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The United States, Great Britain and the Cold War 1944-1947

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case mainly of interest to those involved in retrospective analysis of the Second Indochina War.

In his preface Colonel Henderson develops the contrast between the People's Liberation Army (PLA), which endured, and the U.S. Army, which the author feels did not. The contrast shortly brings the author into a critique of *Crisis in Command* previously reviewed in this journal. He is highly critical and powerful in his comments on that work, but his commentary, however cogent, is really a digression.

The central question Henderson seeks to answer is why the PLA soldiers fought so well in view of the hardships they endured, including the tremendous firepower that was arrayed against them. His approach is to examine factors of motivation and control of the individual PLA soldier in the context of the relationships between the fighting men and the Communist party organization. He places particular emphasis on the importance of small groups of soldiers (the primary group, i.e., a three-man cell) and what makes them cohesive. All the data he examines comes from the period 1965-67.

Colonel Henderson concludes that soldiers' attitudes were shaped by three important forces: party organization and ideology, cadre leaders, and the primary groups. The cadre leader, who was the conduit between party and fighter in instilling homogenous values within the primary groups, was the key to success.

Henderson's general source of data is interviews conducted by RAND which sought to develop information on PLA organization and why it fought so effectively. He has added appendices which describe the nature and limitations of the interviews and he includes a questionnaire—though, as the author points out, the interviews were open-ended.

Henderson has succeeded in producing a very interesting and well done

monograph. Though it is aimed at the specialist on Vietnam, it has value to those interested in examining the motivation and control, and hence staying power, of insurgents elsewhere than Vietnam.

DOUGLAS KINNARD
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Anderson, Terry H. *The United States, Great Britain and the Cold War 1944-1947*. * Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981. 256pp. \$18

Hathaway, Robert M. *Ambiguous Partnership: Britain and America, 1944-1947*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981. 448pp. \$22.50

Anderson and Hathaway have contributed significantly to the cold war literature. Moreover, their books transcend the years in question to offer practical insights into alliance politics. And the backdrop of their topic is the not untimely problem of how a superpower responds to an accelerated decline in relative power. Political analyses of the early postwar years generally suggest that the world slid easily into a situation where there were only two actors on the international stage. American writings have been especially parochial in reducing these years to a bipolar confrontation while overlooking the complexities of Atlantic relations. The physical metaphor of the United States "filling the vacuum" left by a bankrupt and demoralized Britain has been a retreat from explanation. Both authors tell a far more complicated story.

From 1944 until 1947 Britain saw itself as in many ways more of a world power than either Russia or the United States. Its armed forces in a global ring of bases were better deployed than America's. Its fleet was so superior to

*For another view of Terry Anderson's book see the review article by Richard A. Best, Jr., in the November-December 1981 issue, pp. 97-99.

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Russia's that even in early 1947 the Admiralty could think seriously about selling Moscow an aircraft carrier. British development of jet aircraft led the world, while atomic research and an apparently durable Commonwealth added to these indices of power. Britain had no intention of joining what its wartime ambassador to Washington called the "mendicant queue" of exhausted European powers. Each author examines the ensuing tension as an ascendant America encroached on regions and responsibilities that the British economy could no longer underwrite. Although Britain had the trappings of what in 1944 was called a superpower, its economic capacities could no longer match its commitments. London was not prepared to acknowledge the extent of this shortfall.

Like Britain before, the United States encouraged global political, territorial, and especially trade relations that suited its own security and economic interests. Each country used its power to promote a convenient framework of world order. Anderson and Hathaway both describe how Britain was persuaded and sometimes forced to accept the U.S. vision of the postwar world. Now that many observers see a decline in U.S. power and a crumbling of the postwar structure, the British experience may be of pragmatic as well as purely intellectual interest to Americans.

Hathaway's work is clearly the more innovative of the two. Although both authors use the same U.S. and recently available British sources, Hathaway avoids the dry narration that can characterize traditional diplomatic histories. In greater detail than Anderson, he contrasts the styles as well as the world views of Washington and Whitehall. Ambiguities always bedevil coalition politics. But what made U.S./British relations especially difficult was the natural assumption that the same language and democratic values meant parallel national interests. This was

rarely the case. In those areas where interests overlapped, the putative allies proceeded carefully while casting side-long glances at each other.

What makes Hathaway's book superior is that he illuminates the cultural and bureaucratic origins of the U.S. and British misunderstandings. Neither country was a monolith. There were intense internal debates. Perceptions and expectations clashed between left and right and between globalists and pragmatists. Washington wrestled with alternative images of its postwar role while London scrambled amongst the constraints of a severely diminished economy. U.S. and British interpretations of the nature of the international balance of power did not coincide until mid-1947. Moscow, for its part, was torn between its ideological faith in the inevitable growth of Anglo-American antagonism and its assertions of a threatening capitalist bloc. Finally, the Soviets themselves ensured the development of previously elusive common interests between Washington and London.

Despite a more comprehensive title, Anderson gives no further attention than does Hathaway as to how Anglo-American diplomacy was conditioned by the relations of each with the Soviet Union. An interesting point that both authors neglect concerns the contradictory positions between military and civil government officials in both Britain and the United States. Unlike the United States, the Foreign Office soon after the war subordinated the military's role in foreign policy formulation. Although British diplomats were more confrontational in dealing with the Soviets through 1946 than were their American counterparts, the situation was exactly the reverse between the two militaries. The intra-governmental disputes only added to the international confusion that both authors document. It would have been fascinating for these authors to have continued through 1948

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by which time the political landscape had cleared.

U.S. preeminence in Western diplomacy was guaranteed after three years of self-doubt and delay by the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, which led to the overshadowing of British interests in Europe and the Middle East, not to mention the Far East. But thirty-five years later, the United States finds itself exhibiting the well-known symptoms of decline: rampant inflation, chronic balance of payments difficulties, high taxation, and exposed positions abroad. It is no longer the arbiter of international trade, money, and investment. Some critics argue that accepting strategic parity with the Soviet Union, losing control over the world petroleum industry, and conceding regional dominance to local powers all indicate a great power in retreat. Hathaway and, as an adjunct, Anderson present the most relevant test case of a government's eroding ability to play an international role long taken for granted.

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Adan, Avraham (Bren). *On the Banks of the Suez: An Israeli General's Personal Account of the Yom Kippur War*. San Rafael, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1980. 479pp. \$16.95

The wars of modern Israel in general and the *Yom Kippur* War in particular have spawned any number of books purporting to articulate for a large and apparently interested audience the lessons of modern combat. Given an understandable bias on the part of this writer—after all, Israel has won all of their wars at the tactical and operational levels (the strategic decision is not in yet)—most of the best of these books have come from Israel. Almost all of Israel's combat and political commanders have written memoirs at one time or another, but it is Bren's "book" that I have waited for so impatiently.

Because of the early days of confusion in the 1973 war, the Arabs on both fronts gaining strategic and tactical surprise and the unanticipated "lacklustre" performance of the IDF in those early days on the Suez front, journalists and political-military analysts everywhere began searching for scapegoats. I expected Bren's book to penetrate some of the myths created in the search and to illuminate some of the confusion: the death of the tank, the intelligence failure, the Agranat Commission, unity of command problems, and the BarLev Line. Bren does not disappoint.

Additionally, I waited for Bren's book because the Suez campaign has more to tell us ultimately than does the war in the Golan. The battle for the Golan Heights was a personal struggle of epic proportions between individual tank crews and small units and leaders against a tenacious and ultimately unlucky Syrian attack. Chaim Herzog has written the epic poem celebrating the Golan struggle—quite literally a "Gunfight at the OK Coral." Herzog has less to say about the Suez front in that his "war story" does not illuminate the confusion surrounding certain operational issues. Bren's book presents the operational view of an operational commander who is also a master tactician. Herzog's *War of Atonement* is a dramatic elegy; Bren's book is a passionate analysis. Bren's book does not fail my anticipation here either.

In the course of detailing the day-by-day combat activities of his own division, General Adan manages to cast an objective eye, to the point of self-criticism at times, across the entire spectrum of military and political concern, from strategy through front operations to the small unit tactics of combined arms formations. General Adan was in the middle of the bickering commanders: Sharon, Gonen, Tal, Elzar, BarLev, and Dayan—an unfortunate sideshow that seems endemic to high commands. Adan tells this story as