

BOOK REVIEWS



WHY WE WERE IN VIETNAM.
By Norman Podhoretz (Simon and Schuster, 1981. 240 Pages. \$13.50).
Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel R.J. Rinaldo, Fort Eustis, Virginia.

Based on the results, the United States involvement in Vietnam was a disaster. Nevertheless, to those of us who served there and who have kept up with some of the literature that has appeared since the end of the war, the nobility of our purpose in being there in the first place is without question.

This book, therefore, is anti-climactic. It will not give us our parade or draw applause from a gathering at our alma maters. Nor will it get us any free drinks at the local bar. Still, it's nice to see our version of the truth published.

Podhoretz, a neo-conservative editor of *Commentary* magazine, tells why we went in, why we stayed in, and why we withdrew. His conclusion, in a nutshell, is that our participation was not immoral. A corollary is that the war was not conducted by brutes bent on sadism.

Despite its virtues, and despite the author's brisk writing style, the book is boring, perhaps because the issue has finally become boring. And that is good in my view.

We know that our nation and our military services must look to fresh challenges freed from the myths and shibboleths about national security policies that were generated in the wake of Vietnam. It is well to remember, though, that noble purpose remains ingrained in the American way of war — and ignoble causes should take heed.

THE WAR SYSTEM: AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH.
Edited by Richard A. Falk and Samuel S. Kim (Westview Press,

1980. 659 Pages). Reviewed by Major John C. Spence III, United States Army Reserve.

The editors, both of whom are political scientists, have compiled a collection of scholarly essays that treat the phenomenon of war and human conflict. The essays are of uniformly high quality and range from an analysis of Konrad Lorenz's theory of human aggression to the international law aspects of the control of force.

The interested reader, whether his background is social psychology, anthropology, sociology, political science, or international relations will find that this book is a valuable resource for the study of war as a system. The military professional will find especially valuable essays in the book's seventh part, which is called *Decisionmaking Inquiries*.

The essays are written in a sophisticated and scholarly manner and assume a background of professional experience on the part of the reader. This does not detract, though, from the book's intrinsic value as a resource guide.

Given the ever-changing technology of war and the changing nature of world politics, the professional military officer of the 1980s and 1990s should have a sophisticated awareness of war as a system. Falk and Kim impart to the reader such a sophisticated awareness.

WHEN TIGERS FIGHT. By Dick Wilson (The Viking Press, 1982. 269 Pages. \$16.95). Reviewed by Major

NOTE TO READERS: All of the books mentioned in this review section may be purchased directly from the publisher or from your nearest book dealer. We will furnish a publisher's address on request.

C.T. Guthrie, Fort Lewis, Washington.

Dick Wilson has written an excellent narrative history of the Sino-Japanese War that lasted from 1937 to 1945. From the Marco Polo bridge incident near Beijing to the Japanese surrender in September 1945, Wilson describes the events of this conflict between these two Asian giants in a thorough and comprehensive manner. Personalizing his presentation, the author relies heavily on diaries and other materials that were prepared by people who actually participated in the events described in the book.

It is a book for the military historian, the tactician, the Asian specialist, and the general reader. Using photographs and maps of selected battles, Wilson narrates the events of the war from the perspective of a neutral observer. He does not attempt any in-depth analysis of the events he writes about. Rather, his stated goal is to describe the events as objectively as possible, allowing the reader to interpret them.

For the most part, Wilson succeeds admirably, although there are times when he appears to sympathize with the Chinese cause. An interesting and valuable contribution to Asian history, this book should receive your careful attention.

COMBAT MOTIVATION, by Anthony Kelleth (Kluwer Boston, 1982. 368 Pages. \$38.00). Reviewed by Colonel George G. Eddy, United States Army, Retired.

This is a book whose title should arouse the considerable interest of everyone who is concerned with what causes some men to fight and others to defect from combat. Yet when you realize that the book's preface is the

most interesting and comprehensively arrayed part of the entire book, you have to come away still thirsty for a rousing conclusion that never appears.

There is a paradox here. In the book you will find a fairly comprehensive digest of important and useful material — not original research — and yet it is lacking an effective recapitulation to aid in its practical application.

At the outset, the author declares that his effort is to be descriptive rather than prescriptive, and he certainly sticks to his theme. While there is much to catch one's attention, especially the case histories, those genuinely concerned with combat motivation must laboriously cull from the 19 chapters material that is substantive and worthy of application in the functional selection and battle preparation of both regulars and non-regulars.

The author feels that combat motivation is far too complex to lend itself

easily to simple or unidimensional explanations, and that it varies from soldier to soldier, from situation to situation, and from time to time. Thus, combat motivation is not amenable to policies that generalize the influence of particular factors or stress their unique roles, nor is it amenable to policies that fail to recognize the different levels of willingness and commitment among the soldiers at whom they are directed.

THE SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT OF THE U.S. FLEET. 12th Edition. By Norman Polmar (Naval Institute Press, 1981. 421 Pages. \$24.95). Reviewed by Rear Admiral George L. Phillips, United States Navy, Retired.

Norman Polmar's prolific pen is well applied in this masterful overview of the naval forces of the United States. It is a volume that surely will be scanned by the Pentagon planners, for it provides succinct details of our tools of seapower without the need

for digging into abstruse files.

From the clear and informative introductory chapters that deal with the state of the fleet and its organizational and personnel problems, the entire present and authorized array of U.S. naval strength is pictorially displayed, from the mighty capital ships to the workhorse auxiliaries and service craft, from battleships and carriers to aircraft, weapons, and electronic systems. The coverage is complete and reveals a high degree of professionalism.

Particularly interesting is the in-depth review of the Coast Guard and the Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, both of which are valuable adjuncts to the defense establishment. Though separate in administration, these services are usually taken into the Navy in time of war, and they have a distinguished record of service, readiness, reliability, and competency.

The author writes from an authoritative background of consulting and

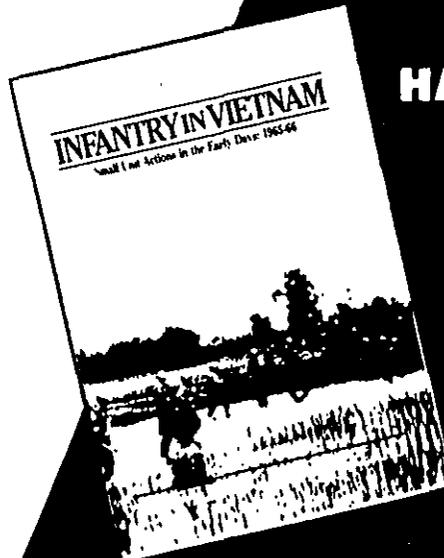
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analytical work for the Department of Defense on a full spectrum of naval matters. His book is recommended as a reference volume that contains all the answers.

SIX ARMIES IN NORMANDY, by John Keegan (Viking, 1982. 365 Pages.) Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Richard P. Dexter, United States Army.

Combining the empathy for the common soldier of an Ernie Pyle, the psychological insight to human reaction under fire of an S.L.A. Marshall, and the analytical narrative style of a Barbara Tuchman, John Keegan, a noted British military historian, reexamines one campaign of World War II through the experiences of soldiers from six armies of different origin who participated in the campaign as allies or adversaries.

The immediate story centers on the period between 6 June and 25 August 1944, but the author's focus encompasses a much broader time frame as he blends in the national heritage of the various participants and constructs an intriguing story of certain military units involved in the first three months of bloody combat in the Normandy campaign.

The author always ends his books with a note for the future. Circumstances have changed, he feels, and high technology has made some of the old rules obsolete. But as his own countrymen learned in the recent fighting in the Falklands, certain classic principles of land warfare used by infantrymen for centuries still apply.

This book is must reading for all professional soldiers and private citizens who are genuinely concerned about the future and want to learn how to face it by reading the lessons of the past.

THE IMAGE OF WAR, 1861-1865: VOLUME III, THE EMBATTLED CONFEDERACY, Edited by William C. Davis (Doubleday, 1982. 464 Pages. \$39.95).

Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Emanci-

pation Proclamation, the Northern blockade, all are included in this third volume of the publisher's magnificent photographic series on the American Civil War.

A project of the National Historical Society, this particular volume concentrates on the war in the east between September 1862 and July 1863 and on the great land battles that, for all practical purposes, determined the war's final outcome. Each of the seven short narratives is complemented by numerous photographs, the captions of which are used to supplement and expand the overall story.

As in the other published volumes in the series, many of the photographs have never been published before. The other three volumes are scheduled for publication in 1983 and 1984.

AFGHANISTAN: THE SOVIET INVASION IN PERSPECTIVE, by Anthony Arnold (Hoover Institution Press, 1981. 126 Pages). Reviewed by Colonel James B. Motley, Office of the Secretary of Defense (International Security Policy).

This concise, well-written book, set in nine chapters, traces Soviet-Afghan relations from 1919 to the present, with emphasis on the events that led to the Soviet invasion of December 1979. The author, a former intelligence analyst, contends that the Soviets have maintained a long-term pattern of aggressive intentions towards Afghanistan first through economic penetration, then through political subversion, and, finally, by military invasion and occupation.

The death of Stalin in 1953 ushered in an era of more flexible and sophisticated Soviet foreign policy. According to the author, during the period 1953-1963 economic aid proved to be an effective tool for the Soviets in their drive to establish a dominant influence in Afghanistan. But despite growing Soviet influence, the leaders of Afghanistan were not prepared to give up the country's non-aligned status.

For the next fifteen years — 1963-1978 — the Soviets continued

their economic penetration but placed greater emphasis on the manipulation of internal Afghan political forces through the Marxist-Leninist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. And from 1978 on, events in Afghanistan unfolded with an almost certain inevitability.

The strength of this book lies in the author's discussion of Soviet calculations and miscalculations of the cost of their Afghan adventure and U.S. policy options that are available to counter continued Soviet occupation of the country.

This informative book argues that Soviet aggressive intentions have been restrained only by the limitations of Soviet capabilities. It is highly recommended for the specialist and for the general reader.

RECENT AND RECOMMENDED

VICTORY IN BANGLADESH, by Major General Lachman Singh. Dehra Dun: Natraj Publishers, 1982. 320 Pages. \$19.95.

THE "AMAROC NEWS": THE DAILY NEWSPAPER OF THE AMERICAN FORCES IN GERMANY, 1919-1923, by Alfred E. Corneblse. Southern Illinois University Press, 1981. 272 Pages. \$24.95.

DER ERSTE WELTKRIEG, by Anton Wagner. 2. Auflage. Vienna: Verlag Carl Ueberreuter, 1982. 420 Pages. oS 95.

AUSTRALIA AT WAR, 1939-1945, by John Robertson. David and Charles, 1981. 269 Pages. \$31.50.

KENTUCKY FIGHTING MEN, 1861-1945, by Richard G. Stone, Jr. University Press of Kentucky, 1982. 126 Pages. \$6.95.

A TALENT TO SURVIVE: THE WARTIME EXPLOITS OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD BROAD, M.C. By Rex Woods. London: William Kimber, 1982. 205 Pages.

VIETNAM WAR LITERATURE: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF IMAGINATIVE WORKS ABOUT AMERICANS FIGHTING IN VIETNAM. By John Newman (Scarecrow Press, 1982. 117 Pages).

BRITISH DEFENSE DIRECTORY, VOLUME I, NUMBER 1, MARCH 1982. Published by Brassey's Publishers Limited. Published quarterly at an annual rate of \$307.50.

PRELUDE TO FAME. By Bertram Ratcliffe. Hippocrene Books, 1982. 112 Pages. \$14.95.