

1967

Behind the Lines Hanoi

B.M. Truitt

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Truitt, B.M. (1967) "Behind the Lines Hanoi," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 20 : No. 9 , Article 17.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol20/iss9/17>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

could reconstruct these small-unit clashes in such an intimate and skillful manner. Having spent a lifetime as a highly successful military historian, author, and officer, he is well qualified to conduct an extremely interesting and objective account of irregular warfare as it is being fought in Vietnam today. The author spent 3 months in Vietnam during the summer of 1966 with the soldiers and units covered in *Battles in the Monsoon*. During this period he shared their fears and concerns, as well as their victories and defeats. Aside from being an interesting hook, it gives the reader a deeper understanding concerning the true nature of irregular warfare. It is highly recommended reading for all military officers.

J. C. MIZE
Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Army

Pell, Claiborne and Goodwin, Harold
L. Challenge of the Seven Seas. New York: Morrow, 1966. 306 p.

If the earth were a smooth sphere it would be covered by a mile and a half of water. About four-fifths of the earth's animal life is found in the sea. Earth's highest peak is Mount Everest, slightly more than 29,000 feet above sea level. Dump this giant among mountains into the Marianas Trench and its top would be more than a mile below the surface. What other facts do you know about the sea? Our authors feel a growing sense of urgency and conviction that we must begin a full program of ocean education and exploitation without delay. The public and the executive and legislative branches of the Federal and State Governments must be made keenly aware of the potential which the seas have to offer for national as well as international gain. In attempting to advance this awareness, the authors cover and discuss, although somewhat superficially, the full spectrum of events, problems, and de-

velopments relating to this vast and challenging subject. The following are a few of the major topics covered: a prediction of oceanographic prospects 30 years hence; the need for turning to the sea for food, minerals, and water; the merchant marine and its continued economic potential; international law; legitimate exploitation of the sea; and the 32 governmental agencies, departments, and offices that are involved in oceanographic activities, leading to the opinion that "the creation of a statutory base of ocean developments does not answer all questions or solve all problems."

The authors demonstrate an unusual intellectual honesty in not maintaining that they have all the answers. However, they do provide a penetrating look at both the problems and possibilities that ocean exploitation holds for not only the United States, but all the world.

R. N. PETERSON
Commander, U.S. Navy

Salisbury, Harrison E. *Behind the Lines — Hanoi*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. 243 p.

This is a rather strongly opinionated report by a "trained" observer who, it would appear, also considers himself to be a military strategist and a diplomatic tactician. To the author, apparently everything Americans have done in the conduct of the war in Vietnam has been faulty. They have erred in the targets they have designated to be important military objectives; they have underestimated the endurance and patriotism of the Vietnamese — North and South; they have failed to seek a negotiated settlement with the enemy. *Behind the Lines — Hanoi* is readable and provocative, if one can tolerate the harsh criticism of American bombing and the remarks inferring possibly questionable motives on the part of U.S. leaders. The book covers the observations and

impressions that the writer, a *New York Times* correspondent, experienced during 2 brief weeks in the Hanoi area between 23 December 1966 and 7 January 1967. While in North Vietnam the author spoke to only one major leader, Premier Pham Van Dong, who stated, "it is a sacred war for Independence, Freedom, Life." He declared that America's air war had met with both military and propaganda defeats. He impressed the interviewer with the indomitable spirit of the North Vietnamese. Most of them bear arms; the teenagers are fiercely patriotic; all are persuaded that there will be another great victory as at Dien Bien Phu over the French. Maintaining that the United States is unable to achieve a military victory despite continued escalation, Dong said that "the key to peace lies with Washington where the first move must be to cease bombing North Vietnam." Mr. Salisbury points out that bombing North Vietnam has only stiffened Hanoi's resistance. He considers Americans remiss not to realize the divergencies between "Socialism in the North and Democracy in the South," and feels they do not understand the political programs and problems of reunification in Vietnam. He believes Hanoi is now ready to talk terms in private and with no third party involved. The author bases this view on the chaos in China and the feeling that Hanoi has no wish to come under that country's domination. If Peking felt that Hanoi was pro-Soviet or that China should intervene in the war against the United States, it would send its "volunteers" into the fray. Salisbury ventures to declare that the U.S. military might actually be seeking such involvement in order to crush China. He feels that China is prepared, even in the event of a nuclear attack, and that it should be a challenge to American diplomats to deal with China and to avoid

a war with her. The writer does not think that the United States has anything to gain even if she defeats North Vietnam and that hence she should try to reach an honorable and reasonable settlement with Hanoi before it is too late.

B. M. TRUITT
Commander, U.S. Navy

Simpson, Smith. *Anatomy of the State Department*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967. 285 p.

This is another analysis of the ills of the State Department. It has the virtue of having been written by a recently retired officer of the diplomatic service, and thus the examples used by the author to support his views are generally accurate. Furthermore, the author has added a considerable amount of research to his extensive firsthand knowledge and experience, but — unfortunately — he becomes a victim of the very "mystifying phenomenon" he warns about: the tendency of each officer to characterize the diplomatic establishment in a different way.

Quoting Plato, the author begins his criticism with "why." Why is there so much doubt about the State Department? The reader is led through a searching, but often slanted, analysis of the inner workings of the Department of State and the Foreign Service of the United States. The State Department is compared with other Federal agencies to show its strengths and weaknesses. State's relations with the Congress and the White House are found wanting. Congress is praised for prodding that brought about reforms in State, but is chastised for not providing the support that the author considers State should have. Military officers will probably be favorably impressed by the author's high regard for the manner in which the military establishment operates, particularly with