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Life with the Enemy: Collaboration and Resistance in Hitler's Europe 1939-1945

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forces while opponents believe that these elite formations in fact accomplish little and are more trouble than they are worth.

Tony Geraghty's history of the SAS and James D. Ladd's study of the SBS are popular histories. Both authors admire their subjects and do not seriously question the *raison d'être* of these special formations. Moreover, there are numerous gaps in the narrative. For example neither author provides much coherent data concerning special operations in Northern Ireland, and Ladd's work is especially difficult to read because of its poor writing style and overly episodic treatment of the subject matter.

Both books on the other hand are useful. They do provide information on the origins of the SAS and SBS. They offer concise descriptions of many SAS and SBS operations and describe in some detail current methods of recruitment and training. They do not, of course, answer the broader questions concerning the proper roles and ultimate value of such forces but they do at least provide some hard evidence for an informed judgment.

STEVEN ROSS
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Rings, Werner. *Life with the Enemy: Collaboration and Resistance in Hitler's Europe 1939-1945*. New York: Doubleday, 1982. 351pp. \$17.95

Why a book on collaboration? Because even if collaboration is an issue often skirted, it happened. It is

easy to write on the romance of resistance, but collaboration with the enemy normally is buried because of memories of betrayal and shame brought about by fellow countrymen. Werner Rings tries to explain what happened after the Germans conquered Europe in World War II.

The German occupation of Europe brought out the best and the worst of each nation's population. The question, "do I collaborate or resist?" was easily answered by a lot of people, as can be seen by the decisions to collaborate made by many in Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, France, Poland, and the other countries. Indeed, at first there was a general readiness to collaborate.

Rings paints superb pictures of opportunists, such as Quisling, the Norwegian; Mussert, the Dutchman; Degrelle, the Belgian; and others who attempted vainly to convince the Germans that they indeed embraced the goals of Nazism and the ideals embodied by the Party.

According to Rings, there were four types of collaboration. The first, the neutral or "I conform" type, arose from an acceptance by the individual that because of circumstances he could not change things. In the second type, or "unconditional collaboration," the individual totally accepted the enemy's principles and ideals. The third type, "conditioned collaboration," occurred when the individual only endorsed *some* Nazi principles and cooperated accordingly. The fourth type of collaboration was "tactical." Here an individual collaborated despite his hatred

of National Socialism because it prevented the murder of fellow countrymen or it fulfilled a political idea in opposition to Nazism. This type of collaboration was really resistance in disguise and was a part of the fight to rid the country of the enemy.

Rings also discussed the role Resistance played in removing the enemy. Once again, the author describes four types. The first was the "symbolic" resistor. The work of such people he sees typified by the French Navy when it scuttled the fleet at Toulon in 1942. A second type of opponent, a "polemic" resistor, opposed the enemy through protest or through organizing protests. Such a person of course had to possess legally acquired power. "Defense" resistance was the third type. Here individuals sided with those in danger, or rallied to those who strove to protect those persons. Solidarity was the key to this resistance. The fourth type of resistance was "offensive." Rings subtitles this section "I Fight to the Death." He tells of individuals taking the fight to the enemy, harassing him with guerrilla tactics, and suffering high casualties. This seems a world apart from the other types of resistance but yet it interlocked with them. But with this pursuit of freedom came a staggering cost in lives as a result of reprisals by the occupying power. Often in the search for a few the enemy would kill thousands.

Finally, Rings deals with the unconquered Allies. To them, he says, the resistance movement and its

contribution to victory was simply a side issue. The author speculates that they held this view because professional soldiers had a low opinion of guerrilla warfare.

The book is a well researched, referenced, and documented testimony that collaboration existed alongside resistance. Read it for enlightenment because history has a tendency to repeat itself.

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Webb, James. *A Country Such as This*.
New York: Doubleday, 1983.
534pp. \$17.95

While openly embraced by reviewers, James Webb's first two novels sent shock waves of protest through the well-filled ranks of his readership. An explanation for this is not hard to find: the novice's flexible command of language, his ability to recreate the speech of fighting men, and his evocation of the camaraderie that comes of hardship appealed to a literary community always on the prowl for new talent. The books were vehicles for an exploration of controversial, difficult questions about military life, and Webb's tenacious tackling of those questions on terms all his own—terms that bowed to neither the naval establishment nor its detractors—did him the double service of offending both.

Those who sympathized with the antiwar movement of the sixties did not swallow the "moral" of *Fields of Fire*, that theirs was not the right to oppose a war they could not under-