

1986

Manuever Warfare Handbook

Richard S. Moore

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Moore, Richard S. (1986) "Manuever Warfare Handbook," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 39 : No. 1 , Article 14.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol39/iss1/14>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

commitment to mutual defense of the global interests it shares with the United States offer a basis for these changes while avoiding either a "Japan-bashing" or "Japanophile" approach.

U.S.-Japan Strategic Reciprocity is a professionally written book whose author sticks to his goal of evaluating the past, present and future course of US-Japan security relations. This short book—154 pages of text and 193 pages in all—is another Hoover Institution Press quality effort, with excellent editing and error-free text. One small word of caution: it presupposes general knowledge of the region and the issues. Beyond that, the book is eminently readable and provides a clear, beneficial contribution to the ongoing and crucial debate as to the future course of our vital US-Japan relationship.

R.S. CLOWARD
Captain, US Navy
American Enterprise Institute

Lind, William S. *Manuever Warfare Handbook*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985. 133pp. \$16.50

Kross, Walter. *Military Reform: The High-Tech Debate in Tactical Air Forces*. Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1985. 240pp. \$7.50

The debate over military reform continues to play a key role in defense planning and budgeting, yet the concept of military reform remains an enigma. To many, it represents a panacea that will correct the defici-

encies of America's fighting forces. To others, military reform poses a threat to all that is good in the military. While the truth is somewhere in between these views, military reform remains a mystery to those that seek to understand it. Based on a theory of warfare both subtle and, of necessity, lacking in concrete rules, military reform has taken many different facades. In its most recognizable form, however, it has come to be associated with two critical areas—maneuver warfare and the debate over high-technology weapons. It is into these two areas that William Lind and Walter Kross, in two widely divergent books, have attempted to end the confusion.

William Lind, longtime critic and supporter of the Marine Corps, has written his book for Marines. Although narrow in its focus, *Manuever Warfare Handbook* attempts to explain the principles of maneuver warfare and, for the first time, apply those concepts to the realities of tactics. Beginning with a thorough explanation of the theory of maneuver warfare, Lind draws heavily on previously published writings by Marine officers to offer concrete examples of maneuver warfare as it may be applied down to the squad level. He then provides chapters on amphibious operations and Marine Corps education and training. Of particular note is his annotated bibliography, which provides an excellent means for professional expansion. Finally, the author devotes almost half his book to a series of tactical lesson plans written

by Col. Michael D. Wyly, US Marine Corps, former head of the Tactics Department at the Amphibious Warfare School. *Maneuver Warfare Handbook*, by providing the first collection of concrete “how to” examples of maneuver warfare for Marines, is a potentially valuable book. Lind’s recent political reputation and his occasional tendency in his book to criticize the Marine Corps, however, could alienate the audience he is trying to reach. Additionally, some of his examples are dated and may lead overly critical readers to miss important points. Rather than being a handbook, the book should be considered a guide, offering under one cover a succinct, easily read beginning for those Marines who seek to apply maneuver warfare at the tactical level.

Walter Kross attempts to clarify the military reform debate by concentrating on the controversy over high-technology weapons, in particular those of the Tactical Air Forces. Unfortunately, he never quite succeeds. Following a too brief look at the military reform movement—which he labels the “Reformers” and inaccurately describes as a few bureaucrats located outside the Department of Defense—Kross takes the reader through two lengthy chapters in which he displays a firm grasp of the quantitative arguments against the procurement of anything but high-technology aircraft. A careful reader may occasionally garner bits of praise for the “Reformers,” but they are quickly

hidden in his analysis of current defense policy as proposed by the “Defense Planners,” obviously the besieged protagonists.

While the author’s arguments may be correct, they suffer from his haphazard explanation of the fundamental elements of the reform movement. The OODA decision cycle developed by Col. John Boyd, the cornerstone of military reform, is mentioned but inadequately defined. William Lind is quoted, largely out of context, but his theory of maneuver warfare is poorly examined and mistakenly equated to war with movement. Kross’ book begins with admirable motives, to finally define the arguments involved in the military reform debate, but his biases too quickly become evident. Carefully read, it does offer a picture of the current debate over high-technology weapons that surrounds the defense budget and even offers insight into the pros and cons of military reform. As such, it may achieve the author’s purpose, to give Washington decision makers an appreciation of the argument. The military practitioner searching for a clear understanding of military reform would do well to look elsewhere.

Lind’s and Kross’ books examine different corners of the military reform debate. Neither, however, provides a comprehensive examination of the full ramifications of the debate nor do they integrate the disparate elements. Both are narrow in their focus, aimed at specific sectors of the defense establishment.

But both hold value for those sectors. Where Lind seeks to challenge conventional thinking, Kross seeks only to put forth the questions. The need continues for a book able to do both.

RICHARD S. MOORE
Captain, US Marine Corps

Volkman, Ernest. *Warriors of the Night: Spies, Soldiers and American Intelligence*. New York: Morrow, 1985. 443pp. \$17.45

There is no reliable history of the American intelligence community. Without a solid factual baseline we cannot judge the plethora of books which feed an all too poorly guided public interest. Books are usually of two types. Either they call for reform, or they market sensation. Volkman makes the conventional nod to the need for change, but basically his book is traffic in tales.

As an indictment of American secret intelligence it is not convincing. As a call for reform it is fatuous. Even the author's conviction seems sometimes to flag. This is not just because the stories Volkman tells are familiar and well digested. In fact, he tells them well. It is not just that the opinions he rehashes are conventional and stylish. The problem lies deeper. The essential weakness of this book, and the others like it, is that it begins from imperfect standards for judgment. Volkman, like most commentators, does not have a clear idea of what American intelligence operations should be because he has only a partial grasp of what American

intelligence operations have been. Hence, he can only guess at the institutional development of the various organizations in the community and must base his narrative on personalities and anecdotes.

A delphic sentiment opens and closes his book: "American intelligence has been operating in a flawed democracy, and one of the costs of that democracy may be that its intelligence is equally flawed." Apparently this mysterious statement means that Americans respect "facts" more than evaluation; technology more than wisdom. Volkman says we must restore the human dimension to the mountains of data generated by machines, both through human sources in the field and in terms of manageable analysis. No doubt this is true enough, but it is tepid tea, all the weaker as Volkman shows plenty of examples of solid, useful evaluation. In his own illustrations political masters ignore, misuse, or abuse the products of their intelligence services. But is this natural political behavior somehow a "flaw" in the democracy? It is hard to understand the point. The record of nondemocratic states is no better. That America has not pursued human espionage as systematically and as ruthlessly as the Soviet Union is less a "flaw" of our culture than a professional decision. Humint is an appropriate and successful method for the Soviets in America, but does the reverse so equally apply?

Volkman's laments seem to stem from a platonian position that perfect knowledge, invariably accurate assess-