

# MR Classics Revisited



**A Savage War of Peace**, Alistair Horne, reviewed by LTC Robert M. Cassidy, USA

Alistair Horne's *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (New York: Review Books Classics, New York, 2006) was first published in 1977. It has

since been reissued, in paperback, with a preface that updates its relevance to the counterinsurgency in Iraq. *A Savage War* is an exquisite history of the French war in Algeria, and it has earned Horne lasting acclaim. It is also the single most interesting book about countering a nationalist insurgency amidst a Muslim population.

Soldiers and defense experts need to read and study this classic. In doing so, they will find that it offers a suitable sequel to two classics recently revisited in *Military Review*: Jean Larteguy's *The Centurions* (New York: Dutton, 1962) and Bernard Fall's *Street Without Joy* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1994). *The Centurions*, a novel, covered the French experiences in both Indochina and Algeria. *Street Without Joy* and *A Savage War* complement Larteguy's book, as each examines the French wars in Indochina and Algeria separately.

The Algerian war provided one final chance for the French Army to rescue its reputation. Recent defeat in Indochina had spurred nascent French disciples of revolutionary warfare to insist that they would fight the Algerian insurgency under conditions different from Indochina's. This group of perceptive officers argued that success in the Algerian counterinsurgency would require a counter-ideology that was strong enough to animate and unite national energies. A key tenet of their revolutionary warfare theory

was the notion that psychological and political factors must underpin the Army's methods to an equal or greater degree than military factors. Peter Paret's *French Revolutionary Warfare from Indochina to Algeria*, compresses the concept of *guerre révolutionnaire* into one succinct formula: partisan warfare, plus psychological warfare, equals revolutionary warfare.

The resulting French innovation of an entirely new corps called the *Sections Administratives Spécialisées* (SAS) was partially successful in winning the support of the Algerian population. The French created some 400 SAS detachments, each under the command of an army officer expert in Arabic and Arab affairs whose training enabled him to handle every possible aspect of civil-military administration and development. The SAS seems to have been a forerunner to the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support program in Vietnam in the 1960s, itself the harbinger of the current Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Between April 1956 and August 1957, the French Army tripled the number of primary schools that it had opened while the number of Muslim functionaries in French service increased from about 6,850 to almost 10,000. Clearly, SAS efforts had some effect in restoring the population's confidence in the French across large swaths of Algeria. Overall, however, there were too few SAS teams to bring about the intended effects throughout the entire country.

*A Savage War* elegantly elucidates another innovative French operation in Algeria, one that employed indigenous forces in irregular roles. Operation Blue Bird was a prototypical special operation that aimed to exploit the ancient enmity between the northern Kabyle tribe

and Algeria's Arabs. The result was "Force K," an anti-FLN (National Liberation Front) guerrilla group of Kabyle separatists that grew to over 1,000 men.\* However, the FLN infiltrated the leadership of Force K and then mauled a French unit in an ambush. Although the French consequently terminated the initiative, out of its ashes emerged a very effective counterinsurgent group known as *Léger's bleus*, named after a Zouave captain who had worked as head of the secret Intelligence and Exploitation Group (GRE)<sup>+</sup> for the noted Colonel Roger Trinquier during the Battle of Algiers. The GRE established a network of Muslim agent informers who, unknown to the FLN, turned coats at French interrogation centers in Algiers.

Recognizing the value of the *bleu* double agents, Captain Léger effectively expanded and exploited his network to fully infiltrate the FLN infrastructure. In January 1958, the *bleus* were able to deceive and capture the equivalent of the FLN general staff in the Algiers operational zone. This feat neutralized the FLN so thoroughly that it was unable to regenerate its infrastructure in Algiers until the closing months of the war.

Horne's narrative is exceedingly relevant to contemporary counterinsurgencies because it examines the employment of civil-military functions and indigenous forces. As Horne reports it, the French effort to integrate security and development through the instrument of the SAS was a good concept, but it fell short by not establishing an adequate number of detachments to cover all of the regions in Algeria. These same challenges remain for the U.S. military and its coalition partners as they establish PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq. Similarities are also evident in the French *bleu* operations to eliminate FLN cadre in Algeria and the

U.S. Phoenix program's Provincial Reconnaissance Unit operations to eliminate Viet Cong infrastructure in Vietnam. Both programs point to the potential utility of using this model on the Pakistani border and in Iraq. Lastly, the French efforts that Horne so artfully portrays in *A Savage War* are also topical today because, in both Afghanistan and Iraq, improving the quantity and capabilities of local forces is essential to securing the population and countering the insurgencies.

Horne's book offers one other, larger, lesson for the current counterinsurgent: if the French had implemented a more effective political program in Algeria, one employing tactics that did not alienate both the Algerian and French publics, they

might have countered the insurgency more successfully.

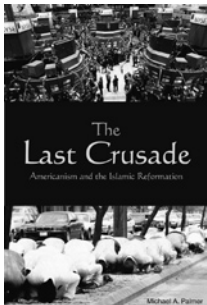
Today, the United States and its partners are also fighting against extremist insurgents animated by an interpretive Islamist ideology. Since American national security strategy describes the conflict as a "long war" of unlimited space and duration, Horne's pellucid descriptions of the topics described above are of immense relevance. *A Savage War of Peace* is a superbly researched, superbly written history of the one 20th-century counterinsurgency that is of most interest to counterinsurgents involved in Iraq and Afghanistan. It will provide those who read it with useful ideas for countering current insurgents in this perennial, ideological kind of war.

\*The FLN, or the *Front de Libération Nationale*, is the Francophone term for the National Liberation Front, the political entity that directed the Algerian insurgents' operations.

\*GRE is *Groupeement de Renseignement et d'Exploitation* in French.

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## MR Book Reviews



**THE LAST CRUSADE: Americanism and the Islamic Reformation**, Michael A. Palmer, Potomac Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2007, 256 pages, \$26.95.

Michael A. Palmer's titular description of the West's role in its ongoing conflict with radical

Islam as a "crusade" is certainly provocative and—to the extent you agree with his conclusions—may be ominously prophetic. Overall, Palmer argues that the conflict is an inherent result of Islam's historic failure to reform and liberalize the tenets of its faith to accommodate the realities of modern life, thus putting it at odds with the developed and developing nations of the world, led by the United States.

In support of this position, Palmer offers a detailed analysis of Islamic history from Mohammed to the present as contrasted with parallel Western history, especially the Protestant Reformation's modernizing role in the West. Students of Middle

Eastern history will probably find these sections more interesting than the average reader, who may feel a bit overwhelmed. However, Palmer makes his point: traditional Islam, with its commitment to jihad and its rejection of secularism and pluralism, is fundamentally opposed to Western traditions and values. Palmer's seeming dismissal of any hope of a progressive Islamic reformation will doubtless come as a shock to liberal Muslim scholars. Likewise, his suggestion that radicals like Osama bin-Laden will probably be the face of any possible Islamic reformation to come will also find detractors. Both of Palmer's opinions go largely unsupported.

Indeed, radical Islamists are actually focused more on "reviving" than "reforming" traditional Islam, religious revivalism being a common response of societies under stress, as the U.S. experiences with revivalism during the late 19th century and, to a lesser extent, the Great Depression, attest. Opportunistic charlatans exploited those revival movements for profit and fame. One might further argue

that Bin-Laden and his ilk follow in a long tradition of messianic leaders who have fanned and exploited religious fervor in pursuit of self-serving political goals. The jury is still out on that.

Palmer is certainly correct, however, in asserting that Bin-Laden and his henchmen "are more than just terrorists" and that the U.S. war with them really "is not a war on terror." We hope he is also right in predicting that the West will prevail, but we shudder at the possible cost of that inevitable victory. Palmer states, "The question centers on how long it will take and how many lives will be spent before the inevitable is realized. . . . How far the West will have to go to win will depend on how quickly and surely the Western powers go about their work. Unfortunately, at present, they are far from united—many refuse to even recognize the war as a war . . . . The real danger is that the longer the conflict lasts, the more likely it becomes that the West, with its unlimited means of destruction, will shed its self-imposed restrictions and adopt an ever-more brutal and unlimited response," harkening back

perhaps to the alleged atrocities committed by medieval Crusaders.

Speculating about a likely Western response to a threatened Islamic nuclear attack, Palmer closes with the chilling warning, "The abyss beckons, and the disunity of the West only deepens the chasm." Palmer's work is a challenging and provocative read. The final chapter alone is worth the cost of the book.

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ultimately determine whether the United States is victorious in the War on Terrorism.

Nasr does not consider *The Shia Revival* a historical work; rather, his intent is to create understanding and generate discussion. In the first chapter, however, he provides a detailed historical description of the conditions that finalized the split between the Shia and Sunni. From the very beginning, the Shia were the self-appointed keepers of the undefiled faith, while the secular pursuits of empire building and conquest were left to the Sunnis. As a result, the Sunni majority came to view the Shias as second-class Arabs, mystical in their approach to religion and apathetic toward Arab nationalism in their politics. The Shias, according to the Sunni, could not be trusted because they were philosophically aligned with Iran's Persians and the anti-nationalist Muslims of Southeast Asia.

The Sunni have held the majority of government and military positions in the Muslim world since the Middle Ages. Therefore, it is not surprising that European governments have tended to countenance the political status quo in most Muslim countries, with the result that the Sunnis were able to maintain their political, economic, and social domination of the Shia. Contemporary Shia scholars are quick to point out that by providing legitimacy to "corrupt" institutions, the Europeans unwittingly created the conditions for, and indirectly contributed to, the rise of radical Islam in the last half of the 20th century.

It was not until after the fall of the Shah in the late 1970s and the subsequent rise of Ayatollah Khomeini and a Shia state in Iran that the Shia gained some political clout in the region. While the triumph of Khomeini's theocracy should have been a seminal event in Shia political history, it was not. Sunni leaders universally rejected the Shia Islamic state because it constituted a potential challenge to centuries of Sunni political domination. Nor did the Shia universally accept Khomeini. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani (a self-exiled Iranian living in Najaf, Iraq) directly

opposed Khomeini's fire-brand rhetoric, preferring honest debate and peaceful demonstrations as the means to gain political power.

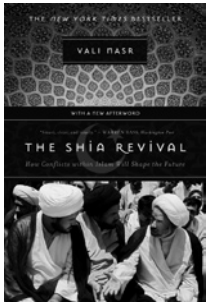
Nasr is careful to point out that the Shia revival is not necessarily pan-Shiism with radical baggage. Nevertheless, an active Shia revival does have significant implications for Iraq and the region. First, cultural and religious ties will continue to strengthen among the Shias across the Middle East. Second, a Shia political consensus will develop based on a need to protect hard-won political gains. Third, the advent of a Shia Iraq will spur Shia communities elsewhere to demand political and religious rights because, once the Shia realize they are no longer the "other Muslims," they will find it difficult to accept a second-class role in Islam.

The bottom line is that the future of the Middle East rests not on any economic or political system, but on reconciliation between the Sunni and the Shia. The United States' legacy in the Middle East may not be the removal of a corrupt regime, the failure to find weapons of mass destruction, or even its ability to jump-start democracy in the region. Its real and lasting legacy may be as the catalyst that helped bridge a 1400-year-old chasm between the two great Islamic communities. In the end, though, regardless of what the United States' best efforts are, the future of the Middle East will be written by Middle Easterners. That future will certainly include the Shia as equal Islamic partners.

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**TWICE ARMED: An American Soldier's Battle for Hearts and Minds in Iraq**, R. Alan King, MBI Publishing Company, St. Paul, MN, 2006, \$24.95, 304 pages.

The United States and the Iraqi Government continue to fight an intense and deadly counterinsurgency in Iraq that threatens to boil over into full-scale civil war between Sunnis and Shi'ites. Undoubtedly,



**THE SHIA REVIVAL**, Vali Nasr, W.W. Norton and Company, New York, 2006, 287 pages \$25.95.

Vali Nasr's *The Shia Revival* is a must-read for anyone wanting to come to grips with the rampant sectarian violence in the Middle East, specifically in Iraq. At the heart of the violence is a 1400-year-old schism between the two great branches of Islam: the Sunnis and Shia. The rejection of Ali ibn Abi Talib (the prophet's son-in-law) as Mohammed's immediate successor created the initial rift between the Sunnis and Shiites. Ali's supporters were referred to as *Ali shi'atu* 'Ali, or simply Shia. Ali eventually became caliph in 656, after the death of Uthman (the third successor to Mohammed), but it was not until the martyrdom of Ali's son, Husayn, at Karbala, Iraq, in 680 C.E., that the Shia transformed from an obscure political party into a major Islamic religious force. The events at Karbala provided the Shia with a martyr, a religious holiday (*Ashoura*), and an identity.

Many contemporary Arab scholars point out similarities between the Catholic/Protestant conflict in Northern Ireland and the Sunni/Shia conflict in Iraq. While there are some parallels, the current Catholic/Protestant conflict is regional in nature and confined to the United Kingdom, whereas the Sunni/Shia conflict knows no borders. Rapprochement between the Sunni and the Shia may

U.S. efforts in Iraq have not produced the desired results, and the insurgent, criminal, and terrorist threats to the country are as strong as ever. What caused this failure, and how can the United States turn things around and emerge victorious on this front line in the War on Terror? *Twice Armed*, by R. Alan King, attempts to explain the challenges, errors, and strategy for ultimate success in Iraq based on its author's personal experiences as a civil affairs battalion commander and deputy director of the Office of Provincial Outreach, Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).

King devotes the first 11 chapters of *Twice Armed* to describing his personal experiences during the ground war and the initial occupation of Baghdad and in subsequent stability operations. Initially, King commanded the 422d Civil Affairs Battalion (attached to the 3d Infantry Division), and he details his efforts to conduct initial stability operations in Baghdad amidst the power vacuum created by Saddam's fall and the delayed arrival of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. We hear about how he dealt with various Iraqi sheiks to secure the surrender of some of the most wanted former regime officials (including "Baghdad Bob") and his efforts to prevent bank robberies and recover artifacts looted in the initial chaos. King goes on to tell of his experiences in the CPA, where he interacted with over 3,000 sheiks and used his understanding of both the Qur'an and the Bible to calm tensions and gain trust during several tense situations.

While King's personal experiences are certainly entertaining, the final two chapters and postscript comprise the "so what" of the book. They contain King's thoughts about what went wrong for the United States in Iraq and what must be done to win there and against the broader ideology driving Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups. King discusses the events that changed Iraqi perceptions of the U.S. presence, several situations the United States should have handled differently, how democracy fits into Iraqi social and cultural

norms, how radicals use religion to incite hate and hide their true political agenda, and the implications of pulling out of Iraq before the job is done. His thoughts are insightful and give *Twice Armed* particular relevance as the United States continues the fight in Iraq.

Special attractions include 16 pages of color photographs of King during meetings with various sheiks and average Iraqis, an appendix that contains a handwritten letter (with translation) from Saddam Hussein to one of his military aides ordering torture for soldiers who desert, and an appendix featuring several psychological operations products disseminated in Iraq that illustrate King's points.

Unlike the authors of many recent books published about the Iraq war, King was there, in uniform; he has sufficient credibility and experience to make his book authoritative. Moreover, he was involved in many critical aspects of the ground war and subsequent stability operations, including the cease-fire talks during the first Fallujah battle and confrontations with Muqtada Al-Sadr's Mahdi Army. King's in-depth understanding of Islam and Christianity lends additional credibility to his arguments.

Regardless of why the United States went to war, the mistakes it made, and the bleak outlook facing Iraq right now, the United States and its allies must ultimately win to ensure freedom and democracy for the Iraqi people and to deny a fertile home ground for Islamic extremists. While *Twice Armed* is somewhat civil-affairs-centric, it offers unique insights into dealing with the Iraqi population that could contribute to an eventual successful effort. It should be a must-read for all field grade officers bound for duty in Iraq.

**MAJ David F. Longbine, USA,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**ROUGHNECK NINE-ONE: The Extraordinary Story of A Special Forces A-Team At War**, Frank Antenori and Hans Halberstadt, St. Martins Press, New York, NY, 2006, 265 pages, \$24.95.

Team Sergeant Frank Antenori's account of Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA, or Special Forces A-team) 391's combat near the village of Debecka, Iraq, during the opening days of Operation Iraqi Freedom lies at the heart of *Roughneck Nine-One*. According to Antenori's title, the team's story is "extraordinary" and the lessons it learned at Debecka "have been studied carefully" inside the Army's training institutions. However, despite Antenori's apparent desire to glorify ODA-391's experience, the tale he spins suggests that the team's success rested more on luck and good technology than warfighting skill.

Antenori's depiction of the engagement at Debecka is one of an embattled Special Forces A-Team taking on an enemy task force consisting of T-55 tanks accompanied by infantry and supported with heavy artillery. Only later do we learn that the "task force" was really a company team consisting of six T-55 tanks and twelve Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs). Antenori concedes that the Iraqi artillery was ineffective and that the T-55 gunners seemed unable to engage the Americans with anything approaching accurate fire. Furthermore, he admits that the team's failure to occupy available higher ground led to its being surprised by the approaching Iraqis. To round out 391's follies, Antenori describes a friendly-fire bombing incident that he is more than willing to blame on the Navy pilot who delivered the bomb—even though 391 designated the target verbally rather than with a laser designator, and despite the fact that nowhere in Antenori's account does it appear that the team gave the pilot any information to help him differentiate between the tanks they wanted hit and one that had been already been knocked out in the vicinity of some friendly Kurds (whom the bomb hit with devastating effect).

Two key factors served ODA-391 very well. The first was U.S. close air support, which proved to be very effective. The second was the team's Javelin anti-tank missiles. Even here, Antenori's account



elicits some troubling questions. At times, he presents team members as vying for the privilege of knocking out Iraqi armored vehicles, as if combat were a variation of a turkey shoot. The concept of “best gunner uses the weapon to kill the enemy as quickly as possible” seems to have been lost. Additionally, the engagement sequences Antenori describes suggest that little thought went into prioritizing targets: rather than kill tanks first, most of the team’s initial targets were the APCs.

*Roughneck-91* is a lively war story from the good old days of Operation Iraqi Freedom, when the enemy wore uniforms and fought poorly enough to permit easy victories at little cost. Upon closer look, however, most of the lessons presented here have less to do with warfighting competence and bravery and more to do with what not to do. That’s where the book’s value largely rests.

**Joseph R. Fischer, Ph.D.,  
Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**THE ONE PERCENT DOCTRINE: Deep Inside America’s Pursuit of Its Enemies Since 9/11,** Ron Suskind, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2006, 354 pages, \$27.00.

According to Ron Suskind, Vice President Dick Cheney developed the “One Percent Doctrine” in response to information that Pakistani scientists might be helping Al-Qaeda build or develop a nuclear weapon. Also known as the Cheney Doctrine, the One Percent Doctrine states that the United States “must treat a one percent chance of catastrophe as a certainty.” This low threshold of proof, according to Suskind, has caused a number of problems for the United States in its post-9/11 War on Terrorism. If U.S. doctrine really requires us to act decisively to preempt an event that will occur only 1 time out of 100, we create conditions that virtually assure errors, some of which will be enormously damaging. The main problem with the doctrine is that the leaders of our intelligence system seem to be both political and incompetent, concerned with

telling administration officials what they want to hear while ignoring the analysis of the professional cadre working beneath them.

Suskind, a Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wall Street Journal* author, does not have the typical profile of a Bush administration critic. However, much of this book seems to suggest that nothing President George W. Bush or his team can do will ever quite meet the mark. Suskind accuses Bush of the usual shortcomings—lack of curiosity, concern with style over substance, and impatience with those who will not confirm his view of the world. In the end, the author succeeds only in proving that this war against terrorists will be enormously complex.

Suskind complains about shortcuts the Bush administration has taken, particularly in the area of human rights. He provides several examples of torture, either conducted or condoned by the United States. However, he then describes the *mubtakkar*, a simple-to-produce and easily transportable delivery system for hydrogen cyanide, a gas similar to that used by the Nazis in their gas chambers. He claims that the development of this device is the terrorist “equivalent of splitting the atom.” Suskind states that Al-Qaeda was within 45 days of executing a gas attack on the New York City subway system using several of these devices when Ayman al-Zawahiri inexplicably cancelled the operation, one that would likely have resulted in casualty rates comparable to those suffered on 9/11. In effect, Suskind laments America’s extreme response to the terrorist threat—and then describes a near doomsday terrorist scenario.

To my mind, it’s hard to worry much about water-boarding someone connected to a scheme like the *mubtakkar*. Still, it’s true that if we apply the One Percent Doctrine (presuming the vice president’s statement in a stressful meeting constitutes doctrine) faithfully and often, ready to take off our gloves with alacrity, we could end up torturing innocent people who fit a one-percent profile.

Suskind answers some interesting questions. For example, how did CIA Director George Tenet, who took the blame for almost all that went wrong both before and after 9/11, manage not only to survive but to thrive, eventually standing before Bush to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom? Suskind convincingly describes Tenet’s great skill in working with leaders across the globe, particularly those in countries where personal ties are as important, if not more important, than the formal relationships between nations. Suskind also describes meetings between Tenet and various international players that offer evidence that Tenet could speak to people as few others in the United States could. In the end, Tenet’s extreme loyalty to Bush, exhibited by his willingness to accept blame without complaint, proved almost as valuable as his popularity with world leaders.

One of the more troubling claims in the book is that the United States has made painful compromises in executing the War on Terrorism. One such compromise is the U.S. negotiation with Musa Kousa, the head of Libya’s external security organization and a notorious terrorist implicated in the bombings of the Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 and a French airliner over Niger in 1989. Kousa is a graduate of Michigan State University, and the small talk between him and an American negotiator about MSU’s NCAA basketball title is surreal, given that they were meeting to discuss reparations to the families of the Lockerbie victims (\$10M per family) and Libya’s abandonment of weapons of mass destruction programs. However, America needed help in defeating future terrorist attacks, and learning more about the enemy required us to forgive these past transgressions. In short, to defeat terrorists we had to befriend terrorists. Suskind describes an extraordinarily complicated world in which we have no option but to compromise what should be our beliefs. He refutes any linkage between the U.S. attack on Iraq and Libya’s friendly overtures

toward Western nations, saying the Libyans had simply tired of isolation and wanted all sanctions to end.

*The One Percent Doctrine* is often interesting, if not always convincing. Suskind cites countless sources throughout the government, but cannot name them for obvious reasons. Because of this, there is no source documentation for a skeptic to check, and one has to take Suskind's word on the content and tone of conversations he describes. Still, he offers several fascinating stories: about a coordination failure between the CIA and FBI that foiled apprehension of the man who went on to plan the London subway bombings; about the role of First Data Corporation and Western Union in tracing terrorist credit card transactions and money transfers; and about A.Q. Khan, the notorious developer of Pakistan's nuclear capability, who shared nuclear technology with countries of concern across the globe. In the end, Suskind has produced a provocative book, one that will have almost as many interpretations as it has readers.

**LTC Jim Varner, USA, Retired,  
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**FIGHTING THE WAR ON  
TERROR: A Counterinsurgency  
Strategy**, James S. Corum, Zenith  
Press, St. Paul, MN, 2007, 304 pages,  
\$25.95.

Insurgencies—conflicts in which factions attempt to take over state power by force—have been around almost as long as there have been organized states. In fact, James S. Corum asserts that insurgency is one of the most common types of conflict. Through detailed historical analysis utilizing his extensive background as a historian and military intelligence officer, Corum advances a superbly researched, well-articulated, and convincing argument that there is nothing fundamentally new in counterinsurgency, but that the United States nevertheless remains ill-prepared to execute it. According to Corum, this is so because “war remains a highly human and personal activity, and no amount of social theory or technological development will change that.”

Skillfully drawing on relevant historical events, Corum explains why insurgents cannot be defeated by the rapid, decisive campaigns preferred by a U.S. doctrine that remains rooted in the cold war. He recounts how forces employing a superior long-term strategy often defeat insurgents, citing the United States' experience in the Philippines, France's in Algeria, and the United Kingdom's in Malaya. For counterpoint, he discusses unsuccessful attempts by the United States in Vietnam, Somalia, Haiti, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Corum believes the United States is still fighting like it did during the cold war, with an emphasis on high-tech weapon systems and intelligence-gathering methods rather than on more effective medium to low-tech capabilities, ground forces, and human intelligence. A poor human-intelligence capability, Corum argues, is a prescription for disaster. Until we address these deficiencies, we are doomed to repeat historical mistakes made in combating insurgencies, and enemies will continue to target American weakness (i.e., the lack of forces, organization, doctrine, and strategy to fight insurgencies).

*Fighting the War on Terror* sets forth actions necessary to engage future insurgencies successfully. Corum, like Thomas X. Hammes in *Sling and the Stone* (Zenith Press, Ocoola, WI, 2004), would have us rely less on technological solutions. His prescription list is long: employ more Army and Marine Corps ground forces, overhaul the military personnel system, increase cultural and linguistic training, establish rigorous counterinsurgency and interrogator training, enhance military and foreign aid funding, provide security assistance and law enforcement training for host nations, increase use of media modes in strategy/campaign planning, and implement an interagency law similar to the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Corum, however, places even greater emphasis on using the media effectively and training host-nation security forces and police. He argues that insurgents understand the importance of winning the people's

hearts and minds better than Americans do, and cautions against ever again mounting military operations in a country without first devising a coherent plan to influence the civilian population we must deal with. Building effective host-nation security forces and police is another mission that must succeed if we are to defeat insurgents.

What separates Corum's work from Hammes's is the level of detail Corum provides and his explanation of how past counterinsurgency efforts should be shaping our approach toward combating today's insurgents. Although the two authors' recommendations are similar, Corum's are deeper and broader.

This fine book is easy to read, and I enthusiastically recommend it to *Military Review's* readers and to anyone who has read or is considering reading Hammes's *Sling and the Stone*. Because of its outstanding historical perspective, *Fighting the War on Terror* can be read alone, as a complement to Hammes, or as a foundation for secondary readings—it's that good.

**LTC David A. Anderson, USMC,  
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Kansas**

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**WAR BY OTHER MEANS: An  
Insider's Account of the War on  
Terror**, John Yoo, Atlantic Monthly  
Press, New York, 2006, 292 pages,  
\$24.00.

At first glance, John Yoo's *War by Other Means* looks like an extension of the ongoing, seemingly academic debate on the legal application of the term “war” to current operations against Al-Qaeda's global terror network. Yoo's background as a legal counsel for the Department of Justice and his initial focus on the president's legal authority as the commander-in-chief appear to doom his book to an indifferent reception among military professionals. However, once Yoo begins his lengthy analysis of wartime decisions, the military relevance emerges, and *War by Other Means* becomes a book that every leader should read.

Yoo explains, then subsequently explores, the importance of the terminology debate that often seems so academic to those in uniform. The definition of a single three-letter word—war—decides whether we confine intractable enemy combatants until they no longer pose a threat to our freedom or bestow upon them the rights and due process of our justice system. One word stands between wartime detainment and burdening our legal system with thousands of enemy combatants and known terrorists. One simple word.

In *War by Other Means*, Yoo addresses this dilemma from a number of perspectives, ranging from the Geneva Conventions and the Patriot Act to interrogations and military commissions. He discusses the danger of trying terror suspects such as José Padilla and John Walker Lindh in our courts, and the equally dangerous precedent of offering foreign terrorists and enemy combatants open access to our legal system. He explores how the operational environment has changed since 9/11 and proclaims the importance of reexamining a wartime legal structure based on a bipolar world in which only nations fought wars.

Yoo closes his book with an in-depth discussion of military commissions, both their historical precedent and contemporary challenges. To date—nearly six years into this long war—the Department of Defense has yet to try a single terrorist. Yoo describes this as “the Bush administration’s most conspicuous policy failure,” blaming Defense Department lawyers for resisting a process that could have transformed the means used to administer military justice in the post-9/11 world. Instead, Yoo argues, military lawyers issued rules that granted unprecedented rights to the accused, making a mockery of a time-tested and proven judicial process.

*War by Other Means* is not your standard military fare, but it is a worthwhile reference all the same. Yoo is a talented writer whose access to our nation’s policymakers during a critical time in our history makes his book even more interesting.

Military veterans will appreciate the background behind the policies that shaped our wartime efforts, and military readers in general will find his analysis of military affairs from a legal perspective to be refreshing and welcome. *War by Other Means* will be a great addition to any library of contemporary political affairs.

**LTC Steve Leonard, USA,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**STATE OF EMERGENCY:  
The Third World Invasion and  
Conquest of America**, Patrick J. Buchanan, Thomas Dunne Books, St. Martin’s Press, New York, 2006, 308 pages, \$24.95.

In *State of Emergency*, Patrick J. Buchanan delivers an apocalyptic analysis of the potential implications of unconstrained Third World migration to the United States. Describing the changes taking place in American society today, Buchanan draws parallels to the fall of the Roman Empire and the transformation of post-World War II Western Europe. Using demographic data and trends, he points to declining birth rates and the aging population of the American majority ethnicity and sees signs that our society is losing its identity. For Buchanan, the result of this trend, in combination with uncontrolled migration, will cause the death of American culture and the emergence of a new melting pot of Third World civilizations.

While Buchanan acknowledges America’s history as the land that welcomes immigrants, he clearly views the current situation as an invasion rather than a migration. The difference between the two, Buchanan argues, is that today’s immigrants do not fully embrace their new nation’s laws, customs, and culture. Rather, they maintain roots in their native countries and use American soil solely as a springboard to economic prosperity.

Immigration promises to be one of the central themes in the 2008 presidential race. Debate on national security issues surrounding Mexican immigration has already occurred on Capitol Hill, without clear resolu-

tion. Buchanan’s ultra-conservative, nationalist argument presents a plan for securing America’s borders and controlling the integration of immigrants into our society. His final chapter proposes a host of actions: an immediate moratorium on immigration, denial of amnesty for illegal immigrants, construction of a 15-foot twin-fence barrier across the Mexican-American border, refusal of medical care to children born to illegal immigrants, elimination of chain migration, the end of dual citizenship, and deportation of any immigrant with a felony record, gang association, or drunken driving arrest.

While Buchanan exhaustively details the negative consequences of immigration on the American population, he omits any discussion of the positive benefits of globalization, the primary benefits of which are national and global economic progress. The migration of a new labor force into the United States and the transference of industrialized processes to low-cost countries enable the global economic pie to grow. While Buchanan supports preserving a nation-state that defines our lives through physical barriers and cultural boundaries, he ignores a common assumption held by most economists: that if America is to survive 21st-century globalization, it must embrace the diversity that comes with joining other nations in free commerce.

Thomas Friedman’s *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, updated 2006) presents the counterargument to Buchanan’s protectionist stance. Friedman questions whether the dissolution of nation-states is indeed perilous. As globalization takes root and national economies continue to extend across the world in search of efficiencies, Buchanan’s “walled American fortress” loses feasibility and credibility.

Whichever side of the immigration debate one sides with, *State of Emergency* offers a powerful perspective on one of America’s greatest challenges. The book pro-

vides ample context for the political positioning we are likely to see from some presidential candidates as 2008 approaches.

**MAJ Kenneth G. Heckel, USA,  
West Point, New York**

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**THE TET OFFENSIVE: A Concise History**, James H. Willbanks, Columbia University Press, New York, 2006, \$29.50.

In this short, well-written, and helpful reference, James Willbanks traces the origins, conduct, and aftermath of the Communist Tet Offensive in 1968, during the Vietnam War. He highlights conflicting interpretations of the campaign's success and significance at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war. Willbanks includes a brief chronology of major Tet-related events from January 1967 to December 1968; a pithy encyclopedia of Tet-related vocabulary; reproductions of 10 important primary documents; and a reference guide to primary sources, significant secondary works, archival collections, and other resources concerning the Vietnam War in 1968.

Within his narrative, Willbanks ably encapsulates the campaign's most salient features for those unfamiliar with Tet 1968 in particular, and the Vietnam War in general. However, his treatment of the continuing historiographical debate over Tet betrays a vein of institutional bias that runs throughout the work. Given his position as a military historian on the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College faculty, it is not surprising that Willbanks effectively condemns what he deems slanted and overzealous American media coverage for translating a major tactical defeat of Communist forces into ultimate strategic victory for North Vietnam. It must be noted, though, that Willbanks does devote relatively extensive and favorable text to *Washington Post* reporter Peter Braestrup's work.

Elsewhere, Willbanks glosses over the genesis and moment of fundamental reappraisals by Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford and the "Wise Men," President Lyndon Johnson's nine-man panel of retired presidential

advisors. He also affords precious bibliographic text to a chapter by Victor Davis Hanson in an otherwise tight selection of important secondary works. Perhaps the text devoted to the Hanson entry could instead have been used to acknowledge Record Group 472 of the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland, as one of the premier archival sources for scholars researching the Vietnam War.

Despite these minor and understandable shortcomings, Willbanks has succeeded admirably in his stated mission "to provide information and resources for further study of the 1968 Tet Offensive." As a primer, his work will launch many undergraduate and graduate students well forward on their paths to scholarly success. *The Tet Offensive* is enjoyable reading and an important new addition to the large body of scholarship concerning the Vietnam War.

**MAJ John M. Hawkins,  
West Point, New York**

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**LIFE AND FATE**, Vasily Grossman, New York Review of Books, NY, 2006, 871 pages, \$22.95.

*Editor's note: Called by many critics "one of the greatest novels of the Soviet era and certainly the best Russian novel on World War II," Life and Fate was recently republished, with fanfare, after a long hiatus from print.*

In her personal and poignant memoir *Night of Stone: Death and Memory in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Penguin, New York, reissue edition 2002), Catherine Merridale observes that the "social effects of catastrophes like war and genocide are not exclusively subjects for historians." In the exhaustive—and exhausting—novel *Life and Fate*, Vasily Grossman reveals a Russian identity that is so far beyond the reach of fact-finders and trend seekers as to be virtually unknown, except to those brave enough to look past the what, where, and most of the how of Russian history to see the naked Russian soul through the all-too-human lenses of pride, guilt, love, selfish ambition, and the desire to survive.

Western military analysts tend to view the Russian experience in World War II through a God's-eye lens, seeing the June 1941 German invasion, the Russian defeats at Kiev, Smolensk, and Minsk, the encirclement of Leningrad, the defense of Moscow, the bitter street-by-street struggle for Stalingrad, and the great early-1943 Russian counteroffensive as points on a continuum from German hegemony in Europe in 1940 to German defeat in 1945. As such, the battles and campaigns are military means to military ends. Analyzed extrinsically, they are no more or less valuable as subjects of study than the Normandy invasion or the battle of El Alamein. In *Life and Fate*, Grossman, a Russian correspondent whose inspirational musings in the Soviet Army newspapers kept hope (and, sometimes, even humor) alive for countless thousands of Russians in the darkest days of the war, affords us a rare opportunity to think about great historical events in terms of their intrinsic value to the understanding of the human condition—especially the relationship of the individual to the collective.

The novel reveals from multiple points of view that, for Joseph Stalin, World War II both interrupted and enhanced the systematic government-sponsored terrorism of the Russian people—began some 20 years before the German invasion—that made the individual Russian, in Merridale's words, "not only victim but collaborator" in the never-ending assault on human dignity that was the Soviet Union. If, as Benedict Anderson argues, nations are (merely?) imagined communities, then national identity is somehow extrinsically imposed through a complex process of coupling individual identity with group identity that begins at birth and continues until death in a way that diminishes (and can erase) the influence of any inherited predispositions.

Stalin, perhaps even more than Adolf Hitler, Mao Tse-Tung, or any other exemplar of modern inhumanity, understood that the way to forge a national identity that consumed someone was to remove any vestige of the other kinds of community that people consider essential for a meaningful



human life. Stalin made it nearly impossible to value membership in family, church, marriage, friendship, or any other type of personal association, except in relation to one's association with the state. What is remarkable is not that Stalin destroyed so many marriages, villages, societies, political parties, religious groups, friendships, or intellectual forums; the remarkable fact, and perhaps the best testimonial to the notion that human persons are indeed unique entities in the cosmos, fate or no fate, God or no God, is that any community outside the state survived at all. Grossman's characters show how—and at what cost.

Grossman, a Russian Jew, finished the novel in 1960, but it was not published anywhere until 1980 (in France), 14 years after he died. Already renowned for his World War II journalism and such novels as *The People Immortal* (Hutchinson & Co., 1943), and *For a Just Cause* (1952), Grossman hoped—in the relative freedom of the Khrushchev era “thaw”—to publish a definitive Russian epic, of a scale not seen since Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (Modern Library, New York, 2002). Unfortunately, his novel was far too honest. It had the distinction of being the only book formally arrested during the Communist reign. (Grossman himself remained unmolested by the authorities, although the government confiscated the manuscript, the typewriter ribbons, and the carbons in February 1961).

Following a dozen characters essential to the narrative arc of the story and some 25 others central to the main characters' lives, Grossman draws on his own experiences to paint a panoramic portrait of Russia in 1942, from the rampant anti-Semitism that still exists there today, to the randomness of the state-sponsored terror, to the frozen hell of Stalingrad. This *New York Review of Books* edition contains an informative introductory essay and a cast of characters, grouped by physical location (Russians inside a German concentration camp, Russians inside a Russian gulag, Russian soldiers in Stalingrad, German soldiers in Stalingrad, Russian scientists at

a government research center, etc.), which becomes helpful the further one wades into the 871-page text.

That the inhumanity of war gives rise to new heights of human kindness in the unlikeliest of places is a phenomenon many other war novelists have articulated beautifully. Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Vintage, New York, 2005), Norman Mailer's *Naked and the Dead* (Picador, New York, 5th edition, 2000), and Anton Myrer's *Once an Eagle* (Harper Perennial, New York, 2002) are among the articulations best known to American readers.

In a Leningrad tenement, in a concentration camp gas chamber, in German and Soviet interrogation rooms (themselves alike in their reduction—and the motivation for the reduction—of the human to the animal in the interrogator's eyes and heart), in a regimental commander's T-34 tank, and in the last embrace between a German soldier who will soon die and the Russian woman who loves him (on a bed made from a door in the basement of a partially demolished Stalingrad office building), Grossman's characters rekindle hope for humanity. They remind the willing that, in the words of one of Grossman's characters, “if what is human in human beings has not been destroyed even now, then evil will never conquer.” Russian-ness (and German-ness, etc.), then, is (simply?) humanness, Grossman seems to say. This was a message too potent for Khrushchev's thought police, but one that military professionals should not ignore today when ideological fanaticism wraps itself in many different cloaks, marketing itself as truth.

**LTC Jeff Wilson,  
West Point, New York**



**BLOOD AND OIL:  
The Middle East in  
World War I, Document-  
ary Film (DVD),**

written and produced by Marty Callaghan, Inecom, 2006, 112 minutes, \$24.95.

Documentary films can bring a sense of immediacy and emotional

intensity to historical events that is impossible for the traditional print media to convey. Conversely, few films reach the depth of analysis possible in books. This film is an exception to the latter observations. Marty Callaghan's documentary couples the emotional power of film with strong analytical commentary. Callaghan has carefully selected and edited original film footage from the World War I period to create a coherent narrative punctuated by commentary from three early-20th-century Middle Eastern history experts: David Fromkin, Edward J. Erickson, and David R. Woodard. These historians provide an overview of a little-known theater of World War I, shed light on why the Middle East has evolved as it has, and offer explanations for the origins of many of the region's persistent problems.

The extensive combat operations that occurred in the Middle East during World War I deserve to be better known, but the horrors of trench warfare on the Western Front have long overshadowed them. Nonetheless, given the strategic significance of the Ottoman Empire's demise in 1918 and the continuing importance of Middle Eastern oil reserves to the Western and Japanese economies, understanding events in the region is fundamental to understanding our present involvement with and continuing difficulties in this area of the world.

*Blood and Oil* covers a wide range of topics: the rise of Turkish militarists and their surprise attack on the Russian Empire, the British naval defeat in the Dardanelles, the British advance from Suez, the disaster at Gallipoli, the British campaigns in Iraq, the fighting on the Caucasus front, T.E. Lawrence and the Arab insurgency, the Gaza battles and the capture of Jerusalem. Although few of the events are well known today outside a small circle of specialists, all of them had lasting and painful effects. The number of casualties alone should give us pause as we consider the potential cost of future campaigns in the region.

The 1919 Treaty of Versailles redrew the map of the Middle East

according to the interests of the victorious Western powers. New nations such as Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia were carved out of the corpse of the Ottoman Empire, and most of them were placed under the “protection” of European powers. This was done with no regard for the cultural, historical, religious, and demographic characteristics of each area, thus paving the way for the endemic social and political instability in the region, instability that has periodically ignited wars, revolts, coups, and military occupations and continues to do so today.

Callaghan also explores the immediate aftermath of the war, notably the rise of Turkey as a relatively secular, strong, and stable nation-state. He touches briefly on the vicious fighting between Armenians and Turks and Turks and Greeks in two conflicts that remain unresolved to this day. The rise of Israel and subsequent developments receive brief mention, as a sort of postscript. A sequel by Callaghan to continue the narrative to the present would be most welcome.

*Blood and Oil* could be a valuable tool in classes on Middle Eastern history and for personal professional development. In a little less than two hours, it presents the viewer with a broad historical perspective on events that continue to affect all of us today. It is a great introduction to the subject and should whet the viewer's appetite to delve more deeply into it.

**LTC Prisco R. Hernández,  
Ph.D., USA, Fort Leavenworth,  
Kansas**

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**WAR OF NERVES: Chemical Warfare from World War I to Al-Qaeda,** Jonathan B. Tucker, Pantheon Books, New York, 2006, 479 pages, \$30.00.

Jonathan Tucker is a world-renowned arms control expert in the fields of chemical and biological weapons who served as a U.N. weapons inspector in Iraq. His latest book, *War of Nerves*, is a comprehensive history of the most lethal class of chemical weapons:

nerve agents. Military readers and scientists alike will marvel at Tucker's highly detailed account of the various agents' discovery, development, proliferation, and control. He successfully weaves together threads of history, science, and political security issues to produce an unprecedented account of modern history's most widely used Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). Examples of compelling discussions include Hitler's rationale for not using nerve agents and the Soviet Union's clandestine development of Novichoks, an entirely new class of nerve agents.

Organized chronologically, Tucker's narrative begins with a description of the surprise release of toxic gases in the trenches of WWI. The focus then shifts to the accidental discovery in the 1930s of the first nerve agent, tabun, by a German chemist working on developing new pesticides for IG Farben, the chemical conglomerate. The Nazi military-industrial complex recognized tabun's utility and tasked IG Farben to develop and mass produce more toxic chemicals. The cold war saw the United States and the Soviet Union pursue a chemical arms race akin to the nuclear arms race. The two countries produced thousands of tons of nerve agents, and with their assistance, many developing states also created programs. This proliferation eventually led to Iraq's mass release of nerve agents during the Iran-Iraq War and Saddam Hussein's subsequent poisoning of Iraq's Kurdish minority. Unfortunately, the end of the cold war has not meant the end of worry. The spread of transnational terrorism has provoked significant concern that chemicals might be released on an unsuspecting public. For Tucker, this era began when the Japanese doomsday cult Aum Shin-rikyo released sarin into the Tokyo subway system in 1995. Tucker ends his book with thought-provoking ideas about current issues, including Operation Iraqi Freedom and international efforts to abolish nerve agents forever.

*War of Nerves* has a few minor shortcomings. Its emphasis on nerve

agents means that other chemical agents are discussed incidentally, merely for historical purposes. This only marginally detracts from the book, however, since nerve agents are the U.S. Defense Department's principal concern. Tucker also pays scant attention to the geopolitics of North Korea's chemical warfare capability and has little to say about the Chemical Weapons Convention. Overall, though, *War of Nerves* is an immensely compelling book. It is important for military readers to appreciate the historical development and current relevance of nerve agents, and Tucker presents that information in an interesting, readable format. In doing so, he makes a valuable contribution to the WMD genre.

**MAJ Peter L. Platteborze, USA,  
Kaneohe, Hawaii**

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**WILLIAM HARDING CARTER AND THE AMERICAN ARMY,** Ronald G. Machoian, Oklahoma University Press, Norman, 2006, 388 pages, \$39.95.

When one thinks of the reformers who influenced the development of the Army in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the names Emory Upton and Elihu Root come to mind. Although Upton and Root certainly contributed to the Army's reform impulse, in *William Harding Carter and the American Army*, Ronald G. Machoian notes that the all-but-forgotten Carter was a key figure behind the efforts to professionalize the officer corps and rationalize the American approach to war. Machoian argues that Carter's efforts to develop a lifelong Army education system and build the Army's general staff structure helped the military transition from an old frontier constabulary army to a “new” army that was better able to address the security needs of an emerging world power.

Machoian emphasizes that Carter's military service coincided with both the massive societal changes that transformed American society in the last decades of the 19th century and with Progressive Era pro-

fessionalization in the civil sector (from roughly 1890 to 1920). Thus, Carter had his feet planted in both the “old” and “new” armies. As a boy, he was a volunteer messenger for the Union Army during the 1864 Battle of Nashville and, after his graduation from West Point in 1873, he served with distinction in campaigns against the Apache and the Sioux. During these formative years Carter also became an ardent supporter of army reform and modernization. Machoian credits Carter with introducing Root to Upton’s ideas and fueling the Secretary of War’s zeal for military reform. Carter and Root’s combined passion, vision, and tireless efforts paved the way for reorganization of the Army’s staff structure, reform of the National Guard, and creation of the Army War College.

Machoian also notes that for all of Carter’s brilliance and drive, the soldier possessed a number of faults and human frailties that sometimes led him to blame his failing on the jealousies and conspiracies of others.

*William Harding Carter and the American Army* is an excellent book for those interested in the roots of the modern American military staff and educational systems and those seeking to understand the complexities of organizational change. The book also illustrates the continuing importance of individuals and personalities in helping or hindering military reform. Ultimately, Carter’s labors to transform the Army remind us of the need to retain intellectual honesty and critical analysis when embarking on change in the military.

**LTC Richard S. Faulkner, USA,  
Retired, Fort Leavenworth,  
Kansas**

**GEORGE WASHINGTON AND BENEDICT ARNOLD: A Tale of Two Patriots**, Dave R. Palmer, Regnery Publishing, Washington, D.C., 2006, 395 pages, \$29.95.

Retired Lieutenant General Dave Palmer’s *George Washington and Benedict Arnold: A Tale of Two Patriots* provides no more, and no less,

than its title suggests. Palmer presents the tale of two men whose fortunes frequently ran together on parallel tracks, but whose fates diverged sharply. George Washington’s name became synonymous with public virtue; Benedict Arnold’s became a byword for treachery. These radically different legacies, Palmer believes, were the result of differences in their character.

Palmer defines character by its component traits of fortitude, temperance, prudence, and justice; as having “the moral fiber to take the harder right instead of the easier wrong”; and, in Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain’s words, as “a firm and seasoned substance of the soul.” By all of these definitions, Washington excelled; by almost all of these measures, Arnold fell hopelessly short.

Not surprisingly, Palmer is at his best when describing Arnold’s treason at West Point. The author of one of the better histories of the U.S. Military Academy (*The River and the Rock: The History of Fortress West Point, 1775-1783*, Hippocrene Books), Palmer explores in great detail the series of events that became the sole legacy of one of America’s original heroes. Arnold, his young wife Peggy Shippen, the gallant Major John André, and a cast of lesser characters come to life in Palmer’s appealing prose.

Unfortunately, Palmer makes little headway against the nagging question of why Arnold did what he did. After explaining factors that may have influenced Arnold’s decision to betray the cause for which he had given so much—disillusionment with the civilian leadership of the rebellion, disgust with Congress’s repeated failures to reward his contributions to the war, and disappointment with Washington’s public censure of his (Arnold’s) behavior as military governor of Philadelphia—Palmer recasts Arnold’s treason as a failing of character. According to Palmer, Arnold was a “thoroughgoing narcissist, ego-centered in the extreme.” The difference between Arnold the hero and Arnold the traitor was coincidental. “When right for him happened to correspond with what

was right for causes outside of self,” Palmer writes, “he was a hero. When right for him conflicted with other causes, however, his narcissism led him . . . eventually to dishonorable behavior.”

Palmer’s book suffers from the same problem that afflicts all dual biographies: he cannot do full justice to either of his subjects. Recent biographies such as Edward Lengel’s *George Washington: A Military Life* (Random House, 2005) and James Kirby Martin’s *Benedict Arnold: Revolutionary Hero* (New York University Press, 2000) explore the protagonists in greater depth and detail.

An engaging and easy read, *A Tale of Two Patriots* outlines many key events in the lives of these two great men during the American Revolution. Despite his treason, Arnold was a hero—and Palmer reminds us of just how vital Benedict Arnold’s contributions were to the fledgling republic. Arnold’s treachery was only one of the many trials, tribulations, and disappointments Washington overcame during the second longest war in America’s history. Palmer’s dual biography ably clarifies both of these important points.

**MAJ Jason “Dutch” Palmer,  
USA, West Point**

**ARMED FORCES GUIDE TO PERSONAL FINANCIAL PLANNING**—6th Edition, Margaret H. Belknap and F. Michael Marty, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2007, 331 pages, \$22.95.

This new edition of *Armed Forces Guide to Personal Financial Planning* provides a single-source document for service members interested in the wealth of financial information currently available. Assisted by other members of the Social Sciences Department at the United States Military Academy, the authors updated this edition to reflect how technology has changed the way Americans plan, save, spend, and invest their income. In addition, the authors incorporated pertinent information for service members who face deployment to a combat zone.

Whether you are just entering the service or are in the middle of your career, this book has something of value for you. Its straightforward and easy-to-understand writing can help anyone comprehend the full scope of proper financial planning, and it offers practical advice on a range of financial topics, including the basics of credit, taxes, and banking, and decisions regarding housing, automobiles, insurance, and college and medical coverage. Belknap and Marty also cover basic to advanced investment strategies. They conclude with a chapter on transitioning from the military that covers benefits, social security, and veterans affairs.

This guide provides clear explanations and practical advice that help Soldiers make informed decisions about money throughout their careers. I recommend it to all readers.

**LTC Robert Rielly, USA, Retired,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

**THE LONG ROAD HOME: A  
Story of War and Family**, Martha  
Raddatz, New York, G.P. Putnam's

Sons, 2007, 307 pages, \$24.95.

"Black Sunday, 1900 hours April 4, 2004, Sadr City, Iraq. Where the light shone that evening, it illuminated only gore and the clenched faces of soldiers unaccustomed to pain."

So begins the tale of 2-7 Cavalry's 24-hour-long first battle during Operation Iraqi Freedom. *The Long Road Home: A Story of War and Family* captures the bravery, courage, carnage, hope, despair, and determination of U.S. Soldiers fighting in Sadr City, Iraq. Martha Raddatz, chief White House correspondent and former senior national security correspondent for ABC News, humanizes those who fought and, just as important, their family members back in Fort Hood, Texas.

Raddatz emphasizes how important the home front is during wartime and points to the contributions made by family readiness groups (FRGs) and the incredible energy they produce. She brings out in painful detail how absolutely important it is for Soldiers and family members to update notification paperwork and contact infor-


mation for use in an emergency.

Raddatz keeps politics out of her book, except where it directly influences events—for example, when the Department of Defense decided to send the 1st Cavalry Division into Iraq without most of its combat vehicles based on the premise (discredited on 4 April) that their mission would be a "stability operation" and not put Soldiers in peril.


While this might not have been 2-7's first time in a combat zone, it was the first time the men in the unit experienced killing—of the enemy and of their own. The feelings they had are well portrayed throughout the book, from the anguish caused by seeing their own killed or wounded to the uncertainty and unease involved in considering how to react to children, women, and old men who had chosen to become combatants.

*The Long Road Home* is rich in detail, easy to read, funny, profane, sad, infuriating, and very human. I highly recommend it for all service members and their spouses.

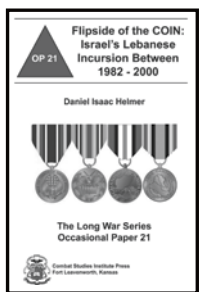
**LTC John E. Taylor, USA,  
Woodbridge, Virginia**



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