The Last Warrior: Andrew Marshall and the Shaping of Modern American Defense Strategy

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Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol68/iss2/16
possible attack. Fortunately, the author argues, this deficiency has been partly corrected with the acquisition of expertise in “market intelligence,” the ability to analyze “big data” in stock exchange trading for unusual activity. The author discusses at length Chinese financial and cyber capabilities and vulnerabilities. Cyber attack and financial/currency manipulation have become Chinese specialties, as manifested in recent attacks on the U.S. Postal Service. At the same time, the Chinese economy has become shaky as a result of poor investments, exemplified by the construction of numerous huge buildings with no prospect of occupation and by capital flight. The latter results from the placement by financial elite of their capital gains in safe havens, mainly the United States.

On the other side of the world, Germany, under the leadership of Angela Merkel, has become the dominant player in the European Union, through its powerful position in the EU central bank. According to the author, however, the strengthened euro is threatened by the weakened U.S. dollar, through the export of inflation. Rickards discusses how the U.S. Federal Reserve’s “printing” of money to support the national deficit has led to such export and the dangers it poses for the world economy. The weakening of the dollar, until now the world’s “reserve currency,” has led to demands that it be replaced by “special drawing rights” (SDRs) on the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a creation of the post-World War II Bretton Woods agreements. Rickards discusses how uncertainties inherent in fiat currencies (the U.S. dollar, the Chinese yuan, the EU euro, IMF SDRs, etc.) have led to proposals for return to the pre-1914 gold standard. The possibility, even likelihood, of the adoption of that currency standard has resulted in buildups of national gold reserves, especially by the Chinese. Rickards closes with an analysis of a maelstrom that may very well result if the present currency and financial threats are not resolved.

Like its predecessor, this work will be of interest to military officers because of its analyses and predictions of economic stress and the associated effects on national defense.

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I remember the first time that I heard the name of Andrew Marshall. Here was a man, I was told, who in his early nineties, a man of the “greatest generation,” was still working away in a small office in the Pentagon. He had worked for every president since Richard Nixon and every Secretary of Defense since James Schlesinger. I was both curious and awed. Who has the grit to last so long in our bureaucracy? I could only imagine the level of intellectual power it would take to remain trusted and valued not only for a few years but decades. With Marshall’s upcoming retirement in early 2015, it is only fitting that someone write a biography of this great civil servant, an assessment of his forty-plus years of public service and of the impact of his
office—the Office of Net Assessment—on senior government decision makers. Enter Andrew Krepinevich and Barry Watts's excellent biography. Krepinevich and Watts are no strangers to Marshall. They were a part of what is fondly called "St. Andrew's Prep," the some ninety or so people who over the years have worked for Marshall. Many of them have gone on to have impacts elsewhere in government or in the private sector, identifying and discussing national-security issues with the same rigor and intellectual chops that their boss in the Office of Net Assessment brought to the job.

Krepinevich and Watts handle his story with objectivity, aiming to show his "intellectual contributions to US defense strategy." Thus the story begins with a young Andrew Marshall, an autodidact, reading widely and voraciously in Detroit. He goes on to the University of Chicago, earning a master's in economics. He then considers earning a PhD in statistics but instead decides, in the 1950s, to work for the then-fledgling RAND Corporation. Marshall there meets some influential people who would change his life and would help propel him into the perch he has held from 1973 to today.

It is a credit to the authors that they can craft a thorough biography about a man whose work is largely classified. In fact, only one of his assessments has ever been written at the unclassified level. But his intellectual fingerprint has been so prevalent that there is plenty to discuss. The authors go into great detail about how Marshall developed the idea of net assessment, arguing that he looked further out than others, identifying issues that might challenge American decision makers in the future. He was so prescient that the discussions many of us are having today about China's rise were presaged by what Marshall and his office were thinking about as early as the late 1980s and into the 1990s.

Marshall left it to his subordinates to best figure out for themselves what net assessments were; he balanced intellectual guidance with demanding thoroughness. In a building where egos loom large and people posture for influence, Marshall remained out of the limelight, quietly but diligently working to identify the right questions, the ones that needed to be explored.

Marshall's exit will leave a hole. But this excellent biography and the men and women he mentored are testaments to his impact and a reminder that we have much to do to remain competitive in the future.

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Brian McAllister Linn, professor of history and liberal arts at Texas A&M University, addresses here the war between the United States and the fledgling Philippine Republic, detailing the prolonged guerrilla struggle that followed. First published in 1989 and reprinted in 2000, Linn's book presents the struggle between the U.S. Army and guerrillas on the island of Luzon as a series of regionalized conflicts. Eschewing a conventional campaign history,