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Editor's Shelf

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Editor's Shelf

As a torrent of books flows across my desk it is always refreshing to recognize a sage among the overabundance of “experts” espousing wisdom and guidance. The authors of our first offering in this feature justifiably bear that mantle and require no introduction to any audience associated with the transformation of the America’s military; Generals (Ret.)



Zeb B. Bradford, Jr., and Frederic J. Brown are two of the Army’s most respected innovators and critics. They are renowned for their 1973 work, *The United States Army in Transition*, that served as a blueprint for military reform following the Vietnam War. They have again joined forces to examine the challenges associated with the interagency process. In their soon to be released *America’s Army: A Way to Interagency Effectiveness* the authors suggest that various federal, state, and local agencies need to adapt specific programs and procedures (vetted by the Army) if they are to be successful in efforts to improve policy execution. The authors conclude that only within the context of these proven programs can the diverse levels of governance ever hope to meet the demands associated with the war on terrorism, disaster relief, and stabilization and reconstruction missions.

Continuing the parade of venerable sages is Graham A. Cosmas and his *MACV: The Joint Command in the Years of Withdrawal, 1968-1973*. The second of two volumes examining the Vietnam conflict from the perspective of the theater commander and his headquarters; Cosmas tells the story of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) from the Tet offensive of 1968 through the command’s stand-down in March 1973. The author draws on his impeccable skills as a historian, researcher, and author to present the seminal account of MACV’s role in making and implementing American policy in Southeast Asia during the period of US disengagement from Vietnam. The book is the tenth volume published by the Center of Military History in its U.S. Army in Vietnam series and is destined to become the classic account of this turbulent period in American military history.

Say the name Bill Mauldin and every American soldier or historian over the age of 40, well, perhaps a good bit over, will conjure up visions of his beloved characters Willie and Joe. For those unfortunate souls who may not be familiar with the exploits of these “dogface” heroes Todd DePastino has produced *Bill Mauldin: A Life Up Front*. The author pays homage to the artist who shocked and educated the American public regarding the realities of war, from the perspective of the front-line soldier during WW II. The work traces Mauldin’s career and private life, from its humble beginnings in the rural West, to his assignments in Sicily, Rome, and France; and later tours in Korea, the Pacific, and Vietnam. The book, developed in partnership with Mauldin’s

For details on publishers and prices of books mentioned, see “Off the Press” in this issue or call *Parameters* at 717-245-4943 (e-mail: CARL_Parameters@conus.army.mil).

family and estate, serves as the first-ever biography of the man who single-handedly incensed George Patton while at the same time invoking Dwight Eisenhower's protection. A must read for students of art and history.

The Greenwood Publishing Group, specifically, the folks at Praeger Security International continue their mission of providing readers with insight and understanding of how America's military functions in an era of global uncertainty. *Military Reform: A Reference Handbook* is authored by Winslow T. Wheeler and Lawrence J. Korb and details the history of attempts at reforming America's armed forces. These two eminent authors examine the critical issues associated with military reform in an effort to distinguish them from "cosmetic dabbling." Wheeler and Korb examine reforms, from the American Revolution to the present day, and determine that many of the so-called reforms have done little to improve the actual functioning of our armed forces. In fact, they conclude that many ill-conceived reforms have actually burdened US forces to the point of mental and physical immobility. The authors use the example of Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom to demonstrate what has and has not been reformed in today's armed forces and within the Department of Defense.

Praeger Security International has established a series of "PSI Reports" examining a variety of topics, most recently, America's international security posture and national interests. The following three works are from that series. First is Brian Hanley's *Planning for Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*. The author establishes his thesis on the belief that moral and intellectual qualities determine the fate of armies in conflict, and material and bureaucracy are not necessarily as vital as many would have us think. The author advocates reform in the manner in which we train, educate, and promote officers in today's military. Hanley examines such topics as the military's key strategic planning documents and how they are executed; the ongoing military transformation, and offers an alternative approach; and thoughts on building a "first-rate" Joint War College. In the second book in this series Frank R. Douglas provides an insightful view of the history of American involvement on the European continent following World War II in *The United States, NATO, and a New Multilateral Relationship*. Douglas analyzes the transformation that occurred within NATO when the threat from the former Soviet Union dissipated so unexpectedly. All of a sudden the rationale for the large deployment of American forces in Central Europe no longer held true and many were predicting a US withdrawal, along with the accompanying demise of NATO. The author focuses much of his analysis on the actions of the US Congress and their efforts to ensure the future of NATO and American involvement. He concludes that efforts to expand NATO eastward combined with new peacekeeping missions have ensured, at least in the near-term, the organization's future and US involvement. The final book in this series of reports is Anne Noronha Dos Santos's *Military Intervention and Secession in South Asia*. The author draws on some of the most advanced theories in international relations to develop a theory based on the relative power of various secessionist groups and their balance of power within a given state. Anne Dos Santos espouses the belief that the causes bringing about external military intervention in secessionist wars have not, until recently, been addressed. She identifies conditions that make international military in-

tervention in such wars more or less likely. The author then tests her theory against events in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, and Punjab. This is a timely and well-thought presentation that advances the reader's understanding of the causes and consequences of violent state disintegration.

Not yet in the category of sage but well on his way is Matthew J. Morgan. The author's 2007 book, *A Democracy is Born: An Insider's Account of the Battle Against Terrorism in Afghanistan*, provides readers with a fascinating narrative from the perspective of one who was there. Morgan's insight into the democratic development of Afghanistan permits readers to juxtapose the events in that nation with the conflict in Iraq. He cautions readers not to let events in Iraq mask America's strategic rationale for its original incursion into Afghanistan. The author highlights the 2004 Afghan elections as one of the more historic events in the 5,000-year history of the country. Morgan believes those elections were even more dramatic than the American Revolution, given the history of the region. Unfortunately, recent events in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan, along with the renewed conflict in the southern regions of the country, call the author's optimism into question. These renewed threats to Afghanistan's democratic future only serve to make the book more valuable to those concerned about continued US involvement. The author provides readers with the basic knowledge and understanding of what is required to ensure Afghanistan's continuing transformation to a true democracy. As with many successful authors, Morgan recently shifted his focus and genre. The result is an empirical gem, *The American Military after 9/11: Society, State, and Empire*. In this work the author analyzes trends in American society that have evolved since and as a result of 9/11. He contrasts the civil-military relations that marked the Cold War era with requirements generated by the global war on terrorism and concludes there is an undeniable demand for a new strategy related to the application of military force. Morgan draws on the works of many of the masters; Huntington, Keegan, Toffler, etc. to paint an evolving world characterized by new American foreign policy and national security interests. He concludes that America's participation in the global war on terrorism will have a significant and continuing impact on the US military's relation to society, state, and empire. This work would be a valuable addition to the libraries of anyone with an interest in military history, sociology, psychology, or political science.

Our final offering in this feature is *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* edited by Robert J. Art and Louise Richardson. The editors have drawn on the work of academics, practitioners, and experts in the field to provide readers with 14 case studies examining the policies, strategies, and tactics employed by terrorists in the past. This distinguished group of authors examines organizations and movements ranging from the Red Brigades and IRA of the early 1960s to the FARC and Hamas of today. In each of the case studies the author provides the reader a brief overview, an analysis of the policies and techniques that a particular government employed in an attempt to counter the threat, and a concluding assessment of whether these measures proved effective. The editors have assembled a timely and stimulating work that is certain to provide US policymakers and military leaders with valuable lessons for their war on terrorism. — RHT □