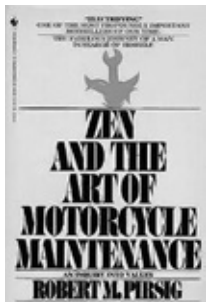


MR Classics Revisited



ZEN AND THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE: An Inquiry into Values, Robert M. Pirsig, HarperCollins Publishers, New York 1974, reprint 2005, 430 pages, \$13.95.

Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle*

Maintenance (ZMM) metaphorically outlines the intellectual journey that the War Machine as an institution needs to take in order to reform itself. The perfect place for this reform to begin is in the military's first operational war fighting school, the Army's School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS). Students at SAMS are reading ZMM in the true spirit of the school, the spirit of intellectual reform. Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege started SAMS in the early 1980s when he realized that the Army as an institution could not reform itself from the inside, from the top-down. SAMS students learn to think for themselves, freeing themselves from the doctrinal Procrustean bed of black-and-white thinking. ZMM can help us challenge our unconscious schemata of categorical thinking that force us into seeing the world in functional hierarchies made up of block-and-line charts and examine our unconscious conflation of what's in our minds with what's in the world—the reification of our mental models, theories, and myths. ZMM is a timeless classic accessible to anyone courageous enough to challenge his or her own convictions. The understanding gained is not about good old-fashioned heroic, warrior leadership; it is not about decision-making; it is not about problem-solving. It is about critical reasoning. ZMM will not leave the reflective person unaffected.

Introduction by LTC Timothy Challans, U.S. Army Retired, Ph.D.

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance is a bizarre title for a serious piece of literature, yet the title could not be more fitting. The philosophical quandaries in which the narrator engages proffer the reader an opportunity to expand upon traditionally held Western thoughts and values. The storyline is not typical of military readings, but unfortunately neither is the subject of critical thinking, which this book is all about. The title conjures images of Buddhist monks in secluded meditation, but also draws upon imagery of motorcycle maintenance to attract an audience with a proclivity for Western thinking into “an inquiry into values” and serious dialogue on logical reasoning and intuitive judgments about “quality.”

While taking a cursory, but grounding, tour through 2,500 years of philosophical evolution, the book challenges the reader to consider the value of self-reflection in order to increase the reader's capacity for critical thinking. It is a philosophically engaging modern epic well worth reading. It is not a manual for fixing motorcycles, nor will it have you sitting cross-legged in trance-like meditation, but it will make you scratch your head, challenge the way you think, and make you rethink the way you live.

Robert Pirsig uses a father-son motorcycle trip across the northern region and west coast of the U.S. as the backdrop upon which he paints a candid picture of a well-educated, middle-aged man—presumably the author himself—struggling with his sanity. The narrator, previously subjected to electroshock therapy that left mental voids, is physically retracing his past and exploring the philosophical debates and discovery that he was previously obsessed with and which left him committed to an asylum. It is a captivating story filled with imagery to which the reader can

easily relate, but the true power of the work is found in Pirsig's ability to use the story to pull the reader through a lesson on early Western philosophy while comparing it to aspects of Eastern philosophy.

The narrator navigates through early Greek philosophical developments while drifting through periods of deep internal reflection, contemplating the meaning of artifacts that remain and memories that surface from his life before therapy. A central developing theme throughout the book is the benefit of reflection to develop intuition about what “right looks like.” How is it that societies are able to reach majority consensus on aesthetic judgments that seem impossible to quantify?

Early in the work, a stage seems set for a battle to unfold between those who hold sacred an artistic, qualitative view, and those who favor a structured and quantitative perception of life commonly associated with modern science. But a nagging question delays the onset. The narrator grapples with a peculiar relationship between the sometimes polarizing debate between proponents of science and art. He notes the almost fervent certainty given to the results of a slow and methodical scientific method while reminding the reader that its value inextricably stems from a systematic elimination of null-hypotheses in an attempt to validate a working hypothesis or theory. However, it is impossible to imagine all null-hypotheses, and the working premise is itself a product of artistic intuition. From where does this artistic capacity for intuition originate?

Intuition, or the ability to recognize the quality of an idea, is based upon one's ability to assimilate a lifetime of experiences grounded both in methodical and rational reasoning that develop from introspection. The human capacity to perform

both inductive and deductive reasoning capitalizes on the ability to synthesize experiential data obtained throughout life, and possibly from unrelated hypothesis testing. It is unreasonable to disassociate art and science. Deductive powers emanate from reflecting upon the results of scientific testing and form the basis of perceptions that lead to intuition. Intuition generates hypotheses that through scientific testing can generate data and improve a continually synthesizing perception of reality that leads to new intuitions. It is a self-fulfilling and never-ending process. Failure to recognize this symbiotic relationship impedes the ability of military professionals to understand the nature of living with complex adaptive systems that have become a part of everyday life, in both peace and conflict.

Averting a winner-takes-all battle, Pirsig helps the reader recognize

the interdependent relationship between art and science, along with the underlying imperative for self-reflection that develops a capacity for intuition regarding goodness or quality. For the narrator, reflection upon experience allows a certain innate grasp of quality, which was at the heart of early Greek philosophy. It is the foundation for the art of problem solving and allows prospective motorcycle mechanics, sans complete manuals, to develop their creative problem-solving skills.

Pirsig employs the word “gumption” to bring the entire ethereal discussion back to plain American English. Gumption describes a trait possessed by those who are able to find and see the true quality that distinguishes some solutions from others, and he similarly describes “gumption traps” as those things that tend to steal creative thought and blind or block the ability to see quality solutions.

Devoted students of philosophy might occasionally take issue with the flippant manner that the narrator discusses some of the idols of philosophy, but for the mere mortal reader, it is this same attitude that provides a sense of personal connection. Pirsig’s work is a compelling and easy to read, though lengthy, journey into the realm of philosophy. It engages the mind, inspires self-reflection, and exposes the reader to contrasting yet complementary forms of thought. It is hard to imagine someone reading or even re-reading this book without gleaning insight into the way one lives or re-evaluating the way one thinks. For the military professional, it offers a lesson in critical thinking and self-teaching that arms the mind to cope with the complex adaptive world.

**MAJ Mark E. Blomme, USAF,
Langley AFB, Virginia**

MR Book Reviews

HUMAN INTELLIGENCE, COUNTERTERRORISM, & NATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A Practical Guide, Gary Berntsen, Potomac Books, Inc., Washington, DC, 144 pages, \$19.95.

Gary Berntsen’s stated purpose for writing *Human Intelligence, Counterterrorism, & National Leadership* is “to serve as a guide to assist incoming presidents and White House staffs so they may master the subject of human intelligence [HUMINT] and counterterrorism operations.” While this is a lofty and admirable goal, Berntsen’s work fails to achieve it. The book serves as an opinion piece more than a serious critique of the current situation. It provides the reader only a biased, cursory look at HUMINT and counterterrorism.

The opening chapter of the book provides a brief background of the CIA and its Clandestine Service, an area in which Berntsen has considerable experience, having served as a

station chief on three separate occasions. However, the author asserts that 95 percent of the information needed for determining U.S. policy can be derived from open source reporting (newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, Internet, etc.) and reporting from the U.S. embassies.

The final pieces of the puzzle are then supplied by the CIA. It is here that Berntsen sets the tone for the majority of his book, which implies the CIA’s Clandestine Service is the cornerstone of the Intelligence Community (IC) and omits the vital contributions of the other 15 intelligence organizations, such as the NSA, DIA, NRO, and NGA, even as they support the HUMINT mission. The book also ignores the contributions of the CIA’s own Directorate of Intelligence, which painstakingly analyzes the information provided by the Clandestine Service and turns it into the intelligence products used by the president, policy makers, staffers, and agencies across the IC.

The chapter on covert action proposes that CIA station chiefs, needing only the approval of the U.S. ambassadors in their embassies, be allowed to initiate nonlethal covert actions in order to defend “fledgling democracies” from themselves in countries such as Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Mexico. Only after initiating these covert actions would approval be sought from the president, the Senate Select Committee for Intelligence, and the House Permanent Subcommittee on Intelligence, as is currently required under U.S. law. Berntsen’s proposal would allow station chiefs and ambassadors in U.S. embassies around the world to set foreign policy and attempt to destabilize foreign governments without the prior consent of our own democratically elected officials.

The author continues to oversimplify other major global issues regarding terrorism and narcotrafficking, proposing shortsighted

solutions such as combining the U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and the Army's Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) in order to better carry out covert actions around the globe. While this may be an interesting idea, research shows that covert action is only a portion of SOCOM's mission. Which organization(s) would assume SOCOM's other missions and to what gain or detriment? As for INSCOM—whose stated mission is to provide intelligence, security, and information operations for military commanders and national decision makers—which organizations will fill the void left by the loss of this intelligence asset?

Unfortunately, despite its stated goal, Berntsen's work lacks objectivity, has been poorly researched, and suffers from glaring omissions.

**LTC Randy G. Masten, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

IN THE COMMON DEFENSE: National Security Law for Perilous Times, James E. Baker, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 2007, 404 pages, \$30.00.

Soldiers and politicians often claim that legislation such as the Goldwater-Nichols Act or Title 10 require something more. However, almost no one who challenges the legislation has actually read it. They mistakenly assume that no one else has read it, and they trust a lawyer to read it for them. Such lapses are terrible mistakes, for national security legislation is basic to soldiering at any level.

Military Review (May-June 2008) has two articles that illuminate the important aspects of national security: Dr. Charles Stevenson's "The Story Behind the National Security Act of 1947" and James R. Locher III's, "The Most Important Thing: Legislative Reform of the National Security System." These two articles, combined with James Baker's *In the Common Defense*, will equip Soldiers and civilians alike with a basic understanding of national security legislation.

Taken together, this material will encourage Soldiers to learn for them-

selves what the law actually says. The articles serve as a good primer for Baker's book in that Stevenson describes the system that continues to plague the Armed Forces to this day, and Locher argues that our old systems need to be refined, reformed, and in some cases replaced. The National Security Act of 1947, sometimes described as unifying the Armed Forces, actually hived off the Air Force as a new service and fundamentally enshrined the Marine Corps as a separate service.

Baker's book stems from his life as a Marine rifleman, a lawyer when he was involved in national security, and finally as a judge on the bench of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. Baker knows whereof he speaks and is able to make the basis of our national security system understandable. He does not, however, make it particularly easy to read. The book is heavy going. The topic is difficult and the writing sometimes dense, but the book is well organized and finished with a lawyer's rigor.

In the Common Defense makes the taxonomy of the Constitution and the law clear and describes the system as it exists today. It primarily focuses on how that system enables the United States to anticipate and react to threats or fails to do so. It turns out there is not a lot of basic law on national defense. Much of the law that has been written stems from efforts to enable government agencies and the services to operate and do so while causing the least harm to the Constitution, particularly with regard to civil liberties and the principles of federalism.

Every Soldier, regardless of service or grade, should read this excellent work and then take the trouble to read legislation as it is passed.

**COL Gregory Fontenot,
USA, Retired,
Lansing, Kansas**

MILITARY COOPERATION IN MULTINATIONAL PEACE OPERATIONS: Managing Cultural Diversity and Crisis Response, Joseph Soeters and

Philippe Manigart, eds., Routledge, Abingdon, UK, 2008, 253 pages, \$140.00.

Soeters and Manigart have mined some gold nuggets of truth about multinational military operations in an uneven compilation of overviews and case studies. Most of the writing focuses on recent European peace experiences with the UN and NATO. A few other major players, Australia and Japan, are also recognized. Its academic style of presentation, with high levels of theory, could challenge American practitioners. It will also give them unique views on key issues, which are usually ignored in an effort to create the semblance of unity.

No issue is discussed more often than the dominant role of the English language in multinational operations. Non-English speakers are highly sensitive to the value of native fluency and the dangers of miscommunication. For instance, peacekeepers in Kabul drove through high-risk territory because they preferred to be treated by German medics with better linguistic skills. Swedish officers on a UN operation noted the dominance of English speakers in formal meetings. Canadian instructors described the native speaker preference in high profile jobs. Too often, native English speakers mistakenly assumed other officers understood them when actually the non-natives were too embarrassed to expose their comprehension inadequacies. Anthony King, in a particularly insightful piece, highlights the use of irony by British officers as a dual-edged sword. Understanding the communication challenge is sometimes an underappreciated aspect of multinational interoperability.

These essays are sometimes unflinching when discussing national traits and how they made major impacts on cooperation within peace forces. The importance of after-hours drinking habits and rank-segregation are highlighted. *Power distance*, the hierarchical relationship, is considered by a Canadian writer to be a significant military dimension. Norway and Denmark

are low on *power distance* while Turkey, France, and Belgium are found to be high with strong authoritarian leadership.

Another major issue is *uncertainty avoidance*, difficult in an innovative mission-command atmosphere, and prevalent in Portugal and Greece. Other contributors' observations about Dutch, German, Irish, Polish, Italian, Japanese, and American forces are respectful and insightful. Correctly balancing organizations, in places like Afghanistan, will be a difficult balancing act well into the future.

I recommend U.S. military libraries purchase this book to supplement the guidance in Joint Publication 3-16, *Multinational Operations*. It is probably too costly for most personal American collections.

**James Cricks,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE BORDER: Exploring the U.S.-Mexican Divide, David J. Danelo, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2008, 256 pages, \$24.95.

Drug violence in Mexico has grabbed headlines recently, with more than 5,000 Mexicans killed in 2008—more than double the number from 2007. Much of that violence has occurred in northern border states as rival drug cartels fight over gateways to lucrative American markets. Former drug czar Barry McCaffrey compared the situation to that in Iraq, warning that millions of refugees could seek safety in the U.S.; in the same week the Department of Homeland Security acknowledged the development of contingency plans to position U.S. military forces on the border in the event of an emergency. Though some have dismissed these concerns as exaggerated, a secure border must nonetheless be acknowledged as an important element of national security.

Former Marine officer and Iraq War veteran David Danelo gives all 2,000 miles of our southern boundary his full attention in *The Border: Exploring the U.S.-Mexican Divide*. Beginning at the Gulf of Mexico,

Danelo doggedly follows the border to its terminus at the Pacific Ocean, stopping as he travels to explore border towns like McAllen, El Paso, and Nogales. He discovers that perceptions of the border change with the geography. In south Texas, he finds a vibrant cross-border culture where both bilingualism and a distaste for border fences are common, even among law enforcement officials. As he moves west, however, he finds polarization an “us against them” mentality that makes the border barrier a popular proposition, at least on the American side. Along the way, Danelo ponders the security of the border. Is it really secure, and from what and whom? Is the Border Patrol the right organization to secure it, or is this a job best done by the military? Danelo's travelogue spans both sides of the line and introduces an array of interesting characters, including a 26-year old Marxist Chicano activist, an ex-con tour guide from Matamoros, and a sociopathic Cajun trucker, all of whom see the border from radically different perspectives.

The Border is not so much a book of answers as it is a book of questions. There are more scholarly works on the topic, but this is an enjoyable, well-written, and thought-provoking look at an element of national security frequently overshadowed by overseas conflicts. As Mexico continues to feel the pressures of mounting drug violence, it's a subject that military professionals should at least have on their radar screens.

**MAJ Jason Ridgeway, USA,
West Point, New York**

WARRIOR KING: The Triumph and Betrayal of an American Commander in Iraq, Nathan Sassaman with Joe Layden, St. Martin's Press, New York, 2008, 305 pages, \$25.95.

This may not be the best book you will read, but it will probably be the book you will discuss the most this year. In *Warrior King*, Nate Sassaman and Joe Layden have written a controversial memoir of Sassaman's

time as a battalion commander in Iraq. Sassaman received a letter of reprimand for lying about an incident involving men from his unit. He believes he and his men were made scapegoats by the military in light of the Abu Ghraib incident and this book outlines his case.

Warrior King is not short on opinion and raises some interesting issues. Sassaman's relationship with his brigade commander serves as the basis for the larger issue surrounding how to fight an insurgency. Sassaman firmly believes the U.S. is not winning, but merely trying not to lose the war in Iraq. Sassaman's philosophy on how to win stands in contrast to the Army's current ideas on winning the hearts and minds in an insurgency; he offers the results that his battalion achieved as an example. The book offers critical assessments of the leadership, both peers and superiors alike, besides claims of selective enforcement in the chain of command.

The book is easy to read but limited to the author's perspective on what occurred, including the central incident. Although Sassaman has a perspective on many aspects of the war in Iraq, he is most effective when he stays at his level of command. When Sassaman comments about levels senior to his own, he offers little evidence to support his conclusions. Additionally, some readers may be put off by his qualifier—that “you need to get some American blood on your hands” before you can question a commander. This book offers perspective on not only a controversial incident, but also on what denotes a good leader. It raises questions on how we should fight an insurgency. For these reasons, I recommend the book. Readers may or may not agree with the author's conclusions, but it is sure to spark discussion.

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

EUROPE'S ROLE IN NATION-BUILDING: From the Balkans to the Congo, James Dobbins, et al., RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, CA, 2008, 342 pages, \$35.00.

This book, sponsored by the RAND Corporation and led by James Dobbins—a renowned peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction expert—is the third in a series of monographs addressing nation-building. Whereas the first two volumes focused on U.S. and the UN-led nation building experiences, Dobbins and his co-authors investigate “Europe’s role in nation-building.” The thesis of the book is “to determine how successful European powers are at achieving the objective of transforming a society emerging from conflict into one at peace with itself and its neighbors.” In doing so, the authors take an in-depth look at six post-Cold War European Union (EU)-led nation-building operations: Macedonia, Bosnia, Cote d’Ivoire, Albania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sierra Leone; by systematically analyzing, then comparing and contrasting these experiences.

The co-authors’ coverage of each country case is concise yet remarkably comprehensive, demonstrating their deep insight of the subject. Significant characteristics emerge from these operational country case studies: all missions had UN Security Council mandates; missions were short with few friendly fatalities; some other nation or organization accomplished the original pacification; operational commitments were rather tentative, with most European governments proving to be highly risk adverse; even though they approved them, there was a general unwillingness of European governments to contribute forces and financial assistance to support missions perceived as more difficult or dangerous; the EU was only moderately successful in mobilizing its civilian capacity in support of military commitments, likely because of funding issues; and operational success occurred most often when there was a well-defined and limited mission, particularly when a single nation took the lead role. Overall, operations were moderately successful. Most achieved sustained peace, GDP growth, and democratic freedom. However, marginal successes

were experienced in impoverished nations where it was extremely difficult to provide stable security.

The book goes one step further by comparing the European experience in nation-building with those of the United States and the UN. The authors note that of the 22 cases studied in this volume and the preceding U.S.- and UN-focused volumes, 16 nations remained at peace in 2007. Other noteworthy comparative results are the correlation between low force-to-population ratios and higher numbers of casualties, and between higher casualty rates and lack of overall success. The level of effort expended, in terms of military strength and economic assistance over time, affected the probability of operational success. Starting conditions may even more strongly affect outcome. Finally, the United States has tended to take on the larger, tougher operations, and therefore had generally lower levels of success than EU- and UN-led operations.

This volume is reader friendly, and provides extremely useful points of comparison for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of current country or institutionally led nation-building efforts. The authors’ methodical approach, coupled with their rigorous analyses and compelling conclusions, demonstrate that there are valuable lessons to draw upon to improve nation-building operations. This unique body of work, in combination with the preceding volumes, is a must-read for nation-building practitioners, government and international institution officials, academics, and anyone else interested in gaining an insightful perspective on the subject.

**David A. Anderson,
Ph.D., LTC, USMC, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

WARLORD: A Life of Winston Churchill at War, 1874-1945, Carlo D’Este, HarperCollins Publishers, New York, 864 pages, 2008, \$39.95.

Carlo D’Este’s outstanding biography is a vivid profile of Winston Churchill, warts and all, a great man seemingly born and bred for

war. Churchill was fascinated by all things military from his early years and invigorated by military training (Sandhurst), by combat experiences as a young man in India and Sudan, and exposure to combat as a war correspondent in the Boer War. He was also First Lord of the Admiralty prior to and during the first part of World War I, and after political disgrace resulting from the Dardanelles failure, was a fully engaged regimental commander in Belgium in 1916. He returned as First Lord of the Admiralty in 1939 and became prime minister of England in May 1940.

In February 1915, just prior to the Dardanelles and Gallipoli, Churchill said to Violet Asquith, “I think a curse should rest on me—because I love this war. I know it’s smashing and shattering the lives of thousands every moment—and yet—I can’t help it—I enjoy every second of it.”

D’Este describes a war leader who, if he could have done so, would have fought in the trenches, led soldiers in combat, commanded a theater of war, planned strategy and disposition of forces, and led the nation, all at once. Churchill’s desire to fill every military role and to experience every adventure of war was as far from ordinary egoism as the spirit of self-sacrifice is from mystical intuition. Churchill’s instinct was toward total identification and absorption in all aspects of the conduct of the war.

D’Este’s Churchill is a difficult, not very likeable child and youth, emotionally neglected by his mercurial father and beautiful mother. Churchill’s father had a low opinion of his son’s abilities, believed he lacked the intellectual capacity for law, and was exasperated by his son’s refusal to apply himself to his studies or stay out of scrapes with other boys and school authorities.

Churchill left his adolescence with narcissistic wounds; from an early age he craved honor, glory, position, and influence, as well as riches. He lived well beyond his means throughout his life. He found acceptance at Sandhurst and applied himself to learning his profession. He was a superb and fearless

horseman and an outstanding polo player. In addition, at Sandhurst he was in his element. Nevertheless, Churchill was always a difficult person who acted as if rules were made for other people: in his 20s he was ambitious, opportunistic, and self-serving. When he became an author and war correspondent, Churchill infuriated military leaders with his critical judgments of British ineptitude in the Sudan and Boer Wars. "Infuriating" is a term that appears frequently in authorities' reactions to Churchill's behaviors as a youth and young man.

Churchill's ability to infuriate others did not subside as he rose to political prominence in the Liberal party. He came to be viewed as an opportunist and adventurer because of his switches of political parties, his frequent changes of opinion on key issues, and his failures with the Dardanelles and Gallipoli fiascos during World War I, which he never lived down.

D'Estes' portrait of Churchill as war leader is that of an inspired, creative, brilliant, and nearly intolerable micromanager. Churchill interfered with his generals anywhere and everywhere. He never lost his penchant for military end runs, ancillary operations, and daring initiatives. Churchill's conduct as military strategist in World War II made it crystal clear that the Dardanelles was not an aberration; it was a reflection of his deepest tendencies. Churchill was a great leader but he was not, in this portrait, a great or even sound strategist. He was physically brave to the point of recklessness. During the Blitz, he liked to walk in St. James Park or watch the bombing of London from the rooftops of ministries. He never missed an opportunity in either World War I or World War II to approach the front whenever possible. "Real danger nerved him," an associate accurately said of him.

Churchill was a trial to his generals who rarely displayed the fighting spirit and initiative he admired. His style was to aggressively challenge his military leaders in direct conversations; and if they allowed themselves

to be bullied, he lost respect for them. If, on the other hand, they resisted him too adamantly or unreasonably, he replaced them. D'Estes' account of Churchill's conflicted relationships with his chief of staff, Alan Brooke, and with General Eisenhower are among the strengths of the book.

Possibly the biggest surprise in the book is D'Estes' description of how close the British political establishment came to appointing Halifax instead of Churchill as prime minister in May 1940. Churchill became prime minister only because Halifax declined the position, either in an act of supreme self-abnegation, failure of nerve, or a political calculation that Churchill would quickly self-destruct.

D'Estes view is that, despite Churchill's faults and infuriating traits, England would not have survived 1940 and 1941 without his leadership. "It took Armageddon to make me PM," Churchill once said. If, when England faced destruction the British political establishment had not overcome its intense distrust of Churchill, England might well have entered into a negotiated settlement with the Nazis prior to Pearl Harbor, with historical consequences impossible to imagine.

**Dee Wilson,
Washington State**

THE AIRMEN AND THE HEAD-HUNTERS: A True Story of Lost Soldiers, Heroic Tribesmen and the Unlikeliest Rescue of World War II, Judith M. Heimann, Harcourt, New York, 2007, 304 pages, \$26.00

Does an almost forgotten chapter of World War II history involving a little known military rescue deep in the jungles of Japanese occupied Borneo offer any relevance or interest to the average reader of today? This is the question that is both asked and answered affirmatively by *The Airmen and the Headhunters: A True Story of Lost Soldiers, Heroic Tribesmen and the Unlikeliest Rescue of World War II*. The book chronicles the adventures of eight army airmen shot down over Japanese-occupied Borneo in 1944.

The airmen are discovered by the Dayaks, an unknown tribe of head hunters from the interior of Borneo. Interwoven in this story is the saga of British Major Tom Harrison and a group of seven other Australian special soldiers conducting operations in Borneo during this time. The actions of these special operations soldiers were linked closely to the successful rescue of the airmen.

On 16 November 1944, Japanese forces shot down a B-24 from the 23d Bomb Squadron, 307th Bomb Group, carrying a crew of 11 personnel over the interior of Borneo. The world of a remote jungle people soon engulfed these eight survivors. The Dayak tribe, having sworn off head-hunting as late as 1930, was a mystery to the airmen. However, several of the Dayak group were Christians due to their exposure to missionaries and considered it against their faith to turn the airmen over to the Japanese. The eight airmen survived for over seven months by being shuttled between different Dayak villages. The appearance of British and Australian special forces soldiers provided the final impetus for the safe return of the airmen.

Judith M. Heimann, the wife of an American diplomat stationed in Indonesia and Borneo, began researching the rumors of this story in 1992. She spent several years interviewing the surviving airmen and their families as well as several of the surviving Dayak tribesmen who were involved in the events. Heimann traveled extensively in Borneo and interviewed key participants. She traveled to several of the locations in this book, and obtained firsthand interviews with key participants and their family members. Mrs. Heimann discusses the cultural adjustment of the airmen to the Dayak tribe and demystifies these tribesmen. She provides a direct example of how the airmen's pre-conceived notions about the Dayaks are altered favorably through exposure to these people and their culture. The author also provides a glimpse into the unique special forces operations taking place in Borneo between 1944 and 1945.

The Airmen and the Headhunters takes an obscure area of operation

and brings to light a unique struggle that took place. Heimann illustrates how a remote jungle tribe, combined with a group of special forces operatives and downed airmen, created havoc behind the Japanese lines in 1944 and 1945. I highly recommend this selection for all readers with an interest in military history as well as those who might enjoy a glimpse into an otherwise unknown culture.

**MAJ Benjamin K. Dennard
Schofield Barracks, Hawaii**

PARADISE LOST: Smyrna, 1922: The Destruction of Islam's City of Tolerance, Giles Milton, Basic Books, New York, 2008, 432 pages, \$27.95.

Giles Milton, one of the more entertaining writers of popular history, has written a book that is both gripping and a good read. *Paradise Lost: Smyrna, 1922: The Destruction of Islam's City of Tolerance* discusses the destruction of the cosmopolitan city of Smyrna (Izmir) and the ethnic and religious purges that accompanied it. The period following World War I was full of turmoil that could not be calmed by the host of international solutions and the mandates that accompanied it. The German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires were dismembered and the minority nationalities were given great autonomy and, often, independence. President Woodrow Wilson's well-meaning Fourteen Points were part of this effort. Britain, France, and the United States were not only proponents but also "neutrals" in this effort. The result was trauma, deep trauma that is still apparent in the Middle East and the Balkans.

Smyrna was a truly cosmopolitan city that was peopled by Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Arabs, and Europeans. It was the richest city in Anatolia. However, large parts of Anatolia were occupied by Greece with British connivance. When Mustafa Kemal launched his successful counteroffensive against the Greek Army, Smyrna fell under Turkish control. The old city was torched and Turkish irregulars fell upon

the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish populace. It was bloody repayment with a vengeance for earlier Greek atrocities against the Turks. Allied warships were too frequently neutral observers in the midst of open carnage. Well over 100,000 people perished and the end result was the forced deportation of Greeks and Armenians from Turkey and of Turks from Greece. Massive ethnic and religious cleansing was performed by both sides. This was the birth of modern Turkey. Revolutions are seldom pretty and the events in Smyrna made this one even less so.

Milton sees the events through the eyes of the Levantine elite—the key merchants and upper class of Smyrna who left diaries and detailed accounts of the time. They had the time and social "duty" to maintain these records, and interviews with surviving family provided a good deal of information to the author. The book is well-researched, but the author's evidence trail is hard to follow. His endnotes are skimpy, the bibliography rambles, and there is no index. There are no maps or photographs—and the book screams for both. The book will do nothing to heal the divide between either the Greeks and the Turks or the Armenians and the Turks, but it does point out the difficulties when great powers make sweeping mandates without establishing a comprehensive plan with a rigorous enforcement regime.

The book is recommended for military professionals, those who are concerned with peacekeeping and peace enforcement missions, and those who are interested in an area of history that this country tends to neglect.

**LTC Lester W. Grau,
USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

TRENCH WARFARE UNDER GRANT AND LEE: Field Fortifications in the Overland Campaign, Earl J. Hess, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2007, 336 pages, \$39.95.

Earl Hess has contributed yet another credible scholarly work to

his already impressive list of titles, all of which continue to deepen the overall understanding of the experience of Civil War combat. Like his much-celebrated earlier works, the *Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat* (University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, 1997) and *Banners to the Breeze: The Kentucky Campaign, Corinth, and Stones River* (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE, 2000), *Trench Warfare under Grant and Lee: Field Fortifications in the Overland Campaign* uses extensive primary sources and even meticulous battlefield research to bring to light an often misunderstood or little-studied aspect of the War Between the States.

Trench Warfare under Grant and Lee represents the middle book of a trilogy on the use of fortifications in the Civil War—the first being *Field Armies and Fortifications in the Civil War the Eastern Campaigns, 1861-1864* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2005)—and presages the yet-to-be-written final volume, which will cover the campaign around Petersburg to the war's conclusion in 1865. Hess uses this second work on trench warfare to underscore the central theme of his trilogy, that field fortifications were not, as commonly held, the result of the widespread use of rifled muskets and their attendant casualties. Instead, the reliance on trenches was the result of Grant's repeated and incessant assaults on Lee in his contrived war of attrition against the vaunted Army of Northern Virginia. For the Confederates, the trench and other man-made obstacles offered a way to redress the overwhelming Northern battlefield advantages of manpower and materiel while the Federals sought to use them as a means of holding ground in close proximity to the Southern lines or to conserve strength on one part of the battlefield while massing for a decisive attack on another.

Picking up where his previous study left off, Hess begins his second study by first examining the engineer components of both Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and

Grant/Meade's Army of the Potomac and then embarks upon a series of chronological case studies that examines each of the battles—Wilderness, Spotsylvania, the North Anna, and Cold Harbor—of the Overland Campaign which cost Grant approximately 60,000 men in barely six weeks.

Where other authors limit their studies of the Overland Campaign to only Richmond's northern approaches, Hess includes the additional case study of Butler's Army of the James and its operations from the southeast. Hess includes the abortive attack on Bermuda Hundred within the overall framework of the Overland Campaign because it not only included the extensive use of field fortifications, but also fit unwittingly into Grant's overall strategy of holding Confederate forces and wearing them down through attrition.

While Hess' study is limited overall in its utility for the modern practitioner of operational art, it is still noteworthy for its ultimate attention to detail and from the overall expertise that the author brings to his study. Not only did Hess glean valuable information from the armies' operational reports, he also relied heavily on firsthand accounts of trench action by both engineer officers and common soldiers to give a precise view of what life and combat in the trenches entailed. Furthermore, the author also pored over the battle sites and personally examined and, in some cases, measured the remnants of still-existing trenches to confirm or deny the written historical sources. Hess has contributed another fine work to the existing body of historical scholarship on the Civil War. *Trench Warfare under Grant and Lee* will make a fine addition to any Civil War historian's library.

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BORROWED SOLDIERS: Americans Under British Command, 1918, Mitchell A. Yockelson, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2008, 256 pages, \$29.95.

In 1917, when President Woodrow Wilson led the United States into the First World War, he sought to keep his country above what he viewed as the sordid entanglements of European power politics. Thus, he had America fighting alongside Britain, France, and Italy as an "associated power" rather than an "ally." To that same end, Wilson admonished General John Pershing to use the newly-created divisions of the American Expeditionary Force to create an independent field army, an army capable of winning discretely American victories.

With this guidance, Pershing stubbornly resisted British and French efforts to "amalgamate" small U.S. units into the allied armies. However, Pershing badly needed allied help in organizing and training an effective, modern force. As a result, once U.S. divisions had finished training with the Allies, Pershing pulled most of them back under his control to create the First U.S. Army. What few Americans remember is that Pershing allowed two National Guard divisions—the 27th from New York and the 30th from the Carolinas and Tennessee—to remain under the control of the Sir Douglas Haig's British Expeditionary Force. Together, these two divisions formed the II U.S. Corps, which fought on the British front from the summer of 1918 until the end of the war.

In *Borrowed Soldiers*, Mitch Yockelson revisits the story of this often forgotten American corps and, in doing so, offers us a fascinating case study in coalition warfare. In many ways, the II Corps was an orphan unit. The Americans relied on the British for food, weapons, and, eventually, even clothing. What is more, Pershing never sent the divisions their organic artillery and denied them replacements until after the Armistice. Nevertheless, at the end of September 1918, the British gave the two divisions of doughboys one of the most difficult assignments of the war: breaching of the Hindenburg Line. Over a three-day period, the inexperienced American divisions took heavy casualties and struggled to reach their objectives.

In doing so, they demonstrated the same problem of inexperienced leadership endured by the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) units in the Argonne Forest. To their credit, the 27th and 30th later showed a steep learning curve in fighting through German rear guards along the Selle River in mid-October.

In their brief time at the British front, the U.S. II Corps lost almost a third of its strength in killed and wounded and earned mixed reviews from their British and Australian comrades-in-arms. Nevertheless, the author argues that the assignment of the American troops to the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was a successful experiment in coalition warfighting. With this book, Yockelson has done a good job of illuminating a little-known aspect of America's military past.

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THE FAR REACHES OF EMPIRE: War in Nova Scotia 1710-1760, John Grenier, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2008, 288 pages, \$34.95.

John Grenier's *The Far Reaches of Empire* provides a well-researched account of a little known theater of colonial conquest in the early American epoch. He covers a 50-year period in the 18th century when Anglo-American soldiers and colonists attempted to exert dominion over the French Acadian settlers and indigenous Indian tribes living in Nova Scotia. This long-term conflict took place against the background of the greater Anglo-French struggle for power in the New World.

In today's terminology the campaign for domination in Nova Scotia would be classified as a counterinsurgency. Conflict in Nova Scotia between 1749 and 1755 possessed the worst characteristics of modern warfare: indiscriminate violence against noncombatants, the creation of refugee populations, guerrilla operations, and a touch of ethnic cleansing. Both sides were equally ruthless in the pursuit of their goals.

The book struggles to tie the different strands of this Nova Scotian counterinsurgency into a coherent, understandable framework. The strategic goals of the insurgents, particularly their French sponsors were unclear, and the overall British strategy of pacification were never fully articulated in the text. That said, the author does show how the Nova Scotia experience contributed to the development of an American

approach to war characterized by the desire for total victory and unconditional outcomes.

Grenier is an active duty Air Force colonel with a Ph.D. in history who has established himself as an expert in early American military history. The strengths of his second book represent excellent archival research. He used extensive primary and secondary sources and writes with an easy-to-read style.

He generously provides maps for the reader, with references to both the English and French language place-names. I often consulted these maps during the course of reading the book.

I recommend this book to Soldiers and historians with a strong interest in the military history of North America in the 18th century.

**Kevin D. Stringer, Ph.D.,
Zurich, Switzerland**

MR Letters

Tell Me How This Ends

John Stettler, *Dallas, Texas*—Much of Linda Robinson's *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (reviewed by Colonel Gregory Fontenot in the November-December 2008 *Military Review*) examines the "surge" in Iraq, but doesn't mention the U.S. making any headway until it discusses the actions of the Iraqi volunteers known as the "Sons of Iraq." We read of continued problems even with the influx of surge troops. The real turning point in the conflict comes in Ameriyah—with the help of the Sons of Iraq.

General Petraeus was of obvious importance in restoring order in Iraq. The book indicates that one of General Petraeus's greatest strengths is knowing when to encourage officers to use their own good judgment, but it does not answer the big question,

Was the troop surge into Iraq the best strategy?

The book mentions other strategies that would not have required a surge in troop levels. However, much to my dismay, it never mentions General Peter Chiarelli's noteworthy statement: "*I don't need more troops, I need more jobs.*"

The Sons of Iraq were being fostered well before the "surge strategy" was announced. *Was General Chiarelli encouraging this as part of his desire to pay Iraqis to do something productive?* Was he muzzled by an administration that might not have liked his call for "economic pluralism"? Did the administration not like his idea of paying money to men who once attacked our Soldiers? Did ideology compel the administration to describe the strategy as a "surge" strategy rather than a "jobs for former insurgents" strategy? Was sending more troops the only way to stabilize Iraq? Why wasn't

there a debate on whether "more jobs" could have done the trick? I am just a civilian, but as a civilian, I can raise such issues. The military needs to debate the merits of "a surge strategy" versus a "jobs strategy."

This is important because of something else not mentioned in the book: while Iraq was being stabilized, Afghanistan was going to hell. Was Afghanistan starving for more troops? The nice thing about a "more jobs" strategy is that we could have easily used it in Afghanistan as well as in Iraq. Due to the lack of troops, the "surge strategy" was limited to Iraq. Unfortunately, the "jobs" idea was forgotten, but for the Sons of Iraq.

I have great respect for the wide range of talent in the Army. Our Soldiers should be the most precious commodity in our military arsenal, especially in times like these when they are in short supply. Thanks to all of you.