
**LET US FIGHT AS FREE MEN:
Black Soldiers and Civil Rights**

**Christine Knauer, University of Pennsylvania Press,
Philadelphia, 2014, 352 pages**

In *Let Us Fight As Free Men: Black Soldiers and Civil Rights*, Christine Knauer, a postdoctoral research fellow at Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Germany, thoroughly investigates the long, challenging, humiliating, and ultimately triumphant road to integration of the United States Armed Forces. Over eight chapters, from the Korean trenches to Capitol Hill, Knauer examines the struggle by relying on personal accounts, archives, editorials, columns, and letters, which poignantly reveal some of the truest feelings and motives of our political and military luminaries. The Korean War and the segregated South serve as the military and domestic panoramas. These lenses provide unique insight into the intersection of Jim Crowism and the military. The book's only shortcoming, which Knauer concedes, is the limited narrative and space given to women. They are peripheral players; this is a story about masculinity.

Consider the moment: America, the purveyor of global democracy, fighting in Korea—even as it struggles with its own civil rights problems at home. Hypocritically, the United States expected black men to fight for the country while it simultaneously upheld a caste system in the South. This dichotomy enabled a white-hot political, social, and ideological struggle, pitting the white power structure, which held stereotypes and negative sentiments toward blacks, against a marginalized citizenry. Knauer presents the confrontation in stunning detail and clarity. You witness a craven Harry Truman politicking for votes and reelection; the high-powered military brass—mainly those in the Army—steadfast in their opposition to integration; the civil rights activists and pols prodding the system for change; and the press—both mainstream and minor outlets—lobbing editorial salvos with the skill and precision of artillerymen sparing

no target or opportunity. This collection of players is depicted as having framed and pushed this policy debate to the forefront of American consciousness. Their actions were volatile, impassioned, and influential. Nevertheless, all of this occurred as segregated units were fighting and dying in a difficult war in Korea.

Despite political roadblocks, social sabotaging, vigorous debate over black military performance, and Truman's ineffectual executive orders, black soldiers persevered, and segregation ended in the spring of 1951. Henceforth, everyone would fight together in the defense of the country. Black Americans, never losing sight of their ultimate goal, viewed military equality as pivotal in securing future civil rights in the United States. Their service indicated their commitment to America, regardless of social status.

Serving in the military has been, and remains, a proud tradition for black Americans. Knauer's research adequately reflects this pride and the complexity of the atmosphere from which this distinction and honor emanates. Given current political and social moods, it is a timely and cogent book. It is essential reading for all service members.

**Maj. John L. Hewitt III, U.S. Army, Shaw Air
Force Base, South Carolina**

**FOR LIBERTY AND THE REPUBLIC: The
American Citizen as Soldier, 1775-1861**

**Ricardo A. Herrera, New York University Press, New
York, 2015, 272 pages**

More than fifty years ago, in his famous book *The Soldier and The State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Samuel P. Huntington argued that the American liberal ideology was inimical to military values, and therefore it subtly undermined national security—especially in its hostility to a professional military. In *For Liberty and The Republic*, Ricardo A. Herrera reminds us that Americans in the early republic were not only inspired by liberalism but also by a republican ideology that was far more sympathetic to military values. Herrera's "military ethos of republicanism"

captures the martial spirit that animated so many Americans from the Revolution to the Civil War.

To make his argument, Herrera exploits thousands of unpublished letters and manuscripts gleaned from dozens of archives around the country. Preferring contemporary letters and accounts to later memoirs and reminiscences, he captures the “unrehearsed and unembellished” thoughts of several generations of American soldiers. From these he deduces a common multigenerational ideology that provided “order and gave greater meaning” to their soldiering. Unlike scholars who take a more sociological approach, such as Samuel Watson and Robert Wettemann, Herrera adopts an almost pointillist method. He carefully marshals his evidence point by point, alternating color and contrast to paint a portrait of early American soldiers.

The author builds his “military ethos of republicanism” through five overlapped topics: virtue, legitimacy, self-governance, national mission, and fame and honor. I found the chapter on self-governance, entitled “Free Men in Uniform: Soldierly Self-Governance,” the most stimulating and central to his argument. Here, he describes how the individualism of liberalism somewhat fitfully reconciles itself to the hierarchical and communal demands of military service. American soldiers did this chiefly through an insistence on voluntarism and negotiations over the terms and conditions of military service. For example, the near-universal militia system gradually evolved into a more voluntary and self-governing collection of militia units, where many had the characteristics and exclusivity of social or political clubs. Similarly, the volunteer soldiers enlisted as “a contractual agreement freely entered into by the soldiers and the government.” American soldiers took these contracts seriously and expected their leaders to do so as well.

Yet, Herrera links self-governance to the communal responsibility of citizenship. He observes that to these men, “bearing arms was the right and the responsibility of the virtuous citizen.” Thus, the other chapters on virtue, legitimacy, national mission, and honor combine to shape the self-governing individual into a soldier willing to risk death. This martial spirit sustained these men through ferocious battles in the Mexican and Civil Wars. Indeed, the common “military ethos of republicanism” or “shared civic-martial culture” contributed to the long and bloody ordeal of the war for the Union.

While regular soldiers from colonial times onward have lamented the preoccupation with individual rights and often have complained about the indiscipline of volunteers and the militia, American military leaders adapted to the style of leadership needed to inspire the American citizen-soldier. Schofield’s “Definition of Discipline,” originating from the general’s experience in the Civil War, is still memorized by West Point’s plebes today. Our modern professional army remains imbued with many of the same values that inspired the largely volunteer soldiers two hundred years ago. Today’s citizen-soldiers still fight for “liberty and the republic.”

**Donald B. Connelly, PhD,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

BEYOND THE CALL: The True Story of One World War II Pilot’s Covert Mission to Rescue POWs on the Eastern Front

**Lee Trimble and Jeremy Dronfield, Berkley Caliber,
New York, 2015, 352 pages**

Beyond the Call is a son’s discovery of his father’s role in rescuing Allied prisoners of war trapped in Eastern Europe prior to the end of the war in Europe. Lee Trimble knew that his father, Capt. Robert Trimble, served in World War II, and that he flew thirty-five missions as a B-17 pilot with the 493rd Bomb Group of the United States Eighth Air Force. It was during a 2006 conversation at a nursing home that his father let it slip that his role in the war did not end upon completing the magical thirty-fifth combat mission on 30 December 1944. Capt. Trimble embarked on a new covert mission to recover Allied prisoners of war located behind Russian lines in Eastern Europe.

The author takes the reader to the beginning days of the Cold War as the alliance between the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union began unraveling in the concluding months of World War II. As Russian forces advanced toward Berlin, Allied prisoners of war were set loose from German prison camps throughout Eastern Europe. Soviet policy on repatriated prisoners, paranoia toward foreigners, and desire to hide the Soviet-planned conquest for liberated areas all placed Allied prisoners in danger of being sent to Russia, where they

would be used as political pawns for future concessions and for the return of repatriated Russian army prisoners who sought asylum in the West. Capt. Trimble operated in Soviet-occupied Ukraine under the cover of ferrying American aircraft back to England. He would spend several harrowing months outwitting Soviet authorities in returning stranded flight crews, liberated Allied prisoners, and displaced civilians.

Capt. Trimble witnessed the horrors of war and a precursor to the crushing brutality of the Soviet oppression that was to come in Eastern Europe. The author provides a riveting account of his father's greatest accomplishment in rescuing more than four hundred French female forced laborers despite the fact that alerted Soviet authorities had set a trap for Capt. Trimble and the French women.

The strengths of *Beyond the Call* are Trimble's extensive search of National Archives files in researching his father's story and his candid account of his father's difficulty in returning home after the war. *Beyond the Call* is a remarkable story of courage in the face of incredible danger. It is also a testament of a son's love for his father and the desire to share his father's heroic story with others. *Beyond the Call* is highly recommend for anyone interested in a true story of courage, heroism, or World War II.

Jesse McIntyre III, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

THE FORECAST FOR D-DAY: And the Weatherman behind Ike's Greatest Gamble

John Ross, Lyons Press, Guilford, Connecticut,
2014, 235 pages

Author John Ross admits in his acknowledgments that he is not a historian or a meteorologist. While he may not possess a credential that one might expect in writing such a book, he readily declares a fascination for "the intersection of natural history and human events." This fascination, coupled with an interest in World War II and an awareness that the invasion of Western Europe in 1944 had been postponed a day because of weather, motivated Ross to write about the forecast and the weatherman who advised Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower. That weatherman was Group Capt. James Martin Stagg from the British Royal Air Force.

The reader learns that Stagg, a geophysicist, was challenged to assemble one weather forecast from three

independent weather forecasting sources: the British Meteorological Office, the United States Strategic Air Force (USSTAF), and the Royal Naval Meteorological Service. Additionally, at that time, divergent schools of meteorological thought influenced forecasting. The civilian meteorological office depended considerably on the emerging science of atmospheric physics to prepare forecasts believed reliable no more than forty-eight hours in advance. The principal USSTAF meteorologists subscribed to analog forecasting that held accurate predictions could be articulated weeks ahead. Stagg, fortunately, subscribed more to the former point-of-view in the face of tremendous pressure to endorse a favorable forecast. Impatient commanders were anxious to move forward with the invasion.

Ross is particularly informative when focused on Stagg. One learns about the weatherman's personal and professional background as well as the stress he was under to deliver appropriate advice. To develop this narrative, Ross relies on several sources, including Stagg's *The Forecast for Overlord*, published in 1971. Ross is careful to add a cautionary note about the reliability of memoirs and recollections years after an event occurred.

While Stagg is appropriately featured in Ross's account, the reader is introduced to others who helped shape or influence the forecast. C.K.M. Douglas, Sverre Petterssen, Irving P. Krick, Donald N. Yates, and Edward H. "Iceberg" Smith are among those who had roles in predicting the weather or gathering data to do so. Ross taps interviews, archives, obituaries, histories, and online sources, including Wikipedia, to develop the story. Occasionally, Ross is given to speculation, or the "educated guess." For example, he ponders and suggests how different the world might have been if "Ike and his meteorologist, James Martin Stagg, had gotten it wrong." On a lesser scale, Ross suggests that Stagg at an early age, "may well have been fascinated by radio;" while later in life, he may have shared "in the back of his mind, perhaps," Douglas's doubts about the value of forecasts beyond three days.

Speculation aside, Ross's book is informative and worth the read. It gives one an appreciation for the state of weather forecasting in World War II and the work of the men and women who advised the commander on his decision to initiate Operation Overlord.

**Stephen D. Coats, PhD,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

MINISTERS AT WAR: Winston Churchill and His War Cabinet

Jonathan Schneer, Basic Books, New York,
2015, 352 pages

What more can be said or written about Sir Winston Churchill? It has been seventy-five years since he first obtained the position that has long since secured his place in history. Yet, in a new work, Jonathan Schneer takes a fresh perspective on Churchill. Schneer reminds us that not less than two months following the surrender of Nazi Germany, Churchill was, shockingly, defeated for a second term as prime minister, voted out by a largely grateful constituency that he had just led from imminent defeat to resounding victory in World War II.

The author argues that the seeds of Churchill's political demise in 1945 perhaps were sown in his earliest days as prime minister while selecting the members of his cabinet. Schneer maintains that Churchill selected an inner circle that put a premium on talent over party affiliation, personal affinity, or other secondary considerations, in a manner similar to former U.S. president Abraham Lincoln. Both leaders faced a direct threat to national security and picked men with the necessary qualifications to *win wars*. In building his particular team, Churchill was compelled to form a coalition involving his own Conservative Party, as well as the rival Labour and Liberal Parties.

Thus, *Ministers at War* works on several levels. To be sure, Churchill's talented lineup of ministers was concerned first about national survival, especially during the dark years of 1940-1941, and later about winning the war, given the United States' eventual entry. Nevertheless, these men of great ability—including Lord Privy Seal Clement Atlee, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, Minister of Aircraft Production Lord Beaverbrook, and Minister of Labour Ernest Bevin—were also worried about political survival, and, in some cases, they aspired to the position of prime minister. Atlee and Eden both eventually became prime ministers; Beaverbrook, a close confidante, would challenge Churchill while he was still in office. Hence, this team of rivals waged smaller “wars” with Churchill, with each other, within their parties, and with the British public. Indeed, it is these internal conflicts and their largely

domestic political implications that comprise the essence of Schneer's book.

In the end, Schneer makes two indelible and convincing points. The first is that no one other than Winston Churchill could have held this particular coalition of strong personalities together under such abject wartime conditions. Only someone of Churchill's personal cachet and managerial aplomb could have held this highly effective but equally temperamental group together for so long—his core advisers stayed with him for five years. The second is that Churchill never could overcome the basic ideological differences separating him and the other members of his war cabinet. In picking his team to form a truly representative national government during wartime, Churchill never embraced the increasingly socialistic Labour agenda that proposed a very different post-war Britain than he himself envisioned. As a consequence, he grew increasingly distant from a British public desirous of a better future, one not necessarily including Winston Churchill.

Jonathan Schneer's *Ministers at War* makes a valuable contribution to the pantheon of work on Winston Churchill. Eminently readable and making extensive use of diaries and personal papers, the book represents a fresh perspective on this venerable yet unendingly fascinating subject.

Mark Montesclaros, Fort Gordon, Georgia

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE: A Graphic History of Allied Victory in the Ardennes, 1944-1945

Wayne Vansant, Zenith Press, Minneapolis,
2014, 104 pages

My father introduced me to the Battle of the Bulge when I was a teenager. His roommate in college was Charles B. MacDonald, who had just returned from World War II to complete his college degree. I had the honor to meet MacDonald on a few occasions, and my interest in World War II and the Battle of the Bulge grew from there. The graphic novel *The Battle of the Bulge: A Graphic History of the Allied Victory in the Ardennes, 1944-1945* by Wayne Vansant does a great job telling the story—good and bad—by combining art and storyline, much like a comic book. While I would suspect most children get their

knowledge of World War II from the Call of Duty: World at War video game instead of reading books, this book would be suitable to give to a young person who has an interest in history. I was able to read the book quickly, and it retained my interest. As much as I have studied this event, I learned new information.

There are several positive aspects of the book. The drawings were created professionally, and they illustrate the right emotions for the reader. The German and American panels, for the most part, are separated by a different sky tone, which provides a subtle transition between the different points of view and actions described. The text is not technical, which could make the book more interesting for a younger audience. Readers should not expect a lot of weapons specifications or battle statistics; however, the equipment and uniforms were illustrated with precision.

Overall, the accuracy of the events is very good, but two areas may be incorrect. First, the author writes that SS-Standartenfuehrer (Col.) Jochen Peiper stated that for the offensive to succeed, a specific Allied fuel depot had to be captured. However, interviews of German generals and studies conducted after World War II clearly indicate that the capture of Allied fuel would have been a bonus—but not a necessity. The second inaccuracy is the description of the action at Parker's Crossroads, which included several attacks by a German force on a small American force. The text states the first incident occurred 21 December 1944, but by other accounts it occurred 23 December. In addition, it states that Maj. Parker was injured 22 December, but other reports state his injury and evacuation occurred 23 December. I do not believe the potential errors were intentional. The events at Parker's Crossroads so, understandably, details within the different actions can mix and merge over time.

The book does a good job of setting up *why* the German offensive took place, but it could have added one or two panes to show the enormous effort the German military took to build up its forces for the offensive despite the challenges of fighting the war on three fronts. Some additional details on the strategic situation at the time would have been helpful. However, small area maps are placed appropriately to illustrate locations as needed.

The author makes a point of identifying certain civilians, service members, and units decorated for their

actions during the battles. However, on several occasions, it does not mention the medals they received. He addresses two units that were awarded citations for their actions but only mentions the Presidential Unit Citation for the all-black 333rd Artillery Battalion—one of six units to receive the same citation during the Battle of the Bulge. Although it is widely known that German forces carried out several massacres of American troops during this German campaign, the author depicts an occasion where American troops executed unarmed German soldiers, which must be intended to illustrate that atrocities happen on both sides.

Overall, the different aspects of the actions within the Battle of the Bulge are very well portrayed through both accuracy in text and illustration. This book is recommended for middle school or high school students of history.

Col. James Kennedy, U.S. Army, Retired, Fort Belvoir, Virginia

GENERALS OF THE BULGE: Leadership in the U.S. Army's Greatest Battle

Jerry D. Morelock, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, 2015, 384 pages

In *Generals of the Bulge: Leadership in the U.S. Army's Greatest Battle*, Jerry Morelock's compilation of historical biographies reexamines the leadership of six general officers directly involved in combat during the Battle of the Bulge. Morelock, a soldier and historian, looks at the actions and decisions of the general officers through the lens of how their personalities and character influenced the performance of their duties. His work is particularly valuable and instructive in its examination of the effectiveness of the "American brand" of leadership exemplified by these senior-level commanders in battle—as successes and failures.

The opening chapter provides a comprehensive, yet succinct, summary of the Army's posture as well as that of the German forces at the time of the Ardennes offensive. Additionally, the author describes the leadership, doctrine, organization, manpower, and equipment of the U.S. Army in the European theater. These details of the structure and organization are researched well. They provide a skillful depiction of the background of the Army at the time. The book's appendices have a

wealth of information regarding orders of battle and lists of key individuals. Of particular note in this chapter is a description of how Gen. George C. Marshall Jr. groomed selected officers during the interwar years for significant future assignments. The information provided in this chapter offers a broad context of the overall condition of the Army leading up to the Battle of the Bulge.

In the subsequent chapters, Morelock provides insightful details and battlefield leadership analysis of six general officers who led large Army formations in late 1944. Morelock begins with Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme commander, Allied Expeditionary Force; then it continues with Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley and the 12th Army Group, to provide significant understanding into strategic-level leadership. There are several references to the influential leadership of then Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Marshall on these individuals. The author continues with his review of Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson and the Ninth Army; Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton's VIII Corps; Maj. Gen. Alan W. Jones, commander, 106th Infantry Division; and Brig. Gen. Bruce C. Clarke, commander, Combat Command B. In each account of these general officers, the author brings to light their strengths and weakness as commanders by reflecting on their prewar experiences and their actions during the Army's toughest battle of the war.

The strongest point Morelock brings in the conclusion of his book is, "strength of character is the common denominator shared by successful leaders." Gen. Eisenhower's character trait of being a team player strongly influenced his success in leading a wartime coalition. His *leadership by consensus* is a significant example for all future coalition leaders. Lt. Gen. Simpson's unselfish leadership, Maj. Gen. Middleton's calm leadership, and Brig. Gen. Clarke's self-confidence are more examples of successful senior-level military leadership traits illuminated in this book. Morelock also provides honest examples of flaws and weaknesses in leadership at the most senior levels. The author's balance of examining these officers' successes and failures provides a far-reaching examination of senior Army leadership that is an exemplar for all leaders. As Morelock states, "we cannot cheat the future generations of the rich history of leadership in battle." The character demonstrated by these general officers

will remain powerful examples for future generations of leaders.

**Brig. Gen. John C. Hanley, U.S. Army, Retired,
New Berlin, Wisconsin**

WHY SOUTH VIETNAM FELL

Anthony James Joes, Lexington Books, Lanham,
Maryland, 2014, 218 pages

This review is best subtitled "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." First, the good. There is a lot here to like. Professor Joes has succinctly compiled and synthesized a great deal of contemporary scholarship on the Vietnam War in an engrossing way. The volume is extensively documented—a good thing for those interested in taking issue with some of his more provocative conclusions. For those who think the war was one where American prospects of victory were squandered needlessly, this book will be a central pillar for arguments along that line. We have seen similar assertions before, such as Michael Lind's *Vietnam, The Necessary War* (Simon & Schuster, 1999), Lewis Sorley's *A Better War* (Harcourt Brace & Company, 1999), and Mark Moyar's *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965* (Cambridge University Press, 2006). Instead of taking a topical approach, such as Lind, or focusing on a discrete period within the larger war, as Sorley and Moyar do, Joes surveys the entire regional conflict, from its French Indochina beginnings to the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) collapse in 1975, to make his argument. He manages to do this quite well in only 187 pages of text and notes.

Joes persuasively articulates his central points, and none will be a surprise to longtime scholars of the conflict. For those without a deep background in the subject, his conclusions will seem novel—and therein lies the prime value of the book. The author questions commonly held views regarding the causes for defeat, particularly when more popular notions contain an air of inevitability to them. Professor Joes does not believe the French were destined to lose their war in Indochina; had they used an approach similar to that used in Algeria, they would have enjoyed better chances. He agrees with Mark Moyar that Ngo Dinh Diem was the best leader the fledgling Republic of Vietnam had, and his assassination seriously compromised eventual prospects for victory. Joes takes on the critics of the Army of the Republic

of Vietnam (ARVN), echoing Andrew Weist's argument that sufficient spirit of resistance remained within it, only needing more encouragement. His chapter entitled "The Americans Abandon the South Vietnamese" will startle—and possibly shock—some readers with its very brief description of the terms of the Paris Peace Accords of 1973 and the subsequent drastic reduction in foreign aid that all but guaranteed the Republic of Vietnam's demise at the hands of its communist enemies.

The chapters on the 1968 Tet Offensive and the 1972 Easter Offensive contain analysis more familiar to military readers, as these recount the unmitigated tactical disasters the ARVN and their American and free world allies inflicted. Less well known are the notions that the South Vietnamese public rallied against the Communists in the wake of Tet and that the ARVN enjoyed a much-needed morale boost after it turned back the Easter Offensive, admittedly with help from American airpower.

In addition, the intense vitriol that the author employs against the American press for intentionally misrepresenting the situation at specified times and places is not surprising. While readers probably have been exposed to this before, they will appreciate some of the specifics he relates in precise detail.

Next, we come to the bad: The reader cannot escape Professor Joes' continuously asking, "What if?" While a wonderful exercise in imagination and fuel for counterfactual reasoning scenarios in historical war-gaming, this is not strictly history. One might have titled the book *Why South Vietnam Should Not Have Fallen*, given how it is written. Professional historians of the war will be unsatisfied as Joes provides little that has not already been said in the other works he cites. There are no new sources brought to light here, no new archival discoveries, no correspondences recently discovered, nor any other documentary revelations. The real value this book provides to historians will be its grist for debate, further research, and far weightier published argument and counterargument. One imagines a slew of master's degree theses and PhD dissertations inspired by Professor Joes' conclusions herein.

One should also keep in mind other worthwhile scholarly treatments the author chose not to use, or, if he did use others, perhaps he decided not to list them in his references. Discerning scholars will no doubt notice that works that disagree with the author's assumptions and conclusions are missing. For example, John Prados' book on the Ho Chi Minh Trail was consulted; his other books on the Vietnam

War, among them *The Hidden History of the Vietnam War* and *Vietnam: The History of an Unwinnable War, 1945-1975*, apparently were not. Just comparing the title of the latter work with the argumentative thrust of *Why South Vietnam Fell*, one can easily guess why.

Finally, we finish with the ugly. This book should have been an entry point for new students of the Vietnam War, given how it synthesizes much current scholarship, eloquently articulates a stimulating viewpoint, and provides good recommendations for further reading in the notes to the text. But, it costs eighty-five dollars retail. As of this writing, no paperback or e-book at significantly less cost is available. It is hard to imagine readers buying one of their first books on the Vietnam War at such a high price. The larger military academic and university libraries that can afford it will no doubt purchase this volume, but that means it that will not get much exposure outside the narrow sphere of Vietnam War scholars and historians. The book is not really intended for them anyway, except perhaps as a goad—a dare—for them to explicitly contradict its controversial conclusions.

I definitely recommend this work for military officers, civilian policy analysts and decision makers, and, yes, even Vietnam War historians. However, get someone to loan it to you—do not buy it unless the cost comes down well below its current stratospheric level. I cannot advise purchasing this book at this price, not unless you intend to consult it a lot—and then only if you are going to challenge its arguments in print.

**Col. Eric M. Walters, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired,
Fort Lee, Virginia**

**SO MUCH TO LOSE: John F. Kennedy and American
Policy in Laos**

**William Rust, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington,
Kentucky, 2014, 376 pages**

In his inaugural address, John Kennedy promised to "... bear any burden ... in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty." Historians of his administration regularly cite Cuba, Berlin, and Vietnam as the defining fronts in this, Kennedy's self-proclaimed "long twilight struggle." William Rust, in his history *So Much to Lose: John F. Kennedy and American Policy in Laos* does a great service in shedding light on the less well-known,

but highly contentious, Cold War struggle for the small, landlocked nation.

The challenges of describing the Laotian situation in the early 1960s are daunting. A panoply of actors appears: a trifurcated Lao population (neutral, pro-Western, and Communist), the Kennedy administration and the U.S. military establishment, and other entities ranging from the Soviet Union to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization.

Initially, Rust superbly sets, and then continues to track, the all-important context in which the crisis in Laos played out. His weaving of the situation in Berlin and Cuba into the narrative is not distracting; it gives the reader a deep understanding of how the lens of the Cold War could magnify even such a small, strategically insignificant country.

Working chronologically, Rust details the Laotian morass that would dog Kennedy for his entire presidency. He begins with an excellent basic history of what was then a kingdom, culminating in his succinct exposition on the positions of the three main Lao factions and their relations to the United States and the Communist world. With this solid foundation, Rust traces the arduous yearlong negotiations that resulted in the 1962 Geneva Treaty neutralizing Laos. He provides fascinating insights into the maddening challenges of dealing with Laotian interlocutors as well as the Soviets and even allies Great Britain and France. He ably drives home the point that by 1963, with the neutralization process faltering, Kennedy was anchored with a problem without any satisfactory solution. Only Kennedy's death, and the subsuming of the Laotian conflict under the broader Vietnam War, moved the issue of Laos to the periphery.

Rust's work is extensively footnoted with primary sources, notably the *Foreign Relations of the United States* volumes and *United States-Vietnam Relations 1945-1967*, commonly referred to as the Pentagon Papers. But far from being a dry reiteration of meeting minutes, Rust imbues the proceedings with a tension, highlighting President Kennedy's vacillations amidst varying political and military advice. Of particular interest are two appendices: the first, a full copy of the 1962 Geneva Agreement neutralizing Laos, and second, a 1963 State Department/Department of Defense memorandum for President Kennedy laying out his options for leveraging all instruments of national power. The latter is of particular interest to students of the historical use of the DIME (an acronym used to identify four instruments of national power: diplomatic, informational, military, and economic).

If there is a weakness in Rust's work, it is the lack of a strong conclusion to either the final chapter or the epilogue; both seem to end abruptly. Regardless, this is an excellent, very readable book. *So Much to Lose* ably proves that John Kennedy's soaring rhetoric could not always carry the day—especially in a small, isolated country.

Robert M. Brown, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

NORTH KOREA UNDERCOVER: Inside the World's Most Secret State

**John Sweeney, Pegasus Books, New York,
2015, 336 pages**

Posing as a university professor with a visiting group of students from the London School of Economics, renowned investigative journalist John Sweeney, in *North Korea Undercover: Inside the World's Most Secret State*, returns an outstanding accounting of conditions in North Korea. Sweeney's goal in writing this book was to “make the world's most secretive society a little less unknown, to map this terra incognita that loves to tell us: Be Quiet.” Combining research, interviews with several defectors, and his personal observations from an eight-day trip in March 2013, the author clearly achieves his goal.

Despite a choreographed itinerary guided by two “tourist agency” minders, Sweeney offers evidence of a North Korean government that is undoubtedly the most evil, oppressive, and propagandizing in the world today. He posits that North Korean claims of nuclear capabilities are a bluff that masks a tragic human rights crisis, and that, excluding the elite, the vast majority of its citizens are malnourished. Conservative estimates put five hundred thousand dead of starvation in the famine of the 1990s. He also writes about a general population that is brainwashed; the mausoleum that houses the glass cases displaying the preserved remains of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il—exhibited like Lenin—receives electricity 100 percent of the time, while hospitals, schools, and the rest of the country do not enjoy reliable electricity. Sweeney cites other examples of North Korean failures: libraries have few books, most of which he says are not worth reading; universities have few students; children's camps have no children; large highways have little to no traffic; and nonconformists are either executed or sent to

gulags, where it is estimated that the government has incarcerated more than one hundred thousand individuals. He also writes of factories that are dormant, a bottling plant that produces no bottles, and hospitals that have few patients.

However, there may be room for optimism. More and more North Koreans are becoming aware of the outside world via smuggled information technology such as smart phones that provide access to the Internet, particularly for those located near the Korean demilitarized zone in the south and near the Chinese border in the north. The author suggests that the West should do more to inform the people of North Korea. For example, the British Broadcasting Corporation could establish a North Korean Service, and Voice of America could increase its output. South Korea could reverse-engineer North Korean mobile phones, of which there are two million, to see what can be modified to provide the North Koreans with the ability to do more with their mobile phones—and then build the world’s largest cellular masts near the demilitarized zone. “Information is light, and the people of the dark state of North Korea need more of that than anything else.”

The author suggests that the Kim dynasty will eventually fall. When it does, dealing with those implications promises to be a daunting task for the international community and particularly for South Korea. *North Korea Undercover* provides relevant insights into the country today. The book will be of interest to many, ranging from the casually curious to those who one day will help rebuild the country once its people are freed from the oppressive grip the Kim regime has imposed for three generations.

Col. David D. Haught, U.S. Army, Retired, Fort Belvoir, Virginia

ACT OF WAR: Lyndon Johnson, North Korea, and the Capture of the Spy Ship Pueblo

Jack Cheevers, NAL Caliber, New York, 2014, 448 pages

The 1968 capture of the *USS Pueblo* by North Korea and the detention of its crew for almost a year are incidents largely forgotten with the passage of time. In *Act of War*, author Jack Cheevers writes

a comprehensive history of a significant and controversial event. He makes a persuasive case that, considering the asymmetric threats we face today, we should be revisiting its lessons rather than letting it be forgotten.

Act of War reads like novel. It is fast paced, rich in detail, and covers events in a style that keeps the reader constantly engaged. The author uses interviews, declassified reports, transcripts, and summaries of the negotiations to provide the reader with a thorough understanding of the events. It includes the ship’s mission, its seizure, the imprisonment and torture endured by the crew, the crew’s release, and the subsequent naval inquiry. Cheevers covers the events and decisions from multiple perspectives, including those of the crew, the ship’s captain, the U.S. Navy, South Korea, and President Johnson’s administration. Calling it “one of the worst intelligence debacles in American history,” Cheevers uses recently declassified National Security Agency damage assessments to provide a fresh appraisal of the amount of damage the ship’s capture caused to national security.

The book is a study of decisions, assumptions, risk, and the consequences of being wrong. The author has a knack for clearly describing the difficult choices and the factors affecting the decisions; this is the true strength of the book. Cheevers does an excellent job of providing all the options open to the decision makers and discussing why they ultimately arrived at their decisions. The tension and the gravity of the decisions are especially clear as the events unfold. Readers ultimately will ask themselves what they would do if confronted with the same circumstances.

The author is balanced in his approach. He presents the facts—both good and bad—and lets the reader determine whether the decision maker made the best decision. What readers likely will find most interesting is the clash of values, which is clearly outlined by the author. For example, while the ship captain’s decision “to save his men’s lives had been a humane one,” the Navy, whose “self-image was built on heroic tales of sea commanders who fought against long odds,” could not understand his decision.

Winner of the Samuel Eliot Morison Award for Naval Literature, this book is a cautionary tale with many lessons relevant to the asymmetric threats we face today. In addition to posing tough questions, it also tells a story of resilience, leadership, and cohesion. I recommend this book to all readers, but especially those interested in international affairs because of the lessons it provides.

Robert J. Rielly, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

NORTH KOREA: State of Paranoia

Paul French, Zen Books, New York, 2014, 480 pages

For many, when they think about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), words like black hole, isolated, hermit kingdom, cult of personality, and even failed state often come to mind. However, few of us really have an accurate idea as to what is actually happening in North Korea. In *North Korea, State of Paranoia*, Paul French provides a glimpse behind the curtain and furthers our understanding of how North Korea became one of the most isolated places on Earth.

French provides us with a systems analysis of North Korean society, politics, philosophy, economy, and the “military-first” approach followed for the last sixty-five years to explain how North Korea became a failed state. While the author does offer images of the Spartan lifestyle most Pyongyang citizens live, the majority of his analysis focuses on the socialist command economy employed by the government, which has crippled the country since the 1970s. With, essentially, no reliable official statistics upon which to base his work, French pieces together his analysis from available sources and augments his insights with comparisons to the Soviet Union and China, both of which also suffered from the effects of similarly dysfunctional economic systems. While most nations throughout the world have abandoned these types of economic principles, North Korea continues producing its centralized plans, which have led to the 1990 famine, misallocated resources, and a failed industrial system.

What prevents the required economic reform needed to save the country, in French's mind, is the country's guiding philosophy of *juche*—a mix of Marxism-Leninism, Maoism, Confucianism, and hypernationalism—which is supposed to lead the country to independence. This philosophy entangles every aspect of society—from the dynastic succession of the Kim family, to its economic policies, to its militaristic approach against the imperialistic West. Clouded by this ultrawarrior communism, the leadership used *juche* to declare all other socialist societies failed because they succumbed to capitalism, creating the illusion that capitalist countries are an existential threat to North Korea's survival. The *juche* philosophy places the society in a constant state of war, requiring the state to maintain its military-first approach. French believes the

juche ideals prevent the government from admitting its economic programs are failing and prevent it from wholeheartedly implementing reforms.

The author does an excellent job, through his analysis, outlining how North Korea transitioned from a growing nation that reached its economic tipping point of production in its first twenty years, to a crippled society burdened with a self-imposed economic straitjacket, almost totally isolated from the world. Past North Korean reforms were, at best, superficial, and they served the interests of the Kim dynasty and the regime's elite.

In the end, French points out that North Korea's most destructive act is the preservation of its failed economic principles. He asserts that radical changes are required to overcome its economic deficiencies, but any such changes would potentially result in the weakening of the Kim dynasty or the power of the military elite—both of which control the manpower to reinforce failing industries and, at least, to prevent North Korea from complete collapse. With no alternative to lead the way to transformation, French clearly outlines a bleak future for the people of North Korea.

Lt. Col. Karl Ledebuhr, U.S. Army, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

FIRES OF OCTOBER: The Planned US Invasion of Cuba during the Missile Crisis of 1962

Blaine L. Pardoe, Casemate Publishers, Havertown, Pennsylvania, 2013, 376 pages

FIRES OF OCTOBER: *The Planned US Invasion of Cuba During the Missile Crisis of 1962* gives a detailed account of the planned but never fully executed U.S. invasion of Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis—and the possible ramifications had it been fully executed. The author spent three years gathering documents from national archives; historical documents from U.S. Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Navy units—including copies of the invasion operation plan, OPLAN 316-62; and eyewitness interviews.

The author does a very good job of including the relevant world events that led up to the crisis, such as the Soviet blockade of Berlin, the presence of U.S. missiles in Turkey, and the emergence of Fidel Castro as a new revolutionary leader in Cuba. Together, these events led

to a situation that was the closest the United States and the Soviet Union would ever come to nuclear war during the twentieth century.

The primary focus of the book is the invasion plan itself, OPLAN 316-62, and the many assumptions the Continental Army Command and XVIII Airborne Corps planners made. As it turns out, the United States had a very poor appreciation of the terrain and the disposition of Cuban and Soviet forces on the island, as well as the attitude of the Cuban population in their support for Fidel Castro. Compounding these problems was the magnitude of logistical resources that were needed to move U.S. forces from their various home bases to staging areas in Florida, and then into assault echelons for a multi-axis assault onto the island. As the planners started to war-game the deployment, the assault, and the post-attack stabilization phase, they quickly realized they lacked sufficient transportation assets to move tanks and other heavy equipment into position to keep pace with the intended assault timetable. As the war-gaming continued, they soon realized that if the Soviets fired even one tactical nuclear weapon against the U.S. forces attempting to invade the island, the invasion plan likely would be called off, and the conflict would become a quid-pro-quo battle of tactical nuclear weapons.

Other significant findings from the war-gaming included a high number of expected casualties on both sides. At that time, the combined Soviet and Cuban forces outnumbered the projected U.S. forces approximately three to one. And, if the U.S. forces were successful in defeating their adversaries on the island, the U.S. forces would likely remain there for months trying to restore order and services for the population—which the forces were not prepared to do.

Finally, the author plays out several “what if” scenarios. Each one is very plausible, but he determines all are essentially “lose-lose” cases for the United States, Cuba, and the Soviet Union.

The book is well written and easy to follow, and it cites credible sources. It was interesting from start to finish, and I would recommend it for field grade officers who will likely serve as military planners on division and higher staffs. It is an excellent study about the timeless importance of the necessity and validity of quality planning assumptions.

**Lt. Col. George Hodge, U.S. Army, Retired,
Lansing, Kansas**

**FAILED STATES AND THE ORIGINS OF
VIOLENCE: A Comparative Analysis of State Failure
as a Root Cause of Terrorism and Political Violence**

**Tiffany Howard, Ashgate Publishing Company,
Burlington, Vermont, 2014, 210 pages**

Along with poverty and political radicalization, what economic or sociopolitical factors bring about political violence and terrorism? To answer this, Dr. Tiffany Howard examines how state failure contributes to an individual’s decision to resort to political violence or terrorism. Specifically, what factors in the environment of state failure foster political violence?

Political scientists agree that isolated causes, such as poverty or physiological traits, do not necessarily lead to political violence—nor are there unified agreements regarding causes or definitions of terrorism. Observing these limitations, Howard assertively attempts to identify which factors, stemming from the failure of the state, lead individuals to engage in political violence, specifically terrorism.

Howard’s primary focus is on political violence and cases of terrorism in domestic contexts of failed states. She argues that individuals resort to political violence—and not always terrorism—as a method to ensure individual and group survival as well as to achieve a measure of security within a failing or failed state. Examining the factors that lead individuals to resort to violence is the key task of the book.

The first chapter of the book, “Breeding Grounds,” goes beyond a simple explanation of her thesis: The environment of state failure fosters political violence. Howard anticipates the potential “so what?” question by digging in to the broader consequences of state failure. This is accomplished through an analytical examination of the specific factors and characteristics of state failure that potentially lead to terrorist violence. These factors include grievances such as failed elections and inadequate representation, among many others. Not surprisingly, Howard finds that radical religious terrorism is prevalent in failed states; this is a phenomenon that political scientist David Rappaport considers to be the fourth wave of terrorism.

The remaining chapters of the book test Howard’s hypothesis in several global regions. These cases include

Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Southeast Asia and South Asia, and Latin America. Howard bases her analysis of these regions on data gathered from Global Barometer data and the 2008 Index of State Weakness rankings. Howard uses logistical regression analysis, which is a tried and true methodology of political science; each region is systematically examined.

Those unfamiliar with analytical tools such as correlative analysis may still find the data useful to support qualitative projects involved in state failure or political violence. On a downside, her data sets from 2008 have been eclipsed by world events. The Arab Awakening of 2011, which is briefly touched on in the book's conclusion, dynamically changed many previously held assumptions about state failure and political violence. This demonstrates a weakness of the book. However, Howard does not deserve criticism in this regard; rather, this problem indicates how political science, along with other fields of research, struggles to keep up with world events.

**Capt. Nathaniel L. Moir, U.S. Army Reserve,
Albany, New York**

LENINGRAD 1943: Inside a City Under Siege

**Alexander Werth, L.B. Tauris, New York,
2015, 256 pages**

Alexander Werth's gripping narrative delves into the siege of Leningrad. It presents a poignant example of the cruelty and horrors that are unique to military operations in a city. Alexander Werth, a correspondent for the *London Sunday Times* and the British Broadcasting Corporation, was the first Western correspondent allowed into the city immediately after the blockade was broken by Soviet forces in September 1943. The book presents a graphic story of the viciousness and destruction produced during the battle within the city.

It must be remembered that Werth's visit was after the worst of the siege and while Leningrad was starting to recover; he did not directly experience the siege. However, he visited a number of buildings, including the apartment he had lived in as a youth, and conducted a mixture of formal and informal interviews with the people there (both civilians and soldiers). In this manner, he was able to hear their experiences directly

and weave them into an enlightening, comprehensive narrative. With its firsthand accounts, the book secures two positions in literature: first, as an authoritative historical document, and second, as a journalistic narrative of the overpowering grief and the futility of modern urban warfare. The book provides an unparalleled look at the conduct of modern warfare in heavily urbanized terrain.

Leningrad 1943 is written in Werth's perspective. He grew up in Leningrad and left Russia at the age of fifteen with his father, Adolph, in 1917, but he returned immediately after the "blockade" had been broken by the Soviet army in 1943. At that time, the German army was only three kilometers away in the suburbs south of the city.

The author uses his journalism skills to paint a vivid picture of the atrocities and the struggles that the population endured during the 872 days of battle. He interviewed ordinary people as well as members of the local government, and he toured selected military areas, which provided him the opportunity to better understand and to draw attention to the hardships the people faced—and survived—during the siege. He also addressed some of the survival tactics and strategies the people developed and employed to combat the never-ending bombardment.

One of the interesting points the author discusses focuses on how the Soviets developed and utilized urban camouflage techniques to confuse the German artillery spotters. It is such accounts that lift the book into the category of "noteworthy" when looking at urban combat from both the operational and strategic perspectives.

The constant interviews and the barrage of places, names, and locations can become a bit overwhelming—especially when the author refers to the same location in both its pre- and post-revolution names. The repetitive references and comparisons to his childhood are a distraction. With this book, I recommend that the reader first peruse the entire introduction from Nicolas Werth, the author's son. The introduction fills in some of the story background and provides useful information.

I recommend this book for anyone interested in urban warfare and the lessons that may be applied to developing theories on combat in megacities, as well as for anyone interested in World War II on the Russian Front. My impression of this book is that it is well written and still relevant.

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

GROUNDLED: The Case for Abolishing the United States Air Force

**Robert M. Farley, University Press of Kentucky,
Lexington, Kentucky, 2014, 272 pages**

For nearly two centuries, *On War*, by Carl von Clausewitz, has been considered the primer on the interface of war and politics and the nature of war itself. The basic argument of *Grounded: The Case for Abolishing the United States Air Force* is that the U.S. Air Force has never been effective in dealing with the realities of war as described by Clausewitz. Rather, from its outset as a component of the U.S. Army, the Air Force has persisted in the delusion that it could lift the fog of war, that it could win wars without boots on the ground, and that technology would inevitably bring improvement, supremacy, and domination of a clearly understood battlefield from a vantage point high in the air and even over the horizon. However, rather than over the horizon, the Air Force was over the rainbow, according to this author. And, the lure of technology and victory—without mud or blood (on our side)—seduced politicians of most persuasions during the century of airpower.

After laying out his argument that Clausewitz remains valid, Farley traces the development of airpower history from early in the twentieth century into the twenty-first. He deals with the wars and the interwar periods; with the creation of the United Kingdom's independent Royal Air Force; with Billy Mitchell, Giulio Douhet, and other airpower-above-all advocates; and with the changes in aircraft technology over time. He finds that advocates inside and outside the service have consistently exaggerated the effectiveness of airpower, whether in the bombing campaigns of World War II or in the drone forays of the current era. Despite the myth, winning wars requires boots.

In fact, the delusional Air Force and its backers have hampered, if not endangered, the efforts they were to have supported. The belief in strategic airpower minimizes close-air support and general assistance to ground forces. That is an immediate battlefield problem. More serious is the way that the promises of cheap and easy victories influence the civilian government, mostly nonveteran as it is, to venture into

risky escapades that inevitably lead to introduction of ground forces after the air effort prove inconclusive.

Farley contends that the Air Force is not useless—it is merely an overpriced attractor for those who would throw around America's weight with less risk than using ground troops. He lays out a plan for integrating air resources into the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy; cites instances where reintegration has occurred, primarily in Canada; and argues forcefully, if not convincingly, for the abolition of the free-standing air arm.

There is probably no real chance that any of the author's suggestions will come to fruition. The Air Force lobby is quite strong, and its contractors are spread throughout the myriad congressional districts. Still, *Grounded* does raise interesting questions and challenge the status quo, and it should give pause to those who might be inclined to assume that the Army of today is for now and always ideal and immutable. Unstated is the question: If the Air Force can lose independent status, why not the Army and Navy too?

John H. Barnhill, PhD, Houston, Texas

A LAND OF ACHING HEARTS: The Middle East in the Great War

**Leila Tarazi Fawaz, Harvard University Press,
Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2014, 416 pages**

Leila Tarazi Fawaz's sweeping synthesis of the First World War in the Middle East explores the social and cultural transformations wrought by the war. Understanding the war's influence, Fawaz argues, is essential to understanding the social and political turmoil of today's Middle East. According to Fawaz—the Issam M. Fares professor of Lebanese and Eastern Mediterranean studies at Tufts University—World War I was the “foundational experience of the modern Middle East.” The war was a global conflict but generated very specific and lasting effects on local identities and politics. As a result, a central feature of Fawaz's narrative is that the conflict resulted in tremendous political changes, such as the breakup of the multifaith, multiethnic Ottoman Empire, but Fawaz never loses sight of the diverse experiences of common people. “The principal heroes,”

she writes, “are the regular folks who face the worst and make the best of it.”

To tell this story, Fawaz focuses each chapter on a specific theme related to the impact of the war on Middle Eastern societies. The first chapter provides a broad overview of the social, political, cultural, and economic situation in the Middle East on the eve of the Great War. The following chapter examines how mobilization and the costs of war waged on many fronts exhausted the Ottoman Empire politically and militarily. The third chapter covers the experience of regular people facing hardships such as unwanted military conscription, migration to escape the war’s devastation, and the great famine caused by the Ottoman hoarding of food supplies and the allied naval blockade. Whereas chapter 3 reveals the experience of many who endured extreme hardships during the war, chapter 4 tells the story of entrepreneurs and profiteers who often benefited from others’ suffering. Fawaz explains that such disparate experiences sharpened class consciousness in many Middle Eastern societies.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore the soldier’s experience—first from the Ottoman and then from the British perspective. Fawaz notes that the burden of Ottoman military service fell heavily on rural populations, as 80 percent of Ottoman soldiers were from rural backgrounds and only 11 percent were literate. On the British side, ground forces in the Middle East included large contingents of colonial troops from territories such as India, Egypt, and Australia. More than two hundred thousand Indian troops were deployed to Middle East by 1916—and almost sixty thousand died during the war.

Through her exploration of the conflict’s influence on Middle Eastern societies and cultures, Fawaz demonstrates that “World War I was not one Great War but rather a series of local or regional wars.” Fawaz’s investigation pulls back the curtain over the social experience of one of those subconflicts. *A Land of Aching Hearts* provides an intriguing overview of the relationship between war and society in the Middle East. By casting the First World War as a key moment in which to understand the emergence of the contemporary Middle East, the book will prove useful for scholars and military practitioners alike.

**Capt. Brian Drohan, U.S. Army,
West Point, New York**

**THE DELUGE: The Great War, America and the
Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931**
Adam Tooze, Viking, New York, 2014, 672 pages

Adam Tooze writes about the emergence of American power in the midst of World War I. While American military power enabled the Entente Powers, also known as the Allies, to defeat Germany and the Central Powers, its real power was economic and financial—since it was American loans that paid for munitions and food from the United States.

Viewed from 1931, Tooze sees that the interwar system of international diplomacy and economics—in which military power was an afterthought—was sustained by American power, which was constrained by the limits set by Congress and public opinion. This emergence was rapid given that the United States was perceived as insignificant both before 1914 and after 1931.

This book is a splendid analytic and interpretive narrative that goes beyond Europe and ties together events in East Asia, Asia Minor, Africa, and Latin America, as well as the policies created in response, moving from striking metalworkers in Buenos Aires, to emerging Chinese nationalism and the foreign reactions to it, and to postwar American investment in Australia.

After 1916, American economic and financial power could easily be converted into military power when the president and the Congress so chose. The prime example is the Nation’s 1916 decision to build a two-ocean navy. The war left the international system of states and alliances in a shambles, with devastated and radicalizing European societies, and it provided glimpses of the possible futures in the events in Germany, Eastern Europe, and Russia. New countries demanded more influence based on their wartime activities—notably Japan, China, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

Woodrow Wilson emerges in this account as an annoying, moralistic advocate of American supremacy. As the various crises between 1916 and 1921 revealed the weakness of British, French, German, Japanese, and Soviet power, Wilson appeared as a tough-minded advocate of American primacy when he believed American vital interests were at stake. The Americans were the key to international stability throughout the period; however, by 1924, and with the American rejection of the League of

Nations, potential allies in Japan and Germany were left at the mercy of their internal enemies. America's failure, despite its new power, to support France in deterring potential German aggression defined the interwar era.

Wilson was a Burkean conservative in his intellectual response to the American Civil War and Reconstruction; he believed in incremental, generational change and white supremacy. He was contemptuous of Germany's new political leadership, and he worried about Japan's rise in power as Europe was tearing itself apart in war. The author presents the Treaty of Versailles as a peace settlement that created its own problems, given its respect for German national sovereignty, as opposed to earlier settlements in 1648 and 1815. He notes that Wilson habitually raised hopes of American intervention and support for nascent democracies—and then dashed them, especially regarding postwar Germany, the Chinese entrance into the war, and Sino-Japanese relations.

As American attention concentrated on its own internal politics in the 1930s, the totalitarians seized their chance for world domination. The author believes that Hitler, Stalin, the Fascists, and the Japanese militarists embarked on their policies as a response to their fears about a world dominated by American capitalist democracy. In 1918, Wilson thought of American dominance in the world as a chance for peace and justice, asserting he was thinking a century ahead. World War I, which began as a classic great power war for political influence, ended as a morally and politically charged war about changing the nature of the world. In this timely book, Tooze shows we are still dealing with the aftershocks of the earthquake that was World War I.

Lewis Bernstein, Woodbridge, Virginia

THE BATTLE FOR MOSCOW

David Stahel, Cambridge University Press,
Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2015, 480 pages

On 12 November 1941, the German Wehrmacht launched the final push of Operation Typhoon, the offensive to seize Moscow. Typhoon was to be the final and climactic act of the Barbarossa campaign, Hitler's bid to crush Stalin's Soviet empire in a single, decisive campaign. However, the German forces before Moscow in November no longer resembled

those that crossed the Soviet frontier in June. Where the initial stages of Barbarossa had featured slashing breakthroughs and vast encirclements in the summer heat, the attacks in November featured bitterly contested frontal attacks conducted in frigid cold. And, after months of hard fighting, the strong and confident German host of June had become a weary, depleted, and poorly supplied remnant. Barbarossa had become a case study in operational culmination.

David Stahel describes this culmination in his new book, *The Battle for Moscow*. It is the fourth in the Australian historian's series of books on the 1941 battles on the Eastern Front. In the previous three books—*Operation Barbarossa and Germany's Defeat in the East*, *Kiev 1941*, and *Operation Typhoon*—Stahel focused on the panzer groups that spearheaded the operations of Army Group Center, the German main effort throughout the campaign. In each book, the author painted a devastating picture of the senior military leadership of the Third Reich. Where previous historical accounts depicted the German general staff as military history's most accomplished planning body, Stahel shows a planning process based on racist arrogance and willful ignorance. Where popular narratives lionize the panzer generals such as Hoth, Hoepner, and Guderian as military virtuosos, Stahel would have us see them as men blinded by ambition and increasingly divorced from frontline reality.

In this newest book, the focus remains on the panzer groups of Army Group Center. However, where the earlier volumes in the series focused primarily on operational planning and execution, *The Battle for Moscow* devotes more attention to soldier letters and firsthand accounts of the campaign. It makes for depressing reading. The suffering of the exhausted German soldiers, attacking into ferocious cold without proper winter uniforms, is a constant reminder of the consequences of the high command's poor planning. Yet, lest we pity the poor *Landser* too much, Stahel reminds of the barbaric nature of the German invasion of the Soviet Union. In particular, Stahel examines and explodes the notion that the *Wehrmacht* served as an innocent bystanders to the atrocities the Nazi regime committed against Soviet prisoners and civilians.

By the end of his narrative, Stahel demolishes other commonly held beliefs about the Moscow Campaign. At no time, he argues, was the Soviet capital ever in real

danger of falling to the Germans. It was no “near-run thing.” Despite the persistent myth, no German units came in sight of the Kremlin. Instead, Stalin kept five armies in reserve as he waited for the German attacks to wear themselves out. Meanwhile, with their fixation on the final prize, the German generals missed the evidence of growing Soviet strength and preparations for the Zhukov’s crushing counterattack.

Like the previous three books in the series, *The Battle for Moscow* is very highly recommended for buffs and scholars alike. Stahel’s research, writing, and analysis give us a new and gripping account of one of the greatest and most momentous campaigns in history.

**Scott Stephenson, PhD,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

A HANDFUL OF BULLETS: How the Murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand Still Menaces the Peace
Harlan K. Ullman, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2014, 256 pages

A Handful of Bullets: How the Murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand Still Menaces the Peace has virtually nothing to do with Franz Ferdinand. Instead, Ullman offers an insightful and daunting strategic analysis of today’s globalized world. One of the Navy’s foremost strategic thinkers, Ullman argues that rapidly increasing interconnectivity has fundamentally changed the potential reach of individuals across the globe—no longer does someone have to assassinate an Archduke to have a global impact. Ullman argues that the traditional state is failing, but American strategic planners remain locked into state-centric and outdated modes of thought. He sprinkles his book with potential solutions to many of America’s ills. Although many of his solutions are unlikely to be implemented—such as reintroducing the draft to reduce the insularity of our professional military—they are certainly worthy of discussion.

At the heart of *A Handful of Bullets* is Ullman’s “New Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.” The new horsemen are “Failed and Failing Governments;” “Economic Despair, Disparity, and Disruption;” “Ideological Extremism and Religious Fanaticism;” and “Environmental Calamity and Climate Change.” While

war, famine, pestilence, and death presumably are still in business, Ullman’s horsemen summarize the most serious threats to the world today. Ullman believes that Failed and Failing Governments is the most dangerous of the horsemen, but he emphasizes the interconnectivity of the horsemen. One of the best sections of the book is a series of “nightmare scenarios”—looming crises that could have a geopolitical effect similar to Franz Ferdinand’s murder. These include everything from a super storm, to the dissolution of NATO, to large-scale cyber disruption of the economy. These crises will see combinations of his horsemen feeding off each other. Within these scenarios, Ullman argues that unlike the Cold War—where the danger was of mass destruction, today we face the imminent danger of mass disruption to our economy, infrastructure, government, and environment. Disruption can come from virtually anywhere. It will need to be responded to with innovation and flexibility.

While Ullman is insightful, *A Handful of Bullets* suffers from poor editing—many of the same arguments and phrases are repeated ad nauseam and Ullman often leaps from topic to topic without transition. He also makes some factual and rhetorical errors, such as when he writes, “America was the uncontested dominant global power by 1945,” or when he refers to World War I as “tragically unavoidable,” a descriptor that current historiography would contest.

Despite these failings, Ullman makes a powerful and timely plea for a reinvigoration of strategic thinking within the U.S. defensive apparatus. He has specific and useful suggestions—the restructuring of U.S. Cyber Command, the intelligent use of reserve status for ships and units to provide flexible defensive capacity, a special U.S. ambassador to NATO to reinvigorate that alliance, and discarding the Electoral College. His focus, though, is on revitalizing the U.S. Army War College and inculcating a culture of “brain-based” solutions. This idea is worthy of consideration.

Incidentally, if you are curious about the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and the start of World War I, Christopher Clark’s *Sleepwalkers* is an excellent examination of the European drift to war. Geoffrey Wawro’s *A Mad Catastrophe* is perhaps the best recent study of Austria-Hungary in 1914, and it provides a very sympathetic treatment of Franz Ferdinand.

**John Fahey, Purdue University,
Vienna, Austria**