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## Divided We Stand,

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The author makes his greatest contribution in examining the evolution of the Zahal into a world-class military organization. Created in 1949, it struggled to develop an operational doctrine. A host of influential military theorists and practitioners, including Yigal Yadin, Chaim Laskov of the Armored Corps, IDF chief of staff Yitzhak Rabin, and Ariel Sharon all played leading roles in creating an effective military force. Foremost of the reformers, according to Hammel, was Moshe Dayan, whose most significant achievement lay in "identifying encouraging, and institutionalizing the innovations of other younger leaders in the profoundly interconnected doctrine of flexibility and fighting spirit."

The IDF came of age during the 1956 Sinai campaign, which served as a dress rehearsal for war in 1967. Led by Dayan, the IDF carefully analyzed every facet of the war and developed detailed operational plans for the inevitable showdown, which came eleven years later when President Nasser of Egypt ordered his army into the Sinai. The author believes that the lightning victory that startled the world in 1967 was actually preordained, a result of Israeli *elan*, a proven doctrine of offensive mobile warfare, and the complete synchronization of arms and services toward a single objective—the total destruction of Arab military forces.

While Hammel's description of the operational and tactical engagements is superb (particularly the fighting

around Jerusalem), the book does contain some shortcomings. The absence of endnotes and the author's over-reliance on secondary sources, save autobiographies of the principal participants, detract from the text. Additionally, the author's obvious infatuation with Zahal leads him to denigrate any capability of Arab forces, so much so he states that whatever Arab operational plans did exist in 1967 were doomed to failure. Moreover, disciples of Clausewitz will cringe as the author laments that the IDF's goals have "sometimes become enslaved to hateful political intentions."

These debits aside, Hammel has written a highly readable, albeit one-sided, popular history of the war that forever changed the political and military face of the Middle East. The Six Day War was Zahal's finest military hour. In the final analysis, Israel's continued existence as a nation rests on the shoulders of Zahal, a military force that demonstrated its military effectiveness during one week in June when it defeated the combined armies of three nations in a modern *blitzkrieg*.

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Lucas, W. Scott. *Divided We Stand*. Kent, United Kingdom: Hodder and Stoughton, 1992. 330pp. \$40  
A combined Anglo-French airborne force landed in the Suez Canal zone

on 5 November 1956. The main assault force landed from the sea the next day. Their mission was to secure the Suez Canal and return its operation to private European hands. Over two-thirds of France's and England's oil came through the canal, and Egyptian President Nasser's nationalisation of the canal five months earlier was perceived as a direct threat to their national interests. Failing in their efforts to regain the canal or turn it over to the control of the United Nations (UN), the two European governments had joined forces with Israel, hoping to overthrow Nasser in the process. Despite military success, however, they would fail in their objective. Within twenty-four hours of the main force landing, American pressure forced the three nations to accept a cease-fire, and thereat died any chance the Europeans had of achieving their goal. The United States had joined hands with its enemy, the Soviet Union, to stop its own allies, Britain and France, from forcing an Arab leader to accede to their demands. It was an action that strained U.S.-allied relations at the time and has continued to affect that relationship well into the present.

*Divided We Stand* is a brilliant investigation of the policies, goals, and personalities that shaped the Suez Crisis. The author has done a masterful job of tracing its root causes back to the immediate postwar period. It was here, he argues, and not in the fast-moving days of 1956, that the foundations were laid for the events that

would prove so disastrous that November. For the United States, holding communism in check was the main goal, and working with pro-Western nationalist leaders seemed the best method of meeting it. Britain's leaders were more interested in regional stability, because the Middle East and the Suez Canal dominated access to oil supplies in the Gulf and its overseas dominions in Asia. France shared those interests. As an oil-exporting nation (yes, the U.S. exported oil then!), the United States did not.

President Eisenhower's attention and primary focus were on the Korean War, and he delegated Middle East affairs to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. Secretary Dulles and his brother Allen, Director of Central Intelligence, viewed the Middle East in the context of the so-called "Northern Tier" countries of Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan, which they hoped to use as a bulwark against Soviet expansion in the region. They recognized Britain's preeminence in Egypt, Libya, and Jordan but felt that the leaders in those countries were more interested in maintaining privilege than in ruling effectively. Finally, President Eisenhower believed that the Europeans were too slow to divest themselves of their empires.

This perception shaped Eisenhower's view of European efforts to regain control of the canal that fateful year and ultimately led him to oppose their actions. He and his advisors also had a shorter-term policy goal in

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mind. In their eyes, the United States should not antagonize "nationalist forces" in the Middle East by even a hint of approval of "Western" intervention in the affairs of an Arab nation, no matter how much the American government might wish that nation's leader to be overthrown.

Frustrated by what he saw as American inaction, British prime minister Anthony Eden unilaterally approached the French and Israelis to develop a military solution to the problem. Israel welcomed his initiative, for Nasser had just closed the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping, thereby blocking Israel's oil imports.

Thus the stage was set for the disaster that would bring down a British government and lead France to seek its own independent nuclear deterrent. The Europeans and the Israelis would be forced to withdraw by the end of December. The canal would be returned to Egyptian control, and the Soviet Union, not the United States, would reap the propaganda benefits of having saved the "Arab World" from "Western imperialism." Recriminations echoed throughout Whitehall and the White House.

There are no real heroes or villains in this story, only honorable men trapped by their perceptions and the decisionmaking machineries in which they worked. For Britain, Suez was a watershed for its influence and policies in the Middle East and indeed, perhaps, in the rest of the world. London continued to have global interests and presence, but it

had found itself increasingly dependent upon American support to sustain its policies. Eden's decision to act in concert with France and Israel represented a final assertion that Britain did not require American approval to defend its interests. In that, it failed; subsequent British initiatives in the region have been conducted with America's tacit approval, if not active support.

*Divided We Stand* is a stellar work with many lessons for anyone interested in the Middle East. The author tells a complex story in a clear and convincing manner. The parallels with, and divergences from, the recent situation in the Persian Gulf will intrigue many. It is lacking only in its paucity of maps and tables. It would have been nice to see the force dispositions as they were when the cease-fire was implemented. However, this is a minor flaw in an otherwise outstanding depiction of the unique Anglo-American relationship during one of its most trying episodes.

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[The views and opinions expressed herein are solely the reviewer's and do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. government.]