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The Next War

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Nonetheless, *War and Existence: A Philosophic Inquiry* is certainly a worthy addition to the libraries of our military colleges and academies. It is a clear and lucid investigation into the nature of war and offers an interesting description of the phenomenon itself.

John D. Becker
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force

Weinberger, Caspar, and Peter Schweizer. *The Next War*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1996. 404pp. \$27.50

Former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and Hoover Institution scholar Peter Schweizer have written an intriguing book. *The Next War* presents five "literary war games," hypothetical future scenarios in which warfare erupts between states. None was based upon any specific current indicators; indeed, Weinberger and Schweizer constructed each scenario so that their "postwar analysis" argues for the authors' current national security policy objectives. Although Weinberger and Schweizer do not explicitly state this as their goal, their preface provides an extensive discussion of perceived weaknesses in current U.S. military force structure, operational readiness, intelligence collection and analysis, and especially nationwide ballistic missile defense. Consequently, the authors designed their scenarios to illustrate these perceived weaknesses.

Each of the five scenarios is concise and well written, and each offers sufficient detail to allow the reader to follow the protagonists' strategic and operational options and intentions without descending

into tactical detail. For example, one scenario postulates a nuclear-armed Iran first undermining, then assuming, the government of Bahrain. From this position, Iran is able to blackmail both the United States into withdrawing from the Arabian Gulf and the Saudi kingdom into following Iranian policy on oil exports. By setting aside tactical details, Weinberger and Schweizer are able to focus on U.S. decision-makers' options regarding force employment and how perceived military weaknesses limit or deny options to the national leadership.

While there exists in each of these scenarios some degree of plausibility, none struck me as a likely next war. Each involves conflict between nation-states; four of the five assume the use of nuclear or biological weapons at the operational level of war; there is little or no involvement of allied powers; enemies achieve strategic surprise against the United States; and each ignores or minimizes U.S. core military strengths in command and control, aerospace dominance, naval flexibility, operational maneuver, and rapid force mobilization and buildup. By focusing only on the highest level of war, namely large-scale conflict between states,

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Weinberger and Schweizer ignore the wider range of threats, operations, and conflicts that are most likely the next wars to involve U.S. troops.

ROBIN K. MYERS
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Snow, Donald M. *Uncivil Wars: International Security and the New Internal Conflicts*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1996. 177pp. \$18.95

The post-Cold War international environment brought on a series of internal conflicts that were curiously “nonmilitary,” resulting in a myriad of opinions and models for a new world. Donald Snow’s *Uncivil Wars* offers yet another perspective. However, Snow’s view is quite significant.

This book explores “contemporary” internal conflicts, defining them as the “more or less systematic murder and terrorizing of civilian populations.” It is indeed the principal form of current systemic violence, even though the world now, according to Snow, is a more stable place.

Snow convincingly argues that these new internal wars are a sufficiently different phenomenon to warrant world-wide intellectual and policy attention. The prototypes he discusses (Somalia, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Georgia, Tajikistan, and Sri Lanka) seem less principled in political terms and less focused on the attainment of some political ideal. They do not fit the Clausewitzian mold of an extension of politics—“They seem more vicious and uncontrolled in their conduct.” They are unlike the traditional Maoist or any

other political philosophy that the United States has learned to understand.

Snow offers the military strategist a new and unique understanding of a strange and unfathomable type of conflict. No military action can deal with the real underlying problems. In a stroke of classic strategic thought, the author rightly contends that contemporary internal war can no longer be explained in terms of Clausewitzian analysis, and that to respond to them with perspectives and strategies appropriate to the Cold War is ineffective.

This book offers the strategist a means for discerning how to assess a nation’s national security and its appropriate military strategy. The destruction of colonial boundaries left many newly formed sovereign states “economically unified but [often] not politically.” As a result, ethnic strife has raged out of control.

Snow’s new breed of internal war has no common center of gravity and no kinship with the traditional Maoist mobile-guerrilla strategy. If one accepts this notion, then Snow’s uncivil wars have important implications for international politics and military affairs.

In view of the media’s ability to make internal strife very public, the United States will be tempted in future conflicts to intervene and “staunch the slaughter.” Snow admits, however, that as a nation the United States is unfortunately not well organized to understand and deal with this kind of conflict; its framework for approach is that of the Cold War—traditional wars of national liberation.

Snow labels a definitive three-tier system that determines a nation’s relevance on a scale of economic and