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## East of Chosin

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*Civil War*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986. 367pp. \$29.95

Naomi Joy Weinberger has written a masterful account of the Syrian intervention in the Lebanese crisis of 1975-76. In the opening chapters of this study, the author presents the long cavalcade of both Lebanese and Syrian history and traces the origins of such poorly understood political topics as Lebanese "Confessionalism" and Syrian *Ba'ath* party government.

This book is a study in both Arab political science and history, and the author has analyzed the Syrian intervention in terms of "client-proxy-agent" relationships, often showing that Syrian strategy was designed to insulate its own mosaic society from the type of political violence which characterized the Lebanese crisis; in fact, her concluding chapter is practically the only published analysis of this intervention in academic terms. It is indeed this dichotomy of client-proxy relationships on both the international and regional levels which has helped transform the Syrian intervention in the Lebanese crisis from a temporary military adventure into a geopolitical nightmare for all concerned.

Although this scholarly treatment may not appeal to those readers whose interests concern military or diplomatic events, Weinberger presents enough historical data surrounding both the Lebanese crisis and the subsequent Syrian intervention to impress any reader. The author accurately illustrates that

Syrian society is in fact an ethnic mirror of its Lebanese contemporary, and she further proves that Syria's President, Hafiz al-Asad, was indeed anxious to contain the neighboring political violence before it ignited his own mosaic nation into such disorder. Weinberger's account is among the best works of the past decade to appear on this subject, and it is comparable to such early analytical works as *Crossroads to Civil War* by Kamal S. Salibi. In light of the American paranoia about obscure—but key—nations such as Syria, Weinberger's book deserves serious consideration by specialists and generalists alike.

W. D. WRIGLEY  
Silver Spring, Maryland

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Appleman, Roy E. *East of Chosin*. College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 1987. 399pp. \$22.50

Roy E. Appleman turns military history into high drama in *East of Chosin*, a historical analysis of the annihilation of the Army's 31st Regimental Combat Team on the frozen eastern shores of North Korea's Chosin Reservoir in November 1950. The author analyzes the failures of command and leadership that abandoned a 3,000-man composite unit of the 7th Infantry Division in subzero Siberian winter, compelling the men to fend for themselves as best they could against overwhelming opposing forces. The only survivors were the 3 officers, 76 enlisted men, and 96 South Korean

soldiers who somehow traversed the frozen reservoir to the sanctuary of the First Marine Division's perimeter, west of the reservoir. The fate of the 31st RCT must rank as one of the U.S. Army's greatest tragedies.

The debacle that befell the 31st RCT seems even more intolerable when contrasted to the successful breakout to the Korean coast by the First Marine Division (5th and 7th Marines), who were then operating on the western side of the reservoir, and who were equally plagued by the abysmal weather and ferocious Chinese and North Korean armies.

That the Marines succeeded so brilliantly where the Army failed so utterly has been known for more than 35 years. The significance of *East of Chosin* is that it cogently distills the reasons for those results. Among them:

- The 31st RCT was saddled with a contingency of unimpressive South Korean soldiers; the Marines had none.

- The Army failed to stockpile ammunition, food, and supplies during its advance from the coast to the reservoir. The Marines stockpiled at strongpoints along their route of march; these stockpiles became key factors during the breakout and movement back to the coast.

- The 31st RCT was effectively without any internal or external radio communications; a Marine forward air controller attached to the 31st, and his pack radio linking him to the First Marine Air Wing, provided the 31st's only link to the

rest of the world. The Marines, by comparison, had excellent communications nets.

- The 31st was strung out in seven different, non-supporting groups along a line of more than 20 miles. The Marines were concentrated with artillery and supporting arms.

- The 31st received no close air support from the Air Force. The First Marine Air Wing provided massive support for the Marine ground forces and, as best it could while the Forward Air Controller's radio was operational, covered the 31st.

- While the 31st was reasonably well-served by several of its officers and NCO's, small-unit leadership effectively collapsed and its rank-and-file troops were no match for the better trained and more highly disciplined Marines.

Readers who deem maps essential to military history will not be disappointed by *East of Chosin*. Maps are well-drawn and annotated and appear at the most appropriate places in the text. They are made especially informative by numerous photographs of the terrain represented in the maps. The ruggedness of North Korea and its harsh winters are starkly revealed.

The author's research is excellent. Appleman blends published, archival, and original source materials into a suspenseful, enlightening history lesson of this military tragedy.

The Army's Chosin Reservoir operations have received scant historical attention. Not surpris-

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ingly, there are no official reports chronicling the tragedy. *East of Chosin* thoroughly fills this void and is the definitive history of that bleak November on the eastern shore of Chosin Reservoir. I give it my highest personal recommendation as an essential element of your professional library.

ARLEN B. COYLE  
Captain, U.S. Naval Reserve

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Goralski, Robert and Freeburg, Russell W. *Oil and War: How the Deadly Struggle for Fuel in World War II Meant Victory or Defeat*. New York: William Morrow, 1987. 384pp. \$19.95

Military planners are well aware of the need for calculating adequate fuel resources into any equation of offense and defense. Too often, however, the weight given this factor is not emphasized as much as it should be. If there is one lesson that can be learned from *Oil and War*, it is that under the circumstances of modern warfare, fuel is one of the ultimate arbiters of any conflict. In a highly readable and informative volume, Goralski and Freeburg trace the course of World War II from the perspective of oil supply and consumption. Emphasizing the geographic realities of oil production and its role for the various European powers and Japan, they focus their attention on its chronologic ramifications for the war effort on the part of both the Axis and Allied powers.

The authors set the pre-war stage with a discussion of Germany's oil import requirements and its consequent impetus for the construction of a large synthetic fuels industry. It is remarkable reading: fifty years after the German debate on the merits of synthetic fuels versus imported oil, the United States, once a world treasure house of oil, is pursuing the same debate. Even the Germans' use of methanol and ethanol as additives for motoring fuels during World War II has a thoroughly modern ring to it. Goralski and Freeburg note that in 1936, through conservation and use of fuel additives, per capita use of fuel in Germany was one-third of that used in Britain—and only one-eleventh of that used by the profligate Americans.

The authors trace the role of oil in the various campaigns of World War II beginning with the initial German *blitzkriegs* and the early Japanese successes in locating oil in Southeast Asia to the last days of the war. A final chapter appropriately addresses the impact of oil in future wars. Throughout the book attention is equally divided between oil production and the role of petroleum refining. Each chapter of the book is replete with facts, and the 26 maps, graphs, and charts assist the reader in following the narrative. The word narrative is important, for unlike many other books filled with facts, *Oil and War* remains highly readable and entertaining.

This book would be an excellent addition to a personal library. The chapters can be read separately or