



## Let's lead horses to water, not faucets

By Jim Waters

The life of British Lt. Col. T. E. Lawrence was portrayed in “Lawrence of Arabia,” a famous film of the early 1960s.

This was a rare case where the real-life experiences of the man whose name graced the title of the box-office hit were at least as adventurous as anything portrayed by the great Peter O’Toole, a virtual unknown made into a star by the movie.

Lawrence himself really was a military hero, who became famous for his exploits during World War I as he led “the Arab Revolt” against the ruling Ottoman Turks in the Middle East. Lawrence and Arab rebels used guerilla warfare to tie down many Turkish troops who otherwise would have been fighting the British armies.

Winston Churchill, England’s illustrious leader, called him “one of the greatest beings alive in this time.”

Lawrence wrote about his Arabian adventures in “The Seven Pillars of Wisdom” – a military classic.

In that book, he tells about how that following the war, he brought back to England some Arab sheiks with which he formed close friendships during the war. They had a wonderful time making appearances before Parliament and getting an audience with royalty.

The night before they were to return home, Lawrence offered these sheiks anything they wanted to take back to their desert homes.

The sheiks led him up to the hotel room and into the bathroom where they pointed at the faucets in the bathtub. They wanted to take the faucets with them because they had seen the water gushing out of them. The sheiks thought that by taking the faucets, they could bring running water to their desert homes.

Lawrence explained how that the sheiks did not understand that the wonder of running water was not in the faucet –that was only a vessel through which it ran. Rather, the real magic was in what’s behind the faucet – a pump, the plumbing, the city main that supplied the water and, ultimately, an outside reservoir.

When you look at our country and commonwealth, what do you see? Do you see only “the faucet,” or can you envision the power behind it?

Our nation’s founders formed a representative government in which the power of the people lies behind the faucet. They could find no better method with which to protect our liberty and our individual rights.

They also did everything they could to keep us from becoming overly enamored with “the faucet” and to keep us living in the realization that just as the faucet did not provide the water—it’s simply a conduit – so government is just the guardian, a channel through which our freedom moves.

Just as Lawrence had his seven pillars of wisdom, I've been traveling around the commonwealth speaking on the "Seven Pillars" that will allow freedom to continue flowing.

Current policies of [stimulus spending](#), bailouts and government "picking" economic winners and losers (how's that working out for ya' with Solyndra?) threaten to dismantle these pillars, including this vital one: "We must not become dependent on a government that has nothing to give anybody except what it first takes from somebody."

And I follow with this warning: "A government that's big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to [take everything you've got](#)."

Current attempts by governments to sever the market's magical hand that has brought an unprecedented flood of prosperity and greatness to our nation is nothing less than an attempt to replace the reservoir without which liberty – and the life that is in it – cannot surge across our commonwealth and country.

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