

THREE PERSPECTIVES ON THE NEW TERRORISM

A Review Essay

BY MARK J. ROBERTS

Countering the New Terrorism

Edited by Ian O. Lesser
Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1999.
160 pp. \$15.00
[ISBN 0-8330-2667-4]

The New Terrorism and the Arms of Mass Destruction

by Walter Laqueur
New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
320 pp. \$28.00
[ISBN 0-6746-1790-8]

Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America, and International Terrorism

by John K. Cooley
Sterling, Va.: Pluto Press, 1999.
256 pp. \$29.95
[ISBN 0-7453-1328-0]

Although terrorism has been an established variety of political violence for eons, it remains a highly charged phenomenon, largely because—through media outlets—it enjoys an instantaneous global audience. National leaders often get the news of terrorist events at the same time as policy analysts, scholars, and journalists who, in turn, give television and press interviews that influence the way in which officialdom reacts to those events.

Three recent books on terrorism present the perspectives of the policy analyst, scholar, and journalist. While distinct, these views reveal common views on the current terrorist threat. The place of Islam in each work is noteworthy. All three recognize the expansion of Islamic networks around the world and agree that the extremists are not indicative of Islam as a whole and that many ideologues of all political and religious stripes engage in terrorist acts to achieve their goals.

The authors trace the roots of the current threat to the Soviet withdrawal

from Afghanistan, which left mujahedin with weapons, training, and a fervent ideology—yet with no enemy to fight. Although some remained in Afghanistan and Pakistan, others went to Kashmir, Yemen, Gaza, the West Bank, Egypt, Algeria, Bosnia, and the Philippines. There they preached their brand of Islam in an attempt to purify the world through *jihad*. Their efforts impacted the United States through bombings of the World Trade Center in New York (1993), the American program manager's office for the Saudi Arabia National Guard in Riyadh (1995), and U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam (1998). They also hatched abortive operations, such as the Manila air conspiracy and the New York monuments plot, which could have caused mass hysteria if successful. Islamists also participated in the Luxor massacre (1997) and the Algerian civil war.

International terrorism was transformed dramatically by the mujahedin diaspora. Today, it relies less on hierarchical organizations than loose networks. Older groups were relatively small and concentrated; current networks are very numerous and have global reach.

Networking as an organizational technique means power migrates to nonstate actors who, in turn, morph into sprawling transnational webs, providing more flexibility and responsiveness. Overall networking demonstrates that terrorism is not static, but dynamic and adaptable. Its leaders are resourceful. Realizing they can't directly challenge U.S. political and military power, terrorists appeal to asymmetric warfare as a means to leverage differences.

A terrorist network has built-in deniability, making it difficult to identify leaders, actors, structure, capabilities, and intentions. Assigning responsibility for terrorism to any agency can be enigmatic because jurisdictional authority may not be well defined. As a result, counterterrorism information gathering and operational efforts can become mired in bureaucratic infighting.

Disturbingly, while the frequency of terrorist incidents has actually declined, their lethality has increased through technological advances. This development, coupled with access to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), constitutes a new security challenge. Under this paradigm, terrorism is adaptive; when targets such as Khobar Towers are hardened, attackers select softer targets like embassies. The new generation of terrorists has learned

much from the past: for instance, by not claiming credit for their actions they avoid retaliation. In addition, many groups today don't seem concerned over the reaction to collateral damage. The trend is toward indiscriminate violence with fewer constraints.

One helpful work on this subject is a publication of the RAND Corporation, *Countering the New Terrorism*, a series of essays edited by Ian Lesser. The contributions cover the current scene and directions that terrorism is taking as well as recommendations on a national counterterrorism strategy. The foreword to the book ponders how to assess the impact of potential terrorist acts. It warns there is danger when "speculation becomes the basis for launching costly efforts to prevent 'what ifs,' or worse, when policymakers believe that highly publicized preventive or mitigation efforts will deter such adversaries."

Through the prism of networks and the information age, this volume provides illustrations of what may occur. The contributors suggest decisionmakers must learn to deal with cyberwar, netwar, and nonstate actors before the terrorist threat worsens. Networks are comprehensive since they mix doctrinal, organizational, strategic, tactical, and technical innovations for both offense and defense. They are dangerous because nonstate, paramilitary, and irregular forces can utilize them to commit acts of terror. Terrorist networks can combine into hybrids. The authors warn that terrorist attacks in the information age may come in swarms, dispersed nodes of a network converging on a target from multiple sources with the ability to rapidly coalesce, disperse, and regroup. The mujahedin used offensive and defensive means in Afghanistan which proved to be effective on the battlefield.

The intention and actions of the new terrorism have more universal and lethal implications. Traditional views of personal safety have been challenged as targeting becomes increasingly indiscriminate, while the privatization of security has made security-related technical expertise and equipment available to terrorists.

Although the United States is a target of terrorist groups, neither its stability nor survival is threatened. Yet terrorism can only be contained and managed—not eliminated. A counterterrorism strategy must be developed to reduce systemic causes through political and economic reform, deter terrorists and their sponsors, reduce the risk of super terrorism, and retaliate when deterrence fails.

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Countering the New Terrorism is an insightful and practical volume for those involved in the world of counter-terrorist policy.

The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction by Walter Laqueur is largely historical in its basic approach and is descriptive rather than prospective. The author, who is widely published on the subject, examines the background of the terrorist trends presented.

Advances in technology have made terrorism far more lethal. Though Laqueur doubts that most terrorist groups will use WMD in the near future, he concludes many chapters by pointing out that such weaponry is increasingly available to rogue actors.

The author explores the development of WMD, including chemical, biological, nuclear, and cyber-terror threats. Among varied historical examples, he finds that the attack by Aum Shinrikyo on the Tokyo subway in 1995 was the first event which provided the world with an appreciation of the magnitude of destruction that even a small group can inflict. Laqueur further notes that Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States cannot account for much of the fissile material in the former Soviet arsenal and considers what might have happened if the bombers of the World Trade Center had used WMD.

"Extending understanding to the terrorist by advocating cultural and moral relativism," in the words of the author, "is easy in the safety of Western universities, but the perspective of the victimized residents of Algerian and Afghan villages or the inhabitants of Rwanda is likely to be different." His prognosis is that as long as there are ideologies and creeds to drive perpetrators, acts of terror will become worse. Terrorism has evolved from limited to "total and indiscriminate warfare" with the goal of killing and maiming as many as possible. What might happen if WMD are employed is chilling.

Although *The New Terrorism* is a valuable book, it does not proffer recommendations on dealing with terrorism and WMD. Its real utility lies in identifying terrorist trends and providing the background to conduct further research.

Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism by John K. Cooley is the most readable of the books under review. A journalist with years of experience, Cooley knows how to report his story. He describes the "strange love



TOPOFF, counterterrorism exercise.

1st Combat Camera Squadron (Myles Cullen)

affair which went disastrously wrong," the U.S. Cold War partnership with "some of the most conservative and fanatical followers of Islam." Although this book is marred by typographical and factual errors, it helps the reader to understand so-called Afghan terrorist networks because it outlines their origins, development, and ideology.

When Afghanistan was invaded in 1979, the United States worked with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to establish an anticommunist proxy force. In comparing American and Soviet perspectives after the invasion, Cooley maintains that both sides held a range of mutual misperceptions, leading Washington to initiate a covert plan. Soon money and arms began flowing via Egypt to Pakistan, where mujahedin converged for training.

The Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate insisted on handling training and arms distribution for the Afghan resistance, while appropriating weapons that Cooley alleges later made their way to various conflicts around the world. Young members of mujahedin units organized into self-contained network cells, which served well during the war and survive today. Known as *anquds* (grapes in Arabic), these cells function interdependently or independently and, like grapes, if some are removed the others can continue operating.

With the gift of hindsight, Cooley states that the Carter, Reagan, and Bush administrations failed to foresee how the anti-Soviet proxy war would lead to a worldwide terrorist blowback. He criticizes these errors in judgment and blames them for creating the networks. Though providing a useful account of the events leading to the predicament posed by mujahedin, *Unholy Wars* offers no solutions on how to defeat terrorist networks. Unfortunately, the author's biases detract from an otherwise important narrative on the origins of international terrorist networks.

In examining the new terrorism, all three books demonstrate that the threat has evolved and requires innovative strategies to counter it. Each is a valuable source for practitioners and students, but only *Countering the New Terrorism* offers recommendations for developing a counterterrorist strategy. However, any strategy would benefit from the policy, academic, and media perspectives found in these books. The critical issue is whether the United States and its allies can keep pace with emerging trends in terrorism and respond with proactive rather than reactive measures.

JFQ

THE NAVY AND THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

A Review Essay by

W. SPENCER JOHNSON

Sword and Shield: The United States Navy and the Persian Gulf War

by Edward J. Marolda and Robert J. Schneller, Jr.

Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1998.

517 pp. \$59.00

[ISBN 0-16-049476-1]

Desert Shield at Sea: What the Navy Really Did

by Marvin Pokrant

Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998.

265 pp. \$59.95

[ISBN 0-313-31023-8]

Desert Storm at Sea: What the Navy Really Did

by Marvin Pokrant

Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999.

329 pp. \$59.95

[ISBN 0-313-31024-6]

Although much has been written about the Persian Gulf War on the ground and in the air, the naval side of Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm has been publicly chronicled only recently. Two new works analyze the conduct of the operations, laying bare the shortcomings of the Navy and the other services, and examine theater joint command and control.

Sword and Shield: The United States Navy and the Persian Gulf War is written by Edward Marolda and Robert Schneller, both members of the Naval Historical Center. Highly readable and profusely illustrated, it is a must for students of the war and military professionals with an interest in joint operations. It draws on hundreds of official reports, command histories, lessons learned, archival material, personal communications, and oral interviews. The book offers a comprehensive survey of events leading to the conflict, operations conducted afloat and ashore by the Navy and Marine Corps,

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and regional developments in the aftermath of the war.

After introducing the strategic and operational orientation of the Navy in the final years of the Cold War, including the influence of maritime strategy and the conduct of operations largely independent of the other services, the authors describe the Navy presence in the Persian Gulf since 1949 and the diplomatic events which resulted in the invasion of Kuwait.

Curiously, movement of maritime prepositioning ships from Diego Garcia and Guam was considered as a deterrent against an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia, but it was not ordered because of a desire to "avoid an ill-considered use of force." This failure can be attributed to oversight by planners at U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) in the first week of the war, and perhaps to the fact that the ships at Diego Garcia and Guam belonged to U.S. Atlantic Command and U.S. Pacific Command. The ships were not ordered to sail until August 8, 1990, a delay of six days after the invasion of Kuwait; the first of them did not land their cargo—a Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB)—until August 15. Thus the United States missed an opportunity to put ground forces into Saudi Arabia earlier to reinforce a brigade of the 82^d Airborne Division that had already been dispatched. This delay could have been fatal had Iraq moved south and captured al-Jubayl and ad-Dammam, the principal ports for the subsequent buildup and sustainment of the war. Indeed, the initial task assigned to the Marines on marrying up with their equipment was to block any Iraqi attempt to capture al-Jubayl.

The first half of *Sword and Shield* details actions during Desert Shield. The authors cover the initial actions in selecting the commander, Seventh Fleet, Vice Admiral Henry Mauz (who was relieved in a normal rotation on December 1 by Vice Admiral Stanley Arthur) to lead the naval forces in the Gulf, superseding a Hawaii-based one-star admiral as naval component commander (COMNAVCENT). These officers established a theater command structure for carrier battle forces operating in the Red Sea, North Arabian Sea, and Persian Gulf, as well as for maritime intercept operations, amphibious forces, mine countermeasure elements, air defense, surface operations, logistics, and the bridge of ships which delivered 95 percent of the materials for the war effort.

By August 7, *USS Independence* in the North Arabian Sea and *USS Eisenhower* in

the Red Sea were close enough to launch carrier aircraft in support of the airfields and arriving forces. They were critical in defending Saudi Arabia because the initial tactical aircraft deployed by the Air Force were short of spare parts, base support, fuel, and air-to-ground munitions. Iraqi ground forces could only be stopped by airpower, and offshore naval air with air-to-ground munitions had the preponderance of that capability, although the carriers were short of precision guided munitions throughout the war. By the end of August, the carrier *USS Saratoga* joined *USS Eisenhower* in the Red Sea, with the battleship *USS Wisconsin* part of the growing force of cruisers, destroyers, frigates, and amphibious and service ships present in theater or en route. The naval presence afloat eventually included six carrier battle groups, two battleships, 31 amphibious ships (with 17,000 embarked marines), and dozens of cruisers, destroyers, frigates, and mine countermeasure ships in addition to fleet logistics, repair, and salvage vessels. In addition, almost half of the Marine Corps was deployed to the Gulf. Allied naval contributions swelled the number of ships employed there and in other waters as part of the maritime intercept operations.

With compelling breadth and sweep, *Sword and Shield* moves chronologically, describing joint and combined strike operations, contributions to the "Great Scud Hunt," surface actions that by early February 1991 annihilated any Iraqi surface naval threat, air defense operations against the Iraqis and the latent danger of Iranian intervention, mine countermeasures to prepare landing areas for amphibious operations and enable offshore gunfire support, planning and rehearsals for amphibious operations, and the subsequent amphibious feint that tied down seven Iraqi divisions awaiting a well advertised attack. Individual unit actions and the roles played by commanders and warfighters who flew missions and braved mine, missile, and air threats provide exciting reading. Operational events ashore in the strategic air campaign, the preparation of the battlefield, and the spectacular ground operations are never far in the background.

Marvin Pokrant, a military operations research analyst, offers a more focused and analytical account of the war in a two-volume work entitled *Desert Shield at Sea: What the Navy Really Did*, and *Desert Storm at Sea: What the*



U.S. Navy (Brad Dillon)

Navy Really Did. Serving as a field representative of the Center for Naval Analyses on the staff of COMNAVCENT, he attended critical meetings and observed the daily conduct of naval operations. After the war, Pokrant headed a team that reconstructed naval operations during the Persian Gulf War and analyzed related issues.

Desert Shield at Sea leads the reader through the buildup and preparation phase, including initial planning for joint operations to defend Saudi Arabia and redress the occupation of Kuwait. The author thoroughly details the international maritime intercept operations that were begun almost immediately. Using a loose cooperative command arrangement, naval forces successfully enforced the embargo against Iraq, although participating nations often had differing rules of engagement. Indeed, the authorization for a U.S. warship to use disabling force to halt an evading vessel was so tightly held that consent from the National Command Authorities was required. Eventually the need was overcome when Britain devised a means of putting ship control teams of Royal Marine commandos, SEALs, coastguardsmen, and marines aboard evasive ships from helicopters, thereby allowing inspections for contraband without using disabling force and the perception of damage to civilian vessels.

The decision by Admiral Mauz to remain afloat in the Seventh Fleet flagship rather than set up headquarters

ashore in Riyadh with CINCENT, General Norman Schwarzkopf, is evidence of difficulties in command coordination. His rationale was the lack of communications in Riyadh that would be required to direct fleet operations, which the flagship provided. But the decision to remain at sea meant COMNAVCENT communications with CINCENT headquarters were often strained by inadequate capacity. Pokrant conjectures that in deciding to stay afloat, Mauz viewed his role as primarily that of a traditional fleet commander. Admiral Arthur, a former COMNAVCENT as a rear admiral, saw his role more as naval component commander and an immediate source of advice on naval forces, the role that he argued for in the postwar reevaluation of the rank and role of COMNAVCENT. However, he also remained at sea because of the connectivity problems entailed in going ashore. COMNAVCENT established a fleet liaison element at CINCENT headquarters, but because of the relatively junior rank of flag officers who filled this position and the paucity of naval officers on the CINCENT staff and in the liaison unit, the Navy was not admitted to the CINC's inner circle, leading to deficiencies in understanding naval capabilities, needs, and potential.

Integrating the Navy into the centralized system for conducting air operations was another problem. Lieutenant

General Charles Horner, the joint force air component commander (JFACC), used a computer assisted force management system that centralized the control of air operations by preplanning aerial sorties for a 24-hour period, 72 hours in advance, and promulgating a detailed and lengthy air tasking order (ATO). In his initial air operations and strike planning meeting with Horner, Mauz argued for a route package system under which geographic areas would be assigned to each service for the autonomous conduct of air operations. He felt that would simplify planning and minimize blue-on-blue attacks on friendly aircraft. Horner rejected this proposal.

The Navy had neither the air planning representation at U.S. Central Command Air Forces (CENTAF) headquarters nor satellite connectivity to readily adapt to the centralized ATO concept. Moreover, naval doctrine called for decentralized air warfare planning aboard each carrier, which was inimical to the centralized system used by the Air Force. The Navy also thought the 72-hour ATO planning requirement too inflexible for strike and restrike operations. The Red Sea carrier battle force, which depended on Air Force tanking to reach its targets, became adept at integrating its operations into the ATO system and exercised with the Air Force before the air war. Carriers in the Persian Gulf, however, were not required to enter over-water operations into ATOs and chose to act more independently, presenting integration problems for orders when the air war began in January.

Navy-Air Force friction also arose over the allocation of tankers for naval aircraft and rules of engagement promulgated by JFACC. In the former case the Navy suspected that priority for aerial tanking was assigned to the Air Force to enhance its role in strike and air defense missions over naval aircraft. Even though Washington committed six carriers to the war, Air Force tanker allocations would only support two carriers in the Red Sea and two in the North Arabian Sea. This prompted the Navy to operate four carriers in the confined waters of the Persian Gulf to reduce the need for Air Force refueling while maximizing their own airpower contributions.

Suspicion of Air Force intentions was further aroused in the Navy when JFACC issued rules which specified that to avoid firing on friendly aircraft, aerial targets could not be engaged beyond visual range without a second electronic means of verifying their identity. While Air Force fighters had this capability,

Navy fighters did not and were thus precluded from filling choice air defense assignments.

Finally, differences in the mechanical means used in Navy and Air Force aerial refueling and the Navy need for JP-5 fuel for carrier safety instead of more volatile Air Force JP-8 caused interservice friction. The Navy is credited, however, with planning and conducting a large portion of the suppression of enemy air defense missions that enabled safe entry and operations of strike packages over enemy air space. In addition, after initial high level reservations, Tomahawks were used to strike heavily defended targets such as Baghdad in daylight while F-117s did the same at night, bringing the conflict home to the Iraqis without respite and at minimum risk. This was joint warfare at its best.

Pokrant divides the narrative in *Desert Storm at Sea* by mission areas, giving detailed and critical accounts of naval operations as planned and carried out. A 17,000-strong amphibious force was assembled and three landing sites selected, none with good topography or landing conditions. Some commentators thought an amphibious operation was essentially dismissed in Washington as early as October and later in planning conferences in Riyadh when the CINC expressed concerns about heavy casualties. The author argues that the idea was yet again discarded at a conference in early February 1991 when minesweeping, pre-assault preparations, gunfire support requirements, and assault were thoroughly briefed and the complexities of amphibious operations were laid out. Nevertheless the Navy was ordered to prepare an assault if a seaward flanking attack was required to relieve pressure on the Marines or fast moving forces needed a logistics lifeline. The plan to demonstrate considerable amphibious capability was successful in immobilizing Iraqi divisions set to repel the anticipated assault. In the end, the order to offload an MEB

from the afloat Marine force prior to G-day to reinforce marines ashore obviated the possibility of an amphibious assault.

The need for mine warfare operations was understood by few, although the only damage to Navy ships came from mine strikes. Efforts to obtain better intelligence on Iraqi minefields were inhibited both by denying flights into the northern Gulf to avoid inciting a premature Iraqi reaction and the lack of priority for satellite coverage of the area. Mine warfare vessels were inadequate for hunting and clearing mines because of their excessive magnetic and sound signatures, years of technological neglect by the Navy, and an over reliance on Royal Navy minesweepers and other coalition assets, which were up to the challenge of clearance operations.

Air defense was not well integrated because of procedures that required separate call signs for Navy and Air Force controllers, airborne warning and control system (AWACS) orbits and reporting procedures, and poor communications links between AWACS aircraft and Aegis air defense control ships. Even so, Navy air defense commanders monitored the return of thousands of strike sorties without any blue-on-blue engagements. The only two Iraqi aircraft that ventured out to threaten Navy ships were downed by Saudi fighters.

In the last two chapters of *Desert Storm at Sea* ("Observations on Jointness" and "What the Navy Can Do to Be More Joint"), Pokrant states that many of the doctrinal, attitudinal, equipment, and interoperability problems faced in the Persian Gulf War have been resolved. However, he also notes that more needs to be done in developing interoperable systems, ensuring that naval officers seek and benefit from joint duty assignments, creating trust between the services, developing joint tactics and doctrine, and managing large scale contingencies. **JFQ**

WHY I LIKE "IKE"

A Book Review by

DAVID JABLONSKY

Eisenhower

by Geoffrey Perret

New York: Random House, 1999.

685 pp. \$35.00

[ISBN 0-375-50046-4]

In his biography of Eisenhower, Geoffrey Perret provides a comprehensive examination of the soldier-statesman based on a diverse combination of primary sources, memoirs, and secondary scholarly studies. It is a well-crafted mix of the personal and official that touches on much that is familiar but also offers fresh insights into a remarkable life.

The author begins with a fine portrait of Dwight Eisenhower as a youth in Abilene, Texas, around the turn of the century. There is the well-known tale of the highly competitive Eisenhower brothers growing up on the poor side of town. But Perret delves below the surface, looking at the fierce competition between Ike and his oldest brother, Edgar, as well as the truly deep friendship between Ike and Milton, the youngest brother, an intellectual and temperamental link that sustained Eisenhower throughout his life.

Then there is Ike's relationship with his parents. A succinct, well etched description of the stable, tough, and eternally optimistic Ida explains his life-long devotion to his mother. The author also makes a compelling though more tenuous case for the long shadow of the father, whose resort to the lash he associates with Dwight's emotional stiffness and difficulty in expressing his feelings to his wife and surviving son.

The account of Eisenhower's career as a cadet at West Point and officer during the interwar years also covers familiar territory. Perret retells the story against the backdrop of the Army and embellishes it with insights into Eisenhower's character and development. Contrary to the popular belief, Ike emerges consistently at the top of his profession at this time and as working hard to remain in that position. By the end of World War I, he was the highest ranking officer among

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Look for
Joint Force Quarterly
on the Joint Doctrine Web site

http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/index.htm

his class from the U.S. Military Academy and the only one to be awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. His performance throughout the interwar period brought assignments of greater responsibility and attracted a succession of influential mentors, from Fox Conner and John Pershing to Douglas MacArthur and George Marshall. Conner was particularly important in expanding Eisenhower's horizon and fostering his proven love of reading with the works of Plato, Cicero, Clausewitz, and *The Federalist Papers*. Three years after parting from Conner, Ike was graduated at the top of his class from both the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College.

As a result, when Eisenhower reported to the War Plans Division at the War Department in 1941, he was known and respected. Marshall's reorganization of the War Department had great implications for the future relationship of the Chief of Staff and his protege; as he moved Ike up the command ladder, the new organization ensured that he would not operate in the field as independently from the Chief of Staff as Pershing had during World War I.

Perret skillfully shows how, as Conner predicted, internal struggles with allies could consume as much time and energy as the enemy for a combined commander. This was particularly the case with regard to the British high command, which had its own outlook on organization and strategy. In the author's view, Ike generally came out on top in most Allied debates, particularly those involving Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery. Along the way, there are insightful descriptions and analyses of both major actors and key strategic events. Walter ("Beetle") Smith, for instance, the tough, acerbic, and absolutely essential chief of staff for Eisenhower's organization, is depicted in his "martyrdom to duodenal ulcers." And Ike's failure in Tunisia in December 1942 is juxtaposed with the Soviet victory at Stalingrad in February 1943 as Adolf Hitler, always incapable of prioritizing strategic choices, diverted troops and planes to North Africa. Finally, there is Eisenhower at his best leading up to Overlord, insisting on controlling air assets to bomb the French transportation network and ready to take complete responsibility if the cross channel operation should fail.

These triumphs are balanced by Perret's objectivity. He notes the flaws in Ike's strategic assessment in War Plans



Eisenhower with Montgomery in Normandy.

National Archives

Division, to include the initial opposition to a buildup of forces in Britain for a cross channel invasion. And there is Eisenhower's tendency to remain loyal to undeserving friends such as Mark Clark, who never lost his own "gigantic view of the Clark role in history." Similarly, Ike was capable of monumental misjudgments, none more critical than when he passed over abler men to choose Lloyd Fredendall as a key unit commander in North Africa. Even after Fredendall suffered serious defeats, Eisenhower supported his subordinate and recommended him for a third star. Only after General Harold Alexander brought the matter to his attention—"I'm sure you must have better men than that"—did Ike remove Fredendall.

Perret also depicts the Eisenhower administration with equal balance. Contrary to earlier analysis, Ike is revealed as an activist President initially bent on overhauling and modernizing the antiquated organization that he inherited at the White House. "If I'd had a staff like this during the war," he said, "we'd have lost it." The result was the establishment of a staff secretariat and the appointment of a decisive chief of staff in Sherman Adams, who was so blunt and tactless that, according to the author, he "made Beetle Smith look like an honors graduate of charm school." At the same time, Eisenhower began to use the National Security Council on a regular basis and was the first to name an assistant to the President for national security affairs, a

post of increasing prominence in subsequent years. Most importantly, Eisenhower translated his fundamental belief that economic solvency was a basic component of national security into a new strategy. The author details how Ike organized different task forces to examine and brief alternative security strategies. After one all-day session of such briefings, George Kennan observed that the President had "asserted his intellectual ascendancy over every man in the room." It resulted in a move away from a strategic focus on maximum danger in NSC 68 toward nuclear deterrence in NSC 162/2.

Eisenhower's involvement in foreign affairs is documented, from the crises over Quemoy and Matsu ("those damned little offshore islands"), Suez and the invasion of Lebanon, to the U-2 policy that undermined the Paris Summit. In these events Eisenhower did not hold his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, in nearly as much regard as Dulles held himself. For Perret, Dulles is closer to a professor who impresses his students than to a cold warrior ready to make decisions.

At the same time, even in emphasizing an activist President in domestic and foreign affairs, this biographer does not lose an objective touch. In the civil rights arena, there was little room for maneuver; but the Eisenhower administration could have done more. And the President's refusal to sign the Geneva Accords after Dien Bien Phu had far-reaching implications that Perret sees as the visceral anticommunism of Dulles and Eisenhower, represented in the Domino Theory. Finally, there is Ike retreating to Olympian aloofness under the onslaught of McCarthyism, a stance that did not alter even when Senator Joe McCarthy self-destructed on national television. "I think I'll just let [McCarthy] kill himself," the President commented.

In sum, the author has produced a sweeping yet compact account of a complex personality. Behind the infectious grin that endeared him to generations of Americans was a steely intelligence and driving ambition. There is an element of luck in such a career. But overall, Eisenhower made his own luck and rose above the level of events throughout his life. "There was in his mind and spirit," Perret concludes, "a force that was nearly always bigger than his circumstances." **JFQ**

BONAPARTE AS MILITARY THEORIST

A Book Review

BY ROBERT A. DOUGHTY

Napoleon on the Art of War

Edited by Jay Luvaas

The Free Press: New York, 1999.

288 pp. \$25.00

[ISBN 0-684-85185-7]

Jay Luvaas has searched for statements by Napoleon on war for most of his professional career, leading him to comb libraries and collections and sort through thousands of documents and publications. This obsession came to the reviewer's attention in the early 1970s when Luvaas was a visiting professor in the Department of History at West Point. Our discussions twenty-five years later when he served on the faculty of the U.S. Army War College revealed that little had changed with regard to this quest. His delight in recounting Napoleon's contribution to the operational level of war is unforgettable. Through the years Luvaas has never wavered in believing that all officers should study the ideas of a commander who could so profoundly motivate his soldiers whether on the verge of spectacular victories or the precipice of crushing defeats.

In these days of the new world order, the new paradigm, and the new economy, some may wonder why Luvaas or anyone else consumed by precision maneuver, brigade combat teams, or cyberspace should be interested in quotations from a leader who never heard a radio, much less touched a computer. The answer becomes obvious to readers of *Napoleon on the Art of War*, for Bonaparte understood not only how war was waged but also the essential role of humans in that enterprise. In addition, Napoleon was a master at shaping forces to obtain the maximum benefit from soldiers, technology, and logistics. He knew that "In war only the commander understands the importance of certain things, and he alone, through his will and superior insight, conquers and surmounts all difficulties. An army is nothing without the head."

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To enable readers to grasp "the importance of certain things" and the potential of the "head" in an army, Luvaas has divided his book into ten chapters, each focused on a topic such as military education, strategy, or the army in the field. He connects the quotations in a narrative, succinctly capturing the essence of Napoleon's thought. The result is a marvelous volume that reads as if it was written by Bonaparte himself.

In technical terms, Napoleon was a master of his profession. Whether commenting on the advantages of forming infantry in two ranks or the challenges of occupying conquered territory, he had a command of technical details on everything from platoon tactics to national military strategy. When it came to organizational detail, he displayed impressive knowledge, not only of artillery and other weaponry, but of tactical units, particularly in organizing, equipping, and employing a corps. His brilliance is also apparent in his commentary about theorists such as Guibert and commanders like Alexander the Great. Rarely has any military leader had such a remarkable proficiency in every aspect of the art of war.

One reason for Napoleon's success was that he understood human nature, particularly the motivation and constitution of soldiers. His grasp is evident in statements such as, "We need men and not boys. No one is braver than our young people, but lacking fortitude they fill the hospitals, and even at the slightest uncertainty they show the character of their age." He also wrote, "An army composed of men from different nations will not hesitate to commit foolish mistakes. . . . The military art would be to expect these mistakes and to benefit from them."

Napoleon's insights into what makes people tick are apparent in his ideas on conducting an occupation: "As a

general rule, it is a political principle to create a good impression of your benevolence after having demonstrated you can be severe with troublemakers." Furthermore, he knew too well that success as a commander depended on soldiers having a greater will to fight than their opponents.

But the most interesting of Napoleon's statements concern the art of war and address the timeless problem of gaining victory and avoiding defeat. "In war it is necessary to have sound and precise ideas. It is with safe and well-conceived plans that we win wars." And, he continued, "With a great general there is never a continuity of great actions which can be attributed to chance and good luck; they always are the result of calculations and genius." Bonaparte also asserted, "In war nothing is accomplished except through calculation. Anything that is not profoundly meditated in its details will produce no result." In addition, he commented, "The art of war is a simple art and everything depends upon execution: there is nothing vague, everything is common sense, and nothing about it is ideological." As many historians attest, he achieved several important victories through an ability to innovate on the battlefield, but innovation was always rooted in meticulous planning and energetic execution. For Napoleon, the art of war was grounded in the science of preparation.

In the final analysis, this book is a must for all professionals concerned with the challenges of waging war, and we are indebted to Jay Luvaas for working so many years to make it available. Although Napoleon's words were recorded two centuries ago, they remain valid now. Even those contemplating the depths of cyberspace may learn from his thoughts. Technology, terrain, and the swirling currents of history have changed how wars are fought, but they always have been and always will be fought by human beings. **JFQ**

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