

2002

MacArthur and Defeat in the Philippines

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Recommended Citation

Kingseed, Cole C. and Connaughton, Richard (2002) "MacArthur and Defeat in the Philippines," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 55 : No. 2 , Article 14.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol55/iss2/14>

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when trying to penetrate the *Mujahedeen*—was very poor.

Even with the shortcomings mentioned, this volume must be rated as one of the best in providing a systematic analysis of the Soviet armed forces on the tactical level. In addition to twenty photographs of soldiers and their weapons, there are about thirty maps illustrating various tactical operations. The translation from Russian to English is excellent. The book will be indispensable to students of military tactics, as well as area specialists, as its lessons continue to be pertinent to conflict in Central Asia.

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Connaughton, Richard. *MacArthur and Defeat in the Philippines*. New York: Overlook Press, 2001. 394pp. \$35

In the dark days following the onset of the Pacific War, American military successes were few and far between. The gallant, albeit unsuccessful, defense of the Philippines, however, captured the national spirit and made General Douglas A. MacArthur a national hero. His triumphant return to Manila three years later seemed to confirm his status as a commander of extraordinary military genius. Largely forgotten was his abortive defense of the archipelago in 1941 that ultimately led to the surrender of the largest number of American troops in history. In his prequel to *The Battle for Manila*, British author Richard Connaughton examines MacArthur's early campaigns and concludes that his subject was a courageous general but a deeply flawed man.

Connaughton begins his story with a brief narrative outlining America's involvement in the Philippines since the 1880s, the same decade that witnessed MacArthur's birth. Switching gears, he then follows MacArthur's career from his graduation from West Point in 1903 through his multiple tours in the Philippines. Connaughton pays special attention to his subject's activities in the years immediately preceding World War II, when MacArthur held the rank of field marshal of the Philippine Commonwealth. The MacArthur who emerges during this period was the kind of military planner whose strategic vision was based on the enemy's presumed intentions rather than the foe's capabilities.

When the Japanese attacked in December 1941, MacArthur's defensive plans proved hollow. Connaughton severely criticizes MacArthur for allowing the destruction of his air force on the ground at Clark Field and speculates that MacArthur, alone of the other senior Allied commanders who suffered defeat in the first days of the war, was not sacked but promoted to the temporary rank of general because he was "untouchable both politically and militarily." In his assessment of MacArthur, Connaughton joins a growing number of historians who find fault with the "Far Eastern General."

Nor is Connaughton laudatory about MacArthur's static defense of Lingayen Gulf, which he characterizes as "among the most lackluster, uninspiring defenses conducted throughout the duration of World War II." Within a week of the Japanese amphibious assault at Lingayen Gulf, MacArthur declared Manila an open city and withdrew the majority of his forces to the Bataan Peninsula and the island fortress of Corregidor. Unfortunately the garrison was ill equipped,

and adequate logistical supplies to support a prolonged defense had not been stored. The result was predictable—the garrison was soon on half-rations that sapped the strength of the defending force during the subsequent campaign. In the author's view, as MacArthur advanced in seniority he increasingly became the "victim of his own ego and sense of infallibility, to the degree that he could not accept that it was human to err or to fail." Especially critical of MacArthur's decision to retain overall command of the Philippines from Australia, Connaughton contends that MacArthur deliberately misled the Army chief of staff, George C. Marshall, about the actual number of Bataan's defenders and frequently dictated optimistic dispatches that were belied by the deplorable condition of the defenders of Bataan and Corregidor.

So where does Douglas MacArthur rank among the great battle captains of the world? Not very high, states Connaughton. Citing with approval Roosevelt's assessment that MacArthur's defense of Luzon was more "criminal" than heroic, "more a rout than military achievement," Connaughton concludes that MacArthur avoided censure by maintaining the support of the Philippine government and the Philippine people, and because the removal of MacArthur by a Democratic president would have generated political backlash at a difficult time. Those factors, coupled with MacArthur's penchant for public relations by which he created an image of a lonely hero defending America on a distant shore, permitted MacArthur to occupy a position in the Valhalla of American military figures.

Douglas MacArthur has not fared well in recent historiography of his unsuccessful defense of the Philippines in 1941–42.

According to Connaughton, MacArthur made "monstrous blunders" in directing the defense of the archipelago. Strangely enough, however, Connaughton concludes with a more positive assessment, suggesting that MacArthur arrived in Australia a better soldier for having experienced defeat in the Philippines. From Australia MacArthur would embark upon a campaign that included eighty-seven amphibious landings in his progress toward ultimate victory and the liberation of the island chain that had witnessed his greatest defeat.

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Campbell, R. Thomas. *The CSSH. L. Hunley: Confederate Submarine*. Shippensburg, Penna.: Burd Street Press, 2000. 173pp. \$14.95

The Confederate vessel *H. L. Hunley* became the first submarine to sink an opposing vessel in time of war when, on 17 February 1864, it detonated a spar torpedo against the hull of USS *Housatonic*, which was on blockade duty off Charleston, South Carolina. The ship sank in shallow water with a loss of five lives. *Hunley* disappeared following the explosion. The manner of its loss, the location of the wreck, and the fate of the crew have puzzled and challenged Civil War buffs, historians, and underwater archeologists for more than a hundred years. Interest in the submarine intensified with the discovery of the vessel in May 1995 and the raising of the wreck intact in August 2000.

R. Thomas Campbell's book *The CSS H. L. Hunley: Confederate Submarine* continues the popular fascination with