

Osama bin-Laden Interview, June 1999: Entering the Mind of an Adversary

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Osama bin-Laden's news medium of choice, the Al-Jazeera television network, has enabled him to converse in a religious style of Arabic used by learned men of theology in Saudi Arabia. Al-Jazeera correspondent Jamal Abdul-Latif Ismail, author of *Bin Laden, Al-Jazeera, and I* (Bin Laaden wa al-Jazeera wa Ana) conducted a most insightful interview with Bin-Laden in 1999.¹ This essay focuses on excerpts from this interview and helps the reader understand the meaning behind Bin-Laden's words.

Getting the Interview

Ismail begins his book by describing how he obtained interviews with Bin-Laden and the number two al-Qaeda leader, Ayman Al-Zawahiri. Getting to Bin-Laden involved many false starts and required working with contacts in London, Cairo, and Peshawar: an al-Qaeda operative would set up an interview with Ismail then abruptly cancel it. It is important to understand that Ayman Al-Zawahiri and members of his Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) orchestrated media events. Al-Zawahiri, who has a keen understanding of the power of media, imagery, and slogans, is a prolific writer about the past and future of Islamic militancy. His book *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner* is required reading for those who wish to understand al-Qaeda.² The book explains the rationale behind Al-Zawahiri's strategic shift from attacking Egypt to directly attacking the United States.

Ismail dealt with several al-Qaeda front men before landing the interview with Bin-Laden. Meetings at hotels and telephone calls at specified times finally resulted in Ismail's contact with Al-Zawahiri via tele-

phone. Ismail was taken to many safe houses and never knew if he was temporarily stopping for a rest or if this was the place his interview would occur. It took 16 months to secure a face-to-face interview with Bin-Laden. Bin-Laden no longer grants personal interviews, no doubt because al-Qaeda used a hit team posing as a television crew on 9 September 2001 to assassinate Northern Alliance commander Ahmed Shah Masood in Afghanistan. Bin-Laden now videotapes his messages.

Interview and Assessment

Ismail's interview affords much insight into Bin-Laden's ego, mind, and psyche. Bin-Laden uses symbols and imagery that requires interpretation and chooses words carefully to create a mystique and image for Arab audiences. Excerpts from the interview follow:

Ismail: Who is Osama bin-Laden, and what does he want?

Bin-Laden: Praise be to Allah, Usama bin Muhammed bin Awad bin Laden was by Allah's grace born to Muslim parents on the Arabian Peninsula in the Malaaz District of Riyadh in the year 1377 Hejirah [1957]. With Allah's grace, we went to Medina 6 months after my birth. I then spent my entire life in the Hijaz between Mecca, Medina, and Jeddah.

My father Sheikh Muhammed bin Awad bin Laden was born in Hadramaut and left to work in the Hijaz over 70 years ago. With Allah's grace, he was given an honor not bestowed on any contractor and that is the building of the holy mosque in Mecca, which contains the blessed Kaaba. [Muslims believe this is the first House of God established by the Prophet Abraham.] He then

undertook the construction of the prophet's mosque in Medina. When the Jordanian government announced a bid to renovate the Dome of the Rock Mosque in Jerusalem, he gathered all his architects and engineers and asked them to place a bid without any profit. They insisted that they could submit a competitive bid and make a little profit on this project. So, may Allah have mercy on his soul, he further reduced the bid in order to guarantee serving this project. It is with Allah's grace that he would occasionally pray in all three mosques in one day. It is no secret that he was one of the founders of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's infrastructure.

After this I studied in the Hijaz and majored in economics at Jeddah University or what is called King Abdul-Aziz University, I learned early the inner-workings of my father's company, may Allah bless him, despite the fact that my father died when I was 10 years old, this is briefly who Osama bin-Laden is.

Assessment: What Bin-Laden does and does not reveal about himself speaks volumes. He opens his interview by giving his full name, which establishes his Arab and Islamic bloodline. He never mentions Saudi Arabia by name; he refers to the country as the Arabian Peninsula. Bin-Laden wants his audience to understand that he grew up in the Hijaz province, where Islam was founded 14 centuries ago.

Bin-Laden is tremendously proud of his father but purposefully does not mention his mother, a Syrian woman who did not remain married to his father for long. Bin-Laden did not want to detract from his image as a pure Arab fighter by disclosing

that his mother was Syrian. An Arab in Bin-Laden's mind is defined not by language, but by religion and geography. An Arab is one who is from the Arabian Peninsula—a Sunni Muslim—everyone else (Egyptians, Iranians, and Syrians) being less pure.

When Bin-Laden mentions that his father died when Bin-Laden was a child, he sends the message to listeners that he became independent at an early age. In Arabian society the loss of a father is significant because he is the chief patriarch. Much attention is given to the fact that the Prophet Muhammad was orphaned at a young age and needed an elder to protect him. Bin-Laden might have modeled himself after Muhammed or hidden the fact that his older brother took care of his mother and him until Bin-Laden was able to inherit his father's funds.

Ismail: What do you want?

Bin-Laden: What we want and what we are demanding are the rights of every living being. We demand that our land be freed from our enemies, and that our land be freed from Americans. For these living creatures were given by God a protective instinct that refused to be intruded upon. For these, may Allah praise you, are like the chickens. When an armed person enters a chicken's home, it attacks [the assailant], and it is only a chicken.

We demand the rights for every living creature, specifically human rights and in particular the [rights] of Muslims. There were aggressions on the lands of Islam, particularly the holy shrines, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first center [qibla] in which Prophet Muhammed, peace be upon him [PBUH], directed his prayers. This aggression continued with the alliance between crusaders and Jews that is led by America and Israel, in which they have taken the land of the two holy mosques [reference to Saudi Arabia], and there is no power except by Allah. We desire to instigate the community [of Muslims] to undertake the liberation of their land and fight for the sake of Allah, most high, so that Islamic law and Allah's are raised high.

Assessment: Bin-Laden's demand for human rights is classic mimicry of

the Western view of international human rights. Militants will feign democracy and petition for freedom to seek power, but once in power, impose a religious dictatorship. Bin-Laden makes clear his goals to instigate an Islamic militant revolution against the United States and Israel. Bin-Laden believes the United States and Israel are in collusion to dominate the Islamic world. "There is no power except for Allah," is an old saying that denotes the helplessness of Muslims. Bin-Laden uses his messages of violent jihad as the remedy for this helplessness.

Ismail: [Ismail asks Bin-Laden about recent attacks by British and U.S. forces against Iraq during Operation Desert Fox.]

Bin-Laden: Praise be to Allah, the last attack [1999] that occurred a few days ago in Iraq was directed by America and Britain. This confirms many meanings that are both dangerous and significant. We will not discuss here the material and human losses, the killing of our Muslim brothers from among the Iraqi people but will discuss the proofs [rationale] behind these attacks. America accuses Iraq of using poison gasses on its own people and against the Kurds. America accuses Iraq of using its destructive weapons against Iran. What is significant and what people should stop and take note of is that America did not speak of these things at that juncture, America at that time aided [Iraq], who was subsidized by many agents in the region.

It [Iraq] became the largest Arab [military] power in the region threatening the security of the Jews and Israeli security that has occupied the legacy [Al-Aqsa Mosque] left us by our holy prophet [PBUH]. It was when [this threat to Israel] appeared that it began making an issue of these things [Iraq's weapons capability]. It [America] claims to hold them [Israel] accountable, [America says]: correct, there are advanced weapons and weapons of mass destruction in Israel, but Israel has never used them, but Iraq uses them; this talk is redundant. America also possesses these weapons and has deployed them hitting entire nations in the Far East in Nagasaki and

Hiroshima after Japan surrendered and World War II was beginning its conclusion. Despite this, America insisted on striking nations [their] fathers, children, women, and elderly. The truth must be revealed that any attack today against any nation in the Islamic world is in reality an attack [orchestrated] by Israel and that people must awake to this reality.

People must organize large popular movements to bring down world organizations that have enslaved and maintained their positions at the expense of Islam and the Muslims. America has divorced itself from this popular discontent, for the Jews have been able to direct the Christians from among the Americans and English to encourage the strike against Iraq. It is the Israeli influence and Jewish influence inside the White House that has become clear. For the Defense Secretary is Jewish, the Secretary of State is Jewish, the head of the CIA and national security, [all of] the highest officials are Jews. They have encouraged the Christians to clip the wings of the Islamic world and the real objective is not Saddam Hussein but the development of the Islamic world as an emerging world power [sic]. They have struck Iraq, encircled Libya before, or if [the Americans] strike the Al-Shifa factory in Sudan, and it was a plant that made medicine, are all clear signs of recent events [sic].

It has become clear that no Muslim should and every sane person not go to the United Nations. Muslims legally must not succumb to this organization that is heretical. We will tell those intelligent non-Muslims not to go to this organization, for look at North Korea, for [would] any sane person go to an infidel to receive judgment[?]

Assessment: Bin-Laden finishes this section by railing about the United Nations, America's control of the organization, and its right to veto on the Security Council. He accuses Muslims who wish to divide the Muslims for their own gain or those who participate in the United Nations as not understanding their own faith.

Bin-Laden's claim that the United States dropped the atomic bomb after Japan surrendered displays his

incredible misunderstanding of the events of World War II. He has no comprehension of World War II, Operation Olympic, or U.S. President Harry S. Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb to shorten the war.³ Bin-Laden's reference to World War II and his manipulation of Islamic history and the law shows how he takes pieces of history and alters them to justify his arguments. He views the Japanese self-sacrifice and kamikaze ethic from a jihadist perspective.

Bin-Laden's vehement anti-Semitism is a staple of many Islamic militant groups but also shows his fixation on Israel and the demonizing of Jews, partly because of the Wahhabi doctrine by which he was raised. It is not to Bin-Laden's advantage to reveal Muhammed's relationship with the Jews in Medina, where there was a societal compact between Muslims and Jews to live as one community. It is also not in Bin-Laden's interest to mention that early Christians helped sustain early Islam. One must also remember Bin-Laden's religious education is steeped in the teachings of Wahhabism. Wahhabism's founder, Muhammed bin Abdul-Wahab, in *Kitab al-Tawheed* wrote, "The ways of the people of the book (Jews and Christians) are condemned as polytheist."⁴ Abdul-Wahab's Islam is far more intolerant than 7th-century Muslim doctrine. Bin-Laden's focus is on incitement at all costs, and he prefers a simple explanation of a world in which Muslims are perpetual victims and self-examination is discouraged.

Ismail: What impact did the British and American strikes on Baghdad have on anti-American sentiments in the region, and [do you] see military responses curbing [your] terrorist efforts?

Bin-Laden: Praise Allah, what must be understood regarding this question is that the Muslim nations after this attack are nations that are not in control of its destiny. Our enemies roam freely and with conceit through our homes, lands, and air space. They strike [Muslims] without seeking anyone's permission and especially during this attack. . . . The current [Arab] regimes are in a deep conspiracy [with the adversary, and have lost the] ability to do anything

against this obscene occupation. For it is up to Muslims, particularly the Ahl al-Hal Wal-Aqd [those leaders that loosen and bind communities]; those of truthful Ulama, believing merchants, and heads of tribes must immigrate for Allah's sake and find for themselves a place where they can raise the banner of [offensive] jihad. To make their umma [communities] aware of [the importance of] preserving their religion and dignity, otherwise all shall be lost. They must reflect on what has happened to our brothers in Palestine . . . the Palestinian nation used to be famous for its agricultural prowess. . . . This nation today has made refugees unwelcome and rejected around the world. . . . Why is there no response when the Holy Mosque in Jerusalem is under attack, what will make 1.2 billion Muslims move? This is something that is incredulous that must be addressed. . . . Anyone believing that [America will not] strike is living in a fantasy.

Assessment: Bin-Laden's reference to immigrating to a place where a banner of jihad can be raised is intended to encourage Muslims to join him in Afghanistan. Playing on Islamic history once again, Bin-Laden describes how Muhammed was forced to leave Mecca to go to Medina, where he established the first Muslim society. Bin-Laden takes this hijra (withdrawal) out of context. Muhammed was ordered to leave Mecca to spare Muslims from genocide. Bin-Laden also conveniently excludes how Muhammed peacefully interacted with non-Muslims in Medina and how he attempted to construct a single community made up of Muslims, Jews, and other non-Muslims.

Bin-Laden's idea of migration and waging offensive jihad was also used in the 1970s and 1980s by an Egyptian terrorist group called Takfir wal Hijrah whose followers left Cairo and traveled to remote regions of southern Egypt to wage war against Egyptian authorities. No doubt Bin-Laden and his Egyptian ideologue, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, have discussed many Islamic militant movements and their tactics.

Bin-Laden's reference to truthful Ulama (religious scholars) comes

from his belief that any cleric who does not espouse Bin-Laden's religious view is being paid by Arab regimes. He considers the Saudi Council of Ulama a mouthpiece of the government. Bin-Laden admires militant Saudi clerics like Sheikh Safar Al-Hawali, whose sermons about an inevitable clash between Islam and the West are widely disseminated by cassette tape. Al-Hawali's diatribes, which appeal to many young Saudi students, offer an alternate and militant explanation to the perceived impotence of the Saudi regime during Operation Desert Storm. Al-Hawali's radical speeches include diatribes about a worldwide conspiracy against Islam by the United States and Israel.

There are indications that the religious and political views of the 15 Saudis among the terrorists who attacked the World Trade Center were shaped by Al-Hawali's tapes. Another popular militant Saudi cleric, Skeikh Salman Al-Auda, has written a book, *The End of History*, which highlights the decay of Western civilization and uses Muslims to accelerate the collapse of the West.⁵

Ismail: Will there be a response to the cruise-missile attacks on Afghanistan of 1998?

Bin-Laden: With Allah's grace we have formulated with many of our brothers around the globe the World Islamic Front for the Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders. The Front's organization and coordination is coming along in an exceptional manner. It will have a wider ability to move and achieve victory for the faith and take revenge on the Jews, Christians, and Americans.

Assessment: Bin-Laden's response demonstrates his patience and unwillingness to strike without careful planning and coordination. This is not the answer of an impulsive person.

Ismail points out to Bin-Laden that there have been no operations carried out since the announcement at the World Islamic Front.

Bin-Laden: [This organization] has not gained firm roots, and its members come from varied backgrounds around the world. They have wide activities within the movement. It is also not necessary to

announce every operation they have attempted or succeeded in.

Important Lessons from the Interview

Several concepts contained in Bin-Laden's interview must be highlighted to help the reader understand the rationale behind Bin-Laden's thoughts. He claims that 75 percent of Americans supported President Bill Clinton's 1998 and 1999 operations against Afghanistan and Iraq. He considers U.S. civilians and soldiers to be one and the same, thereby justifying killing U.S. civilians. Bin-Laden admits that he set up military training camps and trained over 15,000 men—the majority from Arab countries—during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Ismail asked Bin-Laden about his being implicated in Sheikh Abdullah Azzam's assassination. Bin-Laden never directly answered this question but, instead, lavished praise on Azzam as a key leader in the Islamic militant movement. Azzam organized the first Arab resistance against the Soviet Union during the invasion of Afghanistan. Azzam's Maktab-al-Khadamat-al-Mujahidden (Mujahideen Services Office) also known as Al-Qaeda al-Sulba (the firm base) became the core of Bin-Laden's organization.

When asked about his health, Bin-Laden said he could ride a horse 70 kilometers without needing a rest. This statement is meant to appeal to the romantic image of Arabs as warriors and skilled horsemen. Bin-Laden says it is the right of Muslims to acquire nuclear technology and that the West can no longer monopolize it. He believes veterans of the Soviet war against Afghanistan bear a high responsibility. With only small numbers of rocket-propelled grenades, Kalshnikovs, and antitank mines, they were able to crush the greatest superpower known to mankind. Bin-Laden is convinced that the United States is weaker than the former Soviet Union, citing the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia as a sign of American weakness. He has created an alternate history that claims that U.S. forces, under the banner of the United Nations, killed 13,000 Somalis. Bin-Laden refuses to believe that U.S. forces were in Somalia to feed starv-

ing refugees and deter warlords from using food as a weapon to control them.

Bin-Laden's Views on Petro-Politics

Ismail describes Bin-Laden's belief that America robs Saudi Arabia of its oil wealth. Bin-Laden explains that during the reign of King Faisal, the United States paid only 70 cents per barrel [of oil]. In the 1973 oil crisis, the Muslims asserted their economic power using oil as a weapon, and prices began to rise to \$40 per barrel. When the [oil] prices leveled off to \$36, the United States pressured Gulf countries to increase their production to lower prices. Bin-Laden labels this "the great swindle." Doing basic math, Bin-Laden explains that from \$36 the price was lowered to \$9 per barrel, he relates the retail price at \$144 per barrel, or a loss of \$135. He multiplied \$135 by the 30 million barrels produced in the Islamic world daily, totaling a loss of \$4.5 billion per day for Muslim nations. He breaks down the loss over 25 years to \$30,000 for every Muslim man, woman, and child. Although this is an oversimplification of petroleum production and evolution of agreements between oil companies and oil-producing nations, it is highlighted to demonstrate the skill with which Bin-Laden panders to the disenfranchised, giving them an alternate history.

Aside from exporting atrocities around the world, Bin-Laden exports alternative messages that must be discredited. He has a skill at taking World War II history out of context and packaging Quranic verses, prophetic sayings, and Islamic militant writings from the 13th through the 20th century and passing them off as theology. In a post-11 September

2001 world, the United States must find the logic behind Bin-Laden's diatribe to begin the process of discrediting it Islamically and intellectually. In the end we will capture the likes of Bin-Laden and Al-Zawahiri, but their writings, commentaries, and speeches will outlive them. Dismantling their arguments is an important aspect in this war on terrorism.

Fifty years from now when young Muslims read Bin-Laden and Al-Zawahiri's works, they will hopefully reflect on how not to lapse into Islamic militancy, much like Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is viewed as a lesson on how not to lapse into fascism.⁶ From a military education perspective, the United States has spent hours discussing the ideology and military tactics of the Vietnamese; a new corpus of literature must be developed for this new adversary. **MR**

NOTES

1. *Bin Laden wa al-Jazeera wa Ana* (Bin Laden, Al-Jazeera, and I) (Casablanca, Morocco: Dar-al-Najaaah Al-Jadeedah, 2001).
2. Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Knights Under the Prophet's Banner," *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, London, 2 December 2001.
3. For more information about Operation Olympic, see online at <www.ibiblio.org/pha/war.term/Olympic.html>, accessed 23 June 2004.
4. Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahab, *Kitab al-Tawheed* (Miscellaneous Pakistani Publisher). *Kitab al-Tawheed* is an 18th-century tenets of faith book.
5. Salman bin Fahed al-Auda, *The End of History* (No publishing data given.)
6. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (My struggles) (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

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MR Book Reviews

THE LIBERTY INCIDENT: The 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Spy Ship, A. Jay Cristol, Brassey's Inc, Herndon, VA, 2002, 294 pages, \$27.50.

On 9 June 1967, Israel's Air Force and Navy attacked the USS *Liberty* (a U.S. Navy Intelligence ship). Several conclusions about why it was attacked have been put forward since then, but I believe A. Jay Cristol has ended the controversy about the incident with his new book, *The Liberty Incident: The 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Spy Ship*.

Cristol, a retired navy aviator, who is a federal judge, spent a decade conducting over 500 interviews; researching hundreds of articles and dozens of books, studying thousands of pages of official U.S. and Israeli investigations, and assembling his research into an outstanding book.

Was the *Liberty's* attack intentional or a mistake? How did the United States and Israel contribute to the incident? What was the *Liberty* doing in the area? Was there a cover-up? Is there validity in any of the conspiracy theories? Cristol analyzes these and many other questions with evidence and unbiased thinking.

LTC Rick Baillergeon, USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

POETS OF WORLD WAR II, Harvey Shapiro, ed., The Library of America, New York, 2003, 304 pages, \$20.00.

Was it so hard, Achilles, So very hard to die—Patrick Shaw-Stewart, Gallipoli, 1917.

This anthology is one in a series published by the American Poets Project, an effort intended to produce a first-time "compact national library of poets." *Poets of World War II* consists of 120 poems by 62 poets, 42 from veterans, making it similar in concept to kindred anthologies such as Jan Barry's *Peace is Our Profession: Poems and Passages of War Protest* (East River Anthology, Perkasi, PA, 1981). The book in-

cludes works by conscientious objectors and other war-resisters such as Robinson Jeffers and William Stafford. The contributors, all credible objectivists and imagists, are "followers of the formal school of Southern verse and dense rhetoric."

Editor Harvey Shapiro, an Ivy League-educated poet and a veteran of 35 combat missions as a B-17 tail gunner, sets a solemn tone, stating that although the Allies are victorious, "the sight of dead bodies is scattered among these poems the way bodies were washed up on the shores of invasion beaches." His purpose for compiling the anthology was "to demonstrate that the American poets of the war produced a body of work that has not yet been recognized for its clean and powerful eloquence."

Shapiro gathered some of the best poetry of the war, including infrequently published but no less majestically poignant, air war poems by John Ciardi, James Dickey, Richard Eberhart, Randall Jarrell, Howard Nemerov, and Richard Hugo (although his opus magnum, "Mission to Linz," does not appear here). Some of the best poems of ground combat are by Louis Simpson, George Oppen, and Anthony Hecht. Several poems are quite moving, such as James Tate's "The Lost Pilot," written for his father who was killed in action when Tate was 5 months old, and Peter Viereck's "'Vale' from Carthage," which he wrote on the occasion of his brother's death in the European theater.

There are sublime elegies like Vladimir Nabokov's "When he was small, when he would fall" and Richard Eberhart's "A Ceremony by the Sea." Many poets achieve a powerful austerity through just a few lines, as Samuel Menashe does in his 18-syllable, 5-line poem, "Beachhead."

The poems are not solely about combat and its effects. They also inform the wider ontology of war in

verse that emerges into the foreground of military victory to ask unanswered questions about race and class. Compelling examples are Witter Bynner's "Defeat" and Gwendolyn Brook's "Negro Hero."

For poetry enthusiasts and students of how war relates to literature and the arts, Shapiro's book is an exemplary, diverse collection and a perfect companion to Leon Stokesbury's *Articles of War: A Collection of American Poetry About World War 2* (University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville, 1990). *Poets of World War II* includes an introduction by Shapiro and a helpful biographical section.

Ever since Plato's *Cratylus* (circa 360 B.C.) scholars have debated how poetry closes the aesthetic space between the reader's expectations and the poet's ability to meet them. This work accomplishes that closure quite effectively even though six decades have passed since the end of World War II.

MAJ Jeffrey C. Alfier, USAF,
Ramstein AB, Germany

FACTORIES OF DEATH: Japanese Biological Warfare, 1932-1945, and the American Cover-Up, Sheldon H. Harris, Routledge, New York, 2002, 385 pages, \$24.95.

From 1931 to 1945 the Japanese Army engaged in biological warfare (BW) and chemical warfare (CW) experiments using live human subjects, which led to the first widespread use of bacteriological agents in the war. This definitive work about Unit 731 (the Japanese Army's bacteriological warfare center) and its commander, Lieutenant General Ishii Shiro, is the result of more than 20 years of research, including 12 field trips to China.

Biological warfare was part of Japan's search for relatively cheap, war-winning weapons. Intertwined with this was a debate over World War I lessons and the ways Japan

could survive in a social Darwinian world surrounded by hostile powers. Author Sheldon H. Harris draws together numerous strands of intellectual, social, and scientific history, revealing that Japanese doctors were blind to their work's ethical and moral implications because of the fashion in which they were educated and trained. He explains that the widespread interest in biological and chemical warfare was a result of its being seen as a "higher form of killing" or a more humane form of warfare. Harris's descriptions of experiments are unpleasant, and the reader shares Harris's disgust for the perpetrator's moral lapses.

Although the atrocities occurred in Manchuria, the only country to hold war crime trials was the Soviet Union, and this was done in a low-key manner. China has placed a wall of secrecy around the subject, partly because of the place Manchuria holds in the founding mythology of the People's Republic as explicated in Rana Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

Factories of Death: Japanese Biological Warfare, 1932-1945, and the American Cover-Up is unpleasant to read because it deals with a distasteful subject. Harris gathers particularly damning evidence and presents Ishii Shiro and his colleagues as amoral monsters who experimented on human beings to create new weapons of war. The book's two parts, "Japanese Factories of Death" and "American Cover-Up," are meticulously researched with the results presented in an outraged tone, which leads to this important book's one minor flaw—its shrill tone.

Harris shows how the U.S. Army used the Japanese war criminals' meticulously kept records to advance its own BW and CW studies. The Army classified the records and delayed Harris's Freedom of Information Act requests. What emerges is a picture of Japanese and American governments at their worst. The Japanese government condoned or did not want to know the details of the experiments, although it attempted to

use what was discovered to fashion biological weapons, and Americans shielded these war criminals while using Japanese research to supplement their own. The picture of official obfuscation and mendacity is not pretty.

For years, Japan denied Unit 731 existed or that experiments even occurred. The U.S. Government simultaneously covered up and stonewalled investigations. Japan refused to admit that its Army and Navy committed war crimes, including the use of civilians as comfort women (sex slaves). Japan's treatment of World War II history in its textbooks is questionable. Japan remembers the atomic bombings, but not the events leading up to them. This willful amnesia extends to the Nanjing Massacre, which Japanese revisionists still deny ever happened.

Four days before Harris's death on 31 August 2002, a Japanese court admitted Japan had conducted biological warfare in China, but the court rejected surviving victims' claims to compensation. The court's decision ended more than 5 decades of denial.

Lewis Bernstein, Ph.D.,
Huntsville, Alabama

CHINESE WARFIGHTING: The PLA Experience Since 1949, Mark A. Ryan, David M. Finkelstein, and Michael A. McDevitt, eds., M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York, 2003, 319 pages, \$69.95.

Books in English about Chinese warfighting are rare; most date from the Korean war. Therefore, any new book on the subject is welcome. *Chinese Warfighting: The PLA Experience Since 1949* is an essay collection that includes discussions on patterns of warfare, doctrine, China's post-World War II civil war, the attempts to take Taiwan, the Korean war, the Sino-Indian war, the Sino-Soviet border conflicts, the Sino-Vietnamese war, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the Navy, and the PLA Air Force.

Also of interest is what is not in the book, such as the Chinese civil war, which shaped the PLA and produced its leaders through the 1980s. The book only covers the civil war after 1949, but that war was seminal, ran the gamut from guerrilla to conventional war, and included a war

against Japan, chemical warfare, urban combat, and a linkup with Soviet forces. A concept of civil war is necessary to understand the PLA. The Chinese war in Tibet, the military actions against the excesses of the cultural revolution, and the current Chinese actions against guerrillas in Xinjiang Province are also not discussed.

This book is about Chinese military actions against other countries. China's domestic use of the military is not discussed at all. Seeing how the Communist Party, which began its climb to power as a guerrilla force, dealt with conflicting guerrilla forces and internal dissent would have been interesting. The invasion of Tibet also clearly deserved inclusion.

The book deals with operational and strategic levels of Chinese conflict but occasionally dips into the tactical level, which remains terra incognita to most of us. *Chinese Warfighting* is clearly a book for the military professional. Editors David M. Finkelstein and Michael A. McDevitt's essays are well written, and the military reader is rewarded for his time.

LTC Lester W. Grau, USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC: Hitler's Gray Wolves of the Sea and the Allies' Desperate Struggle to Defeat Them, Andrew Williams, Basic Books, Cambridge, MA, 2003, 320 pages, \$30.00.

"The U-boat attack was the only thing that ever really frightened me during the war," said British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Coming from a man who lived through one of the most storied air battles in history—the Battle of Britain—as well as the nightmare of never-before-seen rocket attacks, such a comment gives one pause. Why, with the major defeats Great Britain and her allies suffered in Africa and Europe and the harrowing escape from Dunkirk, was Churchill only frightened of the U-boat war? The reason is the U-boat war gave the Nazis their greatest hope for defeating the British. Surprisingly, few knew then how close Great Britain was to defeat. Unfortunately, fewer know now.

As an island nation, Great Britain depended on imports for its eco-

nomic, social, and military survival. Britain's life blood depended on its ability to trade with and receive support from the United States and Canada. Britain's leaders knew this, and so did many Nazi leaders, including German Admiral Karl Donitz. Using the U-boat, Donitz developed tactics, techniques, and procedures to sever Britain's lifeline.

Donitz's crews saw themselves as elites and members of a family saving the German Fatherland. Working tirelessly to find technological advantages to keep ahead of the Allies, Donitz devised a plan for U-boat warfare to strangle and starve Great Britain and cause its downfall. He almost succeeded.

From the war's beginning, the German U-boat campaign achieved remarkable success. By the war's end, Allied losses amounted to approximately 50,000 men and 15 million tons of materiel. Losses reached such a level that Great Britain was using and losing more supplies and food than it could replace. Stocks were at such minimal levels that nationwide starvation was only weeks away. The course of the war was hanging in the balance, and victory was within the grasp of the Third Reich. Great Britain, however, prevailed, and the Nazis were defeated. How was such a reversal of fortunes possible?

The Allies worked just as hard to fight the U-boat menace as the Germans did in preparing it. Technological advances, such as sonar and radar, combined with convoy tactics and aggressive long-range air cover effectively combated the early advantages U-boats enjoyed. The successful efforts of code breakers was also important in the course of the battle. Yet, all this took time. How was Great Britain able to buy the time needed to counteract the effects of the U-boat battle?

The battles between U-boats and Allied shipping took place outside the public's view. There were no horrific photographs of destroyed buildings and cities in flames and no stream of refugees reciting the horrors of war and spreading fear and panic. Great Britain's government kept the devastation from the public, minimizing its psychological effect. That Donitz was never able to

show Hitler the devastation he had created diminished his argument for more and better boats versus the Luftwaffe's argument for more aircraft. The inability to visualize the effect of the U-boat battle on both sides of the channel bought time for the Allies to reverse their fortunes.

Williams does an excellent job bringing the battle to life once again. The reader is introduced to both protagonists, and shown how they lived, fought, and often died. The Allies' desperation is palpable, and emotions ranging from arrogance to despair on the part of Germany are easily felt.

**LTC David G. Rathgeber, USMC,
Retired, Camp Pendleton, California**

FLYBOYS: A True Story of Courage, James Bradley, Little Brown and Company, New York, 400 pages, \$25.95.

Flyboys, a great, haunting work, quickly engages readers. James Bradley, the bestselling author of *Flags of Our Fathers* (Bantam, New York, 2000) tells the remarkable tale of aviators and their courage in the Pacific during World War II. Bradley contacted Bill Doran who attended the trials of the Japanese defendants following the war. Doran had signed a nondisclosure statement following the proceedings, but he always believed the aviator's story needed to be told. With the information declassified, he could.

The story began on the island of Chichi Jima. Bradley details the backgrounds, missions, capture, and subsequent execution of seven Navy and Marine Corps aviators just as the battle of Iwo Jima was raging to the south. The shape of Chichi Jima made bombing runs hazardous, yet the communications stations on the island had to be destroyed. Bombing missions cost many aviators their lives and caused the capture of several more. Bradley recounts one remarkable story of a naval aviator who was shot down. The pilot was rescued by a U.S. submarine before the Japanese could attempt capture. The aviator's name was George H.W. Bush.

Bush's insights and emotions about being shot down and the loss of his two crew members are memo-

rable. Bradley writes, "Looking into the eyes of arguably the most accomplished and successful man alive," he saw the same survivor's guilt he had observed in other veterans. The former president said he "thinks about those guys all the time."

Although *Flyboys* tells the aviators' stories, readers looking for an exact replica of *Flags of Our Fathers* might be disappointed. Bradley expands on this story much more than in his previous book and uses the story of the eight aviators to explore the evolution of Japanese militarism and the underlying reasons behind the *bushido* code, the Japanese perspective on expansion in China, and the Japanese philosophy toward killing and atrocities. Bradley writes that the Japanese viewed America as hypocritical because of U.S. atrocities during previous wars and during the country's Westward expansion. Bradley tells the story of the Doolittle raid and how fire-bombing the Japanese mainland led to Japan's hatred of aviators and its desire for revenge, a desire that resulted in the deaths of over 250,000 Chinese and the passage of the Enemy Airmen's Act that led to the execution of three Doolittle flyers.

Bradley's storytelling style allows readers to get to know the people he writes about. He interviews friends and family and describes the capture of the seven aviators and their interrogations, beatings, and interactions with the Japanese. Bradley also describes how each aviator faced execution, why Japanese commanders ordered the executions, why the subordinates who carried them out had a misguided sense of honor and warrior spirit, and describes the horror and barbarity that occurred after the executions. Readers will be left wondering how men could do such things to other men.

The book includes the poignant story of the aviators' families who were first told their sons were missing, then that the men were killed in action, but the families were never told the details of their deaths. The family's emotional journeys and the effect their loved ones' deaths had on their lives are compelling. The later war crimes trials on Chichi Jima were conducted in secret, partly to spare

the families the horrific details of their sons' deaths. When the media finally reported the details, the families were understandably inconsolable.

Bradley admits he doubts justice was served—a conviction that comes through in his writing. He explores why the United States did not bring some of the Japanese war criminals to justice, especially the Japanese Emperor. Bradley's conclusions raise important questions about the U.S. sense of justice and U.S. concessions to Japan.

I highly recommend this interesting, compelling, thought-provoking story about courage, honor, and sacrifice.

**LTC Robert J. Rielly, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

NAPOLEON'S GLANCE: The Secret of Strategy, William Duggan, Thunder's Mouth Press, New York, 2003, 280 pages, \$24.95.

Were you ever engaged in solving a perplexing problem when the solution suddenly became as obvious as daylight? If so, you have experienced what led Napoleon to success—sudden insight—intuition, based on experience, says author of *Napoleon's Glance: The Secret of Strategy*, William Duggan. While this might at first appear too simplistic, Duggan details vignettes about the sudden insights of Pablo Picasso; Saint Paul; civil and suffrage rights activists Ella Baker and Alice Paul; and a third-world banker, among others. *Napoleon's Glance* gives readers an enjoyable series of vignettes, but it will not be particularly rewarding to serious readers.

**COL Arley H. McCormick, USA,
Retired, Huntsville, Alabama**

THE BATTLE OF KÖNIGGRÄTZ: Prussia's Victory over Austria, 1866, Gordon A. Craig, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2003 (first printing 1964), 224 pages, \$14.95.

In 1866, news of Prussia's dramatic victory over Austria at Königgrätz caused the papal secretary to exclaim "Casca il mondo!" (the world is collapsing). After the Battle of Königgrätz, nothing would be the same again. Suddenly, the balance of power in Central Europe was

overthrown; Germany unified itself around upstart Prussia, and the old Austrian empire began its long skid to the trash heap of history. In time, Königgrätz would be seen as the beginning of Europe's "German problem," a problem that needed two world wars to resolve.

The battle changed power relationships and warfare itself. With each combatant deploying a quarter-million soldiers, the Battle of Königgrätz became the largest battle to that time in history. Helmuth von Moltke, the architect of victory, showed the world that an elite group of highly educated officers could guide. The group became the modern general staff. And, by overthrowing the Austrians in a brilliant, 7-week campaign, chief of staff Von Moltke developed a military system that became the model for the rest of the world's armies.

Given the importance of the events of 1866, the story of the "Seven Weeks War" deserves the scholarship and writing skills of a first-rate historian. For that reason, military history students will be gratified with the reprint of Gordon Craig's *Königgrätz, Prussia's Victory over Austria, 1866*. When the book first appeared in 1964, it became the standard English-language work on the subject. Since then, others have offered new, more-detailed interpretations of the campaign, most conspicuously Geoffrey Wawro's 1996 book, *The Austro-Prussian War: Austria's War with Prussia and Italy in 1866* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 1997), but Craig's account still represents the best entry point for readers new to the wars of German Unification.

The book is old-fashioned military history, although it did not have to be, given Craig's impressive scholarly credentials. He chose to focus squarely on armies, commanders, and battles, but if this emphasis is "old fashioned," one can hardly call the book "drums and bugles" history. Craig balances crisp battle narratives with plenty of thoughtful analysis. The book leads to a clear understanding of what Dennis Showalter has recently called the "Prusso-German Revolution in Military Affairs."

One of Craig's most significant ac-

complishments is his contemporary interpretation of the battle. Most observers missed the significance of Von Moltke's brilliant operational scheme and the command and control system that brought it to fruition at Königgrätz. The majority of pundits cite the Dreyse needle gun as the secret of the Prussian victory, but in emphasizing the role of new technology, they overlooked the conceptual and organizational innovations that were the real secret to Von Moltke's success. The Prussian plan, the Prussian system, and Prussian staffs were what put the Prussian needle guns in position to win the battle. When contemporary pundits give technology too much credit, they fall into a trap into which many others have also stumbled.

Most history books have a viable shelf life of 7 to 8 years before more current scholarship supplants them. After almost 30 years, Craig's *Königgrätz* still has much to offer. I highly recommend it.

**LTC Scott Stephenson, USA,
Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PAST: The Lives and Works of the World War II Generation of Historians, William Palmer, The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 2001, 372 pages, \$32.00.

There are three kinds of historians: lumpers, who use highly technical terminology; splitters, who catalog broad similarities among various events and people; and those who record the differences. William Palmer is a lumper. *Engagement with the Past: The Lives and Works of the World War II Generation of Historians* is Palmer's history of 23 prominent 20th-century U.S. and British historians, including Eric Hobsbawm, Richard Hofstadter, and C. Vann Woodward, who rank among the giants of their profession.

Palmer, however, fails to unite his diverse subjects in any meaningful way. As young adults, these historians lived through the Depression and World War II, but despite the subtitle, Palmer does not attempt to depict the scholars as the "greatest generation" of historians. (An equally accomplished score of Anglo-American historians, Frederick Jack-

son Turner, Charles Beard, and Perry Miller, were born in the first quarter of the last century.) He could have labeled the scholars the "Cold War generation" because they published their most important works in the decades after 1945. Palmer set himself an almost impossible task in trying to sort through an entire generation of historians. The scope of the subjects' collective scholarship is as staggering as its quality, encompassing virtually every facet of modern history.

The first half of the book sketches the historians' personal and professional lives. Palmer's recitation of ancient academic catfights and other tribal lore are numbingly familiar to any history graduate student and completely uninteresting to anyone not a member of the guild. The second half examines the scholars' works. Palmer opines that the book shares as a central theme, a new "notion of submerged reality. . . . Historical truth, like an iceberg, is never what it appears on the surface." But, Palmer claims too much here. He overreaches when he asserts his subjects were first to move decisively beyond mere narrative history to richer thematic analyses, as his own discussion of the scholars' mentors reveals. The preceding generation of historians framed highly sophisticated analytical histories that engage to this day.

Other superior group portraits of past masters are in print, and several of those profiled by Palmer have written autobiographies. Readers would be better served by reading the original masterpieces composed by these great historians.

COL Alan Cate, USA,
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania

HATRED: The Psychological Descent into Violence, Willard Gaylin, Public-Affairs, New York, 2003, 256 pages, \$24.00.

Written by Willard Gaylin, a professor of clinical psychology, *Hatred: The Psychological Descent into Violence* is a worthwhile book with few flaws. Gaylin uses a clinical model to discuss modern problems. Looking into the roles of fanatical social and religious leaders, Gaylin suggests hatred is not necessarily an emotion, but a psychological disorder.

This is unfortunate, because the book does not really discuss typical, lesser-known hate criminals. Gaylin does complete his mission of showing why passionate attachment turns into large-scale hatred and violence.

One of the book's weaker points is a blanket and all-too-simple assumption that some hatred, such as against Israel, is caused by the common emotion, jealousy. This is somewhat disappointing considering Gaylin's credentials and his handling of most of the controversial issues. Perhaps, the subject is so broad one might assume Gaylin had to crunch some of his theories because of space.

While he offers little hope of a solution, the fascinating tales of well-known incidents and what probably led to the mindset that caused them makes this book worth reading.

Stephanie B. Mojica,
Los Angeles, California

LIFTING THE FOG OF WAR,

Admiral Bill Owens, with Ed Offley, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, 2001, 296 pages, \$16.95.

In *Lifting the Fog of War*, Admiral Bill Owens, former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, states that few Americans, including few American policymakers, have personal experience with our all-volunteer military. When watching CNN news reports of America's easy military successes in the Persian Gulf, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, Americans might think that their military is sufficiently strong to dominate all conflicts for the foreseeable future. When defense budget discussions arise, they might ask, "If the military ain't broke, why spend all those billions to fix it?"

Owens shows that, while appearing formidable, America's military is, in fact, "running on empty." Because of force reductions, frequent deployments, and aging combat systems fast approaching obsolescence, America's military is in danger of imploding.

Owens offers a relatively inexpensive fix. By integrating advanced information technology into redesigned force structures and by developing innovative doctrine, tactics, and training to govern their employ-

ment, the military can conduct a revolution in the way America wages war. America could transform its military into a smaller, more flexible and lethal, and less expensive force. He develops his argument with historical examples of how failure to adapt force structure, doctrine, and tactics, and training new technology, led to defeat for France in the Franco-Prussian War, for the Confederacy at Gettysburg, and, he argues, for NATO in its air war over Kosovo and Yugoslavia.

To Owens, the largest obstacle to change is not the American public or America's policymakers, but the armed services themselves. What is most needed, he argues, is a transformation in the zero-sum mindset of America's military leaders.

True military Transformation might mean the loss or realignment of the services' traditional roles and missions, resulting in fewer budget dollars for the losing service. Military leaders, primarily concerned with organizational survival in a fiscally constrained environment, impede the military's transformation into a truly joint force that could best and least expensively leverage the Nation's information technology advantages to pursue national objectives.

Owens skillfully portrays the state of America's military and offers concrete steps to solve its problems. I recommend the book to senior military leaders, civilian policymakers, and civilians who wonder, "If it ain't broke, why fix it?"

MAJ Robert P. Mooney, Jr., USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IN AN AGE OF UNCERTAINTY, F.

Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, Santa Monica, CA, RAND (National Security Research Division), 2003, 217 pages, \$24.00.

Nations act in accordance with self-interest. When nations refine those interests, however, their allies and partners must be attentive to the intensity and direction of change. This is particularly true of Turkey, whose role and identity has changed more than once during the 20th century. Today, Turkey's regional and bilateral relationships are more complex and changeable than ever.

According to F. Stephen Larrabee

and Ian O. Lesser, one lesson of the recent war in Iraq is that we should reevaluate assumptions about Turkey. We cannot take for granted Turkey's assumed role as anchor of NATO's southern flank and equal participant in the fight against Iraq. Larrabee and Lesser discuss what Turkey might do in the future, its opportunities, and the risks it is willing to take. Turkey's actions then become much clearer.

Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty, which is an excellent introduction to the complexities of Turkish foreign relations, begins with themes and definitions necessary for any analysis of Turkey's foreign relations. Larrabee and Lesser analyze Turkey's changing domestic situation and its influence on self-definition and its future goals. Throughout the book, the authors stress the importance of internal factors, including Islamist political parties and their potential effects on the secular Turkish state, Turkey's troubled economy, its orientation toward Europe, and its national cohesion, given its large Kurdish population.

The authors discuss Turkey's entry into the European Union, its relationships with Europe, and its important bilateral relationships with Greece and the United States, the Balkans, Eurasia, Mediterranean, and the Middle East. While the book clearly expresses cause and effect, readers unfamiliar with the region might find the book difficult to follow, but the benefits from understanding what Larrabee and Lesser refer to as this "pivot State" are worth the effort. Ample footnotes and a good bibliography guide the reader toward more reading.

Robert Stacy,
Leominster, Massachusetts

HELL WOULDN'T STOP: An Oral History of the Battle of Wake Island, Chet Cunningham, Carroll & Graf Publishers, New York, 2002, 283 pages, \$26.00.

Chet Cunningham, author of *Hell Wouldn't Stop: An Oral History of the Battle of Wake Island*, is the brother of a Wake Island survivor who never discussed his harrowing experiences, but who did write about them in private notes. Cunningham used the notes to connect with other Wake

Island survivors, whose personal accounts he gathered.

The stories begin with the well-organized Japanese assault against Wake Island in December 1941. Hearing that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, U.S. troops on Wake Island set up forces to protect themselves and the island, not knowing that they were vastly outnumbered. Despite their valiant effort, they eventually surrendered to the overwhelming Japanese force, beginning an odyssey that lasted almost 4 years.

Individual accounts describe the suffering and wretched conditions endured on the prison ships and at prison camps. Japan claimed its prison conditions were adequate, yet the prisoners became extremely weak from a lack of food and an overwhelming workload. They built war items for the enemy and suffered because of their comrades' military successes, but this only buoyed their morale.

Cunningham's brother never spoke of the tremendous hardships he faced. Only after his death did Cunningham learn of his brother's suffering. By chronicling the tales of these heroic men, Cunningham has preserved his brother's memory well.

ILT Rene De La Rosa, USA,
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

THE KAISER: New Research on Wilhelm II's Role in Imperial Germany, Annika Mombauer and Wilhelm Deist, eds., Cambridge University Press, New York, 2003, 299 pages, \$60.00.

The aim of *The Kaiser: New Research on Wilhelm II's Role in Imperial Germany* is to add to the field of scholarship on the ambiguous reign of Kaiser Wilhelm II and to honor Wilhelm II's biographer, John Röhl. The essays, which are applicable to Russia's military and diplomatic history, are a cooperative effort and offer a spectrum of approaches. Topics range from unrestricted submarine warfare to Walther Rathenau's relationship with the Kaiser. Two essays have special appeal, one dealing with the international intervention in China's Boxer Rebellion, the other with the personal relationship between Wilhelm II and U.S. President Theodore

Roosevelt. Three essays debate the Kaiser's role before and during World War I.

The essays fill significant gaps in current scholarship regarding Germany before World War I, particularly the evaluation of Wilhelm's role in Germany's involvement in the war. For those interested in the origins of World War I and German history in general, this book has much to offer.

David J. Schepp,
Columbus, Georgia

STRATEGIC ASIA 2003-04: Fragility and Crisis, Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg, eds. with Michael Wills. National Bureau of Asian Research, Seattle, WA, 2003, 526 pages, \$24.95.

Strategic Asia 2003-04: Fragility and Crisis is the third volume in an annual collection of essays in which well-known Asian specialists address the region's near-term outlook. Divided into sections of individual country studies, regional overviews, and specific subject areas, the book analyzes recent developments from a U.S. policy perspective. Regional overviews include Northeast, Southeast, and Central Asia, while South Asia is covered in chapters on India and Pakistan. The book's contributors are primarily scholars from academia and think tanks rather than being government officials.

Most of the analyses are standard geopolitical fare, although many essays focus on economics. An appendix containing the region's statistical data complements the text, and an online database provides further information.

Essayist Zachary Abuza describes the depth of penetration and the degree of cooperation among radical Islamic groups in the region and profiles the history, organization, and leadership of the Jemaah Islamiya terrorist network. Nicholas Eberstadt argues that China's state pension severely constrains plans for an increasingly elderly population. He also describes the difficulty of working past retirement age in labor-intensive China. The lack of quality health care could also pose potential social stresses. Such stressors, he writes, could strain the economy, leading to political pressures that

might affect China's market reforms and democratization.

Current through July-August 2003, the book serves as a handy reference with well-presented statistical data that combines mainstream, short-term analysis of the region's major actors.

**Clifton W. Sherrill, Ph.D.,
Tallahassee, Florida**

DISARMAMENT SKETCHES: Three Decades of Arms Control and International Law, Thomas Graham, Jr., University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2002, 362 pages, \$35.00.

Thomas Graham, Jr., contends that *Disarmament Sketches: Three Decades of Arms Control and International Law* was written as a personal account of his 27 years of experiences at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), not as an exhaustive history of arms control. In truth, however, it is much closer to the latter than the former. Because of Graham's involvement in all aspects of arms control, including being the general counsel and acting director of ACDA, this personal account becomes a history of arms control policy development within the U.S. Government as well as a history of the ACDA.

Instead of approaching the subject as a straight-line chronological narrative, Graham builds his work around the key arms control initiatives that occurred from the time of President Richard M. Nixon's administration to that of President Bill Clinton. Of value is an insider's explanation of the internal and bureaucratic debates that surrounded those initiatives and how policies developed. The reader receives a complete understanding of how interpretations of the Antiballistic Missile Treaty became a point of contention when President Ronald Reagan's administration opined that a broad reading of the treaty allowed for developing and testing "Star Wars." The reader also receives an appreciation for the debate's intensity. Graham was deeply involved in all these policies, so he gives depth to key American and Russian players' personalities.

The policy discussions are only one aspect of this work. Because

Graham's career effectively covered ACDA history, the reader is led through the bureaucratic machinations that occurred from administration to administration on the role ACDA would play. The administrative history of an independent ACDA ended when it was folded into the U.S. Department of State in 1999.

The book, laden with jargon, is at times quite technical. A detailed glossary would have helped those not conversant with the names of the Soviet missiles or acronyms for treaties or arms control initiatives. Because the book is a personal recollection, it contains no footnotes or bibliography. These are minor criticisms, however, when compared to the book's value. Those specializing in arms control should read this book; it is a valuable beginning primer on the subject.

**John C. Binkley, Ph.D.,
Adelphi, Maryland**

NERVE CENTER: Inside the White House Situation Room, Michael K. Bohn, Brassey's Inc., Dulles, VA, 2003, 239 pages, \$24.95.

The Situation Room is a series of rooms in the West Wing's basement staffed by members of government agencies responsible for national security. After working in the U.S. Army Europe's (USAREUR) War Room and the National Military Command Center in the Pentagon (and watching NBC's *West Wing*), I thought I had an idea of what the White House Situation Room looked like. I was wrong.

Michael K. Bohn, the director of the Situation Room during President Ronald Reagan's administration, dispels "Sit Room" myths that show it as an underground command center with big-screen monitors and military personnel in direct communication with fighter planes. His book, *Nerve Center Inside the White House Situation Room*, looks at the room from when President John F. Kennedy created it in May 1961 to President George W. Bush's use of it after the September 2001 terrorist attacks.

Every president who used the room, used it differently. President Lyndon Johnson met in the room daily with military planners to select

targets during the Vietnam war, but President Bill Clinton's National Security Advisor, Tony Lake, kept Clinton out of the room to avoid any public perception of a crisis.

Nerve Center discusses critical events through the years, key decisions made, and the people involved. Photographs and floor plans supply a visual perspective. The book also provides a good historical background—with one drawback. The final chapter is a fictional account of a future crisis and how the room's duty staff might respond. Bohn tries to show how advanced computer and communications might work and suggests the staff's human side would remain the same.

I recommend this book to anyone interested in knowing what goes on in the White House situation room, its limitations, and its capabilities.

**COL Robert S. Driscoll, USA,
Retired, Washington, D.C.**

MARINE RIFLEMAN: Forty-Three Years in the Corps, Wesley L. Fox, Brassey's Inc., Dulles, VA, 2002, 395 pages, \$27.95.

An old axiom says that in every life there is a story to tell. Whether that is true for every life is debatable, but the axiom holds true for the life of Wesley L. Fox. *Marine Rifleman: Forty-Three Years in the Corps* is proof. Recipient of the Medal of Honor, two Legion of Merit awards, a Bronze Star with a Combat V (with valor), and three Purple Heart medals, Fox—a man who consistently aspired to follow a code of honor and ethics—inspires military and civilians alike.

Fox tells the story of his life as he lived it, from the influences of his mother and father and 9 siblings, to his 43 years in the Marine Corps, culminating with his retirement in 1993 at age 62. Fox then served as Deputy Commandant of Cadets at Virginia Tech, a position he held until his retirement in 2001. A "gungy Marine" who did it all from Korea to Vietnam and beyond, Fox would have been forgiven for his autobiography being a bit self-congratulatory, but he has not snared himself in such a trap and avoids hyperbole. Doing so makes the story all the more remarkable.

Using an interesting literary device, Fox names the chapters of the book by his military rank—Private, Private First Class, Corporal, Sergeant. Perhaps he did this to help his memory; perhaps he did it as an easy way to catalog his experiences, but whatever his reason, it helps the reader follow his growth and career. The changes in rank correspond nicely with changes in responsibility and experiences, and the reader can see the changes every rank caused in his life. At the end of every chapter he lists lessons learned.

This unpretentious book does not attempt to be more than it is—an easy, enjoyable account of a life well lived. Marines will find it especially interesting, and some might find stories about Marines they know. Fox describes what it means to be a Marine better than any slogan or advertising campaign ever could.

LTC David G. Rathgeber, USMC,
Retired, Camp Pendleton, California

Letters *continued from page 4*

concept and that it is finally getting the support it needs.

I would like to add some clarification of my own. Current MPF is made up of three Maritime Pre-positioning Squadrons (MPSRONs), with each MPSRON made up of Maritime Pre-positioning Ships (MPS). Currently, 16 ships carry Marine Corps Cargo: 5 MPS in MPSRON One, 5 in MPSRON Two, and 6 in MPSRON Three. Additional ships are under the MPSRON's command and control, but they are not part of the MPF. They are part of the Combat Pre-positioning Force, which carries an Army Heavy Brigade, and Logistic PFSS, which carry Defense Logistics Agency fuels, Air Force and USN ammunition, and USMC aviation support equipment. [For more information, see on-line at <www.msc.navy.mil/factsheet/apf.asp>.] I have

not personally sailed on these vessels, but former classmates who have support the published view. In support of Weaver's view, a legacy MPF MPSRON, when married or incorporated into the current sea-base, supports a Marine Expeditionary Brigade-size Marine Air Ground Task Force.

I would also like to thank Weaver for suggesting some exceptional websites that provide additional information on sea-basing concepts. I encourage Weaver to incorporate his ideas into a future paper on the virtues of sea-basing and MPF(F). Doing so will stimulate future discussions in the joint force, which will be beneficial to the general understanding of the MPF(F) and how to use it in future sea-based engagements. An increased interest will make sea-basing a truly joint concept.

