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National Defense

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ago: first, our overconfidence in knowing and assessing the enemy's intentions and second, the utility of ships as large, expensive, and vulnerable as battleships. In this respect, the book is unquestionably current. While the serious thread that runs through the story does not dominate it, the author's points are well-founded even if somewhat simplistically presented. Included at the book's end is an afterword that continues a brief history of the battleships that survived the Japanese attack, plus a well-known letter written by Nimitz in 1965 that addresses the totally devastating effect that the attack would have had *if* the fleet had been at sea and *if* Yamamoto had followed up the tactical advantage gained on the initial attack.

Whether the decision to republish was made following the announcement of the battleships' return to service or not is uncertain. However, casual historians, ex-Navy men (and women), and prospective *New Jersey* crewmembers will certainly find this novel's brief excursion into the past a worthwhile experience.

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Fallows, James. *National Defense*. New York: Random House, 1981. 221pp.

This book is a readable discussion of selected national defense issues. Fallows is writing for the general reader rather than for military affairs professionals. Unfortunately, his readers will receive an unbalanced and frequently biased picture of national defense.

Fallows is a journalist, not a military analyst. He notes his background in the Introduction and discloses that he has had no military service. Although Fallows says that he has been conscious of possible bias and has done his best to avoid it, this reviewer believes that he

has been unsuccessful in the attempt.

A major problem with *National Defense* is the lack of balance in its treatment of topics. Fallows draws his arguments primarily from dissidents and critics of the current defense establishment and rarely gives the other side of an argument. For example, 15 pages are devoted to a stimulating, essentially sociological examination of "the civilianized service" of the volunteer army and the various problems that it has created for the armed services. But Fallows gives only one page, and that includes his rebuttal, to what he considers the "three respectable arguments against the draft." Although he uses a variety of military and academic sources to show the pernicious effects that the volunteer army has had, no real attempt is made to examine the social costs of a peacetime draft. He does not let proponents of a volunteer army develop their case and accuses economists who favor relying on market forces to obtain military personnel of making "wooden pronouncements." (Fallows appears to be weak in his understanding of economics, and he is opposed to applying economic analysis to national defense decisions.)

While Fallows quotes liberally from interviews with critics of various aspects of contemporary national defense and from a variety of publications (mostly secondary sources) to make his points, he often quotes anonymous officers and civilian defense experts. Some of these critics of the way national defense is conducted are respected, serious analysts like Pierre Sprey and Stephen Canby. But Fallows also makes heavy use of "authorities" such as the pseudonymous "Cincinnatus." Use of such material does not inspire reader confidence in the objectivity of the author.

Fallows makes some unsubstantiated accusations that are very offensive. In discussing military careerism, he states,

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"Most of today's generals and admirals are men who got there because they were procurement wizards, or adept at punching their tickets, or careful not to make waves. Simply on a human level, I was struck by how little 'edge' most of the generals seemed to have to their characters, how bland most of them seemed . . ." (p. 122) There is no place for such *ad hominem* argument in a work that purports to be a serious study of national defense.

It is regrettable that Fallows' book is so flawed. He does highlight some important issues that must be faced in national defense policy. The quality and effectiveness of the people in the armed forces, as well as their numbers, is a vital concern. There are dangers in developing highly complex weapons systems which cost so much that too few units are procured. If weapons are very expensive to operate, training opportunities can be so constrained by Operating and Maintenance funding that readiness suffers. The fortunate absence of any actual experience with thermonuclear war makes the planning and programming decisions for strategic nuclear forces uniquely full of uncertainty.

Fallows is certainly correct in arguing that the public discussion of national defense needs more coherence, and *National Defense* contains much interesting material pertinent to these national concerns. But the work's omissions and errors prevent it from being an effective means to that end.

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Gann, Lewis H. and Duignan, Peter.
Why South Africa Will Survive: A Historical Analysis. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981. 312pp.

In their preface to *Why South Africa Will Survive*, Drs. Gann and Duignan assert that their " . . . views concerning South Africa are unpopular within the

academic establishment . . ." (p. [xi]), which, in this reviewer's judgment, somewhat overstates the case. Academia is hardly a monolithic entity and, just as survey research has shown that ROTC units are perceived differently by different faculty, depending upon academic discipline, age, sex and previous military service, so one could contend that academics have different perceptions of South Africa. Perhaps their statement might be modified to read black and liberal white American academics, the overwhelming majority of whom seem to view South Africa in a hostile manner. Those familiar with the facile remarks about the "military mind" will readily grasp the point about the heterogeneity of university and college faculties in the United States.

The authors, who have done extensive research in and on Zimbabwe and who are well known for their excellent joint volumes on the colonial services of Germany, Great Britain and Belgium, are historians by training (Gann received his doctorate at Oxford, while Duignan received his at Stanford) and both have had active military duty in the American (Duignan) and British (Gann) armies. From their vantage point in the prestigious Hoover Institution in Stanford, California, the two historians have become disenchanted with the orthodoxies propounded about South Africa by liberal academicians, and their book is a brilliantly conceived and executed counterattack. They are both accurate and fair in recapitulating the bulk of the liberal's position on South Africa, but their recapitulation suffers somewhat from their omission of the names of most of the liberal sinners. Interestingly enough, two of the six persons who read the book in manuscript form and who are thanked in the preface can be so classified. Generally speaking, one needs to hunt among the endnotes to find the villains, as they are not often displayed in the text.