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## Looking Back at the Bomb

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# Review Essays

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## Looking Back at the Bomb

**JAMES E. AUER and RICHARD HALLORAN**

The great debate over the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that swept across America last summer was partly emotional and even trivial but mainly genuine and profound. The 50th anniversary of the bombings generated at least nine books, a packet of magazine articles, radio commentaries, television shows, reminiscences by Americans who attacked and Japanese who were victims. If it had not been for the O. J. Simpson trial, the atomic issue might have dominated national attention.

The deliberations have subsided, but that does not mean the issues have gone away or a consensus has been reached. The fundamental question remains: Was the United States justified in dropping two bombs that immediately killed 200,000 people, the vast majority of them civilians? More simply, was President Truman right or wrong?

After studying much of the literature, we have concluded that the United States was justified and President Truman was right. We also believe that, like most human endeavors, it could have been handled better; the atomic bombing of Nagasaki so soon after Hiroshima is rightly open to question. Lastly, we recognize that, again as with most human endeavor, reasonable men and women will differ.

Sifting through this mass of material, it seems evident that Japan had been defeated by late July 1945, and that some Japanese leaders realized this. But defeat and surrender are not the same, and the issue was how to get Japan, notably the militarists who ruled the nation, to quit. In this, President Truman appeared to have six options:

- Invade Japan in two stages, prolonging the war for a year and taking large numbers of American and Allied casualties.
- Continue the aerial bombing and naval blockade until the Japanese lost the will to resist and surrendered.
- Get the Russians into the war in the hope they would crack Japanese resolve and make them sue for peace.
- Accept Japan's proposals to negotiate by modifying the demand for an unconditional surrender to permit Japan to retain the Emperor, a vital point to the Japanese, and agreeing to a minimal occupation of Japan.
- Warn that atomic bombs would be used unless Japan surrendered, and possibly detonate one as a demonstration.
- Drop the atomic bombs to shock the Japanese into quitting before more devastation was loosed on their nation.

Each option was considered, some more thoroughly than others, between 12 April when Mr. Truman became President and 24 July when he approved an order to drop the bombs after 3 August 1945. It was not a methodical process--government then was no more neat and orderly than it is today--but the decision was taken after three and a half years of a brutal, draining, desperate war.

US forces planned to invade Kyushu, Japan's southwestern island, on 1 November 1945; a second assault was planned

for 1 March 1946, against Tokyo. As for expected casualties, planners knew the ratio had risen as American forces got closer to Japan and the Japanese became ever more ferocious in defending their homeland. Estimates were all over the lot, from a minimum of 40,000 on up.

Continuing to bomb and blockade aroused fears that Japan would wait out the United States in hopes of a better deal. Americans were weary and impatient to end the war. Keeping an invasion force poised for months would be hard. Allied prisoners all over Asia might be killed.

The Russians promised to enter the war in August, but there is little evidence that Japan would have quit even if the Russians had reached the southern tip of Korea. The high command in Tokyo was not relying on forces on the Asian mainland to defend Japan proper.

Negotiating on Japanese terms was seen as breaking faith with Allies and a political land mine within the United States, where the public backed unconditional surrender. The Allies relented on retaining the Emperor; a shift in the Potsdam Declaration called for the unconditional surrender of Japan's armed forces rather than Japan as a nation, a nuance that Japanese diplomats caught but militarists ignored.

Much thought was given to warning the Japanese about the atomic bomb beyond the Potsdam Declaration's promise that Japan faced "prompt and utter destruction," but some doubted the Japanese high command would believe it. A proposed demonstration was dismissed because the Japanese might shoot down the airplane carrying the bomb, because the bomb had been tested but once and might not work again, and because the Japanese might think the United States had only one.

That left dropping the bomb. On 24 July in Potsdam, Mr. Truman approved its use. The next night, he wrote in his diary: "We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world. . . . It seems to be the most terrible thing ever discovered, but it can be made useful."

Critics of Mr. Truman contend he dropped the bomb to stave off the Russians, or to justify the \$2 billion expense of developing the bomb, or because he was a racist. The overwhelming evidence in several of the new books, plus that from historian David McCullough in his superb biography, *Truman*, shows that the President was driven foremost by a determination to end the war on American terms and with the least loss of life. "We have used it in order to shorten the agony of war," Mr. Truman said just after the bomb had been dropped.

With the benefit of hindsight, some of the criticism might have been forestalled if the Potsdam Declaration had included an explicit pledge that the imperial throne would be retained plus an explicit warning about the atomic bomb. No one knows, however, whether that would have been enough to make Japan surrender. No Japanese has come forward to say: "If only . . . ."

Each student of this decision may draw his or her own insights from the history of this episode. Among them might be to reinforce the conviction that moral issues do not go away, as much as a soldier might be tempted to brush them aside to get on with the mission. Another might be an understanding that the only fair way to judge a momentous decision would be in the context of the times. As Senator Howard Baker said during the Watergate hearings: "What did the President know and when did he know it?"

Still another: Personalities count, whether they be elected or appointed political leaders or serving military officers. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson comes off as thoughtful and perceptive, while Secretary of State James Byrnes seems to have been unable to see past the next political maneuver. Even so, in this decision, civilian supremacy over the military services served the nation well. Students of this question might find enlightening a comparison between the dominating political role of the Japanese high command and the subordinate military role of the American Joint Chiefs in World War II.

Lastly, we come away from these books again discouraged by the corrosive effect of interservice rivalry. Some was natural and even constructive: Each service thought it had the better way to force Japan to surrender--the Army Air Force by bombing, the Navy by blockade, the Army by invasion. From that came consideration of all possibilities. But sometimes a reader might wonder whether General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz were more

concerned with fighting each other than the Japanese.

A leader of the so-called revisionists who condemn President Truman's decision is Gar Alperovitz, a historian and political economist at the University of Maryland. His new book, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, is an updated version of his 1965 *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*. Armed with scores of declassified records, including Mr. Truman's notes on Potsdam that were discovered in 1979, Alperovitz has written a long and thoroughly documented work.

He contends that Japan knew it was defeated by May 1945. In his view, if the United States had indicated more clearly that Japan could retain Emperor Hirohito, Japan would have surrendered without an American invasion or the atomic bombings. Any hesitation by Japan would have been overcome by Russia's attack, but the United States delayed the Potsdam Conference so that the Alamogordo atomic test results would be known. Then, Secretary of State Byrnes persuaded President Truman to discourage Soviet entry into the war. Alperovitz further contends that most US officials, military and civilian, other than Byrnes, who won over a wavering President Truman, and the Manhattan Project chief, Lieutenant General Leslie Groves, wanted the Potsdam Declaration to assure the Japanese that they could retain the Emperor. Despite his almost endless documentation, Alperovitz admits that critical decisions at Potsdam were not documented, including the decision on 24 July to allow the Army Air Force to use atomic bombs on cities as soon as made ready. Alperovitz says Byrnes wanted to use the bombs not to induce Japan's surrender but to make the Soviets behave. Thus, two bombs were needlessly dropped on two cities that weren't military targets.

Then Alperovitz contends that Truman and Byrnes proceeded to cover up the deed. While Alperovitz anoints Byrnes as his major villain, he's back and forth on Secretary of War Stimson. He alternately paints him as the "good" advocate of offering assurances on the Emperor, the "bad" Cabinet secretary responsible for building the bomb, the "good" savior of the ancient capital in Kyoto, and the "bad" postwar apologist for the bomb. Most poignantly, Alperovitz uses Stimson as the "good" voice of reason arguing unsuccessfully that "where wisdom lay" was in seeing "satisfactory relations with Russia as not merely connected with but as virtually dominated by the problem of the atomic bomb." Alperovitz is hard on Truman for not listening to his Chief of Staff, Admiral William D. Leahy, who warned that atomic bombs would be in the same category as poison gas, a violation of "all of the known acts of war." The author condemns the President for having acted illegally, self-servingly overestimating the number of American lives saved, and misrepresenting Hiroshima and Nagasaki as military targets.

Race is the focus of historian and multiculturalist Ronald Takaki, a Japanese American at the University of California, Berkeley, in his mercifully briefer *Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb*. Mr. Truman's racial bias, his lack of international experience, and his inferiority complex dominate Takaki's account. Takaki also takes umbrage over Truman's estimate of half-a-million lives saved by the bombs and emphasizes the lesser casualty estimates of some military leaders.

Takaki makes sure his readers know Mr. Truman used the "n-word" frequently, including in letters to his wife, Bess. In one, Mr. Truman writes, his Uncle Will "says the Lord made a white man of dust, a nigger from mud, then threw up what was left and it came down a Chinaman. He does hate Chinese and Japs. So do I." Takaki tells us there was lots of racism then in the United States, in case we didn't know, and Harry Truman, despite some actions to the contrary, such as in integrating the military services after the war, was an example of that racism.

Robert Jay Lifton, a professor of psychology at John Jay College and the City University of New York, and Greg Mitchell, a former editor of *Nuclear Times* magazine, consider the term "revisionist" to be pejorative. Even so, they are far more vituperative than Alperovitz and Takaki in condemning Mr. Truman and his associates in their *Hiroshima in America: Fifty Years of Denial*. They allege not only a cover-up by Truman, but a "confabulation," which they define as "an untrue belief or reconstruction that can unconsciously alter events in favor of one's own moral claim." The authors assert: "It can change what one actually did into something one's conscience can accept--and this confabulation had the specific psychological function of placing blame for the bombings entirely on the Japanese."

In the final quarter of this volume, the authors describe the "largely unexamined dimension of Hiroshima: the lasting psychological, ethical, and political impact on those who used the first nuclear weapons." They say "the bomb's contamination not only of Japanese victims and survivors, but of the American mind as well" has produced

"aberrations in American life."

Among these aberrations, they list nuclear weapons "as the dominant technology of a permanent, self-propelling American megamachine that seems almost independent of human control." The nuclear dynamic "inevitably extends to non-nuclear devices" being seen as "humane," which "undoubtedly influenced the widespread use of highly advanced and lethal napalm in Vietnam and carpet bombing in Iraq." The atomic bomb's "desecration and transgression is further illuminated by the Frankenstein myth" as the monster and his creator are "antithetical halves of a single being."

Lifton and Mitchell assert that America's "bomb entrapment required us to violate existing ethical practices in actions aimed at harming our people and consistently lying to them about that harm." It was a "self-betrayal" of "our own history, our national entity, and ourselves." Hiroshima is the "mother of all cover-ups, creating tonalities, distortions, manipulative procedures, and patterns of concealment that have been applied to all of American life that followed" in Vietnam, Watergate, and Iran-Contra.

They assert the decision to bomb Hiroshima ultimately caused the genocides in Bosnia and Rwanda. There is more, but you get the drift.

The analyses by Alperovitz, Takaki, and, most of all, Lifton and Mitchell, confuse power and morality. War, as Clausewitz reminds us, is a continuation of politics by other means, and those means can get very nasty. Alperovitz, Takaki, Lifton, and Mitchell say little about the strategic concerns of American leaders during and after World War II. Alperovitz mentions but provides little analysis of Roosevelt's decision to defer the serious problem of dealing with the Soviet Union. Truman had to confront that problem immediately and saw the potential of the bomb to end the war plus deal with Soviet aggressiveness. Alperovitz and the others blame Truman and Byrnes for causing the Cold War; Lifton and Mitchell blame them for a myriad of additional ills. But none of these authors offers convincing evidence to suggest that their alternative strategies would have produced a better world.

More important, Alperovitz, Takaki, and Lifton and Mitchell fail to note that the atomic decision was made cleanly and properly by the civilian Commander in Chief of the armed forces in accordance with the Constitution. No Dr. Strangelove appeared. Alperovitz suggests that the inexperienced or naive Truman might have been duped by Byrnes but does not assert that the President denied his responsibility for the decision even when the suffering from the blasts and radiation became obvious. In short, the authors ignored the process of civilian control that worked.

All three books also make much of reservations by military and civilian leaders before the bombs were dropped. None of the authors, however, notes that no one even threatened to resign, much less did so to indicate moral outrage. If military officers are bound to disobey illegal or immoral orders, then George Marshall, William Leahy, Ernest King, and Douglas MacArthur, to name only some of those alleged to have opposed dropping the bomb, did not do their duty. Another conclusion is that their views have been taken out of context.

Nor do the revisionists suggest that any other country possessing the bomb would not have used it. They might expect the United States to hold itself to a higher standard, but by 1945 the rigors of war weighed heavily on all combatants. And in a democracy the highest imperative, after victory itself, was to stop the killing of American men (and foreign men, women, and children, too). Woodrow Wilson ended American neutrality and entered World War I, even though he had promised not to during his election campaign, because of his outrage at Germany's use of unrestricted submarine warfare. Following Pearl Harbor, the United States used nearly unrestricted submarine warfare as an effective means of defeating Japan. The fire-bombing of Tokyo provided further evidence of American willingness to use horrific means to force Japan to surrender. Had the atomic bomb not been used, there would have been political bloodshed when the American public found out about it, especially because it "*wasn't used to save American lives.*" Minoru Genda, the Japanese naval officer who planned the attack on Pearl Harbor, was asked during a visit to Annapolis, Maryland, in the 1970s whether Japan would have used the A-bomb. Despite his position as a member of the Diet, Japan's national legislature, he answered candidly that he thought so--and set off a political uproar in Japan. Revisionists do not permit themselves to see that the American decision reflected the bomb's capability to make a difference in a long and ugly war, not America's immorality.

At the other end of the spectrum, Robert James Maddox, a historian at Penn State University, wastes no time in disclosing where he stands. On page 2 of *Weapons for Victory: The Hiroshima Decision Fifty Years Later*, he laces

into Gar Alperovitz by name, rank, and serial number. Referring to Alperovitz's earlier book, *Atomic Diplomacy*, Maddox asserts: "Despite the appearance of meticulous documentation, it was based on pervasive misrepresentations of the historical record." He accuses the revisionists of "writing history backward" in using casualty projections for an invasion of Japan. He says they are either "incompetent to write about" the figures or they employ them "to promote their own agendas."

Maddox has written a lean, well-focused, and tightly argued volume seen largely from the standpoint of American leaders who influenced the President's decision. The book is carefully documented and has a useful bibliography. A thoughtful chapter examines the legacy of unconditional surrender and how it complicated getting a defeated Japan to quit. President Truman, Maddox says, inherited from President Roosevelt "a mixed bag of advisers, whose competing claims inhibited development of consistent, well-thought out policies."

A chapter on "Advice and Dissent" gives a good account of a crucial meeting on 18 June 1945, when the President met with Cabinet officers and the Joint Chiefs. Until then, each service had fought for its own mission. The Chiefs, led by General George C. Marshall, the Army's Chief of Staff, agreed that an invasion, at least of Kyushu, Japan's southwestern island, was essential. The President wanted to know what casualties could be expected. The Chiefs gave varying estimates, which apparently began the controversy that runs to this day. The fact of the matter, as General Marshall pointed out, was that no one could say with any accuracy. He concluded only: "It is a grim fact that there is not an easy, bloodless way to victory in war."

Later, at Potsdam, the Chiefs discussed the atomic bomb. Here, Maddox contradicts the revisionists: "Pending the discovery of new material, there is no reliable evidence that *any* [emphasis in original] high-ranking officer expressed moral objections about the bomb to Truman." Maddox has a less-than-kind word for unnamed military officers: "Later claims by various generals and admirals about what they thought are immaterial and in many cases obviously self-serving or motivated by devotion to their particular branch of service."

Maddox's clinching argument:

Truman was commander in chief of American armed forces and had a duty to the men under his command not shared by those who were to propose alternatives while bearing no responsibility for the consequences. Or by those passing moral judgment years later. One can only imagine what would have happened had tens of thousands of young Americans been killed or wounded on Japanese soil, and then it became known that the president had chosen not to employ weapons that might have ended the war months earlier.

Another lean book is Alan J. Levine's *The Pacific War: Japan versus the Allies*. Rather than put the revisionists in the cross-hairs, Levine goes after a wider range of writers. He contends that Ronald Spector's *Eagle Against the Sun* is flawed by its lack of interest in Japan's side of things. He asserts that John Toland's *The Rising Sun* "perhaps exemplifies the tendency to whitewash the Japanese." On the other hand, David Bergamini's *Japan's Imperial Conspiracy* mistakenly "portrays all of modern Japanese history as a sinister conspiracy orchestrated by the throne."

Levine, a historian specializing in Russian history, is no apologist for the United States or President Truman or American military commanders. He argues that Japan could have been forced to surrender with air and sea power: "The Americans would only have had to wait to starve and burn Japan into submission." Thus, he writes: "The belief in the need to invade Japan was an error pregnant with consequences." Again: "The foolishness of American strategic thinking is shown by the fact that many leaders of the Japanese Army *wanted* [emphasis in original] an invasion." As other writers report, the Japanese meant to exact such heavy losses on the invading armada and on the beach that the Americans would negotiate a peace less onerous to Japan.

Levine views the Hiroshima atomic bomb in the context of bombing Japan into surrender and therefore supports Truman's decision: "The morality of the decision to use the bomb cannot be sensibly considered in isolation, although this has often been tried. The United States made the decision to accept massive losses of civilian life when it began the fire attacks on Japanese cities, not when President Truman decided to use the atomic bomb."

Had the A-bomb never existed, Levine argues, Japan would still have quit before the planned invasion. But conventional bombing and blockade would probably have killed more Japanese than those lost at Hiroshima and

Nagasaki. "It is thus reasonably certain," Levine concludes, "that the use of the bomb saved Japanese as well as American lives." He also argues: "In hindsight, the dropping of the second bomb, so soon after the first, must be considered a horrible mistake. Nagasaki's destruction seems to have contributed nothing to the decision to surrender." Other writers would point to continued Japanese resistance up to and beyond the Emperor's proclamation on 15 August that Japan must make peace by "enduring the unendurable and suffering the insufferable."

Thomas B. Allen and Norman Polmar wait until the end of *Code-Name Downfall: The Secret Plan to Invade Japan--and Why Truman Dropped the Bomb* to go after unnamed revisionists: "Anyone who closely and dispassionately examines the last weeks of the war would have to conclude that Truman was looking for ways to end the conflict honorably and at the lowest possible cost in American *and Japanese* [emphasis in original] lives."

Allen, who has written about the Civil War, and Polmar, a writer on military affairs and consultant to the Pentagon, bring up a point not found elsewhere in the debate over casualty projections. The Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot "ordered more than 370,000 Purple Hearts for award to the wounded and the families of those killed in the final battles for Japan." Thus, they contend, "Kyushu would have been the bloodiest invasion in history."

This is an uneven book with, nonetheless, some keen insights. The opening chapter says officers at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., had begun working on plans for a campaign against Japan in 1897. The first American thought that this might require an invasion came in 1900. Another chapter dissects Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb--and how he confronted it in Trumanesque the-buck-stops-here fashion. Allen and Polmar give a good account of the meeting on 18 June 1945, when the President, his top advisers, and the Joint Chiefs discussed the options for forcing Japan to surrender. The authors give another good account of discussions at Potsdam, where Stimson and Byrnes disagreed, as they had in Washington, over unconditional surrender.

The book, however, is marred by an evident lack of familiarity with Japan. The Kuriles stretch toward Japan from the Kamchatka Peninsula, not from Siberia. The Japanese word "haragei" does not mean "the Japanese art of saying one thing while meaning another"; rather it means "gut feeling" and refers to unspoken, intuitive communication. The term "ketsu-go," said to mean "decisive battle," apparently comes from reports by General Douglas MacArthur's staff but is not found in Japanese records or a dictionary today. The proper term was "hondo kessen," announced by the Imperial General Staff in June 1945.

Stanley Weintraub's massive volume entitled *The Last Great Victory: The End of World War II, July/August 1945* is disappointing. It seeks to weave together so many strands, from Japanese soldiers retreating through the jungles of Burma to American sailors abandoned after the cruiser *Indianapolis* is torpedoed, that all but the most dogged reader gets lost.

Once Weintraub, who teaches arts and humanities at Penn State, brings his narrative to Potsdam, he slips into a day-by-day account that, despite its meandering, provides certain insights. For one thing, arguments over the fate of Poland and war reparations from Germany, which had quit in May, seemed to have taken more time than discussions over how to make Japan surrender. For another, he clears up a small mystery, which is why President Truman ordered the atomic bomb not to be used until 3 August. Apparently Truman wanted to be out of Potsdam and away from Marshal Josef Stalin when it was dropped.

This book, too, is marred by factual errors. The author mistakes the Kuriles for the Ryukyu chain of islands; Hiroshima is not "close to the southern tip of Honshu" but 100 miles away; Thailand was not occupied by Japan but was an ally. The author's distaste for the military service comes through in repeated references to the "brass" and in technical mistakes: He writes of "loading" a bomb after takeoff, when he meant "arming," and the command "bombs away" to order bomb bay doors opened rather than a bombardier's signal that bombs have been dropped.

Bruce Lee's *Marching Orders: The Untold Story of World War II* is the result of a journalist going through what he says were 14,000 pages of "Magic" summaries, the product of American intelligence breaking Japanese diplomatic codes. The book provides only skimpy context and is thus useful primarily to those who bring to it a strong grasp of World War II history.

*Rain of Ruin: A Photographic History of Hiroshima and Nagasaki* is aptly described in its title. The large-sized book

traces the atomic bomb from research and development through deployment to the B-29 base on Tinian to the drops over the two Japanese cities and the consequences of those detonations.

While not among the recent books, students of this issue might find keen insights in Chapter One of Forrest C. Pogue's book *George C. Marshall: Statesman 1945-1959*. He quotes General Marshall as saying, "I think it was quite necessary to drop the bomb to shorten the war."

Curiously, none of these books reports much about the engineering and logistics feat that enabled B-29s to bomb Japan with conventional and atomic weapons. The scruffy island of Tinian was captured on 10 August 1944. Less than four months later, an airfield was ready for the first B-29 strike on 24 November. By August 1945, a year after construction started, that airbase was the largest in the world at the time and accommodated nearly 1000 B-29s. A visitor to the nearly abandoned island 30 years later found the airfields, with a touch of maintenance, could be usable again.[1]

Among the magazine articles, a standout is Donald Kagan's "Why America Dropped the Bomb" in the September 1995 issue of *Commentary*. Kagan, a historian at Yale, is masterful in refuting the "new revisionist consensus" that the bomb was neither necessary nor a morally acceptable means to end the war, and that Americans have refused to admit this. Kagan contends, "If a moral complaint is to be fairly lodged, it must be lodged against any and all warfare that attacked innocents." He asserts: "It is right to do all we can to reduce the horrors of war. But to prevent them entirely, it will be necessary to prevent war." He concludes that Americans need not shrink from basic questions arising from Hiroshima: "An honest examination of the evidence reveals that their leaders, in the tragic predicament common to all who have engaged in wars that reach the point where every choice is repugnant, chose the least bad course. Americans may look back on that decision with sadness, but without shame."

An article in the Spring 1995 issue of the *Wilson Quarterly* is pertinent even if not directly a part of the A-bomb debate. Mitchel Reiss, a White House aide in 1988-89, reviews the 50 years since Hiroshima in "The Future That Never Came" and says "never before in military history have countries exercised such restraint with the destructive power at their disposal." Lest anyone become complacent, he cautions: "The danger is that as the echoes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki grow more distant with the passing of time, the devastation and unspeakable horror of those events may fade from our collective memories. We forget at our peril."

## NOTE

1. The Tinian airbase was built by the Sixth Brigade of Naval Construction Battalions commanded by Commodore Paul James Halloran, Civil Engineer Corps, USN, who was Richard Halloran's father. Readers, please excuse this nod to filial piety.

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## **The Middle East: Contradictory and Less Predictable**

### **NORVELL B. DEATKINE**

Each summer for the past few years I have been able to spend several weeks in the Middle East, in 11 countries including Algeria, Morocco, Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, and this year in Oman. When I return and begin preparing for my next class and catching up on my reading, as well as attending various gatherings of the Middle East scholarly illuminati, I have a problem in relating what I hear and read to what I have seen. The problem is that of transforming the increasing mass of information into readable analyses of what it all means, to identify what Arnold Toynbee has called "the slower, impalpable, imponderable movements that work below the surface and penetrate to the depths."

Midst the recent avalanche of books, symposium papers, and articles on Middle Eastern subjects, a truly analytical vision of recent and current events in the Middle East is rare, particularly one that can describe current events from a historical perspective. There are few Hodgsons, Hittis, Houranis, Brockelmanns, Coons, Von Grunebaums, Kedouris, Alfred Guillaumes, H. A. R. Gibbs, and others of similar stature writing today. Those who attempt it, such as Bernard Lewis, an Orientalist of the old school, are systematically deconstructed in print by the current crop of predominantly chronocentric and egocentric academicians. Toynbee predicted in 1948 that "Pan-Islamism is dormant--yet we have to reckon with the possibility that the sleeper may awake if ever the cosmopolitan proletariat of a Westernized world revolts against Western domination and cries out for anti-Western leadership." There is today a particularly urgent need for this type of historical perspective when analyzing Islamism and its consequences.

This need is made more pressing by the many contradictions in trends that this reviewer has observed in the past six years. Begin with the opposing trends of modernity and atavism. On one hand the radical Islamists are projecting an image of an Islamic state operating within the strictures of a 7th-century Islamic culture and theology, while on the other hand the same radicals, who are frequently highly educated young men, pursue state-of-the-art technological advances in all areas of human endeavor. This is one of the points made by Daniel Pipes in an illuminating article on

radical Islam in the December issue of *First Things*. Radical Islam is not some quaint Eastern religion suitable for new-age dabblers. Second, despite increasing calls for a united Islamic world, the reality seems to be a continuing fragmentation of the Arab and Islamic world. Third, while there seems to be some stirring of political freedom in parts of the Middle East, generally there is less social freedom than 25 years ago: consider the more traditional roles and dress that women have adopted, willingly or otherwise, during that period. Fourth, satellite dishes have sprouted like mushrooms all over the Middle East, even in Iran, where they are banned (recently a satellite dish factory in Iran was raided to stop production). Yet, Western mythmakers notwithstanding, the "global village" effect has *not* occurred in the region; if anything, the trend seems to be away from the Western world and its political culture, as well as its social mores. As a political-military operator in the field or a planner at national level, how does one make sense of these apparent contradictions?

One can begin to look for answers by analyzing a similar era--the Tanzimat, the Ottoman Empire's experiment with Westernization. That attempt to modernize the Ottoman Empire while retaining its traditional society and political culture provides an early example of the impossibility of changing one component of a culture, whether economics, politics, or technology, without altering the culture itself. Yet this is precisely what the neo-Islamists want to do. As a Muslim colleague put it, "We want your TV sets but not your programs, we want your technology but not your culture." Essentially they want modernity but not modernism. Does this disdainful rejection of Western culture presage a return to the "self-sufficiency" of the middle ages, in which an Islamic world slumbered in the belief that the Western world was inferior and did not constitute a threat to their comfortable existence? Or is this a harbinger of an aggressive, new ideology masquerading as a religion, with the predictable result of collectivist totalitarianism similar to fascism or communism? Or is it the legitimate, predictable, and inevitable response to generations of Western domination, cultural penetration, and perceived Western superiority in almost every aspect of human advances? Or is this simply the perception created by overheated academic discourse? Is there an "Islamic threat"?

The academic contest concerning the Islamic "threat" is a relatively new game, but it is being fought with the same teams on the field: those sympathetic to the Arab or Palestinian cause on one side and those sympathetic to the Zionist idea on the other. There are, however, some notable exceptions on this question among Arab secularists.

The academic battle lines were drawn in sharp relief by Bernard Lewis in a 1990 article, "Muslim Rage," in which he explained that the palpable anti-Western emotions of the governments and populace were not simply a consequence of Western support (meaning American) of Israel, as so many writers on the Middle East would have us believe, but something much deeper--a clash of civilizations. This theme was enlarged upon by Samuel Huntington in his article "The Clash of Civilizations?" in the Summer 1993 issue of *Foreign Affairs*. Most Middle East scholars have attacked or distanced themselves from that perspective; even those with reservations about aspects of radical Islamism are loathe to say so unless they transform the evidence into conflicts based on gender, race, or class. For example, the most recent *Middle East Journal* had an entire edition on feminist issues in the Middle East, complete with passages such as this one: "These masculine-centric discursive axioms constituted European nationalism from its inception. Both Benedict Anderson and George Mosse argue that nationalism favors a distinctly homosocial form of male bonding." I wonder what Freya Stark, Elizabeth Monroe, and Gertrude Bell would have thought of the preceding lines? Talcott Seelye, a long-serving US Foreign Service Officer in the Middle East, was once quoted as saying he never read any of the newer works on the Middle East. One can readily understand why.

Some coherent and useful literature is still being published, however. An example is *A Sense Of Siege: The Geopolitics of Islam and the West*, which presents a balanced analysis and is written in understandable English. Graham Fuller and Ian Lesser have produced an excellent review and assessment of the current literature on the subject of Islamism and the interaction of the Western and Islamic worlds. The authors are careful, however, to disassociate themselves from the "Islam versus the West" paradigm, declaring their "deep commitment to the concept of reconciliation and cooperation between civilizations." One hopes this idealism did not skew their analysis. Moreover their affinity for splitting the difference ("no one side is more right than the other") in placing blame for civilizational conflict is not necessarily the right approach in a "let the chips fall where they may" examination of the issues. These reservations aside, this is a succinct and highly readable work for political-military planners and operators. The authors recognize that there is little we can do to prevent Islamic takeovers of states that are failing in their obligations to the populace; nevertheless, they believe that US dialogue with "moderate" Islamic groups is "worth pursuing." The September 1995 *Middle East Quarterly* features two interviews of note. One is with Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau, who

provides a reasonable rationale for a dialogue with Islamic fundamentalists. The other is with an Iranian dissident, Mohammad Mohaddessin, who opines that "there is no such thing as a moderate fundamentalist. It's like talking about a moderate Nazi."

In an academic field where personal attacks and charges of racism abound, producing an objective book on the subject of Islam and the West is akin to walking across a minefield. The current literature on the subject produces more heat than light--more visceral emotion than dispassionate analysis. One writer sees the Huntington article as being the root of the "racist" attitudes of Western leaders--as if Islam constitutes a race. The writer, Haifaa A. Jawad, in the periodical *Defence and International Security* decries the policy of some Western states to solicit friendly Muslim nations to contain Muslim fundamentalism. This writer has it backwards: the leaders of several Muslim nations are concerned about what they see as a too-benevolent view of Islamism among those Western nations. The double standard is also at work here. While the author condemns the denial of Western citizenship to Muslim immigrants, she fails to mention hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, into their third generation, living in Arab countries that adamantly refuse to grant them the most basic of human rights. ("They will forget their homeland." "It will legitimize Israeli occupation." etc.) Then there is her complaint that Muslims living in the West are not treated with respect. There is no mention of the thinly veiled intolerance to non-Muslim communities in the Middle East which is emptying these states of their Christian and other minority populations.

Tolerance and respect cannot be a unilateral exercise. This idea is illustrated by the proceedings of various Christian-Muslim dialogue groups, one of which was recently reported in the periodical *First Things*. The Westerners, generally clergymen of "progressive" mainline churches, denounced the Crusades, the reconquest of Spain, Western imperialism, the establishment of artificial borders, the wars in the Russian Muslim states, and Bosnia, the latter two ostensibly the latest version of the Crusades. The Muslims reiterated these denunciations, adding the state of Israel as an example of a new Crusader state, "a foreign body lodged in the heart of the Arab world." Never will one hear any reference to how the Muslims came to occupy Spain, or the Balkans, or North Africa, or indeed most of the land they occupy today. Author C. M. Naim, a professor of Urdu at the University of Chicago, made this memorable observation: "Interfaith dialogue soon turns into an incoherent comparison of Islam, a faith without history, and Christianity, a history without faith." Certain American Middle East gurus tend to convulse at the mere mention of the home-grown "religious right" while maintaining a curious accommodation to Islamic fundamentalism. As Naim wrote, "One only heard that secularism is good for America but not for Pakistan or Egypt, because . . . Muslims are required by their religion to establish an Islamic state."

This imbalance in dialogue allows for views that are otherwise not tolerated in our secular society. For instance, a book written for American Muslim high school students, *The Messenger of Allah*, was available at a book fair sponsored by the Middle East Studies Association. In describing the situation at the time of the Prophet Mohammed's wars against non-Muslim tribes in the Arabian peninsula, the book describes Jews as hypocrites, back-stabbers, usurers, deceitful. Christians come off somewhat better, being alluded to merely as cowards. Among the apologists for Islam it is this condescending license granted to Islamic excesses but denied others which renders their indulgent assessments suspect. The lack of rigor in studies of the effects of Islam on society and everyday life by some Western scholars results in a myopic view that could prove dangerously wrong.

Politically driven assessments in the other direction are also plentiful. A PBS *Frontline* program, "Jihad in America," was mostly an exercise in fear-mongering; the overblown rhetoric of the featured speakers spewing hate and vengeance was not evaluated in the context of their culture or compared to other domestic movements spouting similar appeals to visceral emotions. For instance, the tone of the Muslim rabble-rousers in the film was approximately the same as some of the speakers at the recent "Million Man March" in Washington, D.C. Nor in retrospect is the radical Muslim rhetoric more dangerous than was that of the New Left on college campuses in the 1960s and 1970s. One advocated class warfare, one promotes religious confrontation, and one racial strife. The result is the same. In a truly classic book, *The Arab Mind*, Raphael Patai captures the Middle Eastern propensity for exaggeration, and for context over content. Too bad the Arab elite hate the book. They could learn much from it. Patai would have made an interesting defense witness at the World Trade Center bombing conspiracy trial, in which the verbal bombast of the ten defendants proved to be a crucial element in the convictions.

Turning to the more topical issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, *The UN*

*Inspections in Iraq: Lessons for On-Site Verification*, by Kathleen Bailey, has some interesting conclusions pertaining to the planning and conduct of arms control verification inspections. The author introduces her book by stating,

The successes of the UN activities in Iraq have encouraged arms control planners to press for more intrusive inspections in several areas--from new inspection measures for the global 1972 Biological and Toxin Convention to regional agreements such as the African Nuclear Weapons-free Zone.

A close study of the book--a very readable and interesting experience despite its daunting title--leaves one doubtful that measures to control the spread of weapons of mass destruction are effective. In the chapter on chemical weapons, the author believes the Iraqis may have removed and hidden an entire Sarin chemical production plant. In the next chapter, Dr. Bailey concludes that biological agents are easily hidden and that only effective human intelligence will uncover them. She notes also that the lack of Western human intelligence sources was a primary weakness in the search for Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

In her final chapter, on nuclear weapons, the author substantiates what UNSCOM inspectors have indicated, that the Iraqis had the indigenous capability to produce weapons well beyond that envisaged by Western intelligence services, reflecting a persistent incredulity in the West that underdeveloped nations have the ability to produce sophisticated weapons without our help. David Kay, the former chief inspector of the nuclear inspection team to Iraq, makes this point crystal clear in a Winter 1995 article in the *Washington Quarterly*. In the space of one decade, Iraq went from total dependence on the outside world to near total indigenous capability. Dr. Bailey, in turn, avers that without human intelligence, the detection of home-grown nuclear production is near impossible, noting that even after ten ballistic missile inspections, the Iraqis are considered to have 200 to 300 Scud-type missiles hidden. She summarizes by concluding that export controls inhibited but did not prevent continuing Iraqi acquisition of weapons of mass destruction.

It is within the above context that two articles in the Autumn 1995 issue of the *Washington Quarterly* are of interest. One by Aaron Karp is relentlessly Pollyannish, but the other, by Ahmed Hashim, is more clear-eyed and guarded in outlook. Both agree that conventional arms acquisition and force structures of Middle Eastern nations have peaked and are now actually declining. Both agree that the Arab quest for conventional arms parity with the Israelis has abated; Karp, however, sees little interest on the part of the Arabs to create a strategic deterrence based on weapons of mass destruction, while Hashim posits that is exactly what is happening. Karp has evidence that:

Egypt long ago lost interest in acquiring a nuclear option. Syria never assembled the technical resources. Others like Saudi Arabia toyed with the possibility but were never seriously interested. The few that remained interested, like Iran and Libya, have had little luck, although foreign technical assistance or illegally acquired fissionable materials could change that.

In light of the sobering lessons contained in the Bailey book, assessments such as these are not only condescending but downright dangerous. Not only does Ahmed Hashim make a good case for the view that Middle Eastern leaders will opt for weapons of mass destruction as a solution to their security problems, but he also goes against the grain of conventional wisdom in viewing it as a possible positive development. He questions the stereotypical view of Middle Eastern leaders as "insensitive to human casualties and destruction." Whether or not the Middle East would be stable with weapons of mass destruction requires "research without hoary clichés about irrationality and callousness of leaders and of people in the Middle East."

In his book *Iran and Iraq: The Threat from the North*, Anthony Cordesman presents a less-benevolent view of the Arab and Persian leadership. He writes that in addition to strengthening the friendly Gulf forces and improving our force projection capabilities, we must tighten arms controls and limit technology transfers to Iran and Iraq. Cordesman goes on to state that these restrictions should not be meant to isolate Iran and Iraq politically, culturally, or economically. How we can accomplish both objectives simultaneously is not clearly explained. Cordesman is also very cautious in his assessment of the Iranian nuclear effort; while he concludes that Iran will probably need eight to ten years to have a nuclear capability, he notes that Iran continues to "allocate significant resources to its nuclear weapons effort." Marvin Miller, in a chapter on weapons of mass destruction in the newly released book *Powder Keg in the Middle East*, quotes others to arrive at the conclusion that while Iran has malevolent intentions it lacks the capability to

produce a nuclear weapon. As I read these somewhat dismissive assessments, I recalled the group of Iranian students I met in Aleppo, Syria, in 1994: fluent in English, reserved, but polite and friendly. None were majoring in recreation, social work, or criminology: they were all engineers.

On the subject of Iran, Ahmed Hashim, in the Adelphi Paper *The Crisis of The Iranian State*, sees an Iranian state with its economy in free-fall, growing popular alienation, and a political system facing a crisis of legitimacy; the author is not certain it will survive the crisis. At best he sees an Iran "lurching from crisis to crisis, hoping to find ad hoc solutions to its political and socio-economic problems." On the other hand, Shahram Chubin, in another chapter in *Powder Keg in the Middle East*, believes that "Iran has no urgent, overwhelming, or concrete security problem."

The other pariah state, Iraq, was the subject of a presentation by an American University graduate student, Ms. Laura Drake, at a recent seminar. Her analysis, based not only on research but in-country observation, led her to conclude that the "dual containment" policy has the earmarks of failure and will be counterproductive to US interests. It leaves Israel as the unchallenged hegemon in the area (which is seen as the major objective of our policy), Syria less likely to come to terms with Israel, and Iraq in "progressive state breakdown." Iraq has become the "black hole" of the Middle East and is likely to draw surrounding states into a conflagration no one wants. As Drake succinctly put it, the regime of Saddam Hussein is stronger than the state, and we cannot kill the regime without killing the nation--an event that would destabilize the entire Middle East. Moreover, we are increasingly isolating ourselves from the Europeans, and as Iran undergoes revolutionary ossification, our Middle Eastern policies could revitalize a movement that is dying of its own inherent disease.

A common thread through all these readings is the need for not only strategic intelligence but, much more important, the knowledge that explains the underlying trends. The mass of information available to the political-military analyst can be overwhelming unless he or she has intimate knowledge of and an intuitive feel for the differences between the significant and the trivial in this field of study. That sort of knowledge is achievable only after years of on-the-ground work with the indigenous people. Unfortunately the terrorist menace has affected the design of our newer embassies in the Middle East, making it increasingly difficult to come by that level of knowledge. These embassies have become fortresses, with layers of security and coded-access elevators and doors. Communications by e-mail and overly air-conditioned offices seem more appropriate to corporate vice-presidents than to the occupants of the slightly disheveled, somewhat decrepit, and highly personalized working spaces of our embassies in the 1950s and 1960s. Increasingly our embassies have become little Americas. All too often we know only what host-nation officials or the Westernized elite who hang around embassies want us to know. In turn, much of what the local people know about us is formed by the vacuous Hollywood depiction of America combined with CNN's daily recitation of disaster and mayhem, interspersed with "infotainment" of the Simpson trial variety.

One point is clear. The days of relative stability in the Middle East are coming to a close. The potentates and despots who rule the Middle East are aging, and their successors are not designated or are of doubtful mettle for the job. There are demands for more democratic and open societies, but many of the Islamist ideologues in the vanguard of these movements equate the social dissolution of Western society with its political system. Once in power they are unlikely to rule in a benevolent fashion. The historical mistrust between ruler and ruled remains pervasive. The saying attributed to the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun and quoted by Elie Kedourie perhaps best sums up the relationship: "The best life has he who has an ample house, a beautiful wife, and sufficient means, and who does not know us and whom we do not know."

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**Strategic Reading on Northeast Asia**

## DONALD W. BOOSE, JR.

The year 1995--half a century after the end of World War II and half a decade after the end of the Cold War--was a turbulent one for Northeast Asia. The region was plagued with disasters. South Korea's economy continued its strong growth, but its political life was disrupted. Japan's weak ruling coalition remained in power, but the Japanese economy suffered severe shocks. Russia remained too weak, too focused on its domestic concerns, and too divided in its counsels to take a major role in regional issues, but gave clear notice of its intention to remain engaged. Midyear tension between the United States and China had subsided somewhat by the end of the year, but China's future direction and role remains a significant concern within the region. In November, the heads of state of the member nations of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum meeting in Osaka reaffirmed their commitment to free trade throughout the region by 2020, but opted for an "Asian" model of self-paced voluntary steps coupled with regional development assistance instead of the "Western" model of strict rules and fixed target dates.

The United States tried with varying degrees of success to balance its priorities among the interests which bind it to the region. Those interests are identified in current strategy documents as security, economic prosperity, and a growing community of market democracies. In February 1995 the US government issued new versions of three of those documents: the President's *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's *National Military Strategy*, and the Department of Defense's *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia and Pacific Region*. The message in each of these documents is that the Pacific is equal with Europe as a region where US interests demand engagement. The Clinton Administration intends for the United States to continue to be a Pacific power and, having ended the post-Cold War Pacific drawdown, plans to maintain the same force presence--about 100,000 troops--in each region.

The challenge is to develop policy when the three categories of US interests conflict. While elsewhere in Asia the disconnect tends to be between economic interests and the US commitment to democracy and human rights, in Northeast Asia the conflict is often between security and economic policy. On 27 June 1995 the perennial US-Japan trade friction was defused once again by an agreement on automobiles and components. Automobile imports are also a major point of contention between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK), where reaction against US trade pressures in this and other sectors--particularly agriculture--prompted anti-American feelings. US security relationships with both Japan and Korea were clouded by these trade tensions and by growing grass-roots dissatisfaction with the American troop presence. This issue was aggravated in Korea by an incident in a Seoul subway and brought to a high pitch by the rape of a schoolgirl in Okinawa by American servicemen, prompting calls in both Japan and Korea for revision of the respective Status of Forces agreements. Nonetheless, during 1995 both security relationships were reaffirmed at separate ministerial-level meetings at which Japan and Korea also pledged increases in financial support for US forces.

US engagement in East Asia and the interacting interests and foreign policies of the four major powers in that region are the subjects of *The Strategic Quadrangle: Russia, China, Japan and the United States in East Asia* (1995) edited by Michael Mandelbaum. This slim but content-rich volume is recommended to readers looking for a regional overview and well-informed speculation on future trends. All five contributors are knowledgeable and experienced observers. Robert Levgold suggests that while Russia will have little effective influence until its own transformation is complete, Russian internal upheaval could seriously affect the region.

David M. Lampton argues that China remains fixed on the goal of continued economic growth, which requires regional stability, but brings Chinese self-confidence, greater desire for regional influence, and growing military power. That element of current US strategy which calls for the enlargement of democracy is viewed as a threat by the Chinese leadership. Thus, while Lampton argues for a continued US military presence and engagement in the regional security dialogue to provide reassurance as China tests its strength, he warns that foreign policy deftness will be essential if the United States is to deal with China while maintaining the support of the other regional powers.

Mike Mochizuki notes that the US-Japan security relationship was undermined by the end of the Cold War but the Japanese government, having no satisfactory alternative, will seek to continue the alliance. He predicts Japan's efforts will be hampered by weak political leadership and reluctance to shift away from traditional "neomercantilist" economic policies. Michael Mandelbaum concludes that the United States will remain actively engaged in East Asia for two

reasons: the risk of a rise to power of a regional hegemon if the United States withdraws, and the lure of wealth as the Asia-Pacific region continues its economic boom. Richard H. Solomon offers a sobering view of the dangers lurking in the region during this time of transition, but sees the possibility of future economic and political cooperation among the four powers, with a strong US-Japan alliance at its core.

The other partner in that alliance, long viewed by American officials as the linchpin of the US position in Asia, had a troubled year in 1995. Japan's long recession, the most serious since World War II, continued into its fifth year as a series of bank failures and scandals added to the misery. On 17 January an earthquake struck the city of Kobe, killing some 5000 people and causing widespread devastation; on 20 March terrorists belonging to the *Aum Shinrikyo* religious group attacked the Tokyo subway system; and in April the yen suddenly rose dramatically against the US dollar, peaking at an 80:1 yen/dollar ratio, although the exchange rate later stabilized at about 100:1. These events shook Japanese self-confidence, while perceptions of a slow and inadequate government response deepened Japanese disillusionment with politicians and bureaucrats. Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama proved to be a skilled survivor, garnering a measure of domestic and international respect, but his ability to act decisively was hobbled by the weakness of his coalition government. Murayama resigned early in 1996 and was replaced on 11 January by former trade minister Ryutaro Hashimoto.

On security issues, the government announced on 29 November a new defense policy outline which calls for a reduction in conventional forces, while increasing Self-Defense Force disaster rescue, anti-terrorism, and UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) capabilities. Japan's peacekeeping role was highlighted in January 1996 when a Japanese detachment joined the UN observer force on the Golan Heights. This was the fourth such deployment since passage of Japan's 1992 PKO bill.

Five recent books address Japan and its relationship with the United States, three from an American and two from a Japanese perspective. *The United States, Japan, and Asia: Challenges for U.S. Policy* (1994), edited by Gerald L. Curtis, was originally prepared as background reading for a 1993 meeting of Columbia University's Assembly of America. Its contributors, most of them well-known East Asia specialists in academia, business, and government, set out to provide information that would be useful to Americans trying to assess US interests and policy in the region. While much has happened in the two years since the writing was done, these essays have held up well. They provide valuable historical data and perspectives that are still largely valid on a range of foreign policy, economic, and security issues.

Ambassador Frank McNeil, a Japanese linguist with years of service in that country as a diplomat and in other capacities and now Director of the Naval War College Strategic Studies Group, brings his long personal experience to bear in a useful introduction for American readers. His *Democracy in Japan: The Emerging Global Concern* (1994) is a readable, well-balanced, and easy-to-understand description of Japanese political and economic developments written by a man with command of the material and a sensible approach. McNeil's discussion of contemporary issues and his prologue (which consists largely of a description of life in a Japanese town written by his daughter, who teaches English in Japan) can be unhesitatingly recommended, although his long historical overview is flawed by excessive errors of the sort resulting from too much cut-and-paste and too little editing. McNeil's insights and perspective on the US-Japan relationship are so valuable that it would be nice to see a subsequent edition of this book with a reworked historical section.

Thomas M. Huber also has solid credentials as a Japanese linguist and institutional historian. In *Strategic Economy in Japan* (1994), Huber suggests that while much of the Japanese economy is purely private and commercial, a substantial part--particularly the techno-industrial and financial sectors--is managed in much the same way that the United States and other Western countries manage their foreign and defense policy and for the same reason: to achieve domestic and international policy goals. He does not suggest that this is sinister. He points out that Japanese economic policy is developed by bureaucrats and then subjected to the same kind of public scrutiny and legislative oversight and approval as US foreign and defense policy. Indeed, in the absence of a military force capable of power projection, economic policy seems a plausible alternative. His comparison of a Japanese export drive to a military campaign is well done, although some operational art mavens may take issue with his conflation of the terms "center of gravity," "decisive point," and "objective." Whether or not one accepts Huber's arguments, his book provides a well-written, systematic, and coherent introduction to the Japanese economy.



In spite of its provocative title, *The Hidden Army: The Untold Story of Japan's Military Forces* (1995) is a generally straightforward account of the development of the Japan Self-Defense Forces since their inception (at the direction of General MacArthur) as the National Police Reserve in 1950. The author, Tetsuo Maeda, is a Japanese journalist who has written on defense issues for years. He tends to view any increase in Japan's military capability with suspicion and is critical of Japan's tendency to follow the US lead in foreign and defense policy, but in tracing the 45-year history of Japan's postwar military, he provides insights that Americans will find valuable. Maeda properly deals in detail with the conundrum of Article Nine of Japan's constitution, which appears to prohibit categorically any type of armed force, but which has been variously interpreted over the years. It is clear that when Japanese officials declare some particular activity "unconstitutional," they really mean that it is more than current public opinion will accept. Some Americans with experience in Japan may believe that the true meaning is simply, "We don't want to do that right now."

Daikichi Irokawa's *The Age of Hirohito: In Search of Modern Japan* (1995) provides a thoughtful social history of the Showa Era (1926-1989). Irokawa lived through those years as a young adult on the home front in World War II, a sailor in the Imperial Navy in the last year of the war, and a historian of modern Japan known for his research on the popular roots of Japanese democracy. His book--as the title indicates--is focused on the life of Hirohito, the Showa Emperor, and the role of the emperor in modern Japan. Some aspects of this issue may be of little interest to non-Japanese readers, but Irokawa's discussion of the extent of Hirohito's active involvement in wartime decisionmaking (based on documents just now coming to light) and his very personal description of Japan's postwar transformation, including its "lifestyle revolution," make for compelling reading.

Across the Korea Strait, the nuclear framework agreement between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continued to hold as we entered 1996. The agreement was reinforced after an episode of North Korean truculence by two subsequent agreements signed on 13 June in Kuala Lumpur and on 15 December in New York. North Korea has in effect accepted that South Korea will manufacture and install the light water reactors that will replace the North's uncompleted graphite modulated reactors that produce weapons-grade plutonium. At the same time, the North continued its efforts to increase direct dialogue with the United States, attempting to close down the Korean Armistice mechanism and replace it with a US-DPRK arrangement. Although North Korea rebuffed efforts to restart the South-North dialogue in 1995, its representatives met periodically with those of the South in Beijing. The North also accepted shipments of South Korean emergency aid rice, inter-Korean trade grew steadily, and the DPRK signed an unprecedented joint venture agreement with the South Korean Daewoo Corporation. At year's end, the reclusive life of North Korea's presumptive leader, Kim Jong Il, and his failure to assume the titles of President of the DPRK and General Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party, fueled unprovable speculation about internal political machinations. A request for emergency food shipments--and the willingness to accept, grudgingly, South Korean rice--indicated growing North Korean economic weakness. Nonetheless, the North Korean military remained formidable.

South Koreans could take pride in their country's economic and political progress, but events in 1995 raised questions about the costs, nature, and extent of that progress. The booming economy suffered serious trade and current account deficits and was plagued by a high bankruptcy rate among small- and medium-sized firms. Trials, allegations of payoffs, and attempts at regulation were manifestations of the troubled relationship between the ROK government and the giant South Korean conglomerate firms, the *chaebol* (reminiscent of and written using the same Chinese characters as the infamous *zaibatsu* of prewar Japan). Critics accused President Kim Young Sam of administrative ineptitude and of using his otherwise welcome reform campaign to punish political rivals. Midsummer elections demonstrated Korea's transition to a functioning democracy, but also revealed the persistence of historic regional factionalism. Throughout the year protesters called for the arrest and punishment of those responsible for the bloody 1980 military suppression of an uprising in the southwestern city of Kwangju. These trends came to a head when government investigators unearthed an immense ruling party political slush fund, financed by the *chaebol*. The year ended with two former presidents in prison awaiting trial, widespread demonstrations, and observers asking if the Republic of Korea will emerge from this experience with a stronger democracy and healthier government-business relationship, or revert to the old patterns.

The background to these events is capably described by Mark Clifford, long-time Korea correspondent and now business editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. His *Troubled Tiger: Businessmen, Bureaucrats, and Generals in South Korea* (1994) traces the 35-year-old Korean economic miracle initiated by Park Chung Hee, an austere, autocratic soldier with a vision of Korea's future and the will to pursue that vision ruthlessly. Calling on his

experiences as an officer in the Japanese army observing state-dominated economic development in Manchuria, Park crafted a strategy that took advantage of Korea's protected position within the circle of US allies, the motivating factor of a very real threat from the North, and Korea's most valuable resource: a well-educated Korean workforce willing to endure sacrifice to improve the nation. Park's "harsh politics and heavy industry" approach, coupled with tight government-controlled allocation of credit to selected industries, worked the economic miracle, but established an insidious pattern of state-industry interdependence. Further, while Park himself was generally immune to the lure of personal enrichment, his successors proved unable to resist, and so the stage was set for more recent events.

Aside from the problems of corruption and political disruption resulting from the uneasy business-government relationship, Clifford sees reliance on the 30-year-old economic model as dysfunctional in the modern global economy. Just as Japan's economy has now stalled, he predicts the same for Korea if its leadership is unable to break free of the old patterns. Readers of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* will see the ethos of that magazine reflected in Clifford's book and will not be surprised at his prescription for dealing with Korea's current problems: deregulation, economic liberalization, and the opening of Korea to foreign capital flows, business, and direct investment.

Additional insights and different perspectives are available in *U.S.-Korean Relations* (1995), the latest in a useful series produced by Claremont College's Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies under the direction of Chae-Jin Lee. Eight of these excellent and inexpensive little books have been published to date, four of them dealing with Korea. In this one, Donald N. Clark examines the cultural stereotypes that have plagued the relationship and comes to the optimistic conclusion that, while our views of each other will always be defined by "images," knowledge on both sides is improving and the images are becoming better focused. Wayne Patterson looks at one aspect of the 90-year US-Korean relationship: Koreans who have immigrated to the United States. Lawrence B. Krause, whose views on Korean economic reform seem congruent with those of Mark Clifford, makes a case for industrial alliances between US and Korean firms. Eun Mee Kim provides a wealth of hard data on foreign direct investment between the United States and Korea, noting that the Korean *chaebol* are now beginning to invest heavily abroad and are on the verge of becoming true multinational corporations. Patrick Morgan argues for a "liberalist" approach, in which cooperative actions and interdependence play a role as large as or greater than security in the US-ROK relationship. Even military professionals firmly in the "realist" camp should find his arguments worth considering. This is a diverse slate of articles, but it epitomizes the value of the Keck Center publications: the reader is guaranteed exposure to interesting and thought-provoking ideas presented by knowledgeable scholars, packaged in a reader-friendly format.

The prognosis for Northeast Asia is for more turbulence ahead. Whatever the outcome, the interests of the United States will be affected. Every one of these books has something to offer that will help the reader understand the dynamics of the important Northeast Asian region.

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## Trends in National Security Issues

### RUSS GROVES

Readers generally familiar with the stream of recent literature related to US national security policy and its underpinnings know that thoughtful and scholarly works are increasingly available on almost any related topic. As the end of the Cold War may have opened the gates for nation-states and political movements globally to stake new claims in pursuit of sovereignty and nationalism, so also have writers begun a competition of sorts to address subjects that were often embedded within and overshadowed by larger issues of the Cold War era. The works in this essay generally fit that description. Without exception, they are scholarly, thoughtful, and have merit. Specialists and non-specialists alike who seek to remain generally abreast of the mainstream can profit from any of these books.

For those concerned with the diversity of views regarding active and reserve component force mix and future configurations, *The Future of the Citizen Soldier Force*, by Jeffrey Jacobs, is must reading. The author does a superb job of framing the contemporary debate, with mention of its historical roots dating to the origins of the militia. Of particular value are the descriptions of the National Guard and Army Reserve, their command structures, a section about adjutants general and their functions, the intended and actual working relations between active and reserve components, and recommendations for the future. The author advocates much broader and more direct control of training and mission readiness assessment by the active components, as part of force integration in an environment of declining defense budgets, than is presently the case.

Although guaranteed to be provocative, this work will serve as one of the more useful primers on the history, context, and references bearing upon the larger issues related to the reserve components. A recent initiative by the active Army to reduce the National Guard force structure by approximately 60,000 and to reduce in number or eliminate divisions as an organizational level altogether, and the spirited opposition by the National Guard, have re-energized that debate.

The line between advocacy and objectivity in the book is not always clear. The author at times displays a missionary zeal, focusing on "flaws" in the present system, which detracts from otherwise compelling arguments for radical change, including restructuring of the Guard. A modest scrub of his sometimes pejorative biases would have left more than sufficient material for serious and searching debate. While the author offers few final answers to the issues discussed, he presents well a sense of the processes through which each generation has tried to deal with them.

The authors of *The American Military in the 21st Century* seek a return to "first principles" in a constructively hypothetical effort to create the armed forces of the United States anew. Based on the Key West Agreement of 1948, which resulted in an assignment of functions to the branches of the military that, along with embedded rivalries, has endured until today, the book makes the case for a long overdue look at roles and missions, organization, efficiency, and means as the bases for change in the US military establishment.

Using the Key West agreement as a point of departure, Steven Wolfe is followed by six contributors who provide well-

researched opinions on extraordinarily detailed measures for a wide-ranging reorientation and reorganization. Berry M. Blechman, positing a future world moving more toward unification than not, sees economic interdependence, technology diffusion, and an expanded global audience for all forms of information due to enhanced communications. To those conditions he adds emerging shared values, namely through a growth of democracy and disdain for war and its legitimacy. He recommends a flexible military, essentially US-based, capable of power projection under a variety of circumstances, using the present structure of the Department of Defense, without eliminating branches of the service as did the Canadians some years ago. He concludes that a US military should be just that, a military force. He argues that a lack of national support for a capable and responsive military will only tempt those whose intent is mischief on a regional if not international scale.

William J. Durch and Pamela L. Reed review a collection of interests that will affect the structure of the US armed forces. Included are public opinion, congressional action, affordability, service interests, and the interests of other defense-oriented domestic constituencies. They observe, "Somewhere between doing only those jobs that a silver bullet can finish and wading deep into the limitless swamp of ethnic conflict, may be a rationale for the use of force that will meet the needs of global leadership while skirting the worst of the swamp."

In a separate article, Durch examines issues related to defense of the US homeland. He reviews the history of nuclear defensive forces and their past and present capabilities, including strategic, tactical, and cruise missiles. Although he sees nuclear weapons development as virtually ended, he concludes that a progressive reduction of nuclear missiles should be the goal while maintaining the ability for assured nuclear retaliation to deter direct nuclear attack on the United States.

John H. Crenshaw notes that only some peace operations "will resemble the kinds of missions to which the US military is accustomed and for which it has traditionally been trained." In his scheme, soldiers would be specially trained and equipped for peace-making, peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations. These could be forces that "do not necessarily shoot to kill, that receive more training in police techniques and riot control, and, perhaps, that are trained to exercise greater patience." Crenshaw urges creation of a new specified peacekeeping command in the US military, and he recommends maintaining a strong humanitarian assistance program as an element of military foreign assistance programs to reduce long-term threats to international stability and US interests.

While *The American Military in the 21st Century* as a whole does not introduce a brave new world, informed readers will find themselves attempting to balance the thematic advocacy of the book with political reality to reach a workable solution. The book deserves a serious but at-arm's-length reading.

In *World Politics and the Evolution of War*, author John J. Weltman reminds readers that over the past five centuries war has been present three times more often than not. His analysis begins with the French Revolution, in which governments saw the potentially unpredictable character of war while the military saw a new age of the decisive battle, in which warfare had changed from its former status as a formal, stylized activity to an enterprise that offered the prospect of achieving clear-cut and dramatic results. This latter view was legitimized through the writings of Jomini and Clausewitz.

Weltman describes the development of nuclear strategy as an attempt at a Jominian solution to a problem that was essentially Clausewitzian in nature. Rules and calculations surrounding the use of nuclear weapons abounded, but the real operative factors were attitudes, expectations, perceptions, and behavior of the antagonists. Nuclear deterrence is ultimately a speculation about psychology and human behavior in situations without historical precedent. Arguably, nuclear deterrence produced a return to conventional war where nuclear weapons, tactical or otherwise, were not factors, as in Korea and Vietnam (and between Iraq and Iran from 1980 to 1988). Desert Storm is seen to represent the archetypal form of war that Americans have historically thought proper.

Weltman asks whether democracies are indeed more peaceful than other forms of governance. Regardless of the identity of adversaries, he suggests the United States is in an era of limited, controllable, and localized warfare in which decisive results and catastrophic reversals are unlikely. If true, the United States should therefore adopt a military force posture based on the ability to inflict punishment cheaply and at a distance, without conquering territory or destroying opposing armed forces. The goal would be to achieve limited objectives by punishment, rather than

military victory.

Although Weltman's scope is narrow by comparison and perhaps less intense in its advocacy than *War and Anti-War* and *The Real World Order*, he nonetheless poses a question for the age: Has large-scale war been tested by modern civilization and found to be unsatisfactory as a means for solving differences? His work is balanced, credible, elegant, and deserves attention, whether or not one agrees with his conclusion.

*Prolonged Wars: A Post-Nuclear Challenge*, edited by Karl P. Magyar and Constantine P. Danopoulos, emerges as an unintended companion work to Weltman's book, although it was published a year earlier. The editors cite *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu to establish the context of their study: "In all history there is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare. Only one who knows the disastrous effects of a long war can realize the supreme importance of rapidity in bringing it to a close." Various authors then examine the causes and outcomes of more than a score of wars since the 1960s.

Their purpose in the book is to develop understanding of the prolongation of wars, which they propose is as important to national security as attempts to understand the causes of war: "Understanding the prolongation phenomenon allows introduction of strategies for reducing the gravity of such wars by limiting their damage and by enhancing their prospects for an early peaceful resolution." This proposition is tested through analyses by various scholars of recent conflicts: Iran-Iraq, the Lebanese Civil War, the Arab-Israeli wars, the Sudan, Chad, Liberia, Rhodesia, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Northern Ireland.

The essay on Vietnam, by Earl Tilford, Jr., has particular relevance. Tilford reminds readers that while the Vietnam conflict is often seen by Americans as having begun in 1959, it actually spanned the years 1945 to 1975. His assessment reveals at least nine reasons for prolonged involvement by the United States. They are worth repeating here:

- A Cold War US mindset against international communism.
- John Kennedy's foreign policy of "pay any price" to defend liberty.
- Covert and incremental introduction of US forces into combat.
- Internal disarray in Vietnam's military and its civilian government.
- Competing domestic US considerations leading to an ambiguous and indecisive US policy.
- The ill-conceived Rolling Thunder bombing campaign.
- An Army and Marine Corps ground war attrition strategy, which the United States could not win (General Vo Nguyen Giap predicted it would lead to US withdrawal when US dead reached approximately 50,000).
- Success in war measured in logistical terms, absent enemy cities to be captured or borders to be crossed.
- The prolonged agony of US extraction following the battles of 1968 and Tet in particular.

Tilford adds that lack of coordination between political goals and military strategy caused the United States to lose; the two came together only in support of withdrawal. From 1959 until the war's conclusion, Hanoi was committed to total war. The United States was committed to something less. It is no surprise that the twin concepts of "endstate" and "exit strategy" have become ground rules in the post-Cold War US political-military discussion.

Tilford and his colleagues have provided the foundation for those who would convert the lessons of Vietnam and elsewhere into strategic policy. The conversion, according to summarizing remarks by the authors, requires an understanding of societal factors that can make war appear beneficial to some groups; international and regional factors such as Cold War confrontations that placed surrogates of the United States and Soviet Union at odds; and strategic incompatibility between adversaries that can lead to prolongation. Thus counter-prolongation dynamics were perhaps at work in the 1990-91 Gulf War. Although not on a scale comparable to Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the same may have been true of US involvement in Burundi, Rwanda, and Somalia, while Haiti and Bosnia are headed in the same counter-prolongation direction. Is "prolonged war" an oxymoron in any foreseeable US political climate short of total war? Might there be a future conflict based on a scenario such as environmental or natural resource availability in which the United States would go to war for an indeterminate period, intended or unintended?

In the introduction to *Gray Area Phenomena*, by Max G. Manwaring et al., Ambassador Edwin G. Corr borrows Peter Lupsha's definition of the phenomenon: "threats to the stability of nation states by non-state actors and non-

governmental processes and organizations." This book examines transnational lawlessness in the form of the drug trade, revolutionary criminal groups, and rogue states, along with neo-Luddites including eco-terrorists (who oppose the "evils" of technology), the xenophobes (who prefer racial or national unity), and fundamentalists (who are the only "true believers"). Strong emphasis is placed on international narcotics control, especially cocaine revenues, a large part of which is used to corrupt legitimate government in a variety of ways.

The authors rate the decline of governability in third-world countries as a major contributor to the existence of the phenomenon. Loss of governmental legitimacy is attributed in part to efforts by those governments over time to distribute rather than create wealth. As a result, losses in societal creativity and free market activity follow, as well as a general inability to deal with corruption, poverty, economic opportunities for all citizens, and the conduct of the state's business, not the least of which is free elections.

In terms of external support to governments under stress, "nation-building," despite its attributes, is not seen as a turn-key operation. True nation-building is the development of people who can and will fight corruption and inefficiency; who can and will build roads, schools, and health care facilities; who can and will strengthen their own national, regional, and local institutions; and who can and will create and maintain the necessary linkages between and among institutions within a given society. Also found in this vexing equation are large urban centers that are impenetrable, uncontrollable, and form dangerous zones of rebellion. Examples cited are Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, Cairo, and Bombay, in which the urban mass is such that the cities are, by most measures, out of control.

On a global scale, the international rule of law and close regulation of monetary procedures, especially to prevent money-laundering, are seen as essential antidotes to *Gray Area Phenomena*. An international unity of effort is necessary, with priority on intelligence rather than combat operations. In conjunction with a political willingness, police efforts must displace military efforts to restore order and legitimacy.

In this context, the United States must define its own vital-interests test that will lead to involvement and abstinence on the scale of gray area activity. In summary, Ambassador Corr argues for application of the six criteria of the Manwaring paradigm, which is based on examination of 69 low-intensity conflicts and forms the basis for coping successfully with insurgencies, terrorism, and narcotics control. The criteria (to deal mainly with international narcotics problems) are: maintenance of host government legitimacy; organization for unity; type and consistency of support to the besieged government; reduction of outside aid to the traffickers; and discipline and capabilities of the supported government's police and armed forces.

*Gray Area Phenomena* is a serious and worthy look at criminal and outlaw forces working globally to undermine governments and market economies. The book proposes many prescriptions for the challenges listed, but possibly the most instructive comes from the chapter entitled "Achieving the Elusive Unity of Effort," by John T. Fishel. Four case studies from US involvement in Bolivia, Panama, El Salvador, and Peru provide specifics on the application of policy with constructive criticism, mainly in the areas of unity of effort and undefined endstates. It is here that a student of national strategic and military policy will find the details that will lend reality to the suggestions found elsewhere in the book.

This book expands the existing view of operations short of war and offers increased appreciation for the complexities surrounding emerging US foreign policy. It is quite possible that gray area challenges will dominate future efforts by the United States to protect domestic and international market economies from threats. Armed interventions may come overwhelmingly to mean operations against gray area adversaries, rather than more conventional enemies. Whether or not that comes to pass, *Gray Area Phenomena* is an important assessment of real and sinister challenges to US values. Along with the other works reviewed here, it should be included in readings intended to lead to a well-rounded comprehension of life in the national security fast lane.

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