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America Can Win: The Case for Military Reform

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in Moline, Ill., Gettysburg, Pa., and Bermuda rather than Birmingham, Atlanta, and Richmond. Using Nuechterlein's methodology, what then becomes of survival interest for the Confederacy?

This book provides not a practical, but a conceptual viewpoint. The typical examples from the 1980-84 time period (the Iranian Hostage Crisis, Marines in Beirut, etc.) do not detract from the lasting value of the methodology. Those of us who are involved intellectually in the debate about future force composition and structure can benefit from Nuechterlein's work and from his ability to involve us in his argument.

ALBERT M. BOTTOMS
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Hart, Gary and Lind, William S. *America Can Win: The Case for Military Reform*. Bethesda, Md.: Adler & Adler, 1986. 301pp. $16.95

In this assessment, Senator Gary Hart (D-Colo.) and his aide, William S. Lind, examine the very core of the U.S. military structure. The diversity of issues ranges from warfare types, Joint Chiefs of Staff organization, and military procurement to subjects as mundane as the weight of the individual rifleman's combat load.

America Can Win is a manifesto of the military reform movement. Reflecting the express aims of this reform movement, the book's two most ambitious and broad goals are: moving the focus of the defense debate from the budget to combat effectiveness, and the adoption of maneuver warfare.

The authors propose that the issue of military budgeting and spending *not* be focused upon how much money is spent but upon whether the money being spent provides America with an effective military with war-winning capabilities. They argue that the measuring stick of the Armed Forces ought to be combat effectiveness, not McNamaraesque cost efficiency. As the authors perceptively point out, "Most congressmen justify their focus on the defense budget by saying that they are trying to prevent waste. What they miss is that, if the armed forces are not effective in combat, *all* defense spending is waste."

The second broad goal is the adoption of maneuver warfare by all branches as expressed doctrine. *America Can Win* is not a treatise on maneuver warfare nor is it intended to be. Nevertheless, since the acceptance of maneuver warfare is a cornerstone to the proposed reform, the authors should have sent out their reasons for its superiority. Instead the book presents only straw anecdotes, and the reader is expected to accept on faith that the doctrine of maneuver warfare is superior. This flaw would have been ameliorated somewhat had a bibliography been included. As is, the average reader's understanding will be limited to the level of cocktail party discussions only.

In their analysis of the current military structure and its ills, the authors are bitingly direct and merci-

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less. Virtually all groups associated with the making of policy involving the Armed Forces are criticized. Such criticism is a natural consequence of the authors' desire to shift and reform the core perceptions within the military structure. Yet, it could cause the policymakers to place bruised egos before professionalism and ignore the valid points made by the book. While the book pulls no punches regarding the policymakers, junior officers and NCOs do not receive such honest treatment as the authors take great pains to gain their favor.

Two major shortcomings of the book are its exclusions of strategy and nuclear war. The authors explicitly state that the book deals with neither strategy nor nuclear war; however, in this age of both tactical and strategic weapons wherein the United States could foreseeably be involved in both superpower and Third World conflicts, the validity of these exclusions is questionable.

America Can Win identifies the issues facing America's military. The great merit of the book is not in its recommendations but its questions that call into account many basic beliefs and convictions regarding the military structure. It is for these hard questions that the book should be read by everyone concerned with the direction of the Armed Forces. The holders of those questioned beliefs must recall the wisdom of Nietzsche: "A very popular error: having the courage of one's convictions; rather it is a matter of having the courage for an attack on one's convictions." In its attacks on America's military structure *America Can Win* provides a foundation for debate.

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Smith, Peter C. *Hold the Narrow Sea. Naval Warfare in the English Channell, 1939-1945.* Ashborne, Derbyshire, England: Mooreland Publishing Co. Ltd.; dist., Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1984. 255pp. $14.95

Ever since England rose to prominence as a seapower, the English Channel and its approaches have been the scene of numerous naval actions. Those waters have always been crucial to England's retention of its position as a maritime nation. Often, for its very survival, England has had to ensure control of "narrow seas" surrounding its shores.

There was perhaps no greater threat to England's survival than the period between the fall of France in June 1940 and the German invasion of Russia in June 1941, when it stood alone facing what appeared to be the invincible might of Nazi Germany. In those critical days both the R.A.F. and the Royal Navy fought valiantly against overwhelming odds to save the country from a widely expected and planned invasion.

It was then, that the English Channel became a scene of numerous clashes between British and German light forces. The term "narrow seas" in fact came into wide use then to refer to the actions of light forces in