summary of David Fromkin's A Peace to End All Peace in 20 minutes. Please note: This is a summary & not the original book. A Peace to End All Peace by David Fromkin provides a comprehensive examination of the British role in reshaping the Middle East during and after World War I. The book delves into the political naivety of British leaders aboard the yacht *Enchantress* in 1912, unaware of the impending war and its consequences for the Ottoman Empire. Fromkin chronicles the rise of the Young Turks, the internal divisions within the Committee of Union and Progress, and the geopolitical maneuvers that led to the Ottoman alignment with Germany...

peace to end all peace: *The Great War in the Middle East* Robert Johnson, James Kitchen, 2019-01-30 Traditionally, in general studies of the First World War, the Middle East is an arena of combat that has been portrayed in romanticised terms, in stark contrast to the mud, blood, and presumed futility of the Western Front. Battles fought in Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Arabia offered a different narrative on the Great War, one in which the agency of individual figures was less neutered by heavy artillery. As with the historiography of the Western Front, which has been the

focus of sustained inquiry since the mid-1960s, such assumptions about the Middle East have come under revision in the last two decades – a reflection of an emerging ‘global turn’ in the history of the First World War. The ‘sideshow’ theatres of the Great War – Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and the Pacific – have come under much greater scrutiny from historians. The fifteen chapters in this volume cover a broad range of perspectives on the First World War in the Middle East, from strategic planning issues wrestled with by statesmen through to the experience of religious communities trying to survive in war zones. The chapter authors look at their specific topics through a global lens, relating their areas of research to wider arguments on the history of the First World War.

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peace to end all peace: The Great Betrayal Fawaz A. Gerges, 2025-04-29 A history of the political instability in the Middle East, driven largely by great power conflict, and predictions for the future of the region. The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 divided the Middle East into states with unnatural boundaries, drawn by colonial powers with short-term interests and no consideration for the people or future of the region. The century that followed saw bad governance, systemic corruption, geopolitical rivalries, and endless foreign intervention and meddling, effectively redrawing borders by force. While there is no singular cause for instability in the Middle East, Gerges's analysis explains the origins of numerous past and ongoing conflicts to draw conclusions about where the region is heading, using the past to predict the future of Arab politics, religion, and life. The Hundred Years War for the Middle East introduces Gerges's new Middle East, shaped by the changes and discontinuity of present day. He presents five major predictions for the next century: state collapse and the emergence of new states; the present state system enduring with minor alteration; durability of political authoritarianism; a new social contract based on constitutional arrangements; and a combination of both constitutionalism and political authoritarianism. From the Sykes-Picot Agreement to the rise of ISIS, our modern understanding of the key actors, non-state organizations (like Al Qaeda and ISIS), and dominant forces allows us to examine how changing relationships and rising tensions will shape the next century--

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as the US built up its military presence following Desert Storm and the invasion of Iraq. Looking at the three enduring missions fulfilled by the British - maintaining interstate order, protecting the free flow of commerce, which later included petroleum; and keeping out other Great Powers - the book demonstrates how these had by 1991 been assumed almost entirely by the American leaders. A comprehensive and thorough look at the history of the Gulf and the contemporary issues affecting the region, this will be essential reading for students of Middle East history, military history and diplomatic history. Visit the author's website at www.thepoliticsandsecurityofthegulf.com

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peace to end all peace: The Woman Who Fought an Empire Gregory J. Wallance, 2018-03-01 Though she lived only to twenty-seven, Sarah Aaronsohn led a remarkable life. The Woman Who Fought an Empire tells the improbable but true odyssey of a bold young woman--the daughter of Romanian-born Jewish settlers in Palestine--who became the daring leader of a Middle East spy ring. Following the outbreak of World War I, Sarah learned that her brother Aaron had formed Nili, an anti-Turkish spy ring, to aid the British in their war against the Ottomans. Sarah, who had witnessed the atrocities of the Armenian genocide by the Turks, believed that only the defeat of the Ottoman Empire could save the Palestinian Jews from a similar fate. Sarah joined Nili, eventually rising to become the organization's leader. Operating behind enemy lines, she and her spies furnished vital information to British intelligence in Cairo about the Turkish military forces until she was caught and tortured by the Turks in the fall of 1917. To protect her secrets, Sarah got hold of a gun and shot herself. The Woman Who Fought an Empire, set at the birth of the modern Middle East, rebukes the Hollywood stereotype of women spies as femme fatales and is both an espionage thriller and a Joan of Arc tale.

peace to end all peace: Churchill and the Islamic World Warren Dockter, 2015-03-20 Winston Churchill began his career as a junior officer and war correspondent in the North West borderlands of British India, and this experience was the beginning of his long relationship with the Islamic world. Overturning the widely-accepted consensus that Churchill was indifferent to, and even contemptuous of, matters concerning the Middle East, this book unravels Churchill's nuanced understanding of the edges of the British Empire. Warren Dockter analyses the future Prime Minister's experiences of the East, including his work as Colonial Under-Secretary in the early 1900s, his relations with the Ottomans and conduct during the Dardanelles Campaign of 1915-16, his arguments with David Lloyd-George over Turkey, and his pragmatic support of Syria and Saudi Arabia during World War II. Challenging the popular depiction of Churchill as an ignorant imperialist when it came to the Middle East, Dockter suggests that his policy making was often more informed and relatively progressive when compared to the Orientalist prejudices of many of his contemporaries.

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