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BOOK REVIEWS

The Strangest, Most Extraordinary Relationship in this Century

Mann, James. *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China, from Nixon to Clinton*. New York: Knopf, 1999. 433pp. \$30

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, the world's most populous nation, and the United States have become regional and global competitors—states whose national interests often clash and whose security concepts are seemingly contradictory. They will likely encounter more turbulent times hereafter. Many are concerned that the United States and China may be slowly embarking on their own version of cold war in the Pacific. Beijing's emerging economic, military, and political power have the potential to challenge U.S. national interests on a broad range of issues and to destabilize long-standing pillars of regional security. The relationship between Beijing and Washington will have profound implications for the region and, perhaps, the world. This is what makes Jim Mann's book on U.S.-Chinese relations from Richard M. Nixon to Bill Clinton so important for followers of international affairs broadly, and of Asia specifically. Most of all, it should be read by those in the next administration who will inherit the legacy of Clinton's troubled China policy.

Mann is currently a diplomatic correspondent and foreign affairs columnist for the Washington bureau of the *Los Angeles Times* and was the Beijing bureau chief for the paper. He has filled an important gap in current literature on U.S.-Chinese relations by bringing readers up to date with insightful writing on the formation of China policy through the terms of six American presidents. He provides a prism through which the current contentious debate over America's China policy can be viewed. Mann adeptly covers the insider's story,

disclosing a plethora of new information on such important issues as the opening of relations with China by Nixon and Henry Kissinger; the derivation of the "China Card" against the Soviet Union; the evolution of Taiwan policy; the secret intelligence sharing and military-to-military relationship; the normalization of relations under President Carter; U.S.-Chinese cooperation in Afghanistan and Cambodia; the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown and its aftermath; and the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1996. However, perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the book is how skillfully "backward" China has manipulated American policy makers and how poorly American administrations—right up to the present—have managed the relationship.

Mann shows how time and again Chinese officials outmaneuvered and outnegotiated their American counterparts. He points out how "Chinese leaders preferred to deal (in Beijing) with a single, high-level American official who could be courted, flattered, and praised for his wisdom (and personally shown the uniqueness of China, its people and history). Such an official would in turn become a forceful advocate in Washington of policies that served China's interest." Americans who assumed the role of special envoy to China were under great pressure to achieve breakthroughs, since they stood to win great praise back home for their diplomatic successes with the reclusive Chinese. Mann builds the case that American policy makers were overly solicitous of Chinese interests, concerns, and sensitivities. He condemns the obsessive secrecy with which the American foreign policy elite have conducted diplomacy with China and circumvented the ordinary processes of government. These agreements would not have withstood congressional or public scrutiny. Mann contends that China still has the upper hand.

Beneath Mann's easy-reading narrative lies extensive research. He does an excellent job in unearthing facts from previously classified records, memoirs, and interviews of the key players in U.S.-Chinese relations. His advice is clear: American policy makers should not be deluded by what they hope China will become, because the Chinese will ultimately make that decision. American national leaders must adhere to a China policy that is coherent, publicly disclosed, and firmly rooted in American interests.

The author claims that the relationship between the United States and China since 1972 has been one of the "strangest, most extraordinary America has had with any nation in this century." This may be true, but it will certainly be one of the most important in the next

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century. Mann says that his book is not designed to forecast the future but to understand the past. If we are to understand the present and shape the future, there is clearly no escaping the lessons of history. *About Face* gives us that history.

Peter T. R. Brookes
Committee on International Relations
U.S. House of Representatives

Ψ

Cimbala, Stephen J. *The Past and Future of Nuclear Deterrence*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998. 235pp. \$55
Stephen Cimbala, professor of political science at Penn State University, continues with this book his contribution to the study of U. S. security issues. His objective is to "examine the nuclear past in order to foretell at least some part of the nuclear future[,] . . . the place of nuclear weapons in relationship [to] force and policy." Given the increasing complexity of change in the mix of national political postures and arsenals, both horizontally (as with India and Pakistan) and vertically (as with China), Cimbala largely achieves his goal. His views, which include the consideration of noted futurists' predictions, escort the reader through the strategies of deterrence, from World War I to the present.

Cimbala begins his study by asking whether the Cold War strategy of deterrence really worked. Arguing that one's acceptance or rejection of nuclear weapons and arms control

proposals is a function of "strong psychological predispositions, prejudices, and gut feelings of threat or reassurance," he postulates two entirely different frames of reference. The first he identifies as the "military-traditional" one; it is an analysis of the comparative relationships of force, be they conventional or unconventional. His second frame of reference is one of political objectivity. Cimbala challenges the concept of certainty, revisiting thorny issues associated with a Nato strategy of flexible response, of nuclear war conducted on European soil. Arguing especially against the "rhetoric of assured destruction," he poses a major point for consideration: that a successful Cold War strategy of nuclear deterrence was the result of improvisations built around the realities of nuclear-escalation uncertainties, of leadership experiments in applied psychology. His arguments are also pertinent to the interests of Realists who postulate that nuclear balance is a necessary state of international

relationships and that nuclear weapons proliferation and international stability can be made compatible. A reader analyzing the major reference points of Realism may wish to consider U.S. antimissile programs, such as the Army's theater high-altitude area defense missile (THAAD). THAAD, ultimately designed to provide a national defense against the growing numbers of nations possessing ballistic missiles, raises the issue of disproportionate national advantage. An additional question is whether a successful antimissile defense system could detract from arms reductions and nonproliferation treaty efforts, further clouding future nuclear policy. Cimbala's association of information warfare with nuclear deterrence is innovative. "Nuclear deterrence is both a competitive and a collaborative relationship between potential adversaries. Information warfare may, if exercised as part of this relationship, destabilize deterrence or impede conflict termination in various ways." Cimbala addresses the technological successes of DESERT STORM as well as William A. Owens's "system of systems." He provides readers an opportunity to develop informed assessments of the synergistic relationships between nuclear weapons and information warfare, or "info-war." He explores the concepts of "dominant battlespace knowledge" (DBK) within the context of a broader revolution in military affairs (RMA). He questions whether

RMA infowar speeds the obsolescence of nuclear weapons, noting that nuclear weapons will remain weapons of choice for nations who perceive their security needs as sufficiently severe.

Cimbala's work challenges the reader to consider national policies and plans regarding smaller nuclear wars. He concludes, "A more nuanced view of how nuclear war might begin, and end, is needed to cope with a post-Cold War international system."

This well researched book is strongly recommend for the military professional and for the student of international affairs. A policy for dealing in the twenty-first century with nuclear weapons and with weapons of mass destruction generally is the grail of strategists today, and the difficulties are manifold. Technological advances in weaponry are accelerating, and the spread of nuclear weapons technology and of unconventional weapons of mass destruction continues. Such proliferation is particularly associated with anti-Western strategies of certain third world nations. U.S. national strategy must recognize the increasing threat of nuclear war at less than global levels, and it must renounce "one size fits all" policies. Changes to national weapons capabilities and intentions are rapid, complex, and continuing. A twenty-first-century national strategy of nuclear deterrence, at varying levels of threat, must address continuing change in

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the international order of nuclear weapons capabilities, intentions, and defenses; be sufficiently expansive to consider nonnuclear weapons of mass destruction; and offer reasonable certitude. Cimbala's book is an expert step in these necessary directions.

SAVERIO DE RUGGIERO
Newport, Rhode Island

Odom, William E. *The Collapse of the Soviet Military*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1998. 523pp. \$35

This book should be one of two books on the reading list of those who wish to understand the current crisis of the Russian military. William Odom, a retired U.S. Army general and Soviet specialist, brings excellent credentials to this study. His research is extensive. His approach to the collapse of the Soviet military is deeply rooted in the history of the Soviet state and its military system.

Odom argues that the military collapse of the Soviet Union was at the very heart of the disintegration of the Soviet system. His book is broken down into two unequal parts. The first provides an in-depth, historical perspective on the origins, development, and crisis of the Soviet military and its commanding place in the Soviet system. In the second part, Odom examines the efforts under Gorbachev

to reform the system, efforts that led to a deepening crisis, internal conflict, and collapse. The author emphasizes the role of Marxism-Leninism in providing an ideological framework for defining threats to the Soviet state and in rationalizing the militarization of state and society.

The first five chapters cover the Soviet military from its birth, during the period of revolution and civil war; examine the role of the military in the mature party-state system that emerged under Stalin; discuss the model of preparation for mass, industrial war, which dictated huge standing forces based upon conscription; and the permanent war economy, which ensnared the national economy in constant preparation for war even as it stifled innovation and economic growth under "mature socialism."

Some will take issue with Odom's emphasis upon ideology as the core, driving factor in the formation of Soviet military strategy. They may prefer to emphasize the critical role of personalities in dictating particular shifts in direction of military policy. Examples would be Khrushchev's cuts in conventional forces and his gamble on strategic nuclear arms; Brezhnev's willingness to fund military programs across the board, even at the risk of contributing to economic stagnation, and his decisions to embark upon the Afghan adventure, even against the advice of the Soviet General Staff, and to avoid direct military intervention in Poland in

the face of the challenge from Solidarity; or the distinct role of Admiral Sergei Gorshkov in creating an oceanic navy to challenge the U.S. Navy for command of the seas.

Odom treats Afghanistan as a continuation of Soviet policies of force projection into the Third World, not noting the very different character of Soviet intervention. He is not alone in this argument; it is one articulated by the late General Dmitri Volkogonov, in *Autopsy of an Empire: The Seven Leaders Who Built the Soviet Regime*. Volkogonov made a compelling case for the limitations imposed by Marxism-Leninism upon the possibilities of systemic reform. It is a theme that Andrei Kokoshin, deputy defense minister and secretary of the Security Council, also emphasized.

Where Odom breaks with Kokoshin is on the question of an enduring professional military legacy with roots in the imperial Russian army, cultivated by military specialists in the Red Army and retained as a part of the world view of the General Staff even after the repression of the specialists. The contribution of A. A. Svechin to the development of military art features prominently in Kokoshin's treatment of Soviet strategic thought but receives scant attention from Odom. For Odom, the military elite and the party had become one. This fed the forces of careerism and opportunism that undercut military professionalism as a unifying criterion for the military's

autonomy in its area of professional competence—the defense of the state from external threats.

This ideological-political limitation on reform dominates the second part of the book. Odom suggests that Gorbachev embarked upon reform without understanding the fundamental aspects of the military crisis, especially the relationship between the existing military system and the nationality question in the Soviet Union. While reducing forces and seeking to reform the war economy to make it more efficient, Gorbachev set in motion powers that he could neither control nor direct. Gorbachev's chief failure in these efforts was his inability to break with the party and Marxism-Leninism, even as he undermined the authority of each. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* generated forces that were fundamentally hostile to the regime and its military system. As Odom states, "The simple answer is that Gorbachev made it collapse." He argues that Gorbachev's double-dealing ultimately set in motion the alienation of reformers and conservatives. The failed crackdown in the Baltic republics in January 1991 marked the onset of the final disintegration and collapse of the Soviet military and with it the Soviet system. In the end, the Soviet military divided. Some of its command elite joined the conspirators, while others refused to take sides; a critical few sided with Yeltsin.

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In the aftermath of the August coup, Boris Yeltsin and Russia became heirs to a broken military machine. Odom argues that empire and militarism were the internal logic of Russian statecraft from the tsars to the commissars, and he questions whether Boris Yeltsin's experiment has broken that fatal logic. One may agree or disagree with this reading of Russian history (this reviewer sees it as a dangerous oversimplification of the national experience), but one conclusion is unassailable: the Soviet military collapsed, and Yeltsin's Russia has overseen its death throes, unable to build an effective national alternative. Chechnya has been the overt manifestation of that continuing disintegration.

Odom has written an important book on the history of the Red Army, and those interested in the future of the Russian army in this time of troubles would be well advised to read it.

JACOB W. KIPP
Foreign Military Studies Office
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Williams, Marion D. *Submarines under Ice: The U.S. Navy's Polar Operations*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1998. 256pp. \$27.95

Although the ends of the earth are poles apart, polar exploration has a long tradition in the Navy, from Robert Peary to Richard Byrd to Operation DEEP FREEZE. Marion

Williams, a former submariner, adds a new dimension to the subject with his history of naval submarine operations in the under-ice polar oceans. Salting his book with generous quotations from the logs, reports, and journals of the submarines and men involved, Williams gives a full account of each submarine under-ice probe and voyage from 1931 through 1962.

The first was that of Sir Hubert Wilkins, the Australian Antarctic explorer, who rechristened an old World War I-era navy submarine *Nautilus* and took it to within five hundred miles of the North Pole in 1931. Along the way, he carried out the first-ever oceanographic data collection from beneath the polar ice cover.

Between 1946 and 1953, several submarines explored the marginal ice zones of the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean. Short under-ice probes were conducted during these expeditions, but the endurance limitations of diesel-electric submarines precluded far-ranging under-ice voyages.

By 1956 the Navy had come to realize that the Arctic was an important theater for the Cold War. Williams passes lightly over the reasons for the Navy's renewed interest in under-ice submarine operations. Clearly, however, the Arctic basin looked to be an important patrol theater and launch zone for the ballistic missile-firing submarines that were on the drawing boards and were soon to join the fleet.

As Williams describes it, the under-ice Arctic was an unknown domain in 1957. There were no reliable charts of the central basin, and ice avoidance with high-frequency sonars was an untried art. Nuclear-powered submarines appeared to be the ideal vehicles with which to explore, map, and tame this ocean basin.

In the autumn of 1957, the new *Nautilus* (SSN 571) sailed north from Iceland and got to within 180 miles of the Pole before being forced back by equipment difficulties. In October 1957, the Russians launched the first Earth satellite, *Sputnik*. The White House was eager to demonstrate an equal technical virtuosity, and a transpolar submarine voyage seemed the thing. With secrecy and cover stories worthy of a Cold War novel, an under-ice voyage from the Pacific to the Atlantic was planned for the 1958 season.

Leaving Seattle in early June with its hull number painted out, *Nautilus* soon found itself threading between deep ice and the shallow bottom in the Chukchi Sea. At one point there was but thirty feet to spare between the ice above, the keel-to-truck of the *Nautilus*, and the bottom. These were unknown waters, and the captain decided that navigating the remaining three hundred miles to the deep Arctic basin was too risky so early in the summer season. *Nautilus* withdrew to wait for the ice front to retreat under the summer sun.

After a brief call at Pearl Harbor, *Nautilus* again set out for the Pole in late July. Finding openings in the ice cover giving entrance into the Arctic basin, *Nautilus* forged on, passing under the North Pole at 11:15 P.M. Greenwich Mean Time on 3 August 1958.

A week later, USS *Skate* (SSN 578) also passed under the Pole, on its way to Drift Station Alpha, a floating ice island in the center of the North Polar Sea manned for meteorological research. Homing in on the sounds of an outboard motor operating in a polynya (opening in the ice) adjacent to the station, *Skate* centered itself under the open water and surfaced on 14 August 1958.

With *Nautilus* and *Skate* establishing the capability to cruise under the summer Arctic and surface in polynyas, the Navy moved on to operations in the winter season and to surfacing in heavier ice.

In January and February 1960, USS *Sargo* (SSN 583) cruised widely under the winter Arctic ice pack, surfaced at several polynyas, and broke through thin ice. Although it suffered some damage to topside equipment along the way, it was able to surface at the Pole at midnight on 9 February 1960.

In the summer of 1962, *Skate* and USS *Seadragon* (SSN 584) rendezvoused near the Pole, and on 2 August they surfaced together at the Pole. The Navy had demonstrated that its nuclear submarines could go anywhere in the Arctic

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Ocean, surface nearly at will, and potentially launch a retaliatory missile.

Unfortunately, Williams's book stops in 1962. It is regrettable that he did not bring his work up to the present day, for the submarine force has continued to operate in the Arctic and surface from time to time in interesting places. Also, though Williams gives a lively account of the actions of each submarine in his period working under the Arctic ice cover, he does not go into depth as to why the Navy was so interested in under-ice operational capability. To pursue that path, we must await a history and analysis of the Navy's doctrine and concept of operations for the fleet ballistic missile submarines. Finally, the book lacks a good map to assist readers not familiar with Arctic geography. This reviewer had to follow the action on the *National Geographic* map of the Arctic and recommends that to other readers.

Notwithstanding, this is an admirable book. Well researched and engagingly written, it covers a heretofore ignored but important portion of modern naval history and exploration.

FRANK C. MAHNCKE
Washington, D. C.

MacGarrigle, George L. *Combat Operations: Taking the Offensive,*

October 1966 to October 1967.
Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army
Center for Military History,
1998. 485pp. \$44

This book is an informative, well written narrative of the ground war in Vietnam from October 1966 to October 1967. MacGarrigle untangles the many military activities being carried out and provides an understanding of the perspective of soldiers as well as that of generals. The author dissipates and pushes aside much of the fog of war, with his discussion of the planning, logistical, and manpower constraints and the motivations of leadership on both sides of the conflict.

MacGarrigle served as an Air Force pilot from May 1967 to May 1968, flying AC-47s from Pleiku in the central highlands. His description of the war rings true and brought back memories to this reviewer. He provides a look into the early careers of many national leaders, for example General (then Lieutenant Colonel) Alexander Haig and the later chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General (then Lieutenant Colonel) John Vessey. One of the strengths of MacGarrigle's style is his ability to make combat real to the reader—it is your shoulder behind the M-16, and your feet wearing the water-soaked combat boots in the Mekong Delta. At the same time, one can feel the pain and anguish of the unit commanders on both sides as they plan operations based

on their perceptions of the situation.

MacGarrigle also addresses the strategic aspects of the conflict. His presentation touches on the political motivations for the war and how those motivations changed with time. While strategy is not MacGarrigle's main thrust, he effectively describes how the conflict looked to General William Westmoreland and his senior military leadership team. MacGarrigle shows how Westmoreland struggled to balance the operational demands of taking the offensive with the political realities of the Vietnamese and the often non-congruent interests of his allies. The relatively short time frame considered here precludes an adequate discussion of the political forces within the United States that influenced and later shaped Westmoreland's ability to carry out his strategy. Anyone wanting a more detailed analysis of the U.S. leadership struggle should read H. R. McMaster's *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Lies That Led to Vietnam* (HarperCollins 1997—reviewed in the *Naval War College Review*, Spring 1999).

This book describes one long year of a military conflict. Its purpose is to document the U.S. Army's participation, and MacGarrigle does that very well. If there is a criticism, it is the lack of a page or two on the strategic and operational activities of air and naval forces during this time. MacGarrigle recognizes the

contributions that airpower (both fixed-wing and helicopter) made to specific operations. Yet a sailor reading this book may wonder in which port the Navy was while the Vietnam War was being fought by the Army.

Notwithstanding, this book is excellent reading for those of us who want to recall what was happening in Vietnam for those twelve months. For those who were not there but wish to understand the political and military forces that were at work, I can highly recommend this volume. Thanks to George L. MacGarrigle for making such an outstanding contribution to the Vietnam literature.

RICHARD B. GOETZE, JR.
Major General, U.S. Air Force, Retired

Blair, Clay. *Hitler's U-boat War: The Hunters, 1939–1942*. New York: Random House, 1996. 809pp. \$40

Blair, Clay. *Hitler's U-boat War: The Hunted, 1942–1945*. New York: Random House, 1998. 909pp. \$45

The late Clay Blair, author of more than a dozen books, including *Silent Victory: The U.S. Submarine Campaign against Japan* (1975), has produced an encyclopedic, two-volume history of the German submarine campaign during World War II. The first volume covers the "happy time" from August 1939 to August 1942; the second covers the

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dénouement of the “gray sharks” from the fall and winter of 1942 down to the bitter end in 1945. Indeed, not since the German scholar Jürgen Rohwer produced his magisterial trilogy (*Chronology of the War at Sea* [1974], *The Critical Convoy Battles of March 1943* [1977], and *Axis Submarine Successes, 1939–1945* [1983]) has any historian labored so long and so hard on this subject. Blair’s opus will be the yardstick by which all future accounts of the German U-boats in particular, and of the Battle of the Atlantic in general, will be measured.

The sheer bulk of the work is daunting. There are almost two thousand pages augmented by fourteen maps and thirty-eight appendices (each with its own set of notes). Blair details the sorties of more than a thousand U-boats as well as the Allied convoys against which they sailed, the Allied ships they sunk or were destroyed by, and the ever-increasing interaction between the U-boats and Allied aircraft. The wartime activities of Karl Dönitz’s undersea raiders are further subdivided into theaters: the North Atlantic, the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean, the Americas, the Arctic, and the Mediterranean Sea. The second volume also offers more than forty pages of acknowledgments and sources.

Blair states his purpose clearly and forcefully: to dispel once and for all the widespread “myth,” especially in the Anglo-Saxon

literature, to the effect that Dönitz’s “gray sharks” came within a hair’s breadth of defeating the Allies in the Atlantic. Furthermore, he rejects the equally accepted arguments that the Germans built the best submarines of World War II and that the German U-boat “aces” dominated the war at sea. Blair states unequivocally that the German submarine campaign failed and that Dönitz’s commanders sank but 1 percent of Allied merchant ships in the transatlantic convoys.

However, Blair is not one-sided in doling out criticism. In the first volume, he roundly castigates Britain for its failure to produce sufficient surface and air escorts or adequate antisubmarine weaponry. Coastal Command remained the “scandalously neglected stepchild” of the Royal Air Force, which concentrated instead on terror attacks against German cities. Nor was London generous in sharing its ENIGMA-breaking secrets with the Americans.

Blair saves his heavy artillery for scholars who have denounced Admiral Ernest J. King and his aides as “fools or knaves or worse” for their reaction—or failure to react—to the first German assault against America, Operation DRUMROLL. Without directly citing Samuel Eliot Morison, Blair suggests that historians have failed to appreciate that the U.S. Navy had to conduct a two-ocean war from the start; that it had to dispatch most of its destroyer force to the Pacific theater; that it paid much greater attention

to the safe delivery of soldiers than has been recognized; and that the famous “destroyer for bases” deal severely limited its escort capabilities. At no time does Blair accept the Anglophile historiography that touts British admirals as “brilliant and infallible warlords.”

The second volume continues these themes. Blair argues that Admiral Dönitz’s decision to place all his eggs in the wrong basket—the gas-guzzling, crowded, and narrow-beamed Type VII-C boats—came home to roost by the end of 1943. The late introduction neither of the snorkel nor of the vaunted Type XXI electro-boats could turn the tide in the Battle of the Atlantic. Additionally, by repeatedly shifting the center of gravity of the U-boat campaign (from American waters back to the North Atlantic in November–December 1942, then to the air battle over the Bay of Biscay from May to August 1943, then back again into the North Atlantic during the last three months of 1943), Dönitz confused his own commanders and denied his boats an effective single area of operations. The decision to withdraw again from the Atlantic in January 1944 and upgrade his boats brought little relief, and the final so-called “renewed” U-boat offensive of September 1944 to May 1945 (with snorkels and Type XXI craft) did not deter the Allied onslaught against the Reich. Hurriedly prefabricated, propelled by “ruinously underpowered” six-cylinder diesels, and

handicapped by complex hydraulic gear located *outside* the pressure hull, the new boats were simply never the “wonder” weapons they are still depicted as having been.

Above all, Blair rightly criticizes Dönitz’s failures in the area of electronics. The grand admiral failed to demand microwave search-radar and radar-detector technology for the U-boats. By contrast, Allied centimetric-wavelength radar, especially when installed in four-engine, long-range bombers such as the B-24 Liberator, B-17 Flying Fortress, and the British Halifax, helped turn the tide. Blair’s final tally is daunting: Allied aircraft were involved in 324 U-boat kills, and Allied warships accounted for another 282.

My major criticism of the two volumes is that they read all too much like telephone books or parts inventories. In his all-consuming passion to be thorough, Blair almost numbs the reader’s mind with detailed accounts of every U-boat that ever sailed, regardless of whether those sorties were critical to the outcome of the Battle of the Atlantic. It takes stamina and sheer determination to wade through the two thousand pages of narrative. Yet the two volumes are, and for a very long time will remain, the standard account in the English language of the German U-boat campaign of World War II. The work constitutes a fitting climax to the career of one of America’s foremost experts on submarine warfare in both the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans,

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and beyond, between 1939 and 1945. No serious scholar can afford to ignore it.

HOLGER H. HERWIG
University of Calgary

Clemens, Martin. *Alone on Guadalcanal: A Coastwatcher's Story*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1998. 333pp. \$32.95

In February 1942, in the wake of Japan's first bombing raids on Tulagi, Martin Clemens received his first wartime directive. A young British colonial administrator in the Solomon Islands Protectorate, Clemens was dispatched to Guadalcanal as district officer with additional instructions "to act as Intelligence Officer." Implicit in his charter was the defense of his territory. With the Japanese onslaught just days away and no military forces with which to oppose them, "defense" was problematic. Still, Guadalcanal was defended, and the forward momentum of the Japanese Empire was forever broken. This book is the author's story of the remarkable efforts of all the men who, despite tremendous odds, turned the tide of war in the Pacific.

The book begins as the official diary of a colonial administrator, detailing day to day events and transactions of government. With the Japanese attack, however, the diary quickly becomes a chronicle of survival in an increasingly desperate

situation. Though not likely intended as such, it is also the story of how one man excelled in managing chaos in what we would today call unconventional and asymmetrical circumstances of exceptional stress and personal risk.

When Clemens arrived on Guadalcanal, the military situation was grim. To face the advancing Japanese he had only a handful of poorly armed native police and a small network of coastwatchers. Yet despite Japanese advances, he was able to build a well organized network of over seventy-five scouts, informers, and coastwatchers by the time the Marines landed in August. That network expanded to over four hundred by December.

Clemens's other duties did not go away with the preparations for battle. Throughout he had the added burden of responsibility for an increasingly nervous population of native islanders, planters, and missionaries. As described in his narrative, his immediate tasks included evacuating nonindigenous civilians, hiding colonial records and silver, feeding the population in the face of an embargo on food imports, expanding his intelligence network, and maintaining order, which included trying to solve a murder. He did all this while nursing a temperamental radio set, foraging for food, and dodging Japanese patrols while maintaining the loyalty and cooperation of an eclectic mix of pagans, Christians, Europeans, and ultimately U.S. Marines.

With the Marine landing, Clemens became a special staff officer in the First Marine Division intelligence section. His narrative of life with the Marines on the beachhead and in such historic engagements as the Tenaru River, Tasimboko, and Edson's Ridge, offers the fresh perspective of one whose previous exposure to Americans had been very circumscribed. He writes of short rations, shoestring defenses, "Washing Machine Charlie," the "Let George Do It" medal, and daily life in a headquarters continually bombed, shelled, and threatened with land attack. His wonder at the spirit of the Marines—and at a traditional Thanksgiving feast after months of short rations—is genuine and profound. Also, his personal commentary on such well known figures as Alexander Vandegrift, Merritt "Red Mike" Edson, Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, and Sergeant Major Jacob Vouza adds to the flavor of the narrative. One particularly revealing comment concerned the Americans' infatuation with information. The comment was not made in a critical way, but it is interesting given today's emphasis on information operations.

The author's stated purpose is to recognize the considerable role of the islanders in the war, as well as the spirit of the Marines, who overcame tremendous adversity to make Guadalcanal free again. He meets both objectives. The book is filled with vignettes of native scouts engaging Japanese patrols,

lobbing smoke pots at enemy positions to mark targets for air strikes, and rescuing downed American pilots, all at great risk. This may be the least familiar chapter in an otherwise well known story, and it is probably the most important recent contribution to understanding the battle for Guadalcanal.

It is interesting to note that this book was first submitted for publication in the 1950s. After several attempts over the years it is only now in print. That a well told tale of high adventure by an author of unrivaled qualifications should await a publisher so long is a mystery. We have it now, however, and there is much to learn from it about the battle, the people, the spirit of making do, and winning when reason might say that winning is simply not possible.

THOMAS E. SEAL
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps

Johnson, David E. *Fast Tanks and Heavy Bombers: Innovation in the U.S. Army, 1917–1945*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1998. 288pp. \$37.50

This well documented and convincingly argued book probes the extent to which various constituencies within the military will go to protect parochial service interests and promote narrow agendas. Looking at the Army in the interwar period, David Johnson, a senior analyst at RAND, speaks to

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the follies of extremists in today's airpower versus land power debates. In times of technological advance when budgets are constrained, rivalries between the services for limited budget dollars intensify. The Army of the 1920s and 1930s faced not only competition with the Navy over resources but also internal struggles over spending.

Johnson argues that internal barriers within the Army and the myopia of individuals promoting single-issue constituencies contributed to the Army's lack of preparedness when war came in late 1941. The author focuses on how the Army adapted to the realities of twentieth-century warfare, analyzing responses to two emerging and maturing technologies—the tank and the airplane.

The Army, always conservative, was especially so in its infantry and cavalry branches. Accordingly, armor advocates were forced to accept the preponderant infantry notion that the primary role of tanks was to support advancing troops. Likewise, the cavalry graybeards were determined that the role of horses not be diminished by “machines.” Consequently, American armored doctrine lagged behind that of the Germans. To satisfy narrow branch prerogatives, the Army developed lightly armored, fast tanks.

Airpower advocates were even more single-minded, and when war came airmen paid the price. By the early 1930s, aviators had

formed their own “service within a service,” in which absolute obedience to the dogma of strategic bombing was enforced with a vengeance. To its theoreticians, the promise of technology made the past irrelevant, and the notion that it takes land armies to win wars was “obsolete.” Furthermore, airpower evangelists, ever in search of facts to support their faith, manipulated history and evidence to support the efficacy of strategic bombing. The “big bomber” advocates dominated the hierarchy of the Army Air Corps, and they made sure that those who questioned them were consigned to the margins. In that era of technological advance and constrained budgets, they pushed strategic bombing as a way to fight wars with minimal bloodshed and maximum return on resources.

The result of all of this was that the U.S. Army was poorly prepared for World War II. In combat, American tanks proved no match for heavier, better armored German tanks; with their larger guns, German armor blasted them. In the air the Luftwaffe slaughtered U.S. bomber crews attempting to bring Nazi Germany to its knees through strategic bombing. Did World War II teach the airpower advocates anything? Johnson answers with a resounding “no.” The advent of the atomic bomb led them to discount the fact that strategic bombing had not been decisive in World War II; they ratcheted up the rhetoric to claim that “technology has caught

up with doctrine." General Carl Spaatz and Major General Curtis LeMay proclaimed that "the future of armies has been decidedly curtailed." Although every conflict since World War II has made nonsense of that notion, airpower zealots continue to voice it.

This book is relevant to the current debate over the future of the U.S. armed forces. Recently, some airpower advocates have argued that with the advent of various precision guided munitions, "technology has caught up with doctrine" (once again), so that wars now can be won quickly, with little bloodshed, through precision strike. They simply ignore the fact that there is no historical basis to support the notion that airpower alone can win wars. With constrained budgets, advancing technologies, and results of the Nato war against Serbia to be analyzed, the debate will intensify, and the past may well provide the prologue.

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Sumida, Jon Tetsuro. *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command: The Classic Works of Alfred Thayer Mahan Reconsidered*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; and Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1997. 166pp. \$24.95

This book seeks to rediscover Alfred Thayer Mahan and to reinterpret his writings. Sumida writes that Mahan laid the foundation for modern naval history and strategy through his books on the history of sea power; his main subjects were naval grand strategy and "the art and science of command." Sumida expresses his purpose to "correct [the] widespread and long-standing misperception of his [Mahan's] treatment of these questions and thus facilitate a proper understanding of his thought."

Sumida divides his book into the following: a preface entitled "Musical Performance, Zen Enlightenment, and Naval Command"; an introduction entitled "Resolving a Paradox"; and six chapters respectively entitled "Development of Professional Purpose, Geopolitical Vision, and Historical Technique"; "Political, Political-Economic, and Governmental Argument in the 'Influence of Sea Power' series"; "Strategic and Professional Argument in the 'Influence of Sea Power' series"; "Strategic and Professional Argument in the Lesser Works"; "National, Transnational, and International Politics"; and "The Uses of History and Theory." It closes with a bibliography divided into twelve sections, a selective analytical index to Mahan's writings, and a general index. In all, this is a compact, dense interpretation of the works of the famous sailor-historian.

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Mahan's approach to naval grand strategy, says Sumida, was "relatively straightforward." He pronounces this assessment without giving any details but then adds, "Mahan believed the security of a large and expanding system of international trade in the twentieth century would depend upon the creation of a transnational consortium of power." On this point Sumida elsewhere explains how Mahan showed that Great Britain's sea power had paid large dividends in the age of sail and that the United States ought not, in the age of steam, build a navy equal to or greater than that of Great Britain. A cordial Anglo-American understanding, though not a formal alliance between the two nations, would serve American purposes.

At the time Mahan wrote his books, the maritime purposes of the two states were complementary. Mahan saw the rising German naval threat in terms of its effect on Anglo-American naval relations rather than in respect to the strategic concerns of either Britain or the United States. This coassociation of naval and strategic interests thus has important implications for alliance maritime strategy in the abstract, though Anglo-American naval cooperation between 1917-18 and 1941-45, say, or in Nato, is not considered in this book.

On other substantive matters dealing with aspects of Mahan's work, Sumida is equally direct. For instance, his treatment of "The

Influence of Sea Power" series is a workmanlike, standard appraisal of the texts forming that cluster. He discusses British, French, and American aspects of the politics of sea power, as well as the geographical bases of naval primacy. He closes his third chapter with a discussion of the relative merits of good ships versus good men, quoting Mahan's famous dictum that in the age of Nelson British naval superiority "lay not in the number of her ships but in the wisdom, energy, and tenacity of her admirals and seamen." This passes without comment from Sumida, but it leads naturally to one of his central themes—do men wage war with the aid of science or of art?

Sumida calls for a linking of the elements of a trinity: musical performance theory, Zen enlightenment, and "naval command." Lest readers dismiss this as a supercilious presupposition, it is worth explaining here for disbelievers what Sumida is arguing, albeit not altogether convincingly. It is this: that naval officers in positions of command "require an artistic sensibility because in war they are confronted by problems that are difficult, complex, and unpredictable." This is true, but equally it might be argued that they need a cold and scientific detachment to lead them to correct decisions in an increasingly technologically determined world of war. If artistic instruction demands, as musicians know, thorough replication and

interpretation of a master's demonstration, it is nonetheless true that a complete technical facility is the prerequisite to mastery and thus, in the military milieu, to command and control. I suspect that Sumida is appealing for a more human approach and less blind faith by commanders, but I doubt if his analogy to musical performance pedagogy will resonate with those teaching the problems and complexities of command.

As for Zen Buddhism, Sumida explains (and let me quote him on this) that "the interposition between the individual and reality of abstract constructs, no matter how complex and sophisticated, is believed to result in distortions of perception that promote wrong action." Fixed doctrine will not work, given the unpredictable nature of life; flexible response is required in such circumstances, not doctrinal conformation. "Zen decision making" is thus about individual decisiveness and quickness. Sumida goes on to elaborate, proclaiming that Mahan's writings on the art and science of command have a resemblance to Zen. There are three reasons for this: one, the attempt to teach what cannot be directly stated in words; two, the absence of doctrinal ends; and three, "a recognition of the limitation of ratiocination as the basis of action under conditions of rapid and unpredictable change."

Mahan, says Sumida sympathetically, wanted officers who could

think, make choices, and exhibit strong, disciplined, and flexible character. Thus, as we have known for some time, Nelson was in a way the embodiment of British sea power—and he was quite capable of breaking the rules. Zen may or may not be the true way to meet the requirements of successful command. Many have argued that a better understanding of history and "lessons learned" would be beneficial to the education and training of all naval officers, especially commanders.

This book is a new look at an old subject. As for myself, and for my students in command and staff work, I will still refer to the preliminaries and introduction of Mahan's first "Influence" book, for there lie the fundamentally significant basics about sea power and maritime strategy. Should I want my students to read more about Mahan, I will send them to John Hattendorf's compendium and primer, *Mahan on Naval Strategy*, published in 1991 by the Naval Institute Press in its superb "Classics of Sea Power" series. However, as is generally known, maritime strategic thought has gone beyond Mahan. It is not that Mahan is not understood in our own time but that we have in fact moved on, to P. H. Colomb, Sir Julian Corbett, Wolfgang Wegener, and Sergei Gorshkov, to name but four prominent thinkers on the subject.

I found Sumida's interpretation of Mahan densely argued and

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highly personalized. Some readers will find such an approach illuminating (Paul Kennedy's dust-jacket blurb hails this book as a "brilliant and penetrating study which revises a great deal of our commonly accepted assumptions about Mahan's arguments on the influence of sea power and on naval strategy in general"). However, because it does not evaluate how other scholars have understood and used Mahan's works, I think the principal merit of Sumida's book lies in its distinctive commentary on Mahan's writings, especially in suggesting the relevance of musical interpretation and the teachings of Zen Buddhism.

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Sullivan, David M. *The United States Marine Corps in the Civil War: The Second Year*. Shippensburg, Penna.: White Mane, 1997. 373pp. \$40

This is the second volume (the first was also published in 1997) of David Sullivan's authoritative series on the U.S. Marines during the Civil War. No one has written more on the role of the Marines in this war than Sullivan. He has distinguished himself with solid research, and he vividly brings these Marines to life. There are excellent accounts of the Marines with the North Atlantic Squadron during 1862, including in the muzzle-to-

muzzle duel between CSS *Virginia* and USS *Monitor*. Lieutenant Charles Heywood (later to be the colonel-commandant) and his Marines won highest praise during this engagement. A number of Confederate marines who manned the guns of *Virginia* are also cited for zeal and courage. During the same year, Corporal John F. Mackie of USS *Galena* became the first Marine to receive the Medal of Honor. This account alone makes the book worthwhile for members of the naval service. One could only wish that the publisher, White Mane, had done a better job with his rare collection of photographs.

Sullivan offers an exciting narrative of events: the court-martial of Lieutenant Colonel John G. Reynolds, Marines fighting on the lower Mississippi, and the problems of wartime expansion of the Corps. It was also in the summer of 1862 that the U.S. Senate debated legislation limiting Marine Corps commissions to graduates of the U.S. Naval Academy. This debate, centered on proportional representation by states, was very contentious. Ultimately the bill failed, but it produced excellent discussions on providing for a professionally educated officer corps. This idea thus took root with Congress; it would be 1882 before it was realized.

Enlisted Marines came from farms, towns, and cities. Many were immigrants, newly arrived in the northeastern United States and eager to enlist. They joined for a

variety of reasons: patriotism, adventure, prize money, or simply to avoid the line regiments of the Army. The chapter entitled "Barracks and Hammocks" describes life in the different Marine barracks in Brooklyn, Boston, Philadelphia, Portsmouth (New Hampshire), Washington, as well as various sea-going detachments. From private to sergeant, one of the most common gripes among the men was the loss of the spirit ration. Grog disappeared on 1 September 1862, which caused great unrest and cursing in the ranks.

The book contains an outstanding picture gallery of enlisted Marines in various uniforms and of various ranks. Anyone interested in the uniforms and accouterments of the period will be delighted. One can easily see the shoulder scales on the full dress uniform and the ornaments on the fatigue caps.

The "President's Own," the U.S. Marine Band, has enjoyed a long and distinguished history since its inception during the John Adams administration. There is an excellent history of the band in the concluding chapter. When Lincoln arrived in Washington, it was the Marine Band he heard playing "Hail to the Chief." The band also accompanied the president to the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg in 1863, and later it was a part of his funeral cortege. Other Marine musicians served throughout the war as fifers and drummers.

The author is the editor of *Military Collector & Historian*, the journal of the Company of Military Historians. Sullivan has amassed considerable detail on the Marine Corps during the second year of the Civil War. The second volume equals his first, and it makes one look forward to reading the third volume, which was published in January 1999.

This series should be on the reading list of all Marines. It makes an outstanding addition to a part of Marine Corps history about which little has been written. Colonel Charles Waterhouse's painting of Corporal Mackie under fire at Drewry's Bluff on the James River makes a spectacular dustcover. *The United States Marine Corps in the Civil War: The Second Year* is excellent reading and a valuable reference.

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Polmar, Norman, and Thomas B. Allen. *Spy Book: The Encyclopedia of Espionage*. New York: Random House, 1998. 645pp. \$18

Every few years a new encyclopedia of intelligence finds its way into the book stalls. Ronald Seth's *Encyclopedia of Espionage* (1972), Richard Deacon's *Spyclopedia* (1987), Mark Lloyd's *Guinness Book of Espionage* (1994), and Jay Nash's *Spies: A Narrative Encyclopedia* (1997) are typical examples. While entry

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length and format follow those of the traditional encyclopedia, the basic facts about a given espionage topic often vary with the source. A comparison of the Mata Hari entries for the works just mentioned provides a good illustration of the problem. The reason is straightforward—the general-purpose encyclopedia relies on years of historical scholarship, a factor missing until very recently in the study of espionage. Most authors of espionage encyclopedias rely on secondary or tertiary sources, without further research. In the process they perpetuate their predecessors' errors.

Fortunately, the authors of *Spy Book*—Norman Polmar, a former editor with *Jane's Fighting Ships*, and Thomas Allen, previously a senior editor at the National Geographic Society and author of national security books—to a great extent avoid this pitfall. In most cases they have filtered out the fiction while presenting the material in a very reader-friendly format.

Spy Book, with its more than three thousand entries, follows the traditional alphabetical order, "integrating people, places, institutions, hardware, code words, operations, tradecraft, and other paraphernalia of spying." Important items are marked with a black star indicating that more material may be found in entries for each capitalized name. A chronology of war and events from 1800 B.C. to the present helps orient the reader. In general,

the material is not sourced, although there are many books mentioned in the narrative.

As with most reference works of this kind, the emphasis is on the espionage conflict between the Soviet Union/Russia and Western nations. There is, however, a very good entry on the Chinese services, though it will no doubt need considerable updating in future editions. Similarly, though the Internet is discussed and some URLs are provided, there is no mention of information warfare or of the problems that e-mail and the World Wide Web have created for counterintelligence. On the other hand, the coverage of other foreign intelligence services is good for the major nations, though, with the exception of the Mossad, Middle Eastern services are neglected, as are those of most Third World countries. Polmar and Allen have also included many cases not found in their competition, such as the VENONA operation and the counterintelligence cases of Clyde Conrad, James Hall, Robert Lipka, Harold Nicholson, Bruce Ott, and Aldrich Ames, to give a few examples.

Notwithstanding all that is positive about this book, it too fell victim to the error problem, and the entries must be used accordingly. For example, KGB officer Yuri Nosenko approached the CIA in 1962, not 1963, and he was never a double agent. Likewise, the statement on page 430 that "the

Penkovsky Papers" were black propaganda (untrue) is incorrect; while the source of the papers was disguised, their content was accurate. In the same entry, American KGB agents Peter and Helen Kroger, imprisoned by MI5, were exchanged for Gerald Brooke, not Greville Wynn as claimed. The entry on Harold "Kim" Philby also has several technical errors: he was not recruited at Cambridge as alleged; several details of his Vienna days are wrong; his second wife never worked at Bletchley Park; and Jim Angleton was not the head of the Central Intelligence Agency's Office of Strategic Operations, nor was he the one who convinced the director that Philby was a Soviet agent—Bill Harvey deserves that honor. *Spy Book* even has trouble with its Mata Hari entry. Her husband was not a naval officer but a Dutch

army officer. A final illustration is an error that has become a myth—the code name for Sir William Stevenson was "48100," not "Intrepid"—his biography *The Man Called Intrepid* notwithstanding.

While *Spy Book* may not be the "definitive reference to the world of espionage" as the dust jacket proclaims, Polmar and Allen have provided the next best thing. Within the limits indicated, it will be of real value to students, journalists, and general readers who wish to get a quick summary of a case or learn the meaning of the often arcane terms of espionage.

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