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"Kennedy in Vietnam: American Vietnam Policy, 1960-1963," "Vietnam: The Valor and the Sorrow"

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initiative. If a shift to strategic defense is deemed mutually desirable, dedicated ASAT weapons may be used to attack the vulnerable space-based components of a BMD system. Any of the above actions would have a potentially destabilizing effect on the military balance. If one side perceived that its satellites were vulnerable to attack, in times of heightened tension there would be increasing pressure to conduct military missions dependent upon satellites before these satellites were destroyed.

Stares is not sanguine over the role that traditional arms control, with its emphasis upon qualitative and quantitative restrictions, might play in curbing the ASAT threat. Instead, he suggests that the United States and the U.S.S.R. might agree to certain cooperative measures in space, commonly referred to as "rules of the road." An analogue suggested by Stares is the U.S.-Soviet Incidents at Sea Agreement, which provides for rules of behavior for naval activities and also for consultative channels for resolving disputes.

This is a well-written, well-researched work and should serve as a needed corrective to the conventional wisdom on the military use of outer space. We are now engaged in debate over the role of the military in outer space and the extension of the arms race into space. Stares' book should be read and his recommendations carefully considered as a basis for informed participation in this debate.

LOUISE HODGDEN

Newport, Rhode Island

Rust, William J. *Kennedy in Vietnam: American Vietnam Policy, 1960-1963*. New York: Scribner, 1985. 241pp. \$15.95

Boettcher, Thomas D. *Vietnam: The Valor and the Sorrow*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1985. 472pp. \$27.50 paper \$14.95

Both of these works are contributions to the growing volume of Vietnam literature which attempts to reevaluate the roles played by senior advisors throughout the course of U.S. involvement and which consequently rejects the popular notion that the military establishment led the body-politique down the war-path.

William J. Rust has given us a tightly written review of a crucial period during the Vietnam era which is often overlooked by many who prefer to dwell on the more turbulent years which followed Kennedy's "1000 days." Relying heavily on interviews with major and minor players throughout the government, Mr. Rust provides an interesting glimpse at "the best and brightest" without the glitter. He focuses on the events which culminated in the November 1963 Generals' coup and subsequent assassination of Diem and Nhu, clearly indicting the Kennedy inner circle for its explicit role in them. In so doing, he offers fascinating insight into the means by which President Kennedy often arrived at decisions, bypassing established and systematic lines of authority to accept the advice of ad hoc study groups or minor officials. The

fragmentation of centralized control which naturally ensued is best exemplified by an incident which was to have vital repercussions. On 24 August 1963, the State Department released a message to the embassy in Saigon acknowledging Diem's expendability if his volatile brother Nhu could not be edged out of the political picture. The message, of obvious import in the Administration's overall position in Vietnam, was released without the knowledge of the Secretary of Defense or the Director of Central Intelligence.

Thomas D. Boettcher's book is nominally a first-rate textbook-style history of Vietnam from the beginning of French colonialism until April 1975, but it is at its best in examining the often tumultuous relationship which existed between the soldiers and the statesmen as early as the 1954 Dien Bien Phu crisis, when "General Ridgway's frank appraisal of the problems . . . in Viet Nam turned Eisenhower away from a troop commitment" against the advice of Secretary Dulles, who was preparing to signal France "that the U.S. was willing to move on the matter." In an even more telling passage, Mr. Boettcher describes Robert McNamara as one "who . . . looked upon the generals as men who had stayed in uniform after the Second World War because they couldn't make it in the civilian world."

This book goes far beyond personalities, though. It is first and foremost an exhaustive historical work which stands among the very best available.

Mr. Boettcher has gone one step

further than standard pieces by giving us essentially a second book, printed in the margins of the main text, in which he provides the reader with what is best described as Vietnam trivia— anecdotes, quotations, photographs (over 500, superbly captioned), even an excerpt from the Soldier's Field Manual explaining the construction of Vietcong booby traps. This "book within a book" allows for a far broader understanding of the subject than that which is possible from a conventional history.

Mr. Boettcher's work should serve as the heart of any personal library of Vietnam literature. It is exceptionally well-documented and he uses personal interviews as effectively as Mr. Rust. While Mr. Rust's study is sometimes a little trite for serious history, "Max Taylor was Kennedy's kind of general," it is nevertheless an excellent account of a subject long overdue for dedicated independent analysis. Together with Mr. Boettcher's book, it is an attempt to interpret a crucial period in history which serves its purpose quite well.

LAWRENCE T. DIRITA
Lieutenant, U.S. Navy

Dallin, Alexander. *Black Box: KAL 007 and the Superpowers*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985. 180pp. \$14.95

Armed with a fellowship from the W. Averell Harriman Institute, Columbia University, the author examined the various theories about what happened and what caused the Korean Airlines Flight #007 to end up