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The Cold War Begins in Asia: American East Asian Policy and the Fall of the Japanese Empire

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Gallicchio, Marc S. *The Cold War Begins in Asia: American East Asian Policy and the Fall of the Japanese Empire*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988. 181pp. \$20

Two sentences encapsulate the problem with this book. In discussing the difficulties the United States faced in Korea, China and Indochina in the days after V-J Day, Professor Gallicchio allows, "Nevertheless, the picture was not totally dark. Japan had been defeated and occupied, and American power in the Pacific was at its zenith." Small mercies, indeed.

The proposition advanced is that the Pacific war ended too soon, not for the participants, but for the planners. This is true; Japan's surrender was not expected until 1946. The author starts from this undisputed position to describe a "network of mid-level staff officers in Washington and Chungking" who spearheaded the Joint Chiefs' effort to put 60,000 marines in North China, to transport Chinese Nationalist troops to North China, and to establish a military assistance group to help Chiang Kai-shek. In so doing, the Chiefs clearly had the support of civilians in the War and Navy departments (the Secretary of War said the Marines "could march from one end of China to the other.") The upshot of these moves was that the State Department was unable to match policy with the JCS *fait accompli* in involving substantial U.S. military forces in China's

affairs. This story is told largely from the Pentagon's position, but the author does conclude that the eventual withdrawal of U.S. troops from the mainland in 1947 was a "more circumspect defense strategy" that was "a closer correspondence between ends and means in American East Asian policy."

This problem of ends-means does not appear until the penultimate page. Instead, we are given the military bureaucrats' view that Chiang Kai-shek was the "benevolent dictator that China needed" and therefore the JCS could commit 60,000 Marines more as an "after-thought than any clearly defined national policy." It all seems in retrospect "a helluva way to run a railroad" until one remembers that all the actors from President Truman down to those mid-level staffers were grappling with a series of decisions for whose study there just was not any time. Professor Gallicchio shows little sympathy for this human predicament.

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Pike, Douglas. *Vietnam and the Soviet Union: Anatomy of an Alliance*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1987. 274pp. \$29.85

Douglas Pike, Director of the Indochina Studies Project at Berkeley, is best known for his important work on the Vietcong. In this book he shows himself to be a substantial Kremlinologist as well.