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## Military Leadership

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system which is supposed to control the military. His accounts of the relationships between prime ministers, defense ministers and chiefs of staff are very revealing and they provide insight into some of Israel's crucial political-military decisions through the years. Another bit of evidence put forth by Peri is that the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza since 1967 has given the IDF an expanded civilian policy-making role at the cabinet level as they deal with the administration of those areas.

This is a useful book for readers interested in Israel's role in the contemporary Middle East. Well organized with impressive footnotes and bibliography, it manifests the fears of a segment of Israeli society who see the growth of the military's political power as dangerous. In fact, Peri's closing statement does not rule out an eventual military takeover of Israel. Perhaps David will become Goliath.

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Buck, James H. and Korb, Lawrence J. *Military Leadership*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1981. 270pp. \$22.50 paper \$9.95

The premise of this collection of articles on military leadership is that there are no well defined set of concepts that describe what a military leader is or should be, and that attempting to define such a set may be futile because leadership is so situationally dependent. A postscript

by Professor Sarkesian pessimistically concludes that:

"It is the human, moral, and ethical dimension of leadership that are least susceptible to quantification and precise empirical design. Having noted this, it is appropriate to close with the observation that it is unlikely that researchers and practitioners will find precise answers to the concept and exercise of leadership."

So we are told that leadership is too hard to figure out, but here are what some learned people think about it anyway. The learned range from among others: a historian, a psychologist, a philosopher, and a battalion commander. Distinctions between management and leadership are referred to in about half of the articles. Some conclude managers require different skills than leaders; some conclude that one can't be a leader unless he is a manager; and some conclude that the values of management are inconsistent with those of leadership.

The collection of articles are organized around three main topics: theory, special contemporary issues, and leadership in the field. This group of articles would make a good set of readings for students and teachers in an executive course at a senior service school. Especially the theoretical articles which discuss ideas from the viewpoint of several disciplines: organization theory, psychology, and philosophy. Students in senior service schools could test the concepts derived from this set of articles against their experience both as leaders and followers. Students could

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then either accept, reject, or modify some of the ideas derived from those disciplines as they apply to military leadership.

I disagree that uncovering basic laws of characteristics of good military leadership is too hard. If the subject is worth writing about, it is worth rigorous and scientific inquiry that attempts to objectively identify these characteristics. Nowhere in the book is a discussion of what such a research design might look like, except that Dr. Korb poses some important questions that might be the frontispiece of such an inquiry. These are:

- How can the system provide for the effective assignment and promotion of military professionals?

- Is it possible to determine what abilities a potential leader should possess?

- Is leadership a subject that can be taught? If so, how?

- How can unit leaders be perceived as such when military command is centralized to such a high degree?

- Can the military maintain its community basis; units their social cohesion?

Perhaps a research design that starts with those military persons who, by the standards of the services, are good leaders might lead to the discovery of important characteristics of military leadership. Once identified, these "leaders" could be further investigated by asking those who were their followers if and why these individuals were perceived to be good leaders. Response bias aside,

I believe that followers know who they would like to go to war with and who they wouldn't, and they probably can identify why they feel that way.

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Sims, Robert B. *The Pentagon Reporters*. Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1983. 177pp. \$5.50

At last! A scholarly work about the Pentagon press corps, and its ways of doing business, that is entertaining, informative and does not read like a textbook.

Bob Sims is a descriptive writer of quality. His considerable E-Ring experience, as the public affairs assistant to secretaries of the Navy from both political persuasions, gives him a valuable insight into both the workings of the Pentagon bureaucracy and the men and *woman* (yes, just one) who constituted the Pentagon press corps in 1982. Captain Sims wrote his book while serving as a senior research fellow at the National Defense University. He was able to weave his historical research, interviews and insights into a highly readable manuscript that brings to life the people, and their motivations, who report defense news.

The Pentagon press corps is more mature, and more geographically stable, than their news media colleagues at other Washington institutions. For instance, the Associated Press' Fred Hoffman has toiled at the Pentagon for 22 years, and is not loath to sharply correct transient newsmakers and spokespersons who are