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## Vietnam: The View from Moscow, Peking, Washington

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# 118 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

on Kitchener. Lord Kitchener of Khartoum—"K. of K."—faced formidable opponents in the brilliant Boer generals, Botha, Smuts, De Wet and De la Rey. But it was his own military obtuseness, mindless brutality, and logistic incompetence that earned Kitchener the nickname "K. of Chaos." Whatever the military value of Kitchener's policies of farm-burning and concentration camps (where over 20,000 Boer civilians died), Pakenham shows that these ruthless methods were a colossal political blunder. By them Kitchener only succeeded in undermining support for the war in England, and in increasing Boer bitterness and defiance.

The British Army learned many lessons from the Boer War, and the post-war Esher and Haldane reforms were invaluable preparation for the First World War. Unfortunately, the most important lesson—the enormous advantage repeating rifles give to a well dug-in defense—had to be learned all over again, at a dreadful cost, in the trenches of Flanders.

Although Great Britain eventually won militarily, the war forged a nation of the Boers. The Afrikaners, not the English, have dominated South African politics since the Union of South Africa was formed in 1911. In 1961 the Union became a republic and left the British Commonwealth, thus formally reversing the military decision of the Boer War.

Today the successors to the Boers who defied the whole British Empire at the turn of the century are at odds with most of the rest of the world, as well as with the black majority of their own population. In 1910 a British general found it doubtful that British regimental officers would be interested in "a funny little country like Belgium, although most of them may be buried there before they are much older." If there are officers today professionally curious about the explosive southern part of Africa, they will learn a lot from

Thomas Pakenham's admirable history of the war that created modern South Africa.

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Papp, Daniel S. *Vietnam: The View from Moscow, Peking, Washington*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1981. 257pp.

This book provides a thorough account of American, Soviet, and Chinese foreign policy toward the Vietnam conflict from its beginning at the end of World War II to the fall of Saigon in 1975. The main criticism to be made is that it does not contribute much that is new to our knowledge of the Vietnam war, but primarily resurfaces that which is already known, particularly regarding the United States. The author's discussion of Soviet foreign policy, though, is extremely good as he was able to draw upon original Soviet sources.

What is valuable about this book is the author's balanced, scholarly presentation. He points out fairly both the successes and the failures of American involvement in Vietnam. The absence of a polemical tone either in favor of or against U.S. actions is most welcome. Papp's conclusions are also clear and reasonable. Particularly important is the point that in order for American foreign policy toward the Third World to be successful, the United States must develop a greater understanding of the history and politics of other nations.

This book provides a useful, balanced, and concise account of the conflict in Vietnam and the foreign policy of the United States, the U.S.S.R., and China toward it.

MARK N. KATZ

*Rights and Responsibilities: International, Social, and Individual Dimensions*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California, Center for the Study of the American Experience, 1980. 293pp.