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## Book Reviews

Parameters Editors

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## *Book Reviews*

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**The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq.** By George Packer. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005. 467 pages. \$26.00. **Reviewed by W. Andrew Terrill**, Research Professor of National Security Studies, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

*Assassins' Gate* is a powerful and deeply thoughtful study of US involvement with Iraq during the Administration of President George W. Bush. The book is written with a keen eye for detail and a clear ability to bore into the most important questions surrounding the war. George Packer's analysis makes extensive use of interview data, and the author was also able to spend a great deal of time in post-Saddam Iraq before escalating civil unrest and terrorism made that course of action unwise. Packer notes that he was guardedly in favor of the idea of war with Iraq, but nevertheless severely critiques the way in which the United States debated whether or not it should intervene in Iraq. Mostly, Packer writes as an obsessed (interested is too weak a word) bystander, who is deeply concerned about the future of both the United States and Iraq and is struggling to make sense of the policies that have placed us at our current situation in that country.

While some authors, including Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor in *Cobra II*, have suggested that the influence of neoconservative intellectuals on Iraq policy has been overblown, Packer is having none of it. He states that the Iraq War will always be linked with the term neoconservative, and he considers neoconservative commentators to have been a key driving force in the movement to war. In a chapter titled "Fevered Minds," Packer describes the boredom of the neoconservatives in the aftermath of the Cold War. These individuals are portrayed as intellectual street fighters who were left without a comparable conflict in which they could apply their incendiary style of rhetoric once the Soviet empire had crumbled. The lack of a major world crisis to energize and excite them is presented as a painful withdrawal from the thrilling life-and-death issues that had once engulfed them. The placid years of Bill Clinton only added insult to injury for these lovers of ideological ferment, while the increasing tendency of the Republican Party to move back to the political realism of Richard Nixon and George H. W. Bush terrified them. Realists, according to Packer, believe foreign policy must be based on "vital national interests," not high-minded efforts to transform the world through coercive regime change. Packer also maintains that realists are more likely to ask questions like, "What do human rights have to do with national security?" and "Can democracy be brought by force?"

The 9/11 attacks and the war on terror offered new opportunities for bored interventionist thinkers to reengage in high-stakes intellectual combat and bureaucratic warfare. Moreover, they did so with an unbounded sense of self-confidence, believing their favored policies had won the Cold War. The main effort of this post-9/11 struggle was to focus American anger in favor of war with Iraq and begin the projected effort to remake the Middle East into a pro-Western, democratic, and

capitalist region. One ally of the neoconservatives is described as holed up in his New York apartment reading classics of totalitarianism to allow him to better critique Saddam's regime. He calls this his "war duty." Packer also discusses the role of Iraqi exiles in attempting to push the United States into war. He states that the "fate of exiles is to dream and wait and decay." He further indicates that a central function of such people is to accuse—and especially to accuse Westerners whose misgivings about invading Iraq are treated as complicity with Saddam Hussein. Iraqi exile Kanan Makiya, for example, is quoted as calling Secretary of State Colin Powell "an appeaser" for his reluctance to commit the United States to a military solution to the Iraq problem.

Packer is also deeply critical of the policies of the postwar occupation, which he characterizes as "the policy of an occupier that didn't think it needed to worry about making enemies." The Administration's decision to dissolve the Iraqi Army, according to Packer, "could have occurred only to an occupying power that was sure its enemy was beaten," since it unleashed a number of former soldiers to engage in anti-American terrorism and these individuals formed the backbone of the current insurgency. No one except the US military seemed to think they had to worry about these ex-soldiers. According to Packer, de-Ba'athification was also unpopular with US military officers in Iraq who often lost their hardest-working counterparts just as they were beginning to form a relationship. Packer is also critical of the disproportionate number of young, optimistic civilians sent to Iraq to serve in the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). According to the author, this group was "astonishingly young" and comprised almost no one who knew much about the Middle East or about the conduct of post-conflict operations. Packer quotes a US official in Iraq as stating that the "fifth team" had been sent to do a job that would have severely challenged the "first team."

Whatever illusions Packer, through his own exile associations, might have harbored about the Iraqi population were severely battered when he came into personal contact with the reality of that country. Some of the people he meets are deeply pro-American, grateful for Saddam's ouster, and patient about continuing US involvement in that country. A young woman named Aseel is particularly poignant in her hopes to travel and live a life unbounded by Saddam's brutality. Most Iraqis encountered by Packer are, nevertheless, distrustful of the United States. Packer also confirms the already widely known problem that many Iraqis came to expect a prosperous and re-made society overnight. He further observes that Americans in Iraq are sometimes critiqued as short tempered with a lack of Iraqi gratitude for the liberation. The Americans, Packer suggests, resent nonstop Iraqi criticism and cannot understand why Iraqis do not behave like they were scripted to by the neocons in pre-war debates—Western-oriented, grateful, and secure in the knowledge that anything is better than the continued rule of Saddam Hussein.

The author also engages in an examination of the possibility for prolonged and bloody inter-communal warfare in Iraq. He deals in considerable depth with the competing and possibly irreconcilable Arab, Kurdish, and Turkoman claims to the city of Kirkuk, which is centered in an area of huge oil wealth. The study then moves on to consider how far Iraq still has to go. According to Packer, "Daily existence in Iraq remains a nightmare. In the world's newest democracy, most people aren't free to speak

their minds, belong to a certain group, wear what they want, or even walk down the street without risking their lives.” Yet this bleak assessment does not mean that Packer has given up on Iraq. He notes that America’s fate is now tied to that country and that it is absolutely too soon to say that Iraq’s problems cannot be solved.

In summary, *Assassins’ Gate* may be one of the most important and controversial books published on the Iraq War thus far. The intellectual foundations for the war are examined in microscopic detail, as are all major aspects of postwar policy for rehabilitating Iraq. The author has formed personal bonds with many Iraqis as well as with US soldiers fighting in Iraq and many of the families of the American fallen. He would clearly like Iraq to emerge as a major foreign policy success that can justify the sacrifice that has occurred to help give Iraqis a decent future. His tool for helping to achieve this end is an unrelenting honesty about our actions in Iraq so far. This honesty, informed by a manic research effort, is worthy of the attention of all individuals seriously interested in an acceptable conclusion for the current struggle in Iraq.

**On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom.**

By Gregory Fontenot, E. J. Degen, and David Tohn. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2005. 539 pages. \$34.95. **Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bateman**, a strategist assigned to the Office of Net Assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

T. E. Lawrence was, first and foremost, an academic. He was not a professional soldier, nor did he intend (originally, anyway) to become “Lawrence of Arabia.” The media made a somewhat socially awkward British intellectual-turned-guerilla-warrior into “Lawrence of Arabia.” But Lawrence was true to his foundation when he wrote his own account of his actions in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Lawrence wrote, “In these pages is not a history of the Arab movement. . . . It is a narrative of daily life, mean happenings, little people. Here are no lessons for the world, no disclosures to shock peoples. It is filled with trivial things, partly that no one mistake for history the bones from which some day a man may make history.”

History takes time. It is not an instant thing, and no matter how well written an account of events may be, if recorded in the near-immediate aftermath it does not replace history. Today most historians generally agree that the start point for “history” is about 25 years in the past. It just takes that long for the whole picture to become available. This is an important professional fact to pass on, because many people might mistake *On Point* for the official history of the invasion of Iraq. It is not.

*On Point* is the product of a team effort, conducted at the behest of the then-Chief of Staff of the Army, General Eric Shinseki, to immediately capture and record for analysis and posterity the operational events that occurred during Operation Iraqi Freedom through 10 April 2003. In this collection and recording effort the team was led by retired Colonel Gregory Fontenot. The team members performed their mission superbly in both collecting the raw information and in processing a vast amount of material into a coherent narrative. The account is presented logically, the writing is clear, the associated maps are informative, and overall the book is immensely useful as a chronicle of events over that small period of time.

Fontenot is well known to the readers of *Parameters* as one of the Army's premier minds, and this work demonstrates that he has neither dulled, nor slowed, upon retirement. Indeed, *On Point* represents the closest approximation the United States Army has ever achieved to the original vision of Brigadier General S. L. A. Marshall to conduct "immediate history." (That oxymoron makes sense when one recalls that while Marshall was a magnificent chronicler and teller-of-tales, as befitted his pre-World War II background as a journalist, he really was not a historian.)

The book is divided into seven chapters. The first two chapters explain the background to the conflict, starting with the end of Desert Storm. The next four chapters are purely narrative in nature, describing the fighting, from the border up to Baghdad, and marking the capture of Baghdad as the end-point for the narrative. This, for most readers, will represent the meat of the project. It is also likely to have an enduring value, as this account probably will exert a great influence on the structure and directions which the histories (when they are eventually written, 20 or more years from now) will take.

The seventh chapter, however, is in many ways the most interesting. This chapter reflects the work's origins as an "after-action review" for the Army. Entitled "Implications," this section seems to reflect Fontenot's own careful wording and thought, as both a military officer and a historian. Fontenot deliberately maneuvered his way around the idea that it is possible to derive concrete "lessons learned" from any historical event, but simultaneously he offers the possibility that one might derive wisdom from the study of past events. This is a fine intellectual line to tread, one which may be missed by many casual readers, and Fontenot (and his team) accomplished the task very well. The "Implications" are where the meat of the intellectual content resides for the informed reader. Indeed, the typical consumer of this journal could skip to that chapter and not lose much, considering that it is safe to assume he or she followed events on the ground in Iraq pretty closely as they occurred.

*On Point* is well written, well documented, and represents a great effort on the part of the authors and those who supported them. Unfortunately, aesthetically it is somewhat lacking. Although the quality of the maps is good, there is a significant degradation in the quality of the photos, most of them stock DOD public affairs images. The images were quite obviously photocopied, and the crude, overexposed remainders detract. On the intellectual side, however, the only gap would be that *On Point* lacks a truly critical eye.

Good history is critical of every aspect of an event or era, even as it is laudatory where deserved. This is one reason why independent scholarship is so important. *On Point*, being both an immediate "after-action review" product, and starting out life as an official product of the institution which it chronicles, does not meet that standard. Yes, some events such as the ambush and defeat of the 507th Maintenance Company are discussed. Even the defeat of the 11th Attack Helicopter Regiment is lightly touched upon. But because it was written so quickly after events, and perhaps for other reasons as well, *On Point* does not represent a complete, critical assessment. That task remains. But with *On Point*, the authors and their sponsors have put forward some respectable and solid "bones from which some day a man may make history."

**Rein In at the Brink of the Precipice: American Policy Toward Taiwan and U.S.-PRC Relations.** By Alan D. Romberg. Washington, D.C.: The Henry L. Stimson Center, 2003. 245 pages. \$20.00. **Reviewed by Dr. Andrew Scobell**, Associate Research Professor, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

Concern in the United States over the Taiwan Strait flashpoint may have cooled for the moment, but the flow of books on the topic has not. This is a good thing, because the subject is not one that lends itself to a simplistic understanding. Sound scholarship and analysis are needed on this complex issue. Unfortunately, many of those who write about the topic simply serve to confound or obfuscate, especially for readers who do not bring any expertise or experience to the table. Fortunately, the book under review is one of several recent volumes that is written by an expert and succeeds in illuminating the issue.

The title of the volume comes from the warning China issued via a third party in late 1950 that the United States should “rein in at the brink of the precipice” before China took matters into its own hands. Of course, the warning was not taken seriously, and the result was China’s “surprise” massive military intervention in Korea. Alan Romberg seeks to underscore the danger of misreading China, especially on the sensitive issue of Taiwan. To underscore this point, it is worth recognizing that Beijing was just as upset over President Truman’s order to interpose the 7th Fleet into the Taiwan Strait as it was over the President’s directive to send immediate reinforcements to the Korean Peninsula. “A basic aim of this study,” according to Romberg, “is to provide some help in understanding these issues . . . [to help] future leaders.” Specifically, the author stresses that “failure to adhere to the basic principles of normalization and a lack of real understanding of some of these principles have sometimes led to serious crises in US-PRC relations.” He warns that “sloppy and [or] sweeping misstatement of policy” can be very dangerous.

The author is well qualified to proffer this help and provide these insights. Romberg is a veteran China specialist with extensive professional executive branch experience in the White House (on the National Security Council) and at the State Department (first for 20 years as foreign service officer, later on the Policy Planning Staff and at the US Mission to the United Nations). His book provides a wealth of historical background and analysis and contains a useful appendix with the texts of five joint communiqués, one joint statement, and the Taiwan Relations Act. Organized chronologically, the book builds from the negotiations that resulted in the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Washington and Beijing in 1979, to the state of play in the Administration of George W. Bush. His basic argument is that for China, “The core of the Taiwan issue has centered not on realizing actual unification but rather on the question of establishing sovereignty.”

Romberg has it right, but in his single-minded focus on sovereignty he has inadvertently downplayed another key aspect that increasingly concerns Beijing about Taiwan: the central role that the island plays in China’s security situation. Since the 1990s, leaders and analysts in Beijing have seen a Taiwan outside of mainland control as threatening or at least a grave challenge to China both militarily and

politically. In the view of many Chinese strategists, Taiwan presents a military threat by having its own independent armed forces and defense ties with other countries. At the very least, outside of China's control, Taiwan can provide an invaluable stone for "containing" China. Hence, one of the three conditions that Beijing has given as justifications for a use of force is foreign invasion or occupation. Politically, as a boisterous and bona fide Chinese democracy, Taiwan stands in sharp contrast to the repressive dictatorship on the Chinese mainland. Moreover, Taiwan insists that for all intents and purposes it is a separate country rather than a province of China. The only way for China to ensure once and for all that Taiwan no longer poses a military, political, or sovereignty challenge is to realize unification.

Of course, China would prefer to avoid a military solution, and as of early 2006 Beijing does not exhibit any sense of urgency. But circumstances could change, and it is imperative that Washington maintains its focus and continues to monitor the Taiwan Strait. Moreover, as Romberg argues: "It is important that each new administration not only recommit to the undertakings in the three communiqués (along with the Taiwan Relations Act) as the policy framework for approaching the Taiwan question, but that it understand what is being endorsed."

**Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln.** By Doris Kearns Goodwin. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005. 754 pages. \$35.00. **Reviewed by Colonel Leonard J. Fullenkamp, USA Ret.,** Professor of Military History and Strategy, US Army War College.

It was a badly divided nation that chose Abraham Lincoln as President in 1860. Sectional violence, long smoldering, was soon to ignite the flames of civil war. Lincoln, a compromise candidate for the newly minted Republican Party, gained the nomination after supporters of his powerful and better-known rivals split their votes. In similar fashion, Lincoln won the national election when the popular and electoral votes split along sectional lines.

Between his election in November 1860 and inauguration in March 1861, Lincoln set about selecting the men who as his cabinet would run the executive departments and serve as his advisors. Who Lincoln chose to serve in his cabinet and how that cabinet served him and the nation during the American Civil War are the subjects of Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Team of Rivals*. As the title of the book makes clear, Lincoln's official family was not always a happy family.

As with most Presidents, Lincoln selected men for his cabinet with political skills, strong minds, and with the apparent credentials necessary to run the various departments. Although several were political rivals, Lincoln wanted these men in his cabinet for the talents they possessed, believing that he could forge from among their strong egos and resolutely held political views a team of advisors with whom he could govern.

Senator William H. Seward and Ohio Governor Salmon Chase had coveted the office of the presidency, but had been forced to stand aside in favor of Lincoln. Seward accepted the post of Secretary of State, believing he could function as a prime minister of sorts, capable of manipulating Lincoln and his policies from be-

low. Salmon Chase accepted the powerful position of Secretary of the Treasury to keep a watchful eye on both Lincoln and his political enemy Seward as he maneuvered to secure the nomination for himself in 1864. For the post of Attorney General, Lincoln chose Missouri statesman and judge Edward Bates, who, like Seward and Chase, had vied for the top slot on the Republican ticket. The complex relationships between Lincoln and these three men, and two others, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells, unfold in the pages of this book against the backdrop of the Civil War.

Secretary of State Seward, along with so many others among the intellectual and political elites of the day, badly underestimated the backwoods lawyer from Illinois. Seward accepted his post believing he would be the power behind the throne. Lincoln quickly disabused him of that notion. Over time Lincoln earned first the respect and then the friendship of the brilliant Seward, who served both the President and the country well. At Treasury, Salmon Chase proved his worth and genius by figuring out how to finance the war. However, by refusing to abandon his aspirations to be President, Chase pursued an endless series of political intrigues, ultimately leading Lincoln to ask for his resignation. As the narrative unfolds we see Lincoln outmaneuver both Seward and Chase, and in so doing actually converting Seward to a valued and trusted advisor. With Chase he was less successful and eventually eased him out of the cabinet without converting him to a political enemy. Indeed, after his reelection in 1864, Lincoln appointed Chase to the post of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, knowing as he did so that Chase would look favorably on the President's plans for Reconstruction.

As commander-in-chief Lincoln directed the war with the able assistance of his Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, and Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Wells. Stanton, or "Mars," as Lincoln called him, replaced Senator Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania in January 1862. Lincoln had given the War Department portfolio to Cameron believing that his political skills would be needed in that post. As the Army ballooned in size from 16,000 men to more than a half million, it was not political skill but organizational skill and stamina that were in demand, talents Cameron lacked. Stanton possessed these talents, and more, in abundance. Working tirelessly, Edwin Stanton brought order out of chaos and set the War Department on a firm footing. Lincoln came to have an unusual bond of trust with Stanton almost incomprehensible today. Stanton had Lincoln's permission to overrule his decisions on certain matters such as granting commissions, the letting of contracts, and so forth. Lincoln reserved to Stanton authority over certain matters and almost never interfered with his subordinate in those matters. "Neptune" as Lincoln called Wells, likewise proved to be a talented and reliable department head. Under Wells' direction the tiny prewar American Navy grew to number more than 600 ships, placing it on a par with the best in the world.

Through the narrative's coverage of Lincoln's relationship with his generals, especially George McClellan and Ulysses S. Grant, one finds the bridge between policy and strategy in this book. Battles and campaigns are not much discussed, but succinctly and ably summarized so as to keep the focus on the complexities of Lincoln's direction of a civil war with an army of amateurs led by a handful of professional officers, little experienced in making war on a grand scale. In the beginning Lincoln willingly deferred to



his generals, believing the military men understood war far better than he did. As defeat followed defeat and the situation worsened, Lincoln came to see that in war military judgments and political judgments were often one and the same, and that as President he could not delegate the former without surrendering or compromising his views on the latter. This was particularly the case with McClellan, whose political views were at odds with Lincoln's. Over time Lincoln found that he could abide generals with differing political views, but he could not abide generals who could not win battles. He supported Major General Joseph Hooker for army command even though the general had called for the establishment of a dictatorship, but fired him from his post when he could not defeat Robert E. Lee's army. Ultimately, Lincoln found Grant, and with him the kind of leader necessary to press the war as it had to be pressed on through to victory.

*Team of Rivals* offers a familiar, entertaining, and highly readable history of the Civil War. What sets this book apart from other political and military histories of the war is Doris Kearns Goodwin's emphasis on the women—the wives and daughters of the men in the story. The lives and contributions of the wives, Mary Lincoln and Frances Seward, and daughter Kate Chase, form an integral part of the story of the how key Union leaders prosecuted the Civil War. Their stories, insights, and perspectives enrich the larger fabric of the narrative in an interesting and complementary way. This observation is mentioned last, rather than first in this review, as a way of dispelling any concerns on the part of those interested only in military history, lest they be dissuaded from reading this excellent book by the erroneous notion that this is something less than a serious history of the war. Doris Kearns Goodwin is a first-rate historian and storyteller, and *Team of Rivals* succeeds on all levels, as biography, and as political and military history.

**War Footing: 10 Steps America Must Take to Prevail in the War for the Free World.** By Frank J. Gaffney and colleagues. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2005. 301 pages. \$27.95. **Reviewed by Norman Kass**, foreign policy analyst, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

In a work both timely and targeted, Frank Gaffney and a collegium of prominent analysts, academics, and commentators examine the blight of global terror in all its varied and virulent forms. The resulting opus conveys the grim sense of urgency encapsulated in its title, *War Footing: 10 Steps America Must Take to Prevail in the War for the Free World*. As the name suggests, this is a book that pulls no punches in its portrayal of the scope and intensity of a crisis that has engulfed civilization. Ostensibly a reference guide to the scourge of international terrorism, Gaffney's study is in fact a primer for political activism. It takes direct aim at those who have yet to appreciate the magnitude of the threat we face or the malice of those who have unleashed it, the "Islamists" (or "Islamofascists"). In short, it is a work designed not merely to inform but to jar, exhort, cajole, and galvanize complacent souls and fence-straddlers everywhere into a state of instant awareness and preemptive action. The authors' own description of their work as "your owner's manual for the War for the Free World" prepares the reader for an exposé that is anything but timid or tentative.

The first portion of Gaffney's work looks at the historical roots of today's global confrontation. To understand fanaticism means first grasping its underlying causes. Echoing remarks contained in the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, Gaffney's book defines today's principal evil as a far-flung ideology not unlike the fascism and communism that preceded it. Its ultimate goal is to subvert the tenets of Islam and establish itself as the dominant value system around the world. Its origins and metamorphosis are traced as "Islamism" meandered over time and took root across the Middle East and elsewhere, finding fertile ground in such areas as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Bangladesh, Northern Nigeria, Pakistan, and Egypt. These historical comments are expanded upon later in the text, where the authors analyze six specific regions of the world (the Middle East, Africa, China, Latin America, Russia, and Europe), the threats peculiar to each, and the means of political warfare available to counter them.

With the overall menace exposed, Gaffney et al. turn to what is effectively "ground zero" of their treatise: the steps we should all be prepared to take to fight back. Emphasis is correctly placed on the folly of continued energy dependence and the critical need to develop alternative fuel sources. Thoughtless investments in what are in reality terror-affiliated entities are cited as a key example of how the public often unknowingly bankrolls the international terror network. Generous contributions to terrorist groups masquerading as legitimate philanthropies are still another vehicle that jihadists use to bilk money from the unsuspecting to underwrite their treacherous deeds. While no defense against such deception is ironclad, Gaffney provides his readers with a number of commonsense precautions that can be taken to minimize the chance of falling prey to terrorist guile.

Although the book does provide insights into the military aspects of the campaign to combat terror and examines Iraq as a battle in that campaign, its primary focus is on political warfare as the weapon of choice for engaging terrorists and their shadowy backers. The premise here is that triumph over "Islamism" ultimately rests upon the skill and ingenuity with which political warfare is directed against it. With that as a backdrop, we are called upon to examine what motivates a determined, maniacal opponent and what can be done to undermine his ideological tenets and discredit his cause. As part of his pointed commentary, Gaffney notes that we have "unilaterally disarmed" in our efforts to conduct effective political and ideological engagements against terrorism and urges us to reverse this unfortunate course of action. This plea is followed by a range of suggestions intended to ensure that we neutralize the initiatives that "Islamism" has taken in its quest for supremacy and world domination.

At numerous points in the text, Gaffney's work espouses the view that the fanatical ideology of "Islamofascism" has absolutely nothing in common with the religion of Islam. Terrorists invoke and distort the latter as part of an effort to conceal the inhumanity of their goals and the megalomania with which they pursue them. One would expect, therefore, that *War Footing* would have an abundance of examples of public statements by moderate Muslim leaders clearly rejecting terrorism as a perversion directed against Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Such unambiguous sentiment would then, presumably, be reinforced with examples of how we have forged close cooperation with mainstream Muslim elements to pursue the shared goal of thwarting the menace of terrorism. This sort of exposé, however, does

not appear in the book. The few concrete instances of such cooperation are limited to occasional contacts, with no indication that they represent a basis for the kind of long-term relationship that would be needed to confront terrorism effectively and on a global scale. One is left to wonder if there is a moderate element in Islam at all and, if so, why so little has been done to make common cause with it.

There is also the issue of how effectively the United States alone, without a series of cohesive and interlocking regional relationships, would be able to fend off a sustained global terror threat, however successful the specific steps in the book may turn out to be. Even in the context of historically proven multilateral alliances such as NATO, the book contains only fleeting reference to the value of cooperative engagement with regard to what is, after all, a worldwide problem. It would not appear likely that spurning the United Nations in favor of creating a “Free Nations” alternative will ultimately result in achieving the global cooperation required to defeat terrorism decisively. Likewise, ending diplomatic dialogue with most Muslim states is an understandable reaction to their disingenuous efforts in dealing with the terror menace to date. What is much less clear, however, is whether those we might choose as our alternative interlocutors would be any more forthright or responsive to our concerns.

For those professionally involved with national security issues, as well as those who still cling to the view that 9/11 was a tragic but random occurrence, *War Footing* is definitely required reading.

**The Sword of Lincoln: The Army of the Potomac.** Jeffrey D. Wert. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005. 559 pages. \$30.00. **Reviewed by Dr. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr.**, Professor of Military History, US Army War College.

Jeffrey Wert’s latest book is an outstanding piece of historical writing on the Army of the Potomac. It is massively researched—25 percent of the numbered pages are endnotes, bibliography, and index—and told in the flowing narrative of an accomplished storyteller. There are enough accompanying maps to orient the reader geographically. Wert keeps the plot moving and weaves the stories and opinions of the soldiers in with his narrative. He is especially good at concise summary descriptions of complex battles. The author provides enough analysis and critique to make the book intellectually interesting. Overall, this is a great book. All that said, however, this reviewer found the *Sword of Lincoln* strangely disappointing in two respects. I was expecting something a little different, and there are questions related to some of Wert’s interpretations.

The *Sword of Lincoln* is about the Army of the Potomac. There are many ways to tell its story, but because it was a military organization its story inevitably must deal with some organizational issues. In this respect there are several major issues that Wert gave less attention than they merit. For example, consider the artillery. We are told in a paragraph that Henry Hunt initiated reforms of the artillery, but what those reforms were or why they were important is a mystery. This is not a trivial issue. The artillery was one of the primary advantages of the Union armies, and the changing tactical environment forced significant changes in how artillery was best organized and fought.

Similarly, while Wert at various points justifiably criticizes the Army of the Potomac's poor cavalry employment, he blames it primarily on the lack of aggressive leadership and the late organization into a corps structure. Both of those are valid criticisms if one accepts their underlying premises, although Wert never makes clear exactly why the reorganization into a corps was necessary. The engineers (and artillery) performed brilliantly throughout the war organized at brigade and lower levels under the staff supervision of a chief of engineers in the army headquarters. There is no obvious reason why the cavalry could not have done the same—in fact, that was exactly what George McClellan envisioned. His organizational design was too decentralized, but that does not automatically mean all the cavalry had to be consolidated in a corps. The optimum degree of centralization depended on the missions envisioned for the cavalry—as did the degree of aggressiveness demanded from its leaders. What the Army of the Potomac's cavalry eventually became was excellent mounted infantry. It was never particularly good at reconnaissance or screening—typical cavalry missions. Other organizational issues of significance that deserved more extensive treatment are intelligence, signal, and medical operations. Additionally, Wert essentially ignores the entire field of logistics. Understanding organizations requires talking about organizational issues.

Wert's interpretation of the Army of the Potomac in digested form is that it was a good army that suffered under poor leadership. George McClellan infected the officer corps with his cautious approach (and to some extent tainted it with political conservatism). Only the arrival of Ulysses Grant turned the army around. While fairly standard in many ways, this interpretation deserves reconsideration. I find it lacking in two respects. First it overvalues or misstates the impact of both McClellan and Grant, and second, it assumes without discussion that what the Army of the Potomac needed was much more consistently aggressive leadership.

George McClellan had an enormous impact on the Army of the Potomac. He was certainly its father. He was not, however, some kind of all-dominating figure who forever stamped his mark on the entire chain of command. Leaders after him made decisions based on their individual knowledge, preconceptions, and personalities, not as even inadvertent clones of McClellan. With regard to Grant, Wert believes he interfered with Meade's command to offset Meade's hesitance. Grant was certainly more aggressive than Meade and pushed the army harder than Meade might have on his own, but there are legitimate alternative interpretations. Grant's relationship with the Army of the Potomac was confusing in 1864-65 and has not clarified much with the passage of time. Historians need to be a little less confident in their assessments of that relationship.

Historians also need to tread very lightly as they critique generals—it is too easy to fall into the trap of Monday-morning quarterbacking. Critics know exactly what happened and bear absolutely no responsibility for the outcome. They can therefore take risks the commander on the scene might find unacceptable. It is easy to criticize the various commanders of the Army of the Potomac for not being aggressive, and this reviewer is not advocating excusing their lack of aggression. There were times when it was required and was decidedly lacking. However, a balanced analysis must include at least consideration of the factors they weighed in their own analysis. If it was to be Lincoln's sword, the Army of the Potomac needed much more aggressive

leadership than it got. If, however, the Army of the Potomac was really the shield of Lincoln, its commanders needed to be somewhat circumspect. In actuality, the army was both sword and shield. Lincoln consistently reinforced that portion of the Army of the Potomac's mission that required protecting the capital. Strategically, the Union could have won the war in either the eastern or western theaters; the Confederacy had to win the war in the east. Stated another way, the major eastern Union army could not afford to be destroyed or to allow the capture of Washington. Battles are risky ventures under the most ideal conditions. Against an aggressive opponent like Robert E. Lee at the head of an excellent army like the Army of Northern Virginia, accepting battle was an exceedingly dangerous decision. Losing or pursuing too aggressively might result in irretrievable disaster. If losing was both possible and dangerous, and at least half of the army's mission was protecting Washington, prudence was a justifiable (and even attractive) strategic option. Wert's criticism of Sedgewick at Chancellorsville—he was "'perfectly satisfied' with minimal performance"—is excellent; generalizing that to the entire leadership of the army, as Wert does, is overstepping the evidence. What the successive commanders of the Army of the Potomac failed to do was understand the political consequences of their passivity. There were times when political considerations necessitated risk-taking that the military situation did not. Army of the Potomac commanders consistently failed to recognize those times. This is a much more damning critique than lack of aggressiveness.

I end where I began by restating that this is an excellent book. My issues with it should be taken as commentary rather than as criticism. I heartily recommend *The Sword of Lincoln* and would have been happy to have written it myself.

**Restless Giant: The United States from Watergate to Bush v. Gore.**

By James T. Patterson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. 448 pages. \$35.00. **Reviewed by Major Chad C. Chalfont**, Instructor of American History, US Military Academy.

In August 1974, President Richard Nixon resigned the presidency and asked Americans "to begin healing the wounds of this nation, to put the bitterness and divisions of the recent past behind us, and to rediscover those shared ideals that lie at the heart of our strength and unity as a great and as a free people." While Nixon was referring to Watergate, Americans could have understood Nixon's words in terms of the broader turmoil that the nation faced during the late 1960s and early 1970s. As the United States emerged from the Watergate constitutional crisis and approached its bicentennial, historian James T. Patterson believes the United States was a "restless giant," uncertain of its future and the path it would take during the last quarter-century of the millennium.

*Restless Giant* is a worthy addition to the highly acclaimed *Oxford History of the United States* series. Patterson picks up where he left off in his prize-winning *Grand Expectations* (1945-1974) by examining the United States from Watergate through the 2000 presidential election. Patterson succeeds in his central purpose to provide an interpretive synthesis of the existing literature while still producing a narrative of the period that is accessible to readers who are not historians. To structure this

sweeping work, Patterson emphasizes three themes: the country's preoccupation with societal and economic decline, the people's ambivalent attitudes toward the power of government and the entitlements it offered, and the individual's claims to more and more rights—a "rights consciousness"—that refashioned the relationship between citizen and state. Ultimately, Patterson retains an optimistic view of the period he surveys. While he thoroughly explains how the problems of societal decline, race relations, and income inequality persisted in the United States during the period, he contends that, in the end, most Americans were better off in 2001 than they were in 1974. In tracing the cultural, economic, and technological changes that marked this period, Patterson demonstrates how Americans saw their quality of life improve while "flourishing in an open, competitive, and pluralistic society."

Patterson's balanced analysis of the critical events of the period stands as the strength of the work. He achieves what all good synthetic works should by evaluating other historians' arguments and providing his own new interpretations. His assessment of the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s is one of his strongest contributions to the historiography of the period. After outlining the salient contemporary commentary as well as the historical literature, Patterson offers three incisive observations about this particular source of social conflict in late-20th-century America. First, he insists that many in the media overstated the intensity and polarizing quality of the culture wars—most Americans, he suggests, occupied the middle ground in these battles. Second, he illustrates that by the 1990s liberals were winning many of the culture wars. Younger Americans, in particular, remained more tolerant in thought and deed when it came to these social issues. Finally, he concludes that the United States "maintained a large cultural center that was both more broad-minded and more easygoing than one might have imagined from focusing on the extremes that dominated the headlines." Ultimately, this sort of analysis—which Patterson sustains in other topics throughout *Restless Giant*—will be invaluable to both specialists in the field and readers exploring the period for the first time.

Of course the author of a work of this size and scope must make choices about what to emphasize and where to focus. Still, it is fair to say that Patterson's analysis of the Cold War in the 1980s falls short of expectations. His discussion of the Carter-Reagan military buildup focuses too narrowly upon nuclear weapons and the Strategic Defense Initiative, and his analysis of the end of the Cold War lacks the depth and sense of contingency that this crucial event demands. Further, Patterson relies a bit excessively upon the actions and motivations of the Presidents to drive his narrative of the last quarter of the 20th century. A more consistent use of the stories of ordinary people might have portrayed the events of this era in richer relief. Finally, readers will be disappointed to find that Patterson does not address 11 September 2001, even though that date falls beyond the period covered in the title. They may be unsatisfied with his explanation that "a span of four years is too short to provide a very reliable historical perspective on the legacies" of this event. If Patterson was not comfortable in proposing his own historical interpretation of 9/11, he might have used an epilogue to contextualize the attacks and propose questions for future consideration and research.

I must emphasize that these minor criticisms do not seriously detract from this outstanding contribution to *The Oxford History of the United States* series. *Restless Gi-*

*ant* offers a crisp, engaging narrative for readers seeking an easy grasp of the key developments at home and abroad during the last quarter of the 20th century. James T. Patterson's balanced analysis of contending interpretations of these developments will be most useful to readers as they think critically about this recent era in American history.

**Central Asia's Second Chance.** By Martha Brill Olcott. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005. 387 pages. \$50.00 (\$24.95 paper). **Reviewed by Stephen J. Blank**, Professor of National Security Studies, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

Dr. Martha Brill Olcott is one of America's leading experts on Central Asia, and her publications have done much to stimulate and engender American academic and policy interest in the field, especially after the Central Asian states became independent in 1991. She brings to this book years of firsthand experience, research, and travel throughout the area. The second chance she refers to in the title is quite straightforwardly stated. After 1991 the leaders of the new states had a significant opportunity to establish progressive, dynamic, and developing countries. Instead they failed to get it right, opting for dictatorship, repression, massive corruption, and economic stagnation, except in this dimension for Kazakstan. As a result, by the time of publication and despite massive international interest and assistance after 2001, these states face real dangers of state failure and collapse—as in the case of Kyrgyzstan and what almost happened in Uzbekistan in 2005. Now these governments have what Olcott calls a second chance to get governance and policy right.

She is not optimistic about their willingness or ability to seize this opportunity, however, and with good reason. Western interests and willingness to fund the area have declined considerably since 2001-02. For example, Central Asia is hardly a priority on President Bush's democratization agenda, rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding. Moreover, the continuing consequences and machinations of the authoritarian regimes in the area—which are, if anything, still regressing from the limited democratization or liberalization of the past—make it quite unlikely that these regimes will exploit their second chance. As Olcott forcefully points out, too many observers refuse to understand that unless these states effect the internal reforms they need, then they will not be secure against either external or internal threats no matter what Russia, China, America, or anyone else might do for them.

The domestic dimension of failure in Central Asia relates both to economics and political realities. Although it is doing much better than everyone else, even Kazakstan has a large underclass and a very corrupt administration that is notorious for its venality. Moreover, its ruling elite has become progressively more unwilling to experiment with reform from the top of the political system. Indeed, since this book went to press the reluctance has become more marked and apparently has manifested itself as well in several political murders of opposition figures. As for the other states, the situation varies, but Turkmenistan has wasted the opportunities provided to it by virtue of its natural gas endowment and has essentially destroyed civil society under the Sultanistic rule of President Sapirmurad Niyazov. Uzbekistan's

authoritarianism, brutal suppression of both economic and political reform movements, and corruption are also well known. Organized crime and graft are deeply entrenched in both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and in the latter country the movement away from political democracy is accelerating.

Under these circumstances, despite external assistance and influence the domestic situation in all these states remains precarious. Nor is it likely to improve appreciably under the influence of foreign governments and international donor institutions, many of whose programs, as the author demonstrates, were misconceived. Indeed, despite intensified international rivalry for access, influence, and leverage in Central Asia, it is clear that neither Russia nor China is willing to support reform—indeed, quite the opposite. And rhetoric aside, US funding for aid and assistance has actually declined over the last four years. Therefore, unless there are significant changes in the donors' policies toward and understanding of Central Asia, it is unlikely that there will be major progress toward liberalization, let alone democratization.

If the failure to take advantage of this second chance, both at home and from abroad, persists, an ensuing conflagration in at least one of these states, if not more of them, is almost inevitable. Then, of course, everyone will see this development as a major international crisis and as potentially as a new base for a terrorist threat. But then it will be too late. Dr. Olcott's book is the handwriting on the wall, but it is unclear whether anyone is sober enough or interested enough to read, understand, and act upon this warning.

**The Czar's General: The Memoirs of a Russian General in the Napoleonic Wars.** By Alexey Yermolov. Translated and edited by Alexander Mikaberidze. Welwyn Garden City, Eng.: Ravenhall, 2005. 252 pages. \$34.95. **Reviewed by Major Frederick H. Black, Jr., Ph.D.,** a student at the US Army Command and General Staff College.

In the world of Napoleonic scholarly works, the number of memoirs on library shelves far exceeds the time that any one reader would ever have to digest them all. This does not mean that we should place less value on the newer offerings in this category. Dr. Alexander Mikaberidze, in his recent edited work, *The Czar's General: The Memoirs of a Russian General in the Napoleonic Wars*, has provided a wonderful glimpse beyond the top level of the Russian Army. Names like Barclay, Kutusov, and Bagration are well known to those familiar with Napoleonic history. Conversely, Alexey Yermolov is likely unknown to all but the most attentive students of the Russian Army under Czar Alexander I. Yermolov began his service as an artilleryman in 1791, prior to the Napoleonic era, and then rose in rank and position until well after Napoleon's demise. His memoir covers the early years of 1801-1805 in one chapter, the 1806-1807 campaigns in Poland in another chapter, and then devotes three chapters to the "Great Patriotic War of 1812."

The particulars of Yermolov's career at various levels are interesting, to say the least, but they alone do not provide the greatest importance to the memoir's reader. The value comes from the insight revealed by a lower-level commander into the workings of the Russian Army as a whole. Unlike many other memoir writers though, Yer-



molov also admits that in some cases he did not have much insight at all. During his discussion of the Ulm-Austerlitz campaign, he commented, "Because of my minor position in the army, I could not know the exact intentions of my superiors; rumors had reached me that the czar disagreed with Kutuzov's opinion and concurred with the Austrian proposal." Detailed campaign knowledge is not necessary to appreciate the comment in a broader context. Like so many memoirs from tactical-level commanders (Yermolov commanded an artillery battery in that campaign), the statement reinforces the importance of the commander's intent. Even though this is a recently formalized principle, Yermolov's comment shows that the necessity has long existed.

In the years following the Ulm-Austerlitz campaign, Yermolov rapidly moved up the rank structure of the Russian Army. By March 1808 he had received a promotion to major general. That is not to say that his ascent did not come without troubles. Due to the cult of personality under the czarist regime, Yermolov found himself subject to the whims of various commanders throughout this period. For example, while assigned as Chief of Staff of the 1st Western Army, he quarreled with his commander, General Barclay de Tolly. Yermolov came across as far too brash and arrogant. To make matters worse, Yermolov took an active role in the feud between his own commander and his close friend General Bagration. His intrigue extended to sending the czar letters advocating a united command of all Russian armies—under Bagration, of course. In the end the situation resolved itself because Barclay and Bagration met and worked things out. Yermolov's role should not escape notice, though; it in fact confirms many of the suspicions about his arrogant and ambitious nature. In this regard, Yermolov's story will parallel that of other career military officers; not all of them emerged as unscathed as Yermolov did.

In any translated memoir, the quality of the editing plays a large role in the overall merit of the work. In this case, the editing work by Dr. Mikaberidze is outstanding throughout. A native Georgian, and recent Ph.D. graduate in the Napoleonic field, he has started an exciting trend in bringing Russian sources to American readers. His skill with the Russian language makes such a feat possible. While a few instances may exist where something got lost in the translation, they appear very few indeed. More important, the editor goes beyond mere translation and adds significant context to the original manuscript. Many of the editor's explanatory footnotes provide the reader additional information about the circumstances at the time of a particular battle or campaign. Likewise, he uses footnotes to correct discrepancies based on either misperceptions or simple factual errors by Yermolov. The appendix containing 30 short biographies of significant personalities in the Russian Army of the time also helps the reader keep track of the names much easier. The excellent illustrations throughout, mostly portraits or paintings, also add to the overall strength of the book.

These strengths certainly outweigh the weaknesses of the volume. Among these, most of the maps do not add as much value as they could or should. Most of them lack any type of operational or tactical graphics that would truly enhance the reader's understanding of the situation. The other feature missing from this work is an index. With all of the interesting and important events that Yermolov witnessed, and the wide range of people that he discussed, an index would help the reader find them more quickly. These minor faults notwithstanding, this memoir is a wonderful addition to

the scholarship of the Napoleonic era. Even for the nonspecialist, it will provide a fresh perspective on many timeless topics, such as the operational art and leadership.

**Broken Glass: Caleb Cushing and the Shattering of the Union.**

By John M. Belohlavek. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2005. 482 pages. \$65.00. Reviewed by Dr. Samuel Watson, associate professor, US Military Academy.

*Broken Glass* should remain the definitive biography of Caleb Cushing. But since there has been only one other biography (in 1923), why should we remember Cushing, a champion of Manifest Destiny and a fixture of the mid-19th-century Washington establishment? The multitalented Cushing was a prominent public intellectual, whom Ralph Waldo Emerson praised as “the most eminent scholar” of his day. His long career as a politician, diplomat, lawyer, general, orator, and scholar, and his service in Congress, in state and local office, as Attorney General and as minister to China (the first such American) and Spain, illuminate the panorama of 19th-century politics and a wide spectrum of American public life.

The author, John Belohlavek, observes that “few individuals mirrored the frustrations and challenges” of that era better than Cushing. A wealthy Massachusetts Whig and rising congressional leader in the late 1830s, Cushing displayed a brand of social and political conservatism that drew him into the Democratic Party during the mid-1840s, and his belief that moral progress depended on stability alienated him from the reform causes of New England, especially abolitionism. His devotion to American material growth and territorial expansion led him to support the war against Mexico, in which he commanded forces occupying Matamoros and Mexico City. (He was not engaged in combat operations, however.) By the 1850s Cushing was widely regarded as “the most unpopular man in New England,” but his talent, connections, and Democratic hopes for retaining some strength in that region led to important roles in the administrations of Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan. In 1860 he chaired all three of the Democratic presidential conventions, ultimately supporting de facto secessionist candidate John C. Breckinridge. During the Civil War, Cushing supported the military struggle to preserve the Union, and his talent and connections gradually enabled him to become an unofficial adviser to Republicans William H. Seward (the Secretary of State) and Senator Charles Sumner. Yet his nomination as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was rejected in 1873, and he never regained the political influence (including talk of a presidential run) he had held during the 1850s.

This trajectory presents the salutary example of one of the most capable men of the era, entangled in the snares that brought the nation as a whole to civil war. How did Cushing’s personal tragedy come about? Belohlavek entwines two theses in his answer. Cushing “represented, perhaps better than anyone else of his generation, spread-eagle Americanism in all of its arrogance and aggressiveness.” How did he deal with change, with challenges to his faith in the perfection of American institutions? Belohlavek ultimately suggests that Cushing remained consistent in his advocacy of Union, Constitution, and expansion, and that he was not the opportunist most have portrayed. Yet virtually every American subscribed to these values: much of 19th-century debate, in-

cluding the sectional tensions that led to the Civil War, was over their meaning. Cushing's conservative understanding of Union and Constitution led him inexorably from Whig reformism to Democratic preservationism and sympathy for the slave plantation South. His naïve hope that territorial expansion could provide a rallying point for Americans of all parties and sections proved wishful thinking. Indeed, contemporaries as well as historians saw the seeds of civil war in the conquest of northern Mexico. Expansion without regard to cohesion, to the changes and divisions emerging in American society, proved counterproductive, opening new fields for sectional strife.

Cushing was far from alone in these errors: his individual search for order was characteristic of many during the 1850s. But Belohlavek never hesitates to critique Cushing the man: despite, or perhaps because of, his energy and erudition, Cushing was aloof, inflexible, and intellectually arrogant, "as brilliant and as cold as an icicle" in the words of one contemporary. Ultimately, Cushing's effective diplomacy and efforts to reform the Attorney General's office aside, this reviewer finds Cushing's career disappointing, but we learn more from disappointments than from triumphs. Kent State University Press is to be congratulated for another fine book in its series of 19th-century political studies, and John Belohlavek is to be applauded for grappling with so complex a subject and presenting Cushing's dilemma to the modern reader, warts and all.

**Louis Johnson and the Arming of America: The Roosevelt and Truman Years.** By Keith D. McFarland and David L. Roll. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005. 363 pages. \$35.00. **Reviewed by Major Matthew J. Turpin**, Department of History, US Military Academy.

Keith D. McFarland and David L. Roll offer the first detailed assessment of America's second and much-maligned Secretary of Defense, Louis A. Johnson. Johnson played a principal part in the transformation of America's defense and foreign policy-making establishments after the Second World War. Johnson has been largely ignored by historians of the early Cold War and America's military elite, but McFarland and Roll contend that Presidents Roosevelt and Truman used Johnson as an "instrument of confrontation" and a "battering-ram" to promote unpopular policies such as military preparedness in the second half of the 1930s and defense unification and economization in the late 1940s. While these Presidents used Johnson as a tool, Johnson willingly sacrificed principle for ambition on a number of occasions. McFarland and Roll do not pull their punches with Johnson; while pointing out his strengths they make clear that his "overbearing, arrogant, and imperious" personality led to serious problems. The other purpose of this book is to compare and contrast the presidencies of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman, a task the authors accomplish exceedingly well. Fans of Harry Truman will be disappointed with the picture McFarland and Roll paint of the chief executive, but their arguments are quite persuasive.

Expertly crafted and meticulously researched, this book fills a gap in our understanding of how the United States prepared militarily for World War II and then reorganized the defense establishment after the war. The authors use a wide array of interviews, personal papers, and archival documents to paint a compelling

portrait of Louis Johnson, warts and all. This is the sort of scholarship that we should expect of all historians.

The first third of the book deals with Johnson's life before World War II. In 1937, after serving as the national commander of the American Legion, Johnson was an outspoken internationalist and supporter of military preparedness, and President Roosevelt appointed him as the assistant secretary of war under Harry H. Woodring, an equally devoted isolationist. Johnson believed the assistant secretary was "authorized by law to plan for industrial mobilization in case of war" independent of Secretary Woodring, a job description that Woodring would not accept. From the first day, a feud erupted between the two, not only because of their policy differences, but also because Roosevelt had led Johnson to believe that he would replace Woodring as the secretary, a fact that Johnson told to anyone who would listen. For nearly three years, Roosevelt used the Woodring-Johnson feud to balance between a policy of isolationism and internationalism. Over the course of five chapters, the authors paint a fascinating picture of an individual who made the Army more prepared for war, but also weakened it in many respects. In the end, Roosevelt asked for both men's resignations in 1940 and replaced them with the elder Republican statesman Henry Stimson and his assistant Robert P. Patterson in an effort to build political consensus.

The last two-thirds of the book cover Johnson's life between 1948 and 1950, when he took over as Truman's campaign fundraiser for the 1948 presidential election and then served as Secretary of Defense until forced to resign in September 1950. As Secretary of Defense, Johnson was tasked by Truman with two incredibly difficult missions, ones that his predecessor, James Forrestal, had been unwilling or unable to do: achieve unification of the Army, Air Force, and Navy, and implement drastic cuts through economization in order to balance the budget. Johnson's efforts to complete his President's tasks should serve as a cautionary tale for both civilian and military members of the defense community. The perfect storm of defense reorganization and budget cuts consumed Johnson, his service secretaries, and the nation's senior military officers in pointless parochial battles just as events in Asia and Europe demanded unity and prescience from the United States. The authors' chapter on the 1949 "Revolt of the Admirals" is the best examination available of one of the lowest points in American civil-military relations.

At the same time, Johnson provoked yet another personal feud, this time with Secretary of State Dean Acheson. These two secretaries squared off on a number of issues that the authors cover in detail, most notably the development of foreign policy and NSC-68, the discovery that the Soviet Union possessed nuclear weapons, the creation of NATO, the decision to develop the hydrogen bomb, and the question of whether to support Chiang's Nationalist Chinese. McFarland and Roll suggest that President Truman's own provincialism led to many of these problems. However, Johnson's actions and personality did nothing to mitigate the situation.

The book ends with Johnson's perspective as Secretary of Defense on the start of the Korean War. The authors address the questions of why Johnson backed General MacArthur's efforts to militarily support Chiang's Nationalists against the express wishes of President Truman and why Johnson, not Acheson, became the first political casualty of the Korean War.

If Patrick Henry was right about the “lamp of experience” as our only guide to the future, then this book should be read by all who work within the defense community. The authors offer insightful and timeless conclusions about the personalities that clash and the relationships that form at the very highest levels of the American government.

**Banners South: A Northern Community at War.** By Edmund J. Raus, Jr. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2005. 333 pages. \$39.00. **Reviewed by Ethan S. Rafuse**, Associate Professor of Military History, US Army Command and General Staff College.

Regimental histories can generally be counted on to offer accounts of a unit’s role in the various battles and campaigns in which it participated, information on the men who composed the unit and led it, and interesting anecdotes of soldier life. In recent years, however, historians have begun to see the regimental history as a means through which they can explore larger issues in the military, social, cultural, and political life of 19th-century America—using them, in effect, to pursue the “reintegration” of Civil War history that Professor William W. Freehling called for over a decade ago. One example of how historians are using the regimental history in important and exciting ways is Edmund J. Raus Jr.’s *Banners South*.

Raus’s subject is the soldiers from Cortland, New York, who served with the 23d New York Infantry in 1861-63. Caught up in the *rage militaire* that swept through the North after Fort Sumter, the young men of Cortland rallied to the colors with exhortations from friends, family, teachers, and local leaders to do their duty to their community and nation ringing in their ears. The Cortland Volunteers were subsequently designated Company H of the 23d New York and then mustered into Federal service as one of the two-year regiments the Lincoln Administration agreed would be counted toward New York’s quota under the May 1861 call for three-year troops. In July, they reached Washington D.C., but were left behind when Irvin McDowell marched to defeat at First Manassas. Then, after many months in camp around Washington, they were once again left behind when George McClellan took the Army of the Potomac to the York-James Peninsula in March 1862. As part of Marsena Patrick’s brigade of Rufus King’s division in McDowell’s corps, the “Southern Tier Regiment” subsequently participated in the occupation of Fredericksburg and the tragicomic Federal response to Stonewall Jackson’s operations in the Shenandoah Valley during the spring of 1862. In the aftermath of the Peninsula Campaign, the war returned to northern Virginia, but it was not until Antietam, when they found themselves engaged along the Hagerstown Pike in the Miller Cornfield, that the Cortlanders were finally in a serious fight. At their final battle at Fredericksburg, however, the regiment reverted to its usual role of supporting others who were carrying the fight to the enemy. Comparatively speaking, Company H suffered relatively light casualties in the course of its two years of service, losing only 11 out of the 98 men who were present when it mustered into Federal service.

At first glance, there seems to be little to recommend this particular regiment as a topic of study. After all, with the exception of Antietam, there was no battle at which it could be said that the Cortland Volunteers were in the thick of the action or that

they played anything but a peripheral role in shaping the course and outcome of the engagement. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake for anyone with an interest in the Civil War to ignore this book, for Raus has produced a truly exceptional study that future authors of unit histories would be well-served to read closely and emulate.

First among the factors that make this a worthy study is the evident depth and breadth of Raus's knowledge and understanding of the Civil War in general, and of the common soldier, the communities whose lives shaped and were shaped by the Cortland Volunteers during the war, and the campaigns described in this book in particular. Raus draws on this knowledge, as well as impressive research in primary and secondary sources, to craft informative and effective narratives of events that are enhanced by careful and compelling analysis. Raus is not content merely to describe what happened, but also offers insightful and persuasive explanations of why things happened the way they did. And he does so in a way that effectively illuminates the relationship between the soldiers and the society they served, a presentation that will appeal to historians and general readers alike. The text is supported by maps of exceptional quality—although some readers may wish there were a few more.

Of particular interest is Raus's account of the Cortlanders' experiences in the environs of Fredericksburg during the spring of 1862. Taking place in the shadow of more dramatic events on the peninsula and in the valley, Union operations in northern and central Virginia during the spring of 1862 have rarely received much attention in Civil War history. Raus, however, finds much of interest and importance in these operations, and in the process of describing their course he provides valuable information regarding the military, political, and social dynamics that shaped these aspects of the war in Virginia. Whether the subject is the interaction between the Cortlanders and the citizens of Fredericksburg, their relationship with the Regular Army martinet who commanded their brigade, or the fruitless effort to "bag" Jackson's command, Raus's descriptions and analysis of events are clear, informative, and make for compelling reading.

In sum, Edmond Raus deserves great praise for this book. Clear and at times eloquent in its prose, thoroughly researched, and chock full of useful information and insights, it is highly recommended to all students of the Civil War, especially those interested in the war in the East, the interaction between soldiers and the homefront, and the human experience in the Union Army.

**Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times.** By H. W. Brands. New York: Doubleday, 2005. 620 pages. \$35.00. **Reviewed by Salvatore R. Mercogliano, Ph.D.,** Assistant Professor, Department of History, Military Division, US Military Academy.

In the ranks of professional historians, there are very few who can say that they have a following, but H. W. Brands can claim that accolade. Brands follows up his previous successes in full-length American biographies, *T. R.: The Last Romantic* (1998) and his Pulitzer-nominated *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin* (2002), in grand style. Not merely a biography, *Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times* is a captivating narrative that depicts the early United States through the life

of Andrew Jackson. From Jackson's youth to his death, Brands uses the life and career of the controversial seventh President to discuss the larger historical issues.

Andrew Jackson has remained an enigma in American history. Where previous Presidents had either come from the Virginia dynasty or were named Adams, Jackson was from the west. His early life was controversial, as demonstrated by his marriage to Rachel Donelson Robards. At the time of their marriage, she was still married to her first husband. Jackson's devotion to his wife led to many confrontations, some of them deadly. He despised the abuse of power by Thomas Jefferson as President when he authorized the embargo prohibiting trade with European nations. He saw the personal ambitions of Aaron Burr and James Wilkinson as threats to the union. As a military commander, Jackson demonstrated his independent nature by marching his troops to the sound of the guns and disregarding the orders of Secretary of War John Armstrong. It was a bold move that earned Jackson glory at the battle of New Orleans, even though the War of 1812 had ended. A few years later, leading an expedition into Florida in pursuit of a band of Seminoles, Jackson ordered the execution of two British officials he believed to be inciting the Indians. Even though some in the government wanted Jackson prosecuted, he was named the first governor of the new territory of Florida.

Jackson's popularity and fame earned him a bid for the presidency. The election of 1824 proved one of the most controversial. The lack of a majority in the Electoral College forced the decision into the US House of Representatives and resulted in the election of John Quincy Adams. The corrupt bargain between Adams and the Speaker of the House, Henry Clay, generated the momentum to elect Jackson four years later and resulted in the formation of the Democratic Party. Equally important, opposition to Jackson led to the resumption of party politics in the United States with the creation of the Whigs. As the first popularly elected chief executive, Jackson presided over one of the most tumultuous ages in American history.

What makes Brands' work stand out from previous biographies is his method of using Andrew Jackson as a vehicle to discuss American "civilization." The author has previously discussed how he modeled his biographies on the famous *Story of Civilization* series by Will Durant. As such, each volume captures a certain time period of American history and uses a principal figure as the thread with which to weave his narrative.

This is not an in-depth analysis of Jackson's presidency. That portion of his life is only one section of five: "Child of the Revolution," "Son of the West," "American Hero," "The People's President," and "Patriarch of Democracy." The author spends little time analyzing "The Corrupt Bargain" that lost Jackson the White House in 1824 or the Indian Removal Act. Brands does provide some insight on the Petticoat Affair and the Nullification Crisis. Both of these cases serve as illuminating subject matter for the larger issues of the day: federal versus state rights and the authority of the chief executive in representing the people's will. It is easy to forget how fragile and unsure the American form of government was in the early 19th century. Nearly 50 years after the ratification of the Constitution, Americans found themselves at a crossroads concerning the role of the federal government. It was during the Bank veto that Jackson raised the issue: "It is as much the duty of the

House of Representatives, of the Senate, and of the President to decide upon the constitutionality of any bill or resolution.” Today, it is accepted that this is the purview of the judiciary, but it was not clear in 1832. This uncertainty is center stage in *Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times*.

Brands does a tremendous job of depicting early America and the seventh President of the United States. In particular, he provides an amazing look into the growing pains of a young democracy that has relevance even today. His work is a remarkable portrayal of a great civil servant, legislator, military professional, and patriarch. While the United States today has many individuals who fall into one of these categories, there are few, if any, who can claim all of these titles. H. W. Brands’ *Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times* is a good general account of the early history of the United States and its first popularly elected President, with many interesting and provocative insights.

**Stilwell the Patriot: Vinegar Joe, the Brits, and Chiang Kai-Shek.**

By David Rooney. London: Greenhill Books, 2005. 256 pages. \$34.95.

**Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel David M. Toczek**, currently assigned to NATO’s Allied Land Component Command, Heidelberg.

If you were to ask an informed American about personalities in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater of World War II, the names Joseph Stilwell, Claire Chennault, Frank Merrill, and Chaing Kai-Shek would most likely be among those mentioned. Ask an informed member of the British Commonwealth the same question, however, and you would probably get a significantly different list, aside from Chiang, with names like Louis Mountbatten, Archibald Wavell, William Slim, and Orde Wingate. Although all the figures mentioned appear in American historical standards like *Stilwell and the American Experience in China* and the US Army Green Books, the British usually serve as a backdrop of supporting characters. In *Stilwell the Patriot: Vinegar Joe, the Brits, and Chiang Kai-Shek*, David Rooney seeks to address this gap in the historiography of the CBI by illuminating the often tense relationships between General Joseph W. Stilwell and his British coalition partners. Although the work does provide a British perspective to readers unfamiliar with the contributions of the Chindits, it falls short of the publisher’s characterization as a “revelatory . . . new and meticulously researched biography.”

Rooney brings both experience in and knowledge of the CBI to the work. As a member of the British Army, he served in India in 1945, and since that time he has authored several books concerning the Burma campaign, including *Burma Victory*, *Wingate and the Chindits*, and *Mad Mike*. In the preface, he echoes the common understanding of why Stilwell was known as “Vinegar Joe,” but he attributes those acerbic traits to what he believes is “the only interpretation that makes sense. . . . [H]e was driven all the time by a strong patriotism.” The author achieves his objective of crafting a readable book, although its clarity and lucidity are somewhat suspect, particularly as they relate to the overall assessment of Stilwell.

*Stilwell the Patriot* generally follows a chronological organization, although the somewhat clouded transitions between the chapters’ introductions and bodies tend



to transpose events in time. Readers unfamiliar with the CBI will likely miss these transpositions and might come away a bit confused as to when events happened in relation to each other. This organizational weakness is not helped by the book's either poor editing or factual errors. For example, the book mentions Chennault's retirement from the "US Army Air Force (USAAF)" and his subsequent travel to China "in 1939," identifies Stilwell's political advisor as "John D. Davis, Jr.," and names Stilwell's predecessor in command of Tenth US Army as Simon Bolivar "Bruckner." (Chennault retired from the US Army Air Corps [USAAC] and began his Chinese employment in 1937; his political advisor was John Paton Davies, Jr.; and his predecessor in command was Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr.) Although such errors do not materially affect the argument, they do hint at a greater flaw in the book's construct.

Although Rooney sets out to "assess [Stilwell's] contribution in the wider context of the Burma War," his sources suggest that Stilwell is more the context than the subject. Of the 35 works suggested in the select bibliography "for those who might be interested in reading further about Stilwell's career and the war in Burma," only five relate directly to Stilwell. Along those same lines, of the 40 footnotes interspersed throughout the text, only eight are tied to Stilwell. Further, in neither category does Rooney address any archival research he might have conducted. In fairness, the first footnote states that all of Stilwell's quotations come from *The Stilwell Papers*, but this source, by itself, does not provide any additional insight of Stilwell's relationship to the British efforts in Burma that has not already been available. Just by source selection alone, Rooney's overall argument does not possess sufficient evidence.

Rooney does provide some worthwhile contributions to the body of military literature and thought. The book provides a venue for linking and relating both American and British efforts in Burma and serves to broaden the almost exclusive national focus by most American and British histories. The author's discussion of Stilwell's employment of Merrill's Marauders and the Chindits will resonate with members of the special operations forces community who might expect conventional commanders to employ those types of units in a manner keeping with their purpose and training. Finally, the theme of Stilwell's use of the term "Limey," though tiresome, does illustrate the corrosive nature of a senior commander's prejudice within a combined environment.

At the same time, the reader is left wondering how Stilwell's irascible behavior and Anglophobia is linked to (or excused by) his patriotism. Further, Rooney's suggestion that had Chiang placed 100 trained and equipped Chinese divisions under Stilwell's command they "would almost certainly have been too strong for the military power of Mao Tse-Tung" lacks the structure and historical evidence to make it withstand scrutiny. In the end, Rooney clarifies portions of the general's professional relationships within the CBI, but he does not make good his publisher's promise to reveal.

*Stilwell the Patriot* provides a British perspective and additional illumination of the employment of the Chindits to those who are already familiar with the CBI, its players, and its challenges. For readers who are looking for a well-documented, seminal work on Stilwell and his relations with the British serving in the CBI, however, they will have to look to another source.

**Allies in War: Britain and America Against the Axis Powers, 1940-1945.** By Mark A. Stoler. London: Hodder Arnold, 2005. 352 pages. \$39.95. **Reviewed by Major John K. Walmsley**, Assistant Professor, Department of History, US Military Academy.

Wartime coalitions and alliances are difficult to maintain. The challenge is for two or more nations to cooperate on the development of grand strategy, sometimes at the expense of their national strategy, to meet the needs of the alliance. Disagreements or criticisms within alliances and coalitions are as old as coalitions themselves. For a contemporary example, a minor controversy was created when a senior British officer shared some of his views on current US operations in Iraq in a recent *Military Review* article. Although not derogatory, several of the comments were critical of US policy and operations and clashed with the assumption that allies, such as the United States and Great Britain, should have nothing but kind words for each other. The notion of a harmonious Anglo-American alliance stems from what British Prime Minister Winston Churchill labeled the “special relationship” between the United States and Great Britain during World War II. For many, this relationship is the gold standard of combined operations, and several historical studies on the subject, beginning with Churchill’s own, have done nothing but reaffirm this belief.

In his new book, *Allies in War*, part of the publisher’s series on modern warfare, Mark Stoler examines the relationship between the United States and Great Britain during the Second World War and attacks the assumption of a harmonious Anglo-American coalition. In line with the goal of the series, Stoler confines his study to the conception and development of Anglo-American strategy in the Pacific and European theaters. Stoler acknowledges the importance of the Soviet contribution to Allied victory in World War II, but leaves it to Evan Mawdsley’s *Thunder in the East*, another book in the series, to describe it in full. Unlike Stoler’s previous book *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II*, there is little original research in the current volume. *Allies in War* is a work of synthesis whose manageable size makes it accessible to a larger audience. Stoler’s book should be appealing to the historian or officer looking for a starting point in understanding combined operations, coalitions, or the strategic relationships of World War II, but it may prove less satisfying to those more versed in the subjects.

Stoler blends diplomatic and military history into his study of the Anglo-American alliance, revealing the story of the maturing relationship between the United States and Great Britain. Stoler’s study is organized chronologically and uses the many Anglo-American conferences as the focus for each chapter. Most interestingly, this work on Anglo-American combined operations emphasizes the tension rather than the cooperation between the two nations.

The contentiousness of the Anglo-American relationship existed from the beginning. The Americans recognized the importance of a coalition strategy that guaranteed British survival and promoted US national security, but were suspicious of British motives and feared falling victim to manipulations by Britain, a nation viewed as a potential postwar trade competitor. The British, while welcoming

American assistance, worried about the threat to European colonialism the United States seemed to embody.

Early in the war, as American influence came to match British influence on grand strategy, tensions increased between the two Allies. The Americans did not agree with the British peripheral strategy and its emphasis on naval blockade and strategic bombing. The British viewed the US strategy, an early cross-channel attack to relieve pressure on the Soviet Union, as naïve. Throughout this controversy Stoler emphasizes the developing personal relationship between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. Stoler credits their relationship with overcoming the barriers between the nations and building the cooperation necessary to create a strong alliance.

Another theme Stoler touches upon throughout his study is the pervasive mistrust and lack of cooperation between the Allies. The Americans resented the “politically inspired and militarily worthless” emphasis on the Mediterranean at the expense of a European invasion; the British mistrusted the Americans’ reckless approach to strategy and their constant threats to shift the US emphasis to the Pacific; and the Soviets felt betrayed and abandoned by the unfulfilled promises to divert German forces from the Eastern Front. Stoler points out that even the Allied successes of 1942, such as El Alamein, Midway, and Stalingrad, were predominantly unilateral actions that demonstrated the Allies’ poor coordination. It is during this period, nonetheless, that Stoler sees the foundation being laid for the special relationship that developed between the Americans and the British.

As the relationship progressed, the efforts of the Combined Chiefs of Staff created a more cohesive partnership even as the Anglo-American alliance entered into a period of transition. As American mobilization and contributions of materiel to the war effort outpaced those of Great Britain, the US planners became the ascendant power in the Anglo-American conferences. The Americans also benefited from the development of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a planning body. After being outperformed by their British counterparts in earlier Allied conferences, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff came of age in 1943. With their new, unified front, the Joint Chiefs were able to gain Roosevelt’s confidence and support at a time when Churchill and the British Chiefs of Staff Committee, under General Sir Alan Brooke, lacked any form of solidarity. The new dynamic gave the Americans a decided edge over the British in controlling Alliance decisions late in the war. While disagreements over strategy continued within the Anglo-American partnership, the Americans now had the option of overlooking British objections.

As the war came to a close and the necessity of the Alliance diminished, Stoler argues that only the continued menace of the Soviet Union prevented the further deterioration of the Anglo-American relationship in the postwar world. Just as the fear of the Axis foe spurred an unprecedented level of cooperation during the war, the fear of the Soviet foe helped cement a strong bond of collaboration that exists to this day.

*Allies in War* is an excellent reminder of the difficulties of coalition warfare. As Churchill himself pointed out in his history of Marlborough, “the history of all coalitions is a tale of the reciprocal complaints of allies,” but coalition warfare remains increasingly necessary today.