

The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

Volume 34
Number 1 *Parameters Spring 2004*

Article 10

3-1-2004

Book Reviews

Parameters Editors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters>

Recommended Citation

Editors, Parameters. "Book Reviews." *The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters* 34, 1 (2004).
<https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol34/iss1/10>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by USAWC Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters by an authorized editor of USAWC Press.

Book Reviews

Beyond Baghdad: Postmodern War and Peace. By Ralph Peters. Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Press, 2003. 337 pages. \$22.95. **Reviewed by Richard Halloran**, free-lance writer and former foreign and military correspondent of *The New York Times*.

A pen in the hand of Ralph Peters, as regular readers of these pages can attest, becomes a harpoon. In his latest collection of articles, *Beyond Baghdad*, the lances that Peters hurls are worthy of the finest Nantucket whaler of yore.

Target number one is Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and what Peters calls “his fawning train of courtiers.” High-priority targets include Muslim terrorists, Saudi Arabia and other Arabs, liberals led by former President Bill Clinton, the French, the Germans, other Europeans, and airpower. Those who are spared the wrath of Peters, and indeed are objects of his affection, are soldiers, women, and Israelis.

Like all harpooners, Peters sometimes misses his mark. He admires China, overlooking Chinese genocide in Tibet, the suppression of Uighurs in the western province of Xinjiang, territorial claims through the South China Sea almost to the shores of Indonesia, border skirmishes with India, the 20 million who died in the Cultural Revolution, the massacre at Tienanmen, and the history of the Middle Kingdom as the would-be suzerain of Asia.

Peters also hurls shaft after shaft at the American press and television news, asserting that most correspondents “simply don’t understand what they are seeing.” He may or may not be right, but he fails to make his case. One thirsts for an authoritative quote, a hard fact, a few examples, some shred of evidence that a novice copy editor would have demanded.

Peters is a retired Army intelligence officer and a prolific writer of books, articles, and fiction under his own name and as Owen Parry. He says, and this reviewer agrees, that he has “always been suspicious of books compiled from newspaper pieces.” He gets away with it in this case because there is a flow to his collection, although it is marred slightly by repetition.

Peters’ sharpest barbs are aimed at Mr. Rumsfeld’s “posse of commissars, creatures with no first-hand experience either of the military or of the savage harshness of this world.” Peters asserts: “They ridiculed the voices of experience, even implying that those in uniform had a yellow streak, while the civilian lions safe at their Washington desks were models not only of wisdom but of courage.” Peters is relentless on this point: “If war is too important to be left to the generals—a cheap platitude—then military policy is far too important to be left to political hacks. We speak no treason when we tell the truth to our fellow citizens.”

That’s early in this book. Later, Peters thunders:

The civilian planners, the shameless know-it-alls in expensive suits, who overruled the military’s request for additional ground forces will bear a measure of responsibil-

ity for every American combat death caused because a soldier was simply too tired to react swiftly enough, because troops were falling asleep over their guns, and because they were asked to achieve miracles—and have been doing so—on the cheap.

Airpower is magnificent, Peters says, but “you cannot take prisoners, or protect refugees, or secure crucial facilities and resources from the air. And you certainly cannot stop genocide or ethnic cleansing from the sky.” That takes boots on the ground.

Peters argues that among the reasons Osama bin Laden—the leader of the terrorist al Qaeda gang still at large as of this writing—fears America is because of “our acceptance of women as full-fledged human beings.” Bin Laden, Peters concludes, “is not only terrified of God, but also scared of the girls.” On a more affirmative note, Peters says: “Women’s self-emancipation is a primary source of America’s present power, wealth, and social energy.”

Peters faults the Bush Administration for failing to address “the obvious source of fundamentalist terrorism, subversion, and hatred: Saudi Arabia.” Supporting the Saudis, he asserts, “is the most preposterous and wrongheaded policy in American history since the defense of slavery.”

He widens that criticism to a litany of flaws in the Arab world: “It contains not a single world-class university. No Arab state is a true democracy. No Arab state genuinely respects human rights. No Arab society fully respects the rights of women or minorities.”

The author is equally acerbic about the French. “Paris isn’t a ‘third force,’ but a third farce,” Peters maintains. “French behavior in the current crisis is obsessive, not reasoned, and ultimately self-defeating.” He concludes: “Every American who dies in this war will have a French diplomatic bullet in his or her body.”

Of the Germans: “Most difficult of all for us to stomach were remarks from members of the German government comparing President Bush to Hitler.” Europeans, he writes, “talk a great deal, do very little, and blame the United States for homegrown ills.” The European Union is “an indispensable employment agency for Europe’s excess bureaucrats.”

Some of the articles by Peters have been published in this journal, but many chapters originally appeared in the *New York Post*, the conservative tabloid. From that vantage point, he fires at this reviewer’s former employers at the cross-town *New York Times*: “The next time GI Joe goes out to thrash one of your pet dictators, ask a military man what’s going down, instead of trusting the croissant commandos on your staff.”

Like some others who criticize “the media,” Peters generalizes but fails to cite examples to prove his point. Instead, he sets up straw men so that he can skewer them in the breastplate. He laments “confused, alarmed reporting.” By whom and what was reported? He points to “dire warnings about an impending bloodbath.” In what news dispatch or TV report? “I’m sick of being told how brilliant our enemies are.” Who said that, when, and where? Peters accuses but doesn’t tell us.

Altogether, Ralph Peters is an angry man who can write, and no one—repeat, no one—should ever have any doubt about where he stands on any issue.

The Road to Rainbow: Army Planning for Global War, 1934-1940. By Henry G. Gole. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2002. 224 pages.\$34.95. **Reviewed by Lieutenant General Richard G. Trefry, USA Ret.,** Inspector General of the Army, 1978-83, and Military Assistant to the President, 1989-92.

Each publication year always brings to the public a few unheralded but extremely useful and important books. In the opinion of this reviewer, *The Road to Rainbow* is the sleeper of the year.

The material in this outstanding book lay fallow in 25 footlockers at the Army War College and was not discovered until 1957. Thus the historians who wrote the Army "Green Books" did not have access to these important papers, and even after they were made available, they were not given the attention they richly deserved. Maurice Matloff and Edward Snell, authors of *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare* (one of the Green Books) were not aware such material existed; in fact, they were quoted as believing that "limited in scope, the (pre 1939-41) plans envisaged neither global or total war." That view apparently was shared by other eminent historians of the era, as no reference is apparent in any of the Green Book histories.

In the words of the author, Colonel Henry Gole (USA Ret., Ph.D.): "The Army War College course materials Louis Morton identified four years after Matloff and Snell published *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare 1941-1942* are readily available." It seems that no one had gone through the 1919-1940 course materials in detail with war plans specifically in mind, nor had anyone on the General Staff or War Plans Division asked what was done at the college.

Colonel Gole continues:

In mining the Army War College curricular materials housed in the Military History Institute, particularly the war plans addressing coalition warfare from 1934-1940, one finds high grade nuggets that do in fact modify the way we should understand American war planning between the World Wars. To assess the significance of [the] work at the college, an appreciation of the accepted wisdom [related to] war planning is necessary. American strategic planning may have come of age in 1939-1940, but the "spade work" done by students and faculty during the period 1934-1941 at the US Army War College was very important to the maturation process. That is the main point of this book you see before you.

This is a particularly relevant point in regard to war planning today. In those days, the number of people involved in war planning in the United States probably numbered a few hundred. The color plans were generated in the early part of the century. In those days, plans were coded as follows:

United States – Blue
Germany – Black
Japan – Orange

As they matured over the decades, other countries were added:

Mexico – Green
Canada – Crimson
Great Britain – Red

Brazil – Purple
Domestic – White

In the late 1930s these color plans tended to blend due to the threat provided by the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis. Thus the plans melded into the Rainbow Plans, which formed the basis of the strategy employed for the prosecution of World War II.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I provides the background and evolution of war planning from the Root revolution in 1904 to roughly 1934, the era of the color plans. In Part II Dr. Gole describes the evolution from one-on-one conflict to “Participation With Allies,” the planning leading to coalition. Part III of the book, perhaps the most interesting, discusses the planning from 1938 to 1940 when war became imminent. Finally, in Part IV the author describes the relationship between the War College and the War Department General Staff and the products of a cadre of brilliant officers, mostly unknown to this day, who played such a vital role in the winning of World War II.

On the cover of the book are four pictures depicting some of the principal planners of World War II. The picture of the Army planners is particularly interesting, showing some of the members of the War Plans Division in January 1942. The same picture, enlarged and with the players identified, is included in the picture section of the book. A study of the careers of the officers portrayed would be very interesting. Of course, many books have been written about General Eisenhower, but the rest of the individuals in the picture largely remain generally unknown.

When one considers the plethora of strategic think tanks that abound in the country today, inside and outside of government, and compares what these few men did and how they did it, their contribution becomes all the more a source of wonderment. There is no question that strategically, World War II was the best planned and fought war of the 20th century.

A careful study of this book will provide the reader an education in professional development as well as an appreciation for the Army School System and the officers it has produced. Of particular interest is Chapter 12, “Professionals in a Small Army.” The astute reader will note that nowhere in this pantheon of military brilliance will one find a single set of BDUs, nor will any “Hooah” emanate from the pages. What should impress the reader is the professional growth of a group of Army officers who were ready and present for duty when needed at the highest levels of government.

Of particular interest is the career of General Thomas T. Handy, who, with only a short period of service with troops, served in War Plans and as General Marshall’s Deputy (today’s Vice Chief) for nine years. Few officers, or historians for that matter, have given thought to the fact that the United States Army in World War II was led primarily by two graduates of VMI, George C. Marshall and Thomas T. Handy. The author writes: “Thomas T. Handy . . . deserves close attention. He provided unheard-of continuity in the War Plans/Operation Division, serving from August 1936 until October of 1944, except for one year with the troops (June 1940-June 1941).” Chapter 12, coupled with Chapter 13, provides an enlightening view of a group of extraordinary men during a critical period of our history as a nation.

Henry Gole has made a truly significant contribution by authoring this book. Any true professional soldier will read and re-read this work many times. The role of

the Army War College with the Army Staff has changed over the years. For example, as of 1 October 2003, the Army War College is now assigned to TRADOC. Despite the fact that no relationships endure forever, the background knowledge provided in this book could be extremely useful as the attempt is made to transform the Army to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The Peloponnesian War. By Donald D. Kagan. New York: Viking, 2003. 511 Pages, with 24 maps. \$29.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Martin L. Cook,** Professor of Philosophy, US Air Force Academy.

Thucydides famously declared his intention to write the history of the war we now call the Peloponnesian War at its very outset, “in the belief that it was going to be a great war and more worth writing about than any of those which had taken place in the past.” History has shared his assessment—in no small measure because of the power of his own masterful telling of the story and the philosophical depth of his commentary on its events.

It was, after all, a war that spanned 27 years and in the end destroyed all the major combatants and their civilization. It contains powerful examples of successful and unsuccessful periods of civil-military relations. It demonstrates the “revolutions in military affairs” necessitated by encounters with novel weapons, tactics, and operational concepts. It dramatically shows the relationship of military power to economics, cultural assumptions, and forms of government.

It has been mined for instruction from innumerable perspectives. Naval theorists look to it as an example of the might of the seapower of Athens and the lessons to be learned when, as in the early stages of the war, an almost wholly land-based power such as Sparta attempts to engage a powerful seapower. Political scientists who have never bothered to read even a significant fraction of the work have for generations shamelessly ripped the Melian Dialogue between Athens’ generals and the hapless leaders of the neutral city of Melos from context to provide the standard illustration of “realism” as a theory of international relations. Students of military leadership find the examples of Pericles, Brasidas, Demosthenes, and even Alcibiades timeless illustrations of leadership, character, and strategy.

Donald D. Kagan, Sterling Professor of Classics and History at Yale University, has for many years been the foremost authority to consult on fine points of history and interpretation of the events of the period in large and specialized volumes such as *Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy*, *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition*, and *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*, to name only some of his earlier works. The present volume, *The Peloponnesian War*, is a successful effort to distill decades of specialized scholarship into a one-volume overview of the whole, accessible to a reader who might not have a need or desire for the extremely close assessment of detail in the earlier works. As such, it becomes the single best volume for readers looking to gain a comprehensive understanding of the war’s causes, conduct, and outcomes.

The latter is especially important because Thucydides died before the completion of the war, so even a complete and careful reading of his text leaves

events incomplete. But also, for all the justifiable praise heaped upon his scrupulosity as a historian (especially one writing at the very dawn of the discipline of objective history), there are important gaps and obscurities within his text that Kagan's comprehensive knowledge of alternate sources helps to fill. Where there are inscriptions of the period, or lines and characters from Athens' dramatic literature of the period that serve to illuminate Thucydides' obscurities or gaps, Kagan consistently has them ready at hand to clarify. In this regard, reading Kagan in parallel with Thucydides' own writing will be an invaluable aid to a reader attempting to work through the admittedly somewhat daunting prose of Thucydides' text alone.

The Peloponnesian War is so rich, however, that much depends on the angle from which the student of it wishes to approach the material. It is many things. For the student of Classical Culture and civilization, getting as much clarity as possible about exactly what happened and why it happened is the paramount issue. For this interest, Kagan is consistently one of the most reliable guides—both in this volume and in the earlier, more detailed studies of specific periods and aspects of the war. For the student of military history, campaign analysis, or weapons and tactics of the period, the Peloponnesian War is also a rich repository of examples. Here again, readers seeking a full understanding of these technical-military matters can look to Kagan for clarity and illumination.

There is no substitute, of course, for reading Thucydides' *History* directly. It is not the facts about the war or about military technical or operational issues that makes this war perennially and uniquely worthy of study. Credit for that goes ultimately to the mind of its original historian, Thucydides, who succeeded magnificently in his aim that his work be a "possession for all time." It is the mind of Thucydides that added the dimension of philosophical depth that elevates the events of ancient Greece to the realm of timeless truth. His wry wit, his cutting asides, his determination to see through to the root causes of things—these elevate his history far above a recounting of facts. It is through his vision and word that we see the awful truth of what human nature is capable of doing.

Donald Kagan has provided us with a masterful single-volume history of the Peloponnesian War—one every student of the conflict will find invaluable. But in the end, as I'm sure he'd agree, it is an invaluable aid to understanding a conflict that gains its perennial value through the mind and vision of Thucydides himself. No accurate telling of the facts of the conflict can ever hope to capture the grandeur of Thucydides' insight into the human and moral meaning of those events.

Yellow Smoke: The Future of Land Warfare for America's Military. Robert H. Scales. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003. 179 pages. \$24.95. **Reviewed by Colonel Gregory Fontenot, USA Ret.,** Lansing, Kansas, former Commander of the Battle Command Training Program.

General Bob Scales' *Yellow Smoke* is a timely review of the current condition of warfare and a projection of a possible future condition associated with the conduct of war. Scales advances his argument from solid ground as an experienced

military historian, theorist, and soldier. He defines his tasks and vantage point clearly in the preface, noting that much of what he believes about the future of land war stems from his experience, study, and efforts leading the Army After Next Wargame series at the Army War College. Scales sets out to define the environment of limited warfare, identify some lessons and insights, and draw on these to suggest how the United States may fight land warfare in the future. Simply put, General Scales' thesis is that the United States is developing a style of warfare based on substituting firepower for manpower and then he stipulates how that development will continue in the future. Finally, he seeks to accomplish this in the context of what he perceives are the most likely wars for the United States—wars of limited objectives and means.

The author's argument that the substitution of firepower for manpower is new or relatively new is not necessarily consistent with the historiography of the American military experience. Certainly Russell Weigley, Maurice Matloff, and others argue that the American way of war, at least since the Civil War, has favored attrition rather than maneuver and that the Army, at least, has organized and equipped to do that. Accordingly, the Army has sought to generate a firepower advantage over opponents in the field. This does not invalidate the author's assertion, since he also argues that maneuvering to achieve firepower advantage is increasingly a part of the American style of war.

General Scales argues that the US inclination toward substituting firepower for manpower will be enabled and accelerated by technologies affording stealthy weapon systems, greater precision, and better information. To demonstrate this trend he cites recent examples where the application of firepower rather than troops in the close assault afforded success and notes a growing trend in this direction. Scales is, for the most part, convincing in building a historical case, citing the thinning of troops in the battle space and a growing trend toward decentralized combat.

The author believes this trend will provide an absolute advantage that will enable American forces to wage limited warfare against regional powers that seek by coup de main to overwhelm their neighbors. To illustrate the case for his vision of future warfare, he posits a Serbian invasion of Kosovo in 2020 that is ultimately defeated by a lighter, more lethal ground force deployed rapidly into the theater and supported by closely integrated joint forces.

His example is plausible, and the combat developments he posits to make ground forces lighter, more lethal, and more maneuverable are believable. Nonetheless, his argument is not entirely convincing for several reasons. At one point Scales opines, "Close combat may in the future become less deadly." This is possible only if US armed forces are able to avoid the close fight—in this case close means that American forces must remain outside the effective range of enemy direct-fire weapons. This is a proposition that may not obtain for at least two reasons. If technology continues to be proliferated by friends and foes of the United States, it does not automatically follow that the close fight will become less lethal. If anything, this proliferation is likely to afford relatively weak opponents the opportunity to buy "niche" technology, affording them an advantage against a lighter ground combat force. Second, the US forces may not be able to dictate the range of the close fight. Irregular forces that choose to fight in mufti and from ambush will be able to dramatically decrease the range.

The author also argues that the United States will need to assume risks logistically to accelerate the strategic pace of deployment. Perhaps so, but recent experience in Iraq suggests, as one general officer put it, “just-in-time logistics isn’t.” No one will argue that American forces should deploy more slowly, but speed alone is not the answer. If ground forces have to close with an enemy in compartmented terrain, then agility and information technology may not be enough. Finally, General Scales’ Kosovo example does not account adequately for the problem of transition. What happens when major combat operations are concluded and fewer units must confront an insurgency where their strategic and operational speed may not be as critical as their tactical survivability?

Still, despite these criticisms, General Scales delivers where it matters. He illuminates the actual trends in combat and doctrinal development implicit in the Department of Defense transformation presently under way. How the department and the services solve the dilemma of an opponent determined to close with American ground forces and how our forces are sustained across strategic distances are arguably the most important questions for the successful transformation of America’s military. The author is absolutely right when he argues that transforming the ground force is a far more urgent problem than transforming sea and air forces, given US preeminence in these latter domains. General Scales also points out that there are no opponents of the United States on the horizon that will confront America in formation warfare. Thus the ability of our armed services transformed to defeat symmetrically organized regional opponents is not the central question. The critical issue is how do we match up against those who fight below the threshold of American technical intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance means, and who may be able to exploit vulnerabilities inherent in these lighter, more efficient forces.

Their War for Korea: American, Asian, and European Combatants and Civilians, 1945-1953. By Allan R. Millett. Washington: Brassey’s, 2002. 311 pages. \$25.95. **Reviewed by Colonel Donald W. Boose, Jr., USA Ret.,** who teaches in the US Army War College Department of Distance Education. While on active duty he served with the Military Armistice Commission in Korea, and as Assistant Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Policy, US Forces, Japan.

Allan R. Millett, a retired Marine Corps Reserve colonel and history professor at Ohio State University, will be well known to many readers of *Parameters*. The author of a history of the Marine Corps and other historical and biographical works, he has collaborated with Williamson Murray in a series of detailed studies of military effectiveness and on a history of World War II. In recent years, he has focused on the Korean War, producing a number of valuable monographs on various aspects of the war and establishing an extensive network of colleagues and informants, including many Korean War veterans. It has long been expected that he will produce a comprehensive history of the war. *Their War for Korea* is not that comprehensive history, but a collection of personal reminiscences by those who fought in or were directly affected by the war. Millett provides commentary on each of these in-

dividual accounts, putting them in the larger context of the war. His goal is “to find [the] meaning of the Korean War through the experiences of individuals and small groups of people.”

As the title suggests, Millett sees the period from 25 June 1950 to 27 July 1953 as only “the most violent phase” of a war that began much earlier and has not yet concluded. In a preface explaining his own background as a historian of the Korean War and setting the stage for the 46 vignettes that make up the book, Millett points out that the first three names on the South Korean memorial to those slain in the war are those of National Police who died in September 1945. But Millett argues that the beginning of the Korean War can be traced back even further, at least to the 1920s, when two separate and competing groups of Korean nationalists began struggling against the Japanese occupation of the peninsula and toward two very different conceptions of Korea’s future. Both were firmly rooted in the long and rich Korean cultural tradition. One group, based on Marxism-Leninism, would eventually lead the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the north. The other, a heterogeneous group of Western-influenced modernizers, land owners, entrepreneurs, traditionalists, and a few who had accommodated themselves to the Japanese, would become the leadership of the Republic of Korea (ROK) in the south. The division was intensified when the Soviet Union and the United States occupied North and South Korea in 1945. The Cold War has ended, but the north-south confrontation continues on the peninsula. As Millett demonstrates in one chapter focused on the truce talks and another entitled “The War Goes On for Some Koreans,” the 1953 Korean Armistice terminated the conflict, but it did not resolve the underlying issues that caused the war.

Most of the stories in *Their War for Korea*, however, deal with the 1950-1953 “violent phase” of the war. Millett’s approach is personal and informal. He recounts his meetings with the book’s subjects and then presents their own accounts. In these pages, the reader will meet generals and foot soldiers, guerrilla fighters and pilots (American, North Korean, and Russian), statesmen and spies, refugees and war criminals, war profiteers and self-sacrificing heroes. Based as it is primarily on interviews with people known personally to Millett, the book’s coverage is inevitably unbalanced. More than half of the stories are those of US veterans, 12 concern ROK soldiers and civilians, and six involve non-US United Nations Command (UNC) allies (from Australia, Belgium, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Thailand, and the United Kingdom). Only four chapters focus on the North Koreans, two on the Chinese, and one on the Russian pilots who flew combat missions over North Korea. Most of these accounts are based on Millett’s personal interviews, but a few, including the chapters on General Peng Dehuai (commander of the Communist Chinese People’s Volunteers Army [CPVA] in Korea), on the North Korean and CPVA soldiers, and on the Russian pilots, are based on memoirs and other sources. In the course of presenting these personal stories, Millett adds a substantial amount of historical information on almost every facet of the war. In addition to his long preface, he also provides a summary of the war, a guide to further reading, useful statistical information, a chronology, a glossary that includes many but not all of the acronyms, abbreviations, and non-English words that appear in the text, and a comprehensive index. The book has no maps, however, so

those not familiar with Korean geography may find the frequent references to geographical locations puzzling.

Millett is a reliable guide and there are very few typographical or other errors in the book, although the chronology does contain one puzzling and misleading entry: "July 1844: treaty establishing commercial relations between Kingdom of Korea and United States signed." In fact, the treaty signed in 1844 was with China and, although there was some talk in the US Congress of attempting to negotiate a treaty with Korea in the same year, no action was taken and a US-Korea treaty was not signed until 1882. Millett also occasionally uses, without explanation, terms not found in the glossary. When he writes that a man who fought during the war as a teenage guerrilla "recalls his lost youth with considerable *han*," even a reader unfamiliar with the Korean language and culture might guess that Millett is describing a sense of regret, sadness, and anger. But that same reader may be mystified when told that a certain general felt like an outsider because he had married a *kisaeng* (an upscale woman entertainer).

These are not major problems. Those already familiar with Korean history and culture and with the Korean War will find this book to be a rich and fascinating feast, filled with intriguing sidelights on well-known personalities and events. Those without previous background on the war, although they may initially find its episodic character and the wealth of unfamiliar detail to be a challenge, will also be rewarded and enlightened.

Allan Millett succeeds in presenting the tragedy and complexity of the Korean War and powerfully demonstrates that for those who participated, and especially for Koreans, *Their War for Korea* was "total, uncompromising, and bitter. It brought unimaginable suffering to all the Korean people, which continues fifty years later."

In the Company of Heroes. By Michael J. Durant (CW4, USA Ret.) with Steven Hartov. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2003. 361 pages. \$24.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Henry G. Gole (Colonel, USA Ret.),** a special operations veteran and author of *The Road to Rain-bow: Army Planning for Global War, 1934-1940*.

Your reviewer commends *In the Company of Heroes* to readers who care to know just what elite American soldiers do in training and in combat, and how they feel about their work. Graphic in its description of concrete and grisly events, the book is also an anthem, a song of praise and joy to the brotherhood of warriors by a tough soldier who loves his buddies.

Blackhawk helicopter master aviator Michael Durant's story of his experience in combat and confinement as a prisoner of war (POW) in Mogadishu, Somalia, is the centerpiece of the book. It's a story that grabs the reader and refuses to let go. But Durant and professional writer Steven Hartov go a step further by putting the actions and reflections they describe so well in context. Seriously injured and almost immobile, Durant had time to think while in enemy hands, expecting to die, from 3 to 14 October 1993. Ruminating about how he got to his near-hopeless situation as a POW allows him to describe: relevant aspects of the US military organiza-

tion; the evolution of special operations after the spectacular failure of Desert One in April 1980; and, most particularly, the Night Stalkers, the 160th SOAR (A) (Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Army), unmatched flying professionals whose work is their passion. The tactical situation emerges in great clarity, and his criticism of policy affecting the structure of the US forces in Somalia is brief and lucid. (It could have been a politicized rant, since Durant's friends died as a consequence of the armored force requested and denied. He avoids that temptation.)

US military forces launched Operation Restore Hope, a humanitarian effort in support of the United Nations to feed starving people in Somalia, in December 1992. Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid pillaged and sold the humanitarian aid for profit. Task Force Ranger, composed of US Army, Navy, and Air Force special operators, was ordered to capture Aidid and his key people. Mark Bowden's book, *Black Hawk Down*, and the film of the same name, capture the feel of the operation and describe it well. *In the Company of Heroes* focuses on Durant's actions, observations, and thoughts, beginning with the snatch operation of 3 October 1993 that turned bad early and got much worse.

An RPG (the shoulder-fired Rocket Propelled Grenade system that has been killing American troops from Vietnam in the 1960s to Iraq in 2004) knocked Durant's Black Hawk out of the sky, killing his crew and leaving him injured, alone in Mogadishu and about to be overrun by a mob prepared to tear him apart. Sergeants Gary Gordon and Randy Shugart, Delta Force operators, observing from another bird a living American in the wreck, persisted in requests to be put on the ground until permission was granted. Facing almost certain death, Gordon and Shugart extracted Durant, put him in a safer location, and died fighting off the crazed mob.

Durant was surprised to find himself alive, taken from the mob by Somali leaders who recognized his value to them in bargaining with the Americans. But he didn't exactly get a free ride. In addition to a compound fracture of his upper leg and severe and painful injury to his back, his cheek was broken and an eye was injured when he was clubbed with the severed limb of a comrade. Then he was shot and peppered with concrete and cinder block pieces. His worst experiences were moves from one location to another that found him tossed and folded into small cars, causing excruciating pain. He drank water from a bowl also used as a urine receptacle, slept on concrete floors, and fought off the ubiquitous black flies some of us remember from the TV coverage of starving Somali children.

A weaker man would have recognized the hopelessness of his plight and surrendered to despair. Durant, the beneficiary of excellent training and a solid moral foundation, used both to survive and to prepare for even more disappointment and pain. A lukewarm Roman Catholic before his capture, he found strength as a POW in revived religious faith, a story heard from others who survived the POW experience. But his bond to his friends was key. He was convinced that "Night Stalkers Don't Quit," the motto of the 160th, was a promise; and he believed his commander who said early in the mission that no one would be left behind. Confirmation came from the sky. His friends, not knowing his location, over-flew the city while broadcasting, "Mike Durant. We will not leave without you." Hearing that, Durant smiled in the knowledge that despite all obstacles, the world was in order.

Then his favorite songs were played on Armed Forces Network, dedicated to him by his friends. The bond sustained him.

This book will provide the general reader with insight into the world of special operations. Professional military people will pop their shirt buttons, proud in sharing service to the United States of America with Mike Durant.

The United States and Coercive Diplomacy. Edited by Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin. Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2003. 442 pages. \$45.00 (\$19.95 paper). **Reviewed by Colonel Alan G. Stolberg**, Director of European Studies and the National Security Policy Program, US Army War College.

Frederick the Great, the 18th-century Prussian monarch, is reputed to have said that diplomacy without arms is like music without the instruments. From Frederick's perspective, diplomats clearly were not going to have much chance at success unless they had the support of the profession of arms. Even with the backing of the armed forces, the diplomats could still fail. This was especially true if a state was attempting to coerce or compel another state to undo something significant that it had already initiated. In fact, it would appear from the findings of *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* that even with all appropriate support mechanisms in place, including the armed forces, the chances for a state's coercive diplomatic strategy to succeed are still marginal.

Building on the foundation of coercive diplomacy theory developed in the Cold War era by the legendary Stanford professor Alexander George, editors Robert Art, noted professor of international relations at Brandeis University, and Patrick Cronin, former director of research and studies at the US Institute of Peace and current assistant administrator for the State Department's Agency for International Development, set out to determine the potential for coercive diplomacy to succeed in the post-Cold War world. In this work they focus the research of seven fine authors to assess the viability of the coercive diplomacy approach to a spectrum of crisis situations that America has found itself in since 1991.

The evaluation of regional and functional issues ranging from Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Haiti, to North Korea, China-Taiwan, Iraq, and the war on terror is viewed through the prism of a coercive diplomacy that seeks a behavioral change in an adversarial state by compelling it to either stop doing something it is currently doing, or begin doing something it had not been doing. Two primary types of coercion are identified: the diplomatic threat of the use of force, and the actual employment of force on a limited scale. The use of force can either be a demonstration or limited employment, in either case to convince the target state of the coercer's determination to resolve the crisis in its favor. In addition to the stick approach of diplomatic and military threats, a state also can use carrot-like inducements such as the transfer of resources or the offer of other things for tangible benefit. Most important, coercive diplomacy should never be viewed as an option unless the coercing state is prepared for the failure of this approach, ultimately requiring either the full use of all-out armed force or acquiescence to the target state's desires.

The authors make it clear early on that coercive diplomacy is difficult at best. While these efforts can convey the increasing probability of more punishment to come should the target state fail to comply, if the target state does not fear the coercing state or if the target state cares more about the goals of its efforts than the coercing state, any amount of coercive diplomacy is bound to break down. US attempts to diplomatically coerce Somali warlords, Serbia over Kosovo, North Korean nuclear efforts, and Iraq on WMD disarmament were judged failures because in each case the target state felt that it had much more to lose than the damage that the application of limited American force would produce. US attempts in the war on terror to compel either state or sub-state actors to refrain from the execution of support for terror strikes were considered to be failures, with the possible exception of deterring Iraq by the US strike on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in 1993 in response to a reported plan to assassinate former President Bush. It was determined that radical Islamic terror movements were simply too motivated to be compelled not to strike.

Combining the data from this study with Alexander George's assessment of a number of other cases during the Cold War indicates that coercive diplomacy can be depended upon for success only about 25 or 30 percent of the time. Motivation for the states involved remains the key variable. It all comes down to how badly a state or sub-state actor believes it needs to do something. If it perceives that it wants or needs something bad enough, it will endure, whatever the cost, thus negating the impact of coercive diplomacy and its limited use of force.

This is all the more reason why this study is so critical at this time in American and global history. Future threats of the 21st century, like transnational terrorism and North Korean nuclear proliferation, will remain key tests for coercive diplomatic theorists and policymakers alike. The evidence tells us that this approach is unlikely to work in these cases because the target actors are so intensely motivated. As a result, serious students and policymakers need to read this superb work as part of their efforts to develop alternate approaches, including the application of force well beyond anything simply considered coercive.

The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery. By Wolfgang Schivelbusch. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003. 416 pages. \$27.50. **Reviewed by Colonel Cole C. Kingseed, USA Ret.,** Chief of Military History, US Military Academy, 1999-2001.

In light of the coalition victory over the military forces of Saddam Hussein, it may appear ironic that Wolfgang Schivelbusch's most recent book has captured so much interest. In reminding us that "defeat follows war as ashes follow fire," Schivelbusch examines the phenomenon of military defeat as a structure that transcends national and social borders. Using three seminal cases of modern warfare—the American South after the Civil War, France following the Franco-Prussian War, and Germany after World War I—*The Culture of Defeat* comes at an opportune time. How these societies survived in lieu of being dismantled by the victors forms the basis of this provocative anthology that opens new avenues for historical inquiry.

Schivelbusch is hardly a stranger to social history. An independent scholar, his previous works include *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization and Perception of Time and Space* and *In a Cold Crater: Cultural and Intellectual Life in Berlin, 1945-1948*. In his current study, Schivelbusch opines that “what triumphs today will be defeated tomorrow.” The three case studies are quite illustrative. Over the course of the five decades that span the collapse of the Confederacy to the defeat of Imperial Germany, the author chronicles the psychological and cultural fallout of the defeated states.

Schivelbusch posits that war, death, and rebirth are culturally linked. Following military defeat, the vanquished frequently imitate the victors almost by reflex. Those nations that survive without being dismantled by the victors usually adopt a two-level process. During the initial phase the prewar social and political elites adopt a form of myth to mitigate the psychological impact of military defeat, hence the “lost cause” of the Confederacy and the “stabbed in the back theory” by the German military aristocracy following Versailles. Next the defeated states begin the process of rebirth and recovery that eventually leads to a transformation of society.

Nowhere were these processes more evident than the postwar South. Schivelbusch argues persuasively that following the end of the Reconstruction era, the South attempted to transform itself into a mirror image of the North. From the chaos of military defeat, the South immediately adopted the myth of the lost cause and dropped its call for independence and its adherence to a failed economic system and the theory of states’ rights that led to its defeat. Despite the distinctiveness of the South’s own culture, postwar Southern history was destined to be one of “reunification and reconciliation with the North.” With limited success, the South strove for economic modernization and industrialization and a symbolic marriage with its previous adversary, thus completing the cycle of plantation society, war, and rebirth.

A similar phenomenon occurred in France in the wake of its defeat during the Franco-Prussian War. Here Schivelbusch examines both the military defeat at the hands of Bismarck’s Prussia and the resulting civil war, highlighted by the Paris Commune. As did the South, France found a scapegoat in its military defeat. Marshal Achilles Francois Baseline, who allowed his army corps to be encircled at Metz, emerged as the principal architect of French defeat. So too was Napoleon III’s regime totally discredited. France took some solace in that it accepted defeat by a unified Germany, vice Prussia, its traditional enemy. The harsh terms of the treaty soon gave rise to “*La Revanche*,” a political religion and integrating force that unified the Third Republic. To modernize, the republic then adopted a policy of economic and cultural imperialism to “distance itself from its military defeat, to provide a degree of compensation, and to stimulate regeneration, and to forge a new national mission.”

Schivelbusch then turns his attention to Weimar Germany. According to the author, the German capitulation in World War I was historically unique in that no nation had laid down its arms with its forces so deep in enemy territory. Whether Germany could have held the Rhine River line as some European politicians claimed is highly dubious. In any event, the military’s fictitious claim that it had “never been defeated in battle” rapidly emerged as a prevalent theme in Weimar Germany. Weimar Germany’s embrace of an American-style economy can thus be

seen as “a desire for stability after an exhilarating but perilous roller-coaster ride.” When economic disaster followed global economic depression in the early 1930s, an awaiting Adolf Hitler and the National Socialists then adopted American-style capitalism and mass manipulation to create a modern industrial state. Despite Hitler’s claims to the contrary, Schivelbusch argues that Germany was an eager student of American methods, including the extermination of the Native American tribes and its mass production of consumer goods.

In a chilling epilogue, Schivelbusch adds a dramatic warning to the United States in the wake of America’s withdrawal from Southeast Asia three decades ago. Schivelbusch posits that America’s post-Vietnam malaise was shattered by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. These attacks uncovered the suppressed remains of America’s defeat in Vietnam and the failed attempt to rescue the Iranian hostages in 1980. Thus the American psyche is a vacuum crying to “be filled with an act of military revenge for which there is no addressee.” Recent addressees now include the former Taliban regime of Afghanistan and the government of Saddam Hussein. How these nations are striving to cope with defeat and regenerate themselves may very well reveal lessons derived from Schivelbusch’s landmark study.

To Destroy a City: Strategic Bombing and Its Human Consequences in World War II. By Hermann Knell. Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo Press, 2003. 373 pages. \$32.50. **Reviewed by Jeffrey Record**, Visiting Research Professor, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, and author of *Dark Victory, America’s Second War Against Iraq* (forthcoming).

Hermann Knell was a 19-year-old living in the crowded old medieval town of Würzburg, Germany, on the night of 16-17 March 1945 when hundreds of Allied bombers paid a lethal visit. In one night, the bombers killed more than 5,000 people and flattened 92 percent of the city’s structures, leaving 90,000 Würzburgers homeless. *To Destroy a City* combines Knell’s personal memoir of that night and a discourse on the “why” of it. Germany’s collapse was imminent and its major industrial cities lay in ruins. “Why,” asks Knell, “would such a city of small strategic value and with few facilities to support the German war effort be the target of a bomber fleet?”

Knell arrives, I believe, at the right answer, but the journey to it leaves much to be desired. As a self-acknowledged amateur historian, Knell sometimes gets his facts wrong (he twice dates Hitler’s reoccupation of the Rhineland in 1935), occasionally dwells on topics not germane to his subject (e.g., the political origins of World War I, the relationship of the Treaty of Versailles and Hitler’s rise to power), and on at least one issue falls for a whopper (Goebbels’ claim that the Nazi invasion of Russia was a preemptive attack on a Soviet army assembling for an invasion of Germany). He also blames the Allies for the failure of the 20 July 1944 plot by a group of dissident German officers to overthrow the Nazi regime, when in fact the Allies were in no position to act on the attempted coup, which failed because of bad luck, plotter incompetence, and Goebbels’ quick thinking.

An engineer by trade and now a Canadian citizen, Knell furthermore wanders through the history of strategic bombing (from 1914 to 1945), paying much attention to its horrors (as one would expect of someone who experienced them) but not enough attention to the power and attraction of the idea behind it. During the interwar period, British and American proponents of strategic bombardment believed they had discovered a way to win wars without the necessity of bloody and protracted land combat, and they pursued their vision right through World War II, notwithstanding the early degeneration of the strategic air campaign against Germany into an aerial trench warfare of attrition between Allied bombers, German fighters, and flak. The Allies prevailed in the end only by using bombers as bait to bring up the German fighters, which were then downed by P-51s and P-47s. By March 1945, of course, the Allies owned Germany's skies, the momentum of the strategic bombing campaign had become irresistible, and the mass slaughter of civilians had become routine. Würzburg's destruction may have counted for nothing on the strategic ledger, but the Allies were running out of significant targets. What else was there to do but to keep bombing? Knell sums it up correctly: "Würzburg was bombed because the bombing offensive had long ago become an end to itself, with its own momentum, its own purpose, devoid of tactical or strategic value, indifferent to the needless suffering and destruction it caused."

Knell's greatest strength is the personal perspective he brings to the subject. The literature on strategic bombing available in English is short on the perspectives of those who were bombed as opposed to those who were doing the bombing. And any way you cut it, then or now, the indiscriminate bombing of civilians is an act of terrorism. British Bomber Command's Arthur "Bomber" Harris made no bones about it—he believed in terrorizing the German population into overthrowing their government. To be sure, those who directed the US Army's "Mighty" Eighth Air Force may have believed or at least wanted to believe that they were conducting precision bombing of legitimate military and economic targets, but Dresden and the mass incineration of Japan's cities put an end to any pretense of it. Such are the wages of total war.

But if Knell is certainly right in concluding that strategic bombing between 1914 and 1945 "does not represent a leaf of honor in the annals of mankind," he is wrong to say that "the losses and destruction were unnecessary." In the case of World War II, more than just civilians were being destroyed by Bomber Command and Eighth Air Force. Strategic bombing wrecked much of the Axis's war-making capacity and forced that enemy to divert enormous resources into air defense, pulled most of the Luftwaffe off the Russians' backs, and helped isolate the Normandy beaches from German reinforcement. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine defeating Nazi Germany absent air superiority over Europe (including Normandy on 6 June 1944), which was obtained by compelling the Luftwaffe to exhaust itself against ever-larger waves of Allied bombers and their escort fighters. In the case of Japan, strategic bombing, with the tremendous psychological assist of two atomic weapons, arguably spared the United States—and the Japanese—the bloodbath of an invasion of the home islands. The price of all these successes was, of course, paid out in the form of hundreds of thousands of German and Japanese civilian lives. But this

was total war, and there was no other way to get at the enemy's war-making capacity except via strategic air attack using technologies that could not be employed in a manner that spared civilians.

To Destroy a City offers a unique and valuable perspective on a still very contentious subject.

Strategic Asia 2002-03: Asian Aftershocks. Edited by Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg with Michael Wills. Seattle: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2002. 430 pages. \$24.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Dr. Andrew Scobell, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

In the aftermath of 11 September 2001, the need for up-to-date, reliable, and authoritative information and analysis of the world around us has never been greater. At the same time security practitioners are surrounded by a dizzying array of monographs, periodicals, electronic newsletters, websites, and talking heads, each of which purports to be the most respected and indispensable. The most timely open-source materials tend to range between opinion pieces (frequently devoid of facts and footnotes) and journalism (usually firsthand accounts but based largely on anecdotes), but neither one is the most solid foundation upon which to base one's judgments. More authoritative and thorough analyses by recognized experts can be found in journal articles and books, but these are inevitably dated by the time they appear in print.

Fortunately, security practitioners who focus on Asia now have an excellent resource that is timely, authoritative, and meaty. For the second year in a row, the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR), based in Seattle, has published a superb collection of essays surveying the major countries and sub-regions of Asia. This volume is a product of the collective efforts of a team of talented scholars, analysts, and strategic thinkers. NBR is fortunate to have as its senior advisor on this project former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Shalikashvili (USA Ret.). *Strategic Asia* contains chapters on the United States, China, Japan, Korea, Russia, Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and a chapter examining Islam and Asian security. The volume includes valuable features like maps, a 20-page section of statistical charts and figures, and, thankfully, an index. Those who desire more information and want to check an author's sources can consult endnotes at the conclusion of every chapter. This reviewer found all the contributions to be of very high quality, with the chapters on China by Thomas Christensen (Princeton University) and on Russia by William Wohlforth (Dartmouth College) particularly masterful.

This strategic survey compares very favorably with other similar sources available and has one additional feature that many of the following print sources do not: a long shelf life. Honolulu's East-West Center annually publishes a useful *Asian Security Outlook*, but this is a less-meaty indicator of how security analysts in a particular country tend to see their country's own strategic outlook. Still more concise is the *Northeast Asia Survey* published by the Brookings Institution's Center for Northeast Asia Policy Studies. Other useful, timely, and authoritative print sources

on contemporary Asia include the September issue of the journal *Current History*, which focuses on China and East Asia, and the January/February issue of the bi-monthly journal *Asian Survey*, which features country-by-country reviews of the previous year.

A security practitioner who is looking for an authoritative and up-to-date strategic survey of Asia need look no further than *Strategic Asia 2002-03*. This volume is indispensable.

The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present. By Shannon E. French. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003. 272 pages. \$24.95. **Reviewed by Dr. David L. Perry,** Professor of Ethics, US Army War College.

This is a rich survey of military values in diverse cultures, from ancient Greek and Roman to medieval Scandinavian, from Native American to Chinese and Japanese. The book also has the virtue of treating each of its disparate traditions in depth and with care. Eight of its nine chapters were written by Shannon French, an ethicist who teaches at the US Naval Academy. The remaining chapter was penned by Felicia Ackerman, a professor of philosophy at Brown University who was one of French's Ph.D. advisers.

Although *Code of the Warrior* exhibits close reading of primary texts as well as mastery of pertinent scholarly commentaries, it is fortunately free of burdensome academic jargon, and would thus be useful in undergraduate ethics courses and among general audiences. Its value would be greatest for budding officers in military academies or university ROTC programs, but senior military leaders would also benefit from its reading. This is one of the best books in military ethics since the 1989 publication of Anthony Hartle's *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making*. In fact, French's and Hartle's books might profitably be read together, since they cover different but important and complementary topic areas.

French is not satisfied with approaches to teaching military ethics that rely exclusively on lists of rules, believing that they unwisely neglect motivation and character. In that connection, she draws on a number of studies bearing on the moral psychology of warriors, such as Mark Osiel's *Obeying Orders: Atrocity, Military Discipline, and the Law of War*, and concludes that detailed briefings for soldiers and officers on the laws of war must be reinforced through (a) stories of "role models who remained true to their codes of honor even in the face of nearly overwhelming challenges or temptations," and (b) shaming tactics to inculcate a strong aversion to behaving in ways inconsistent with their organizational codes.

Code of the Warrior contains a wonderful examination of Homer's *Iliad*, helping the reader to understand how a particular sense of honor on the part of its characters could produce admirable figures like Hector on the one hand, yet also generate a devastating and tragic war between Greeks and Trojans from a seemingly trivial affair between Paris and Helen.

The author also presents a perspective rarely discussed in books on military ethics: the Vikings. What, we might ask, could those bad boys (and girls) possi-

bly teach modern warriors about ethics? Quite a bit, in French's view, though her examples from the Nordic sagas tend to illustrate variations on fairly predictable themes of courage, determination, generosity, and honor.

Later in the book French explores the values of 18th- and 19th-century Native American warriors of the Great Plains region. As she narrates various stories told by and about those tribes, the reader may be struck by the contrast between the widespread reverence and respect accorded to the souls of animals hunted for food, and the desire of each tribe to show its superiority over every other tribe through violent conquest and domination, even occasionally by killing unarmed women and children or torturing prisoners of war to death. But French reminds us that whites, too, tended to regard Native Americans as subhuman, a view which served to rationalize their own indiscriminate war tactics.

French then shifts dramatically, this time to a description of the curious combination of Buddhist and martial values evinced by the Chinese monks of the Shaolin Temple. Another dramatic swing in subject brings the reader to the code of the Samurai. French narrates the emergence of that fascinating set of values from an amalgam of Shinto, Confucian, and Zen Buddhist beliefs, combined with uniquely Japanese forms of warrior honor and shame, which typically dictated suicide over surrender.

In her concluding chapter the author addresses the intriguing question, "Are Terrorists Warriors?" Given that terrorists are usually regarded as murderers by definition, and that French concluded in her first chapter that authentic warriors are not murderers, one might assume that her answer to the question would be an easy "No." And in a sense that's exactly where she ends up. Along the way, though, she cites the doctrine of double effect to remind us of the moral difference between directly targeting the innocent versus accidentally killing them in war, as long as one tries one's best to minimize "collateral damage." She also points out that the tactics of al Qaeda—terrorists who profess to be Muslims—in reality violate many core Islamic teachings. French too quickly disposes of the question of whether the 9/11 hijackers exhibited some form of courage: Aristotle's view that real courage must be in the service of the right cause, which French cites exclusively, is not the only credible phenomenology of courage.

All in all, however, *The Code of the Warrior* is an impressively researched and eloquent work, well worth careful study by military professionals and others interested in martial values. It permits us to achieve insights regarding the similarities and differences between our contemporary American military code and those of more distant times and places, thus imparting authentic humanistic wisdom.

Alamein. By Jon Latimer. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002. 400 pages. \$27.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Douglas V. Johnson II (LTC, USA Ret.),** Research Professor, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

This is a remarkably good telling of a very complex tale. Jon Latimer states his task as an attempt to provide an objective accounting of a battle about which several dozen books have already been written, several by notable historians. But Latimer

quickly reminds us that most previous works have a rather strong bias vis-à-vis one or the other of the leading personalities, General Montgomery or Rommel in particular. To make it simple for those who have not read all the previous books, Latimer leads off with a concise historiography of the literature covering this campaign.

The events leading up to the climactic battle are treated with due thoroughness given the primary objective of the work. The chapter on Malta is wonderfully compact and informative, as are the chapters that lead the reader to the selection and arrival of later Field Marshal Sir Bernard Law Montgomery.

Once the battle actually begins, however, the reader is subjected to an almost numbing recitation of continuous attacks by one brigade or battalion after another. If the intent is to convey the true state of development of the British Eighth Army, the author does so with horrifying effectiveness. With rare exceptions the Eighth Army's infantry sacrifices itself with a doggedness reminiscent of the Somme and Passchendaele. Now and then the senior leaders are able to master the requirements of combined arms warfare, and when they do the units accomplish their missions with devastating effectiveness. They do so often enough to pull off a victory, but their inability to do so more often produces enormous casualty lists and compromises the pursuit that might have followed. This reviewer was struck by the mixture of hardened professionals laboring side by side with others who display almost 19th-century regimental (amateur) attitudes. This is an army that is learning its trade as a combined arms team at very high cost.

When I, as an American, set forth to criticize our allies for their shortcomings, I am obliged to recall that this book is focused on the 1940s and particularly 1942. I am further obliged to recall that when the American forces landed in North Africa in October 1942, they too demonstrated a naiveté toward combined arms operations that yielded the debacle of Kasserine Pass. I cannot help but be struck by the fact that for two wars in a row, it took engagement in actual combat to enlighten American military leaders as to the realities of "the war upon which they are embarking," as Clausewitz warned. Observation and analysis, of which there was a good deal before American forces were employed in both World War I and World War II, evidently needed a great deal more lead time to generate an effective execution of what was learned in the training base. In the battle of Alamein, American Army Air Forces supporting the British Eighth Army demonstrated an ability to provide essential ground combat support, yet the knowledge of how to execute this critical function was decidedly absent at the battle of Kasserine Pass. The time was too short, and there was no extant mechanism, beyond a few liaison reports, that would have effectively captured and integrated those lessons-learned into the training base in a timely fashion.

As Latimer describes it, British Eighth Army artillery recovered the reputation of the World War I Royal Artillery Corps whenever all the pieces could be wired together for communication purposes and held in place. But the reader must wonder just how much firepower it takes to thoroughly subdue a crafty enemy. Latimer details the Eighth Army artillery preparations for the opening battle and several subordinate operations, but as those operations unfold, the infantry is shot to pieces time and again by undiscovered or undestroyed machine guns and Axis artillery. While facilitating the advance of the infantry for most of the time, the power of artil-

lery in the defense appears to have been remarkable. Indeed, almost every major Axis counterattack is destroyed or halted by massive artillery concentrations—so long as communications held together—but there were many occasions when it was the “poor bloody infantry” that had to do the real work by manhandling the anti-tank guns when someone was thoughtful enough to provide them.

Latimer is sparse but decidedly high in his praise of the professionalism of the Eighth Army’s support services. He briefly contrasts the Germans’ paucity of all resources (and contrasts the “creature comforts” of their Italian allies), but except for the surfeit or deficit of petroleum products, none of the supply differential seemed to matter in the long run. I would dare to suggest that here is grist for another doctoral dissertation.

Latimer is about as evenhanded in his treatment of then-Lieutenant General Montgomery as anyone I have read and paints him well, warts and wisdom. He is likewise evenhanded in evaluating Monty’s predecessors and subordinates. He presents sufficient evidence to dismiss several of the earlier attacks on Montgomery, but then leaves behind a mixed conclusion. In one sense Montgomery was wielding a blunt instrument, even if it did have several sharp edges. It is clear that he had a better grasp of the concept of combined arms warfare than did most of his subordinates and that he was able to force upon them a degree of mutual cooperation they seemed previously unable to achieve. It would, however, be too much to ascribe any particular brilliance to Montgomery at Alamein—much as he claimed for himself.

War and Intervention: Issues for Contemporary Peace Operations. By Michael V. Bhatia. Bloomfield, Conn.: Kumarian Press, 2003. 222 pages. \$27.95 (paper). **Reviewed by Doug Bandow**, Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute and author and editor of several books, including *Tripwire: Korea and U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changed World*.

Should superpowers do windows? The United States is engaged in long-term nation-building in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Balkans, leading efforts to confront potential nuclear proliferators Iran and North Korea, and expanding traditional security ties throughout East Asia and Europe. Americans should ask whether there is any limit to their global responsibilities. Author Michael Bhatia inadvertently helps answer that question in *War and Intervention* by demonstrating the pitfalls inherent to “peace operations.”

Bhatia treats intervention as a given: between 1798 and 1993, he reports, the US military was engaged on 234 occasions, only five of which resulted in a declaration of war. Thus, he writes, “although presented by certain policymakers as a historical aberration, peace operations are, instead, a contemporary manifestation of the continuing phenomenon of American ground intervention.” In his view, this historical tendency is reinforced by Washington’s contemporary military dominance and global reach.

Washington often has used military force and obviously is capable of doing so today around the globe. Still, there remains a marked difference between defending American commerce from the Barbary pirates and defeating American

Indians as the United States expanded across the continent, and sorting out varied civil wars and guerrilla conflicts in far distant lands.

Mere ability to act does not mean Washington should do so. Indeed, with American forces tied up pacifying Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iraq, and Kosovo, Liberia looked like a country too far even for the Bush Administration. Bhatia's analysis suggests the value of caution and humility regarding America's ability to control international events.

The author ably sorts through not only the different kinds of missions and requirements, but also why success is often so difficult to achieve. Bhatia observes: "A definitional haze surrounds the varieties of peace operations, with a flurry of descriptions, terms, and operational evolutions resulting in a general confusion of peacekeeping with peace enforcement, and UN sanction with unilateral intervention." Especially given the complex reasons of recent US administrations for acting, "It is thus difficult to determine where the humanitarian imperative ends and primary domestic- and foreign-policy objectives begin," writes Bhatia.

The complicated nature of contemporary peacekeeping reflects a changed international environment. Of 108 wars between 1989 and 1998, only seven were interstate. But outside involvement was common and no longer limited to superpowers. The fight in the Congo (Zaire), explains Bhatia, "is a mix of internal and international conflicts, and of conventional units, militias, and individual warlords, with components from Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania."

The end of the Cold War and collapse of nation-states has further decentralized conflict; public and private organizations, including criminal organizations, often play important roles. This makes reconstructing states even more difficult.

Circumstances also vary widely. Are conflicts "ripe for resolution," Bhatia asks—are parties ready for peace? As he notes, "What is unique is that the contemporary phenomenon of transitional administration involves the governance of territory by the United Nations and is typically accomplished at the behest of and with the consent of the local population." This usually means providing a full-service government, which became an obvious problem in Iraq after the collapse of the Hussein regime.

Particularly difficult is constructing a genuinely democratic order. As Bhatia writes, "Elections cannot be viewed as the sole method of appropriate local consultation or as an exit strategy." Elections often deliver unexpected and unpleasant results, as in Bosnia, where the nationalists have routinely triumphed. But the heavy-handed Western response has done little to prepare that nation, such as it is, for an independent existence.

Finally, Bhatia devotes a chapter to the use of military force. Peacekeeping is different from warfighting: "The exchange of military hostilities is neither the dominant nor definitive aspect of peace operations. Instead, the deployment of an adequately robust international contingent is most purposefully a method of opponent dissuasion and conflict prevention. The actual use of force, then, should be minimal, nuanced, preventative, and controlled."

As Bhatia relates, some foreign militaries have proved particularly adept at such operations—Australia in East Timor, for instance. The Europeans, lacking America's combat capabilities, certainly could do more in this regard.

In contrast, the United States possesses the only military that, in the near future at least, is most capable of taking on large contingencies, such as a war on the Korean peninsula. Instead of reorienting and retraining US forces, they should be allowed to concentrate on warfighting.

The issue goes even deeper. The temptation to turn to America to right a mass of foreign wrongs is obviously strong. But Washington should not be expected to do it all. And Bhatia's book, a useful guide to the complex operations to which America increasingly commits its military, unintentionally illustrates the case for a more cautious and restrained approach to peacekeeping and nation-building. These tasks are extraordinarily difficult to do, and especially hard to do well.

Stray Voltage: War in the Information Age. By Wayne Michael Hall. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2003. 248 pages. \$36.95. **Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Timothy L. Thomas, USA Ret.,** an analyst at the Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

For over 40 years, the term "stray voltage" has been used by agriculturalists to describe voltage developed on the grounded neutral system of a farm. If intense enough, the voltage can cause a mild shock to animals, resulting in flinches or even avoidance behavior. Those who read *Stray Voltage: War in the Information Age* by Brigadier General Wayne Michael Hall (USA Ret.) may suffer similar effects. They might flinch with excitement over his new ideas in this interesting book, or avoid portions of it due to a plethora of terms that can exhaust the reader.

What first strikes this reader is the extent to which Hall has deeply thought about concepts that have consumed the pages of foreign and domestic military journals over the past few years. Knowledge war, asymmetric war, information war, and information operations are a few of them. Hall has put his soul into this work, and has done a commendable job of addressing these and other topics few wish to consider. For this alone he deserves our praise and admiration. That Hall has thought about each area deeply is clear throughout each chapter. In the end, the book's essence is built around two concepts: defending against enemy attempts to disrupt US decisionmaking and damage our national will, while simultaneously discussing US means to attack enemy (terrorists, guerillas, etc.) decisionmaking and will to resist.

The commentary is filled with details, and his weaving of one concept into another is done with care. He uses current examples to promote his theory, and it is this method that produces the flinches of excitement (and fear) about tomorrow's reality. This is not your average book on the information age. While agreeing with other commentary on the value of *Stray Voltage* (creative, stimulating, controversial, informed, and comprehensive to name just a few) there are one or two problem areas.

By the time one finishes *Stray Voltage*, readers have encountered a myriad of new terms. Consider, for example, just the term knowledge. The reader is introduced to knowledge war, knowledge attribution, knowledge-based operations and strategy, knowledge engineering, knowledge management, knowledge managers, knowledge mapping, knowledge rheostat, knowledge weapons, knowledge maneu-

ver, and knowledge workers. These terms exhaust the serious reader who doesn't just accept Hall at face value but attempts to ascertain if his ideas are of true value. General Hall must have suffered the same exhaustion as he tried to handle each term and weave his tapestry.

Other terminology in *Stray Voltage* also contains contradictions. Let's examine the term asymmetric war. On page xi, asymmetric war is defined as "the strategy, tactics, and tools a weaker adversary uses to offset the superiority of a foe by attacking the stronger force's vulnerabilities, using both direct and indirect approaches to hamper vital functions or locations for the explicit purpose of seeking and exploiting advantages." Page 43 notes that "asymmetric war involves a strong force either using or threatening to use an advantage that the weaker opponent cannot respond to; it also involves a weak force seeking offsets against the stronger force; and it usually presents a social or political dilemma to the stronger force." That is, in the first case only a weaker adversary's role is addressed, and in the latter case both strong and weak forces are addressed. Which one is it? Such confusing uses of terminology and definitions are the major problems with the work.

Returning to the positive aspects of the book, General Hall is absolutely correct in noting that we must not mirror-image our opponent, and that we need to have people who think like our enemy thinks. This is a very important point, one which he could not have emphasized enough. For the so-called opposing force (OPFOR) to be successful as he recommends (military personnel who understand how the other side thinks, how his culture views certain developments, and what his operations order looks like), the OPFOR must be composed of foreign area officers (FAOs) from the US armed forces and civilian area specialists.

Finally, Hall is absolutely on point in emphasizing the need for thinkers in the years ahead. That's why Hall's version of information superiority, for example, is so impressive. He has a corner of the market now on what it really might mean, not just what someone else said it meant. Thinkers like Hall won't simply accept terminology, they will examine and critique it. He almost certainly does not want the reader to just accept his terms and definitions either, but to think about these concepts for themselves.

Do you want a book we list or review?

The US Army War College Post Exchange Bookstore can provide information on how you can order the books reviewed in *Parameters* or listed in our "Off the Press" section. The Bookstore is open from 0730 to 1330 Monday through Friday. The address and phone number are:

Bookstore, Root Hall
122 Forbes Avenue
Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5250
Phone: (717) 258-3326

Or visit the Bookstore on-line at: <http://odin.aafes.com/wcbooks>.
