
WHY WE LOST: A General's Inside Account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars

Daniel P. Bolger, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, New York, 2014, 544 pages

Lt. Gen. (retired) Daniel Bolger opens his book by writing, "I am a United States Army general, and I lost the Global War on Terrorism." As intended, the statement grabs the reader's attention, but the focus of the work is not how one general lost the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; rather, his underlying theme is that the U.S. military forgot its Sun Tzu in that it did not know the enemy or itself. This dual failure resulted in a series of unrealistic goals that led the United States to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory—or at least from the jaws of good enough. The blame Bolger places on himself and his fellow general officers is that their "lack of humility" prevented them from challenging the underlying assumptions that drove U.S. policy and from challenging their belief that they could transform Iraq and Afghanistan.

Undoubtedly, the strongest part of Bolger's argument is that the United States did not understand its enemies in either Iraq or Afghanistan. The historical context for this discussion is set with a review of Desert Storm, the USS *Cole*, and 9/11 attacks, and the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The driving force behind this analysis is to answer the question, "Who was the enemy?" Bolger contends the failure of policy makers to answer that basic question placed the United States on the long-war road with available options decreasing with every passing year. Furthermore, because senior U.S. leaders did not know who the enemy was, they also did not fully understand the nuances of tribal warfare. In particular, they failed to grasp the importance of patience and the ability of tribal warriors to bide their time.

The second part of Bolger's argument deals with how the United States saw itself. He contends the

U.S. military never reconciled itself to the idea it was a force designed for short, decisive, conventional conflicts and not long, drawn-out counterinsurgency operations. The inability to resolve the conflict of executing a counterinsurgency-centric strategy with a conventional military against a guerrilla force is where Bolger believes general officers came up short. Specifically, the general officer corps' failed in the execution of operational art and the development of realistic military goals. Consequently, the U.S. military spent more than a decade attempting to accomplish the unrealistic task of creating pro-U.S. democracies in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

The primary drawback with Bolger's argument is that he leaves the reader wanting more details as to what exactly was transpiring at the general officer level. As hinted in the subtitle, *A General's Inside Account of The Iraq and Afghanistan Wars*, the reader expects to get more insight on the closed-door debates that must have occurred at that level. Details into the conversations Bolger had with his fellow general officers, especially in terms of their views and assessments, would make a valuable addition to this book. This is especially so since one of the author's key assertions is that the failure to align operational-level goals with success at the tactical level led the United States to stay in Iraq and Afghanistan much too long.

For those interested in the ongoing discussion of what happened in Iraq and Afghanistan and how the military should think about future wars, this work is recommended as an addition to their reading lists. In particular, it makes a constructive contribution to the debate on what role counterinsurgency will have in future Army doctrine by questioning the value of winning "hearts and minds" against the effectiveness of counterinsurgency operations. Additionally, Bolger does an excellent job capturing multiple stories of heroism and leadership at the tactical level to help tell the story of the military's last 13 years of war.

Lt. Col. Wm. Kenna McCurry, U.S. Army, Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

**WHY WE LOST: A General's Inside Account of the
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**Daniel P. Bolger, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
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From the moment the first promotional advertisements appeared, much was expected of *Why We Lost*, retired Lt. Gen. Dan Bolger's reflections on the last 14 years of war. Some hoped that it would be a comprehensive account of operational and strategic decision making that would illuminate the many missteps made over the course of many years. Others hoped fervently it would be an homage to the Army that, like the closing scene of every episode of Scooby Doo, would blame faulty execution of perfect plans squarely on "meddling" politicians. A few expected a detailed analytical study of the many successes and failures experienced by the Army in two protracted wars of attrition.

Finally, there are certainly those who hoped that, based on the provocative title, a senior member of a very limited elite would finally cry *mea culpa* for promoting war as an instrument of national policy in the first place. Sadly, none of the above expectations are realized in Bolger's book. *Why We Lost* is a tremendous disappointment, one that fails to measure up to the level of Bolger's previous works.

The book opens hopefully enough, with a rueful recollection of how political correctness forced the Joint Staff to repackage Operation Infinite Justice as Operation Enduring Freedom. At few subsequent points, however, does the remainder of the book live up to that standard. Although the book contains a high level of detail about the opening campaigns in both Afghanistan and Iraq, nothing Bolger relates is new. Much of the rest is episodic and only loosely tied to a unifying theme. Because of this flaw, the book does not even succeed as a history of U.S. military efforts in Iraq or Afghanistan. By turns acerbic and sympathetic, Bolger's narrative is rich in representative anecdotes, such as the story of Lt. Col. Nate Sassaman, but there is almost no "there" where it should be.

When it appears, the "there" can be summed up as, "most American generals (principally Army and

Marine Corps generals) fought the war they wanted to fight, not the one confronting them. Because they couldn't define the enemy properly, they couldn't deliver victory." By laying the blame at the feet of individuals, Bolger commits a couple of historiographical, as well as logical, errors. First, if leading individuals of a professional organization are culpable, then the institution that recruited, trained, educated, and promoted them must also be culpable. Yet nowhere in Bolger's book does he adequately take to task the many institutional processes and cultures that, in Bolger's view, failed to serve the military or the nation properly. Second, although Bolger doesn't claim that only the generals are to blame, his identification and assessment of civilian leaders is woefully incomplete. Without a balanced discussion of responsibilities, Bolger's argument loses much of its force. The result is that former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld becomes the fall guy for the entire foreign policy and national security apparatus of the United States. To be sure, Rumsfeld contributed in important ways to many of the mistakes made, but comparisons of him to Robert S. McNamara are less apt than comparisons to Louis S. Johnson who, in 1949, so zealously embarked on making the DOD efficient that the Joint Chiefs nicknamed him "Secretary of Economy." And yet, one looks in vain for mention—let alone criticism—of a host of real decision makers in terms of force structure and priorities, including Douglas Feith, Paul Wolfowitz, David Chu, or Michelle Flournoy.

Such omissions would be understandable if Bolger had stuck to his original thesis of poor general officer leadership at the strategic level. Unfortunately, little detail accompanies thumbnail portraits of many of Bolger's contemporaries unless required to reinforce praise—George Casey; qualified praise—David Petraeus; or faint praise—Stanley McChrystal. Most times, Bolger pulls his punches even when it is apparent to the reader that he meant a comment to be much sharper. For example, Bolger scolds McChrystal for being a naïf concerning the media when his true feelings must have been more visceral. About the only time he comes close to calling a fellow general officer unqualified is when he discusses Karl Eikenberry, both as a commanding general in Afghanistan and as U.S. ambassador to Kabul.

Inexplicably, the yardstick he uses to reach this conclusion is exactly the same one he condemns for having led to groupthink among the generals, i.e., that Eikenberry had deviated from the strictly delineated assignment template for infantry officers. In Bolger's view, Eikenberry was suspect precisely because he was an academically trained China expert who "never commanded above the battalion level" and therefore lacked the credibility to command those who had. Arguably, however, Eikenberry's approach to Hamid Karzai's mental instability and lack of legitimacy will prove to have been better-informed and more in U.S. interests than conciliation and coddling. In any event, Bolger should have devoted much more effort explaining the true cost of generals who could not properly identify the enemy. Doing so would have made the Sassaman story and similar vignettes much more meaningful to readers outside the Army.

Despite all the above, Bolger nevertheless accomplishes something important with *Why We Lost*. In some respects, Bolger seeks to inherit the mantle of Andrew Krepinevich (author of *The Army and Vietnam*) who posited the same argument about generalship that Bolger uses in *Why We Lost*. More so than Krepinevich, however, by willingly and very publicly claiming responsibility as a general officer for the unsatisfying way our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have played out, Bolger may have greater success in attracting official support. This might facilitate some desperately needed soul-searching inside the ranks of both the uniformed leadership of all the services and among those who craft our national strategies.

Certainly, the amount of interest and attention generated by Bolger's book inside the Army reaches levels not seen since Col. Doug McGregor's *Breaking the Phalanx*. The Army leadership should leverage that interest and attention in support of genuine organizational renewal. Institutional change must occur from the top down, aided and abetted by a cohort of sympathizers at lower levels. The latter exists; it is up to the former to envision and communicate the proper message to them so that together we can better prepare the Army to serve U.S. interests and the American people.

Col. Thomas E. Hanson, U.S. Army, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

FORTRESS RABAUL: The Battle for the Southwest Pacific, January 1942–April 1943

Bruce Gamble, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2013, 416 pages

Lying thousands of miles from the more famous battles of the central Pacific, the predominately Aerial Battle for Rabaul has often been overlooked by war historians. However, the strategic importance of this former German colonial town, located on the northern end of New Britain in modern Papua New Guinea (PNG), was paramount to Japanese war plans. Rabaul was selected by Japan's Imperial General Headquarters to serve as the strategic heart of the southwest Pacific, securing the southern flank of Truk Lagoon—the "Gibraltar of the Pacific"—from where the Japanese hoped to ambush and crush the U.S. Pacific Fleet. Truk's importance as home base of much of Japan's Pacific Fleet meant that Rabaul would need to be secured from the Australians and held at all costs. This strategic assessment led to the capture of New Britain through Operation R, January–February 1942, and the transformation of a tropical, coconut-exporting town into the "most heavily fortified stronghold south of the equator."

Rabaul's position provided the Japanese air forces the ability to conduct numerous bombing sorties against the Australian mainland to thwart U.S. resupply of Australia and to prevent any Allied offensive against the occupied Dutch East Indies, which was the chief source of Japanese oil. Thus Rabaul, and the New Guinea theater more broadly, became the principal target for Allied airpower in the Pacific. This massing of Allied combat power from early 1942 onward blunted Japan's advance toward Australia at the Battle of the Coral Sea and compelled the Japanese to fight an increasingly defensive battle. By April 1943, the great fortress had become a prison for the 100,000 Japanese defenders as Allied forces "island hopped" north. For Gamble, the decisive phase of the Battle for Rabaul ends when Admiral Yamamoto, commander-in-chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet, is gunned down by U.S. P-38s shortly after leaving New Britain on 18 April 1943.

Surprisingly, the author gives slight attention to the place of the indigenous population during the battle. Native laborers on both sides of the front were coerced

or conscripted by the tens of thousands to work under often brutal conditions, building military infrastructure and harvesting rubber for the war efforts. Furthermore, while describing the Japanese massacre of Australian POWs at Tol Plantation in February 1942, Gamble pointedly labels the Japanese “cowards.” While the massacre certainly qualifies as a war crime, Gamble undermines his historical objectivity by resorting to such rhetoric.

Aside from exploring the longest aerial battle of World War II, Gamble’s work highlights the contemporary geopolitical importance of PNG, which divides Australasia from the dominant Asiatic powers north of the equator. Currently, as an energy-hungry China continues to aggressively assert territorial claims in the petroleum-rich South China Sea, PNG’s strategic importance for Australian policy makers is certainly being reexamined. *Fortress Rabaul* would certainly benefit anyone interested in the Pacific war, the history of military aviation, and the geopolitical future of the region as the United States pivots toward the Asia-Pacific.

Capt. Viktor M. Stoll, U.S. Army, King’s College, London, United Kingdom

BILLY MITCHELL’S WAR WITH THE NAVY: The Interwar Rivalry Over Air Power

Thomas Wildenberg, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2014, 288 pages

Although there have been many books written over the years about Billy Mitchell, historian Thomas Wildenberg has taken a new approach with his latest book. *Billy Mitchell’s War with the Navy* looks at the controversial figure from the point of view of the U.S. Navy and the competition and animosity that developed between the Army and Navy during the interwar period. In addition to contributing to the body of knowledge on Mitchell and the historical period, Wildenberg also wanted to document the inter-service rivalry over airpower that followed World War I. *Billy Mitchell’s War with the Navy* is a fascinating study that illuminates this period of history while providing a new perspective on Mitchell and his impact.

Wildenberg combines thorough research with a very clear and fluid writing style, which provides the reader

a balanced analysis of Mitchell as a person and leader, and an appreciation for the historical period. He corrects some of the myths and misconceptions about Mitchell’s role in history. For example, during his research, he discovers “Mitchell’s importance to the development of strategic bombing had been grossly overstated by those interested in perpetuating his iconic image as the founding father of the U.S. Air Force.” The author also points out various topics in which other writers did not thoroughly research some of Mitchell’s statements.

He describes how Mitchell’s strengths and flaws made him a successful leader and he believes that Mitchell’s leadership during World War I is often overlooked—although it was instrumental to leading the nascent Air Force. Although his initiative, drive, knowledge, and ambition were desperately needed, Mitchell also showed he was willing to violate rules and to even “twist truth and distort reality” to support his ideas.

“He had a history of disregarding his non-flying superiors when it suited him,” writes the author, “especially when he felt slighted or threatened.” This *yin-yang* quality benefited Mitchell throughout his career but also eventually derailed him.

The book is very relevant because it raises some important questions. While the bickering between the armed services and Congress over policy and budget could be a potentially dry subject, the author makes it clear and interesting. Severe austerity provided the circumstances for the rivalry between the services following World War I. *Billy Mitchell’s War with the Navy* is a cautionary tale that will leave readers wondering if today’s severely constrained fiscal environment could also lead to this type of situation. The book highlights the fine line between displaying the moral courage to stand up for your beliefs and the personal motives that may be lying underneath. Whether you believe Mitchell was a hero and a patriot fighting for national defense or a self-serving individual trying to further his own ambitions, Wildenberg’s latest book will have you thinking twice about your convictions.

Ultimately, *Billy Mitchell’s War with the Navy* concludes that Mitchell “would achieve the fame—but not the fortune—he craved, becoming the nation’s foremost evangelist of air power at the expense of the U.S. Navy, which he would come to demonize.” Readers will find the book engaging and informative. I highly recommend this book to all readers, especially those interested in the

history of airpower, the interwar period, leadership, or leading change.

Robert Rielly, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

AN UNSUNG SOLDIER: The Life of Gen. Andrew J. Goodpaster

Robert S. Jordan, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2013, 240 pages

The elusive Andrew Goodpaster, “the man with the briefcase,” is the model of a grand strategist in action. Robert Jordan’s biography shines much needed light on the overlooked military career of this central figure in President Eisenhower’s inner circle. Goodpaster rose quietly on merit more than self-promotion. He graduated second in his class at West Point, was molded in George Marshall’s “command post,” and earned a doctoral degree from Princeton well before embarking on this soldier-to-scholar path. With Eisenhower’s personal knowledge that he possessed one of the country’s top minds, Goodpaster was later pressed into long-term service at the White House because of a friend’s sudden death. Although he would become a four-star general and NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), we are only now gaining an understanding of his role at the dawn of the nuclear era.

Jordan, a NATO scholar, leads us through the unique career of an officer swept up in the rush to expand the Army before World War II. He had been a local union leader before he received his appointment to the class of 1939, which is known as “the largest of the large classes.” His mentor, early Rhodes Scholar George “Abe” Lincoln, nominated Goodpaster to a Council on Foreign Relations conference, where his foreign policy speech left an early impression. He completed his assignments quickly, even with a compressed nine-week Command and General Staff College course, before leading an engineer battalion in the Italian Campaign of 1943.

Recovering in Washington after being wounded, Lincoln recruited him for the new Operations and Plans Division of the War Department. In another key strategic planner job, he came to the attention of Gen. Eisenhower and was assigned to a special project

to look at the future shape of the postwar Army. His planning duties provided him the opportunity to use his technical skills concerning the employment of nuclear weapons. When Eisenhower became the first SACEUR, Goodpaster was moved to Paris to play a central role in “militarization” of NATO as part of the select advanced planning group. In 1953, Eisenhower brought him back to Washington for the New Look grand strategy focusing on massive nuclear retaliation, readiness, and mobilization.

Although Jordan makes the case for Goodpaster as a premier military leader and a scholar, it is evident he made his greatest mark as an exceptional presidential adviser. He was a central figure in U.S. foreign policy development throughout the 1950s, especially when he served as staff secretary for the fledgling National Security Council. Eisenhower changed the presidential relationship with the military and had less direct contact with the individual services. Instead, he relied more on Goodpaster, who started as the liaison to the Defense Department as well as being the president’s daily briefer concerning State and CIA activities. Later, he was the insider who assessed Eisenhower’s competency to make nuclear decisions after the president’s health setbacks. His work was highly sensitive, and he avoided the press. In another book, *John Eisenhower*, Goodpaster’s deputy and the President’s son, speculated he was “too good a soldier.” His austere manner may have stunted the recognition it seems he truly deserved.

This book should be read closely by military professionals who want to understand the true complexities of the civil-military relationship at the highest levels.

James Cricks, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

THE STAR OF AFRICA: The Story of Hans Marseille, The Rogue Luftwaffe Ace Who Dominated the WWII Skies

Colin D. Heaton and Anne-Marie Lewis, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2012, 240 pages

Heaton and Lewis drafted an eminently readable book relating to the life and exploits of one of the most colorful and flamboyant pilots of any nation during World War II, Hans-Joachim Marseille, who died on 30 September

1942. Ironically, he died not as a result of military action but rather from an accident involving his aircraft. Refreshingly, and unlike many biographies, the approach taken by the authors focuses almost exclusively upon his time as a pilot in the Luftwaffe.

The antithesis of the German officer, he was a brash, egotistical womanizer, who was transferred from unit to unit due to his individuality, lack of discipline, and dismissiveness of protocol and tradition. Finally finding a home in Africa with Jagdgeschwader 27 Afrika (JG-27), he honed his skills and gradually grew from a loner and outsider to the darling of the Reich. When he died, he had 158 confirmed kills and was one of the very few recipients of the Knight's Cross with Diamonds—but he had not lost his rebellious streak.

The authors draw upon first-person anecdotes and interviews with many of his former commanders and colleagues, thereby adding a rarely enjoyed level of insight and intimacy. The challenges of commanding Marseille, and the different methods that were tried, are insightful and useful for the aspiring leader. “How do you control the most gifted fighter pilot in the Luftwaffe?” became the mantra of his commanders.

His antics became legendary within the Luftwaffe and are described in detail throughout the narrative, including his breathtaking audacity in front of Goring and Hitler. Only his flying record saved him from multiple courts marshal for insubordination. Notwithstanding his aggressive flying, he was a very sensitive man who drew no pleasure from a kill. He respected his adversaries as fellow fliers and was well known amongst his peers for his chivalry and thoughtfulness.

Marseille was a cross between a bohemian and hunter, who found himself forced to live in both worlds simultaneously. As the war progressed, one is able to perceive—as did his commanders—the increasing toll the conflict between these two halves had upon him both psychologically and physically, and it speaks volumes of the impact that remorseless combat has upon the warrior. A well-written, insightful, quality book, it entertains while it educates; it is highly recommended.

Maj. Chris Buckham, Royal Canadian Air Force, Stuttgart, Germany

**THE LAST REFUGE: Yemen, al-Qaida,
and America's War in Arabia**
Gregory D. Johnsen, W.W. Norton & Company,
New York, 2013, 288 pages

Although Yemen is far from being the last sanctuary of the ever-mutating and elusive al-Qaida network, *The Last Refuge* carefully charts the role that country—a small, complex state on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula—has played in terrorism since the 1980s. Starting at the anti-Soviet jihad and concluding with modern-day suicide bombers, Johnsen unravels the operational narrative of al-Qaida in Yemen, subsequently retitled al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), offering new insights into an often misconstrued and poorly reported sequence of historical events. He achieves this by providing perceptive descriptions of keystone personalities, beliefs, wider motivations, corruption, and organizational structure. He also links this together with accounts of hidden training camps, safe houses, and abundant plots to attack nonbelievers, infidels, and the wider establishment. All told, this is an impressive study by an authority on Yemen and the region.

Frequently written in a persuasive narrative format, *The Last Refuge* is packed full of facts and details, which cause the reader to stop and reflect. Johnsen has cleverly drawn on Arabic documents, videos, audio recordings, and interviews, with both al-Qaida and AQAP, to construct his eye-opening storyline. His style is compelling and full of texture and tempo. He is particularly shrewd to have used the cultural lens of Yemen and its inhabitants to provide a counter-viewpoint to the West's interpretation of events. Therefore, Johnsen is even-handed about Ali Abdullah Salih, the president of North Yemen from 1978 to 1990, and of unified Yemen from 1990 to 2012. An astute—but hesitant—head of state, Salih's support for U.S. policies oscillated and, of course, he deliberately concealed Islamists from U.S. intelligence. Likewise, the author dissects, fairly, how the decisions and miscalculations of the United States and other countries in the Middle East affected the militants' achievements and failures. He illustrates equitably the strengths and weaknesses of the employment of Predator drones, armed with devastating Hellfire missiles, although he

also makes a credible argument against the over-reliance on unmanned aerial vehicles to strike AQAP.

There are also other areas of the book that catch the reader's eye. The rise, initial defeat, and definitive reappearance of al-Qaida in Yemen is one that stands out. A sequence of Yemeni government efforts to "rehabilitate" militants is another. The latter was a fragmentary and misguided attempt to convince a small number of prisoners that their understanding of Islam had been distorted and misrepresented by power-hungry outcasts. Through education and mentorship, the aspiration was to realign beliefs and behavior to a more moderate and acceptable level. The initiative failed, with many supposedly rehabilitated prisoners released from jail immediately re-joining al-Qaida and threatening to kill Americans.

Johnsen also highlights the reality of long periods of detention behind bars. Many impressionable prisoners found solace in selected verses from the Koran, recited by imprisoned al-Qaida veterans. These, time and again, helped them to endure repeated interrogation and suffering—and helped set their plight in a wider religious context. Over time, significant numbers of inmates were influenced to join or continue the jihad because they had been reminded that a jihad is a lifestyle of devotion and sacrifice. Detention centers such as Guantánamo Bay in Cuba, and jails in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, have proven to be a seeding ground for the insurgency and acted as clandestine training hubs. A stint in prison became a rite of passage. But above all, *The Last Refuge* underlines that the insurgents only have to be lucky once, whereas security forces have to be lucky every time. This is not easy in Yemen, particularly as the country has become one of the last safe havens of al-Qaida, full of extremists and jihadists.

In sum, *The Last Refuge* is a must read for diplomats, soldiers, or aid workers heading to the Arabian Peninsula. Although perhaps lacking in a detailed overview of political developments over the period, and possibly a piece on wider lessons learned that would have been helpful to draw all the strands of the narrative together, this is a fascinating, timely, and well-researched study. Comprehensive, but readable and engaging, I recommend this narrative to anyone who wishes to know more about AQAP and the region. Moreover, we would all be wise to remember that al-Qaida in Yemen is determined to strike back at the United States. The

organization warned in 2012: "The war between us will not end and the coming days are bringing something new." We cannot afford to ignore the lessons from Yemen's knotty and intricate recent history. *The Last Refuge* goes a long way to help meet this requirement. **Col. Andrew M. Roe, Ph.D., British Army, Episkopi Garrison, Cyprus**

KILLING WITHOUT HEART: Limits on Robotic Warfare in an Age of Persistent Conflict

M. Shane Riza, Potomac Books, Dulles, Virginia, 2013, 256 pages

When one mentions the term robot, images of Arnold Schwarzenegger in *The Terminator* may run through one's mind. In *The Terminator*, Schwarzenegger played a robot programmed to execute targeted killings. The robot killed, without any moral standards, anyone who got in the way of its mission. In his book, *Killing Without Heart*, M. Shane Riza examines some of the legal and ethical issues associated with employing robots, such as armed drones, during military conflicts. Although the book is comprehensive, readers who may not be familiar with "just war" theory or the law of war may find some of the material difficult to follow.

The use of armed drones during the War on Terrorism has created a schism within the United States and abroad. On one hand, proponents of the use of drones argue that targeting terrorists is a great thing because it minimizes military casualties and reduces the footprint of a military force. On the other hand, opponents claim that armed drones kill innocent people, create unnecessary collateral damage, and make war the first choice versus a last resort. The use of drones may trigger a revolution in technology that causes other states or non-state actors to develop weapons to counter the use of these systems or to employ unconventional tactics to exact revenge.

Riza develops a comprehensive argument that supports the latter perspective. He posits the use of armed unmanned weapons, such as drones, contradicts the laws that govern war by destroying the "moral equality of combatants." Moreover, he questions whether these systems will be successful in ending current or future

military conflicts. Riza surmises that since these lethal unmanned weapons have not had a measurable or significant impact in ending current military operations, it violates “the probability of success” principle associated with just war.

The book is effective in addressing the moral issues associated with powerful nations, such as the United States, engaging in military operations in less developed sovereign countries around the globe with impunity and without risk of life, while less developed nations shoulder the burden of losing human life and the collateral damage that often ensues. The author believes that more debate is needed on the morality and ethics of using robots on the battlefield, especially since the computing power and role of these systems will most likely progress in the future and potentially lead to unintended adverse actions.

Killing Without Heart critically examines the major ethical and practical issues associated with employing robots, such as armed unmanned systems, during military operations. M. Shane Riza challenges the reader to weigh the pros and cons of using these systems. This book is a worthwhile read for those who are interested in examining or debating the major moral, ethical, and legal issues associated with the use of robotics in current and future military operations.

**Lt. Col. Fredrick Sanders, U.S. Army, Retired,
Fort Belvoir, Va.**

**WAYS OF WAR: American Military History from
the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century**
Matthew S. Muehlbauer and David J. Ulbrich,
Routledge, New York and London, 2013, 560 pages

This work provides an informative narrative of how the United States has approached and waged warfare throughout its embattled existence. While rapid transitions through the expanding republic’s inexorable march of campaigns render it inadequate for advanced scholarly endeavors, the text instead provides a survey of American martial efforts within an interconnected narrative that emphasizes evolving approaches to armed conflict. Consciously embracing traditional military history methodology, Muehlbauer and Ulbrich eschew revisionist trends and

institutionally critical narratives. Intent on establishing a broadly defined framework, they generally succeed in capturing “the complexities of American military history over the centuries.”

Already adopted into the U.S. Air Force Academy’s core curriculum, *Ways of War* serves as an excellent primer for officers, noncommissioned officers, and federal civilians seeking understanding of how American warfare has evolved between the colonial period and the 2010s. Beginning with an introduction to analytics that defines the field of military history, the authors explain commonly accepted types and levels of war, varying thematic approaches, and the way-of-war concept that is central to the book’s construction. The work then follows the nearly 300-year arc of American military development across 15 chapters that are either period- or conflict-centric.

While some chapters encompass longer timelines by exploring intermittent conflict during early republic and cold war eras, others pursue deeper analysis of more condensed periods, such as the Civil War and the World Wars. The text concludes with discussion of the complexities of American adventurism and nation building in the post-Cold War era with predictions that the superpower will continue to “adapt to new ways of war” in the face of terrorism, cyberwarfare, and weapons of mass destruction proliferation. Muehlbauer and Ulbrich employ accessible writing that is enhanced by both strategic- and operational-level maps and diagrams, as well as illustrative photographs and pictures. They also include judicious placement of text boxes to draw the reader’s attention to key insights without disrupting narrative continuity.

Weaving the often haphazard development of U.S. war making across global landscapes into a readily digestible narrative, *Ways of War* is ideal for defense professionals seeking introduction to how the republic has evolved militarily over previous centuries. The authors avoid centering on “drum and bugle” tactical analysis, but instead weave battles into more expansive strategic, political, and social tapestries that inform the tumultuous progression of martial activity. They ultimately emphasize that there is no single American way of war but rather that the embattled nation has embraced, in response to “shifting historical factors and events,” many approaches to armed conflict that have been “complex and contradictory.”

Supplementing academic manuscripts that are often inaccessible to all but the most studied, this work arrives as a valuable and highly utilitarian complement to the current field of U.S. military histories.

Capt. Nathan A. Jennings, U.S. Army, West Point, N.Y.

**FORGOTTEN FIFTEENTH: The Daring Airmen
Who Crippled Hitler's War Machine**

**Barrett Tillman, Regnery History, Washington, D.C.,
2014, 338 pages**

Obscured to history behind the Eighth Air Force's bombing campaigns from Britain, the Fifteenth Air Force Bomber and Fighter Wings carried the weight of America's airpower to Hitler's most crucial resources during the war, crippling the Nazi military's ability to move and fight.

Barrett Tillman's book offers aviation history buffs a comprehensive look at the trials and successes of the Fifteenth Air Force—with a sobering look at what the men, who crippled Hitler's fuel supply in the Balkans, endured in the lengthy, excruciating fight. Flying missions from Italy, the Fifteenth penetrated the heart of Nazi-occupied territory every day, facing fierce resistance and suffering devastating losses from German forces and their allies. Understanding the very emotional undertones of those losses, Tillman takes a very tempered approach and carefully discusses the missions and tribulations the Fifteenth faced. He does a very good job of looking deep into the men who served—and the sheer number of men and aircraft they lost—compared to the effectiveness of the bombing campaign itself. Using examples such as Ploiesti, he discusses the contrast between the persistence of U.S. bomber crews in the face of fierce resistance and that of the Axis engineers in the face of Allied bombing.

Born through the efforts of Jimmy Doolittle following the campaigns in North Africa, the Fifteenth Air Force flew out of the plains of Foggia, Italy to be the hammer by which the Allies would pound Nazi Germany into surrender. Tillman does a very thorough job of describing the major events that made the Fifteenth what it was, from the stutter-step development of the Foggia airfield to the constantly shifting

target priorities—production plants, fuel supplies, and transport lines. The historical aspects of the Fifteenth's missions, sacrifices, successes, and failures go to the heart of the grueling combined bombing campaign in the east. Tillman goes into great detail regarding the allied support for missions in the Balkans and Eastern Europe, to include using Russian airbases to shorten mission times and support partisan rebels.

There are extensive numbers of units and people involved in the success of the Fifteenth's mission. Tillman gives great attention to the perseverance of those players who drove the Fifteenth's ability to cripple the oil and industrial supply of World War II Germany. *Forgotten Fifteenth* takes a great look at the capability of the U.S. industrial machine to continue creating bombers and aircraft, and the undaunted spirit of U.S. airmen who flew the missions day-in and day-out knowing the odds. The story speaks volumes for how crucial the Fifteenth's mission was to winning the war and brings the story to the reader in uncompromising detail.

**Maj. Scott Hopkins, U.S. Air Force, Fort
Leavenworth, Kan.**

**CONFLICT AND COOPERATION IN THE
GLOBAL COMMONS: A Comprehensive Approach
for International Security**

**Scott Jasper, ed., Georgetown University Press,
Washington, D.C., 2012, 280 pages**

Conflict and Cooperation in the Global Commons is a collection of essays edited by Scott Jasper covering various aspects of the global commons—namely the maritime, air, space, and cyber domains. The volume describes in detail the background of regulatory approaches in each domain and discusses current practices and issues. It then proposes a multi-layered, whole-of-government, whole-of-nations approach to security in the global commons. The book specifically highlights the importance of cooperation as a prerequisite needed to harness the disparate elements of American national power, to include the political, diplomatic, economic, and military realms.

Having put its own house in order, the United States would, according to this book, need to then

incentivize collaboration between nations and between the public and private sectors to produce streamlined, efficient regulatory environments encompassing all actors. The book also introduces an important by-product of globalization, the principle of economic entanglement where countries form interdependent ties that make conflict self-damaging and cooperation mutually beneficial. Creating entanglement in all aspects of national interest is a helpful concept in considering solutions to trends like the rise of China, whose influence reaches into all domains in the commons.

Although the book covers a wide range of ground and provides the reader a good understanding of the commons and the issues associated with them, it falls short when it comes to formulating a solution to those issues. The essay approach creates a patchwork effect that never leads to a holistic solution. It does not neatly build chapter by chapter as a normally structured book might.

Rather, it provides a thorough introduction to the global commons as a topic of import, including background information, descriptions of current problems, and the identification of key requirements future policymakers must consider. Thus, the book is more descriptive than prescriptive. While it does not provide the comprehensive approach for international security indicated by the title, it does succeed in convincing the reader that such an approach is necessary.

Additionally, the book encourages the reader to question the assumptions on which U.S. military policy is built, making the book of value to a military reader in particular. For example, the basic ideas of forward deployment and rapid response inherent in American military policy assume free access to the commons. Instead, the book argues, we must devote resources to shaping the commons as safe and open spaces through which international trade and maneuver can transit. Area denial and anti-access capabilities may also limit U.S. ability to implement a newer military strategy, like sea basing, which is even more dependent on the commons. Knowledge of these issues, and opinions on them, would be valuable to members of the military to understand the strategic context of U.S. policy in the future.

Capt. Justine M. Meberg, U.S. Army, El Paso, Texas

MONTE CASSINO: Ten Armies in Hell
Peter Caddick-Adams, Oxford University Press, New York, 2013, 432 pages

Peter Caddick-Adams has produced a well-documented and well-researched history of the four-month battle for Monte Cassino during World War II, which ultimately cost the Allies more than 200,000 casualties. He articulates the strategic importance the town of Cassino during the Italian campaign as a major crossroad the Allies needed for their advance to Rome. As the title infers, Caddick-Adams details the horrific experiences faced by Field Marshal Kesselring, the commander of German forces in Italy, and Lt. Gen. Mark Clark, the Allied commander of Fifth Army—comprised of forces from the United States, Great Britain, and the British Commonwealth as well as Free French, Italian, and Polish divisions—and what the combatants encountered during each phase of the battle.

The author vividly describes the mountainous terrain, weather, and logistical challenges faced by both armies and how the conditions impacted the battle. Numerous firsthand accounts by soldiers and commanders from both sides reveal the inhumane conditions, reminiscent of the trench warfare during World War I. To take advantage of the terrain, German engineers invested extensive resources to build six separate lines of defense across the width of the Italian peninsula. The intent was to hold the Allies south of Rome following the Allied landings at Salerno.

The Allied commanders, led by Clark, believed the key to breaking the German defenses and liberating Rome was through Cassino. In a two-pronged approach, the U.S. VI Corps landed at Anzio, approximately 38 miles south of Rome, in January 1944, to coincide with the attack of the U.S. Fifth Army's drive through Cassino. The author brings to light the optimism, yet overconfidence, the Allied commanders had regarding the dual attack. He highlights the Allied command's failure to fully understand the impact that terrain, weather, and rapid German response would have on their operations. Additionally, senior leadership challenges and diverse personalities between Clark and his corps commanders are revealed.

The author devoted a chapter to each phase of Allied attacks around Monte Cassino, along with the weather and the eventual pursuit of the German forces beyond Rome. Caddick-Adams also dedicates a chapter to the controversial destruction of the eleventh century abbey of Monte Cassino during the second phase of the battle in February 1944 and the consequence of its destruction. Previously unoccupied by German forces, although Allied officials believed otherwise, the abbey was immediately occupied by German troops, who turned its ruins into a fortified position.

The subsequent assaults by Indian and New Zealand divisions failed to break through due to the fortified positions in the abbey and the town. On a lighter note, the author reveals the German concern for the countless books, manuscripts, and artwork in the abbey; they shipped those treasures, prior to the battle, to the Vatican and other safe locations in Italy and Germany.

The author brings the role allied forces played in Italy to light—a role often overshadowed by the build-up and liberation of France and the eventual defeat of the Third Reich. *Monte Cassino: Ten Armies in Hell* is a great read and is a must for the World War II enthusiast.

R. Scott Martin, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

CORPS COMMANDERS IN BLUE: Union Major Generals in the Civil War

**Ethan S. Rafuse, Ed., Louisiana State University Press,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 2014, 320 pages**

Until recently, the corps level of command in the American Civil War has been somewhat neglected in scholarly writing on the war. This anthology—edited by Ethan Rafuse, a noted Civil War author and professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and supported by a team of distinguished academic and public Civil War historians—remedies this deficiency with a work providing case studies of the actions of eight Union Army major generals while in corps command.

The choices of personalities are diverse: Meade, a future successful army commander; Hooker, a failed army commander; Gilbert, an accidental and relatively obscure corps commander with only an acting rank; Porter, a cashiered general; McPherson, who

was killed as an army commander; Franklin, a staunch McClellan supporter; Mansfield, an aged commander who was killed on his first day of command; and Hancock, the Civil War's most highly regarded Union corps commander.

Rafuse introduces the anthology with an essay on corps command, which provides a short but useful overview. He recognizes the importance of the corps and that battles were often won, not at the army level, but through the actions of corps commanders and their ability to direct those of their subordinates. The most significant of the following essays is that on Winfield Hancock by Arizona State Professor Brooks Simpson. Hancock is usually considered the best corps commander in the Union Army during the war, although his performance is often only superficially analyzed except for his actions at Gettysburg, where his performance, like everything to do with that battle, has been scrutinized many times. Simpson examines Hancock's performance in the Overland Campaign, concluding that the II Corps commander was suffering both from the effects of his Gettysburg wound and the general exhaustion found in the Army of the Potomac when he failed at Petersburg at the end of the campaign.

The chapter on Fitz-John Porter by the National Park Service's John Hennessy perhaps overstates the political factors involved in Porter's and McClellan's reliefs while downplaying the military rationale, but otherwise provides a useful context to Porter's court-martial. The selection by Marine Corps historian Christopher Stowe on Meade's short career as the Fifth Corps commander unfortunately fails to illuminate one of the great mysteries of Meade—the origin of his distant command style as an army commander—a technique that would not be suitable for lower levels of command. This period is often ignored because Fifth Corps was mostly unengaged during the battle at Chancellorsville, which occurred during Meade's command, and because he later rose to higher command. The author does, however, stress the qualities, mostly humbled ambition, that resulted in Meade's selection as army commander.

This book's greatest strength is its focus on the corps level of command, which makes it unique. However, the work focuses on external—political, social—factors affecting the generals rather than on military and command aspects. Nevertheless, the

various insights and approaches of the different authors provide a valuable resource and a fine addition to any Civil War library.

John J. McGrath, Leavenworth, Kan.

DEFEATING JAPAN: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and Strategy in the Pacific War, 1943–1945

Charles F. Brower, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2013, 234 pages

Designing wartime strategies and campaigns is tough business. Civilian and uniformed leaders operating at the nexus of strategic decision making often collide over which considerations—political or military—should hold sway. Should military leaders defer to policy makers or integrate their decisions into their formulations of the best possible expert military advice?

In an insightful new book, Charles Brower takes on a widely held perspective that U.S. uniformed leadership during World War II was often myopic in prioritizing military considerations in their strategic advice to the national leadership, particularly in the European theater of operations. Brower deftly counters that in the Pacific theater, the U.S. Joint Chiefs, including Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall and Chief of Naval Operations Ernest J. King, not only were influenced by political factors but, at times, accorded them primacy.

Brower effectively demonstrates that policy decisions exercised great influence over the conduct of the Pacific War—in particular, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's demand for unconditional surrender, his strong support for a substantive role for China following the war, and insistence that the Pacific war end as soon as possible but no more than one year following the defeat of Germany's Third Reich.

Brower makes a thorough examination of his domain—the “upper case” designated wartime conferences, such as QUADRANT and OCTAGON, as well as military operations, including lesser known Pacific ventures such as ANAKIM, the retaking of Burma from Japanese forces. Throughout his detailed analysis, the author clearly demonstrates that political matters were always at the forefront of the

Joint Chiefs' thinking and served as the prism through which all subsequent military operations were viewed.

To exemplify this point, let us take FDR's overriding desire to give China and its leader, Chiang Kai-shek, a key role in any post-war global configuration. The Joint Chiefs, in response, subsequently prioritized Chinese offensive operations in Burma, even when it did not make the best military sense and in spite of stiff opposition from their British counterparts on the Combined Chiefs of Staff. From Brower's viewpoint, this example is clearly representative of the primacy of policy in much of the Joint Chiefs' deliberations and subsequent military advice.

Brower's attention to detail is reflected in his meticulous combing over of wartime diaries, conference notes, and other primary references. He also includes detailed notes and a comprehensive biography. However, the book at times seems repetitive as similar points are analyzed and emphasized from conference to conference. The book's high cost relative to its length may be off-putting for some.

These nitpicks, however, do not detract from the Brower's strengths. The author more than effectively shows the difficult give-and-take that national and military leaders wrestled with on some of the weightiest issues of the Pacific and, by extension, World War II. Brower thus makes his case, adding valuable insight and a nuanced view of the impact policy has on military strategy making.

Mark Montesclaros, Fort Gordon, Ga.

WARS OF PLUNDER: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources

Philippe Le Billon, Oxford University Press, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2014, 288 pages

Within *Wars of Plunder*, Philippe Le Billon focuses on the three resources—oil, gems, and timber—he believes create the majority of conflicts throughout the world. Oil and timber are required for developing the infrastructure for growing economies, and gems are the status symbols for the wealthy. Le Billon explains that the underdeveloped countries that contain these resources struggle with both external and internal factions.

These groups often use violence as the means to take the resources for the potential wealth generated from sales.

A respected geographer with a Ph.D. from Oxford, Le Billon conducted extensive research for his book and excels at providing historical evidence to support his premise. The primary objective with *Wars of Plunder* is to provide a relationship between resources and the conflicts that often erupt over the wealth the resources provide. His term “resource curse” highlights the disadvantages that some countries with an abundance of resources face when those resources are desired by larger nations. He highlights Nigeria as a good example of a country that possesses a large oil reserve, pointing out that the dependence on profit from oil has not resulted in nation-state equality funded from the oil wealth.

The author provides great insight for ways to utilize resources for peace. He creates three approaches of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. If we can learn, as a government, about the advantages of peacemaking, we can prevent the conflict before the level reaches the need for military intervention. He highlights the importance of an integrated unified-action approach to sanctions as an effective tool to curb the violence.

Le Billon utilizes the conclusion of his volume to provide three strategies he believes would greatly reduce the number of conflicts in the world. The strategies are categorized against resource conflict, for resource conflict, and for the resource curse. The premise of the strategies is good, but each relies on fairness in global governance. It is impossible to assume that all nations in the world will abide by fairness when competing for natural resources. The author places too much faith in “deep democratization processes that build robust checks and balances within society and consolidate state legitimacy and capacity.” This is evident with China’s presence in Africa and Central Asia to claim oil, timber, and gems in sometimes less-than-legal means. For these strategies to be successful in reducing conflict, all world powers need to work in unison to provide a level playing field.

The author has written an excellent book, which is highly detailed and informative. It provides readers with an understanding of the challenges facing the global economy with the increasing need for resources to meet the demands of growing nations. The book supports

educating military officers on the importance of understanding the elements of national power. It also provides military officers with an excellent historical account of the importance of utilizing diplomacy and economic development to reduce conflicts around the globe. This combination makes *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources* a book that will appeal to a wide array of readers and be of particular importance to military leaders.

Lt. Col. John E. Elrich, U.S. Army, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

CITIES OF EMPIRE: The British Colonies and the Creation of the Urban World

Tristram Hunt, Metropolitan Books, New York, 2014, 544 pages

There are, rightly, many critics of the British Empire and its legacies. Slave plantations helped to fund it, questionable ideologies justified it, and harsh military actions protected and expanded it. Despite its dark aspects, the legacies of the British Empire continue to shape the modern world in ways ranging from the prevalence of English as a *lingua franca* to the legal and governmental structures of countries across the world. Tristram Hunt demonstrates in *Cities of Empire* that the British Empire also had a major role in shaping global urban culture.

Apologists of the Empire often point to the developmental benefits of imperial rule, and there is considerable truth to these arguments. Devoting somewhat self-contained chapters to Boston, Bridgetown, Dublin, Cape Town, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Bombay, Melbourne, New Delhi, and Liverpool, Hunt shows the British Empire’s common commitment to trade and its attendant infrastructure. He argues that the British Empire was a particularly urban empire dependent on an interconnected network of cities serving as bases for military, economic, governmental, and population expansion. Many of the world’s largest cities were in British colonies, and British urban organization can still be seen.

In addition to global urbanization, *Cities of Empire* offers an enjoyable introduction to British imperial history. Hunt uses each city to illustrate the phases of the British Empire. Some of these are simple chronological

divisions within the strategic emphasis of the Empire. Thus, Boston and the slave economy of Bridgetown, Barbados, symbolize Britain's early commitment to, and later turn from, the Atlantic, while Cape Town and Calcutta represent Britain's grown commitment to India during the turn of the nineteenth century. Other cities are emblematic of more ideological trends. For Hunt, Bombay's improved urban infrastructure is an expression of Britain's self-proclaimed civilizing mission, while Melbourne's white settler colony epitomizes the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century belief in a racial union between all Anglo-Saxons throughout the world. The chapter on Melbourne is particularly interesting as contemporary imperial promoters used Australia in general to show that colonization was the key to reinvigorating the Anglo-Saxon race. These expressed bonds were only strengthened by fighting for a common cause during World War I. Of course, the story of the decline of the British Empire is perfectly told in Liverpool's decaying cityscapes, a victim of Britain's modernization and turn to Europe rather than Empire.

Engagingly written, *Cities of Empire* reflects its author's concerns with the place of Great Britain in today's world—as British and American economic power is becoming overshadowed by growing Chinese and Indian capacity. Most of Hunt's cities, including Liverpool, are already being shaped by Chinese capital and trade. As imperial cities—part of the global urban economy—these cities gravitate toward the money. While there are a few oversights, notably regarding the military presence and purpose in some of the towns, Hunt has given an excellent primer on city development and British imperial governance.

John E. Fahey, Purdue University, Ind.

**VIETNAM'S YEAR OF THE RAT: Elbridge Durbrow,
Ngo Dinh Diem and the Turn in U.S. Relations,
1959–1961**

**Ronald Bruce Frankum Jr., McFarland, Jefferson, North
Carolina, 2014, 264 pages**

Vietnam's *Year of the Rat* investigates the turbulent relationship between Ngo Dinh Diem, then president of the Republic of Vietnam, and members of the U.S. Department of State during the

period from 1959 to 1961. The relationship, especially with Elbridge Durbrow, the U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, forms the backdrop for the Year of the Rat and explains how a series of diplomatic crises, a failed *coup d'état*, and a worsening security situation in South Vietnam contributed to the later escalation of U.S. forces in 1965.

The author's argument is that 1960 was "one of the many significant turning points in the war when the United States was presented with a choice on how to proceed and failed to live up to the challenge of making a different decision." These turning points, unfortunately, stemmed from Diem's troubled professional relationship with Durbrow. Their disunity centered on differing visions as to how to most effectively achieve security in South Vietnam and how to administer the republic.

Frankum describes how the problems between Durbrow and Diem, and issues resulting from their conflicting methods, extended to the relationship between Durbrow and the Department of State on one side and the Department of Defense on the other. The defense lead was Gen. Samuel T. Williams, the Military Advisory Assistance Group (MAAG) chief of staff, and later his successor, Gen. Lionel McGaar, with notable assistance from Edward Lansdale. These dissenting positions led to conflicting reports and recommendations, which were sent up the chain of command to the White House. Such reporting did not adequately provide President Kennedy with the information he needed in the decision-making process.

These troubled professional relationships were significantly and negatively influenced by two key events in 1960: the Caravelle Manifesto in April and the failed coup d'état by South Vietnamese paratroopers 11 to 12 November. The Caravelle Manifesto was a political tract written by a group of South Vietnamese intellectuals who publicly criticized Diem and his policies. The arguments presented in the manifesto were then manipulated by Durbrow to control resources allocated to South Vietnam and to leverage influence upon Diem. Understandably, Durbrow's work behind Diem's back was eventually recognized and rightfully regarded as acts of duplicity.

The most critical event, however, was the failed coup attempt in November 1960, which magnified the growing break between Diem's administration and the

United States. Later, Frankum argues, ambassadors and President Kennedy himself inherited a relationship and evolving crisis that was likely beyond repair by 1961. This central argument is convincingly described and clearly supported through meticulous research.

Another positive feature of Frankum's work is his writing; he explains complex series of events in a narrative fashion that is both interesting and informative. There are several books on this murky but important set of years. Notable titles include Robert Scigliano's *South Vietnam: Nation Under Stress* and Denis Warner's *The Last Confucian*. Frankum's effort is a positive addition to scholarship on this topic, and it positively benefits research on MAAG and the U.S. involvement in Vietnam prior to 1965.

Capt. Nathaniel L. Moir, U.S. Army Reserve, Albany, N.Y.

THE INVISIBLE SOLDIERS: How America Outsourced Our Security

Ann Hagedorn, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2014, 320 pages

Ann Hagedorn's *The Invisible Soldiers* is a remarkable investigation into the ascent of private military security companies (PMSCs). She contends that global conflicts have given rise to corporate warriors operating in the shadows without public scrutiny, and PMSCs are taking over U.S. security responsibilities. Her argument is presented with passion and thoroughness.

Hagedorn, an author and staff reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*, begins in London's ultra-secretive Special Forces Club. We're introduced to industry pioneers who have shaped global PMSCs—who developed the model for private security—and who held the interest of the United States.

In the book, the advent of the U.S. Army's Logistics Augmentation Program (LOGPAC) during the Reagan administration pushed the United States into the private security realm; LOGPAC was developed to bypass the Abrams Doctrine, which was conceived to prevent such a disconnect between the public and the military. Its inception opened the doors for corporations to

receive government contracts, effectively ushering in the PMSC era.

The book also claims that LOGPAC's Balkans' success, under the Clinton administration, invigorated the privatization of other services. PMSCs were financially and politically lucrative, and there was no longer a need to send reservists to conflicts; one could contract a private military contractor and fight for an eternity. We learn that Congress, the Department of Defense, and the Department of State were all complicit in the rise of PMSCs.

According to Hagedorn, the unveiling of PMSCs occurred in Iraq. There, the government surrendered security to corporations, which were now benefactors of war and, with that, a new, global war-fighting precedent emerged.

In 2007, the Nisour Square incident revealed PMSC activities in Iraq. However, when the media found other stories to cover, PMSC misconduct was no longer discussed. The checks continued to flow, and secrecy shrouded the industry again. Hagedorn presents evidence that the government continued working with the industry's sketchiest men, and knowing this did not prevent the government from awarding billion-dollar contracts to companies. To be fair, some officials attempted to eliminate PMSC contracts—without success.

Throughout the book, one wonders: Why was our security now in the hands of PMSCs? The answer is simple: there is profit in conflicts since the contracts are enormous. Furthermore, soldiers are too expensive. Cheaply, companies can hire a contractor per mission and fire the contractor afterward. Today, the battlefield is everywhere—as are the PMSCs. Consider their reach through various methods such as cyber, immigration, drones, bodyguards, and anti-piracy, to name a few. As regions become more complex, voids must be filled, and the PMSCs are obliged to fill those voids.

PMSCs prey on conflict and make a serious killing—literally and figuratively. I recommend this book if you can get past the prologue without being angered. While reading, consider the question: Whom are we fighting? In *The Invisible Soldiers*, the answer is clear and frightening. This is a must-read for military members and security enthusiasts.

Maj. John L. Hewitt III, U.S. Army, Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.

WAVELL IN THE MIDDLE EAST, 1939–1941: A Study in Generalship

Harold E. Raugh Jr., University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, 2013, 364 pages

The study of Field Marshall Archibald Percival Wavell's career is part of the ongoing debate over British military performance during the Second World War. This book deals with Wavell's performance as the British commander-in-chief in the Middle East from 1939 to 1941. Despite his charisma, his brilliant use of unorthodox tactics, and his successes during World War II, Wavell has languished in historical obscurity, overshadowed by those who came later and benefited from the foundations he laid.

After a brief sketch of his pre-1939 career, Raugh begins with Wavell's appointment as Middle East Commander-in-Chief in August 1939, weeks before the start of the World War II. When he arrived, his area of responsibility encompassed the region stretching from Egypt to the Persian Gulf, from Iraq to Somaliland. After France fell and Italy declared war, he was surrounded by hostile and potentially hostile neighbors. He had few trained troops and practically no logistical infrastructure, but he had capable air force and navy peers. He also received reinforcements from Britain, India, New Zealand, and Australia.

By spring 1941, he was conducting five simultaneous campaigns with little more than three divisions of ground troops; he won three and lost two. Of the latter, the British campaign in Greece still excites the greatest controversy, and Raugh devotes a chapter explaining how Wavell changed his mind as to its efficacy. He intersperses his narrative account with analyses of Wavell's choices and decisions while explaining the political and strategic constraints placed upon him by geography and politics. His descriptions and analysis of Wavell's first great victory, Operation Compass, which destroyed the Italian position in Libya, is a model of narrative clarity. He explains how the operation unfolded and shows how its initial success turned into failure as troops were siphoned off to other tasks at London's direction.

He shows Wavell as a reluctant participant in operations in Greece and Syria but carrying out his orders

as best he could because he understood the political stakes involved. Raugh explains the supposed diversion of resources to an East African campaign as political in nature, crucial to British attempts to sway U.S. public opinion by opening the Red Sea to neutral shipping. Politics was also the primary motivator behind the Greek and Syrian operations.

Through these campaigns and Wavell's relationship with Churchill, Raugh demonstrates the ways in which military operations interact with strategy. Political-military strategic considerations must always dominate military operations; if war is a continuation of politics by other means, then military operations do not determine strategic goals. His description of Wavell's troubled relationship with Churchill as a fundamental clash of personality and temperament illustrates the importance of mutual confidence in personal relationships at the highest level.

His final assessment of Wavell's generalship leads one to conclude that, although Wavell had the loyalty of his staff and his army, he was fatally handicapped by Churchill's inability to understand his difficulties and his own inability to convey them to the prime minister. In the end, Wavell's resources were always less than adequate to meet his myriad responsibilities on many fronts, but Wavell would have responded that war is always an option of difficulties. This book is recommended not simply for its clarity but because it shows the interplay of policy and operations and the role personal relationships play at the highest levels, where politics, strategy, and military operations intersect.

Lewis Bernstein, Ph.D., Seoul, South Korea

THE BLACK PANTHERS: A Story of Race, War, and Courage—the 761st Tank Battalion in World War II

Gina M. DiNicolò, Westholme Publishing, Yardley, Pennsylvania, 2014, 321 pages

The story of the 761st Tank Battalion, "The Black Panthers," starts off with a promise of delving into the issue of race in a divided Army. Unfortunately, this promise is not fully realized; after the first few chapters, it turns into a well-written unit history

book. DiNicolo chooses not to address the issue of race again until the end of the book.

The early chapters do get you to think about the question of segregation in the military and some of the issues those soldiers faced. DiNicolo does a good job of looking at the issues from several different viewpoints. He also does an admirable job of identifying the major players, both in and out of the Army, who affected not just the 761st Tank Battalion but all of the “colored” units. DiNicolo does not take sides when presenting this information but does provide enough information so that the reader has a better understanding of the arguments.

The unit was activated 1 April 1942 at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. It was then transferred to Camp Hood, Texas, where it served as a training unit in support of units of tank destroyers being prepared for deployment. The 761st Tank Battalion took part in the Louisiana Maneuvers of 1943. The unit then deployed to Europe; its soldiers landed with high morale at Omaha Beach in France on 10 October 1944.

The 761st Tank Battalion was attached to the XII Corps’ 26th Infantry Division, assigned to Gen. George S. Patton Jr.’s Third Army (an army already racing eastward across France) and committed to combat on 7 November 1944. As a result of the soldiers’ great fighting abilities, their unit spearheaded a number of Patton’s moves into enemy territory. The unit forced a hole in the Siegfried Line, allowing Patton’s 4th Armored Division to pour through into Germany. It fought in France, Belgium, and Germany, and the soldiers were among the first U.S. forces to link up with the Soviet Army at the River Steyr in Austria.

At the end of the book, the issue of race is revisited. The author discusses events that immediately followed the war as well as some of the actions and events that happened after the unit was disbanded. Two of the notable events were the eventual awarding of the unit’s Presidential Unit Citation in 1978 and the upgrading of Staff Sgt. Ruben Rivers’ Silver Star to the Medal of Honor in 1997.

I would recommend this book for armor history enthusiasts and students studying the subject of separate tank battalions in World War II. The book is well written and well researched but does not fully explore the issue of race in a divided army.

Lt. Col. David Campbell Jr., U.S. Army, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

SAVAGE WILL: The Daring Escape of Americans Trapped Behind Nazi Lines

Timothy M. Gay, New American Library, New York, 2013, 352 pages

On 8 November 1943, an American C-53 aircraft crash landed in Nazi-occupied Albania. The plane, with its Army Air Force crew of four, carried 13 female Army nurses and 13 male Army medics from the 807th Medical Air Evacuation Transport Squadron. For the next two months, 27 members of group battled incredible odds to finally be rescued. The remaining three members of the contingent, separated from the group, were eventually rescued two months later. Timothy Gay’s outstanding volume, *Savage Will*, captures their unbelievable story of courage and physical and mental stamina.

Gay provides an engrossing account of the action, taking readers from the days prior to the crash to the successful rescue of the group. In between, he describes the brutal hardships they faced, including a lack of food and water, brutal weather, and a trek of more than 600 miles over extremely challenging terrain, wearing poor footwear and possessing little winter clothing. To make matters even more precarious, their entire journey involved traveling through a country heavily occupied by German soldiers—and in the midst of a civil war. It is a powerful testimony to the ability of human spirit to meet and overcome the substantial challenges they faced.

The author also details the experiences of those who assisted in the rescue. This diverse group includes members of the Albanian resistance, local villagers who provided what little they had to the group, members of the British Special Operations Executive, and the American Office of Strategic Services, more commonly known as the OSS. Each played a special role in either the survival or the rescue of the group, and Gay aptly details their roles.

One of the interesting aspects of the volume is Gay’s ability to interweave the rescue itself with the bigger picture of the war. In particular, he includes significant discussion on the country of Albania, addressing the country’s history, its cultural aspects, and the impact of the war inside the nation. Throughout the volume,

the author seamlessly switches his discussion from the rescue to this broader picture.

The author makes outstanding decisions in terms of the volume's organization and the addition of supplemental material. These include emplacing superb maps, inserting photographs throughout the volume, adding a timeline, and concluding the book with an epilogue that provides a synopsis of most of the principals' lives following the rescue. In total, these greatly assist in the reader's understanding of the rescue and in the personalization of all those involved.

Savage Will is the second volume recently released on this rescue—which, until then, had been overlooked by historians and authors. The first, *The Secret Rescue* by Cate Lineberry, is every bit as outstanding as *Savage Will*. I found it a bit more focused on the human dimension of those involved, whereas Gay provides more background material tied to the rescue. Consequently, I believe they are highly complementary of each other. Without question, both should be read and enjoyed.

Rick Baillergeon, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

THE LIBERTY INCIDENT REVEALED: The Definitive Account of the 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Spy Ship

A. Jay Cristol, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2013, 416 pages

This book is a follow-on to the author's 2002 book *The Liberty Incident*. For his previous book, Cristol, a former U.S. naval aviator turned naval lawyer, spent years researching the June 1967 incident when Israeli air force jets and Israeli navy torpedo boats attacked a U.S. flagged naval spy ship in international waters off the Sinai Peninsula. The event occurred during the height of the Arab-Israeli conflict and resulted in the deaths of 34 U.S. sailors in addition to 171 wounded. His conclusions—based on all the declassified information from the U.S., Egyptian, and Israeli governments at the time—upheld the original U.S. board of inquiry finding that the attack had been a case of mistaken identity.

Despite his findings and conclusions, there continue to exist at least a dozen conspiracy theories among former *Liberty* crewmembers and other supporters.

In his 2013 follow-on book, *The Liberty Incident Revealed*, Cristol adds newly declassified information that affirms all the previous findings, but he also takes his more than 27 years' worth of evidence and uses it to deconstruct all the conspiracy theories one by one. Each theory is looked at from multiple points of view and taken apart with overwhelming hard evidence based on official records, interviews, and declassified information, none of which contradicts the others.

When Cristol contacted many of the conspiracy theorists and asked them for evidence to support their positions, he most often he found it to be based on second- or third-hand information with no physical evidence offered at all. The author goes to great lengths to play out as many conspiracy theories as possible to see if they could have been remotely possible. The more he runs them out, the less the supporting evidence trail he finds.

There have been six full government-level investigations—U.S. and Israeli—and all have led to the exact same conclusion. Israel cooperated with the United States in the release of its information and provided the transcripts between the attacking jets, motor torpedo boats, and controlling headquarters, which clearly show that the attackers mistook the U.S. ship for an Egyptian supply vessel. Even the release of recently declassified National Security Agency tapes from an orbiting U.S. Air Force EC-121 electronic intelligence collector matches the Israeli version down to the time hack of each transmission.

Cristol uses his law experience and follows precise rules of evidence, as he lays out his conclusions and deconstruction of conspiracy theories, that will be hard to reject. This book is well written, logical in its flow of information, and is recommended for anyone that might find themselves as a member of an investigation board.

Lt. Col. George Hodge, U.S. Army, Retired, Lansing, Kan.

Facing Page

Top: *Citadel of Herat*, anonymous artist, 1879. The Citadel of Herat during the Afghan Revolt in 1879.

Bottom left: *Alexander the Great*, mosaic tile, unknown artist, circa 100 BCE. Detail of the Alexander Mosaic showing Alexander the Great on horseback. (Image courtesy of National Archaeological Museum, Naples, Italy)

Bottom right: *Chengis Khan and Toghrih Ong Khan*, Rashid al-Din Hamadani, 1430. Ink painting from the pages of the *Jāmi' al-tawārikh* depicting Chengis Khan and his son, Wang Kahn, receiving tribute from the Afghans.