

BOOK REVIEWS



The Pergamon-Brassey's publishing house has sent us a number of publications during the past few weeks we feel can benefit you in your professional reading program. Their titles are self-explanatory:

- **ON GUARD FOR VICTORY: MILITARY DOCTRINE AND BALISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE IN THE USSR.** By Steven P. Adragna. 1987. 93 Pages. \$9.95, Softbound.

- **NATO'S MARITIME FLANKS: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS.** By H. F. Zeiner-Gundersen, *et. al.* 1987. 124 Pages. \$9.95, Softbound.

- **M. V. FRUNZE: MILITARY THEORIST.** By Colonel General Makhmut Gareev. Translated from the Russian edition. 1987. 402 Pages. \$44.00.

- **CLASH IN THE NORTH: POLAR SUMMITRY AND NATO'S NORTHERN FLANK.** Edited by Walter Goldstein. 1987. 208 Pages. \$24.00.

- **THE FALL OF AFGHANISTAN: AN INSIDER'S ACCOUNT.** By Abdul Samad Ghaus. 1987. 219 Pages. \$25.00.

- **WESTWARD WATCH: THE UNITED STATES AND THE CHANGING WESTERN PACIFIC.** By Norman D. Palmer. 1987. 176 Pages. \$14.95, Softbound.

- **BRASSEY'S SOVIET AND COMMUNIST QUOTATIONS.** Compiled and edited by Albert L. Weeks. 1987. 387 Pages. \$50.00.

- **CONTAINING THE SOVIET UNION: A CRITIQUE OF U.S. POLICY.** Edited by Terry L. Deibel and John L. Gaddis. 1987. 251 Pages. \$19.95.

- **THE SUPERPOWERS IN CRISIS: IMPLICATIONS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD.** By Richard J. Krickus. 1987. 236 Pages. \$14.95, Softbound.

- **FROM THE ATLANTIC TO**

THE URALS: NEGOTIATING ARMS CONTROL AT THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE. By John Borawski. 1987. 261 Pages. \$30.00.

The Command and General Staff College's Combat Studies Institute has also sent us two of its most recent publications, both of which should prove of great interest to all infantrymen:

- **STANDING FAST: GERMAN DEFENSIVE DOCTRINE ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT DURING WORLD WAR II: PREWAR TO MARCH 1943.** By Major Timothy A. Wray. Research Survey Number 5. 1986. USGPO S/N 008-020-01118-5. \$11.00. 221 Pages, Softbound. The author has done a fine job in culling both primary and secondary German sources to show the evolution of German defensive doctrine between 1917 and early 1943, and particularly how that doctrine was modified by the German experiences on the Eastern Front during the early years of World War II. He demonstrates that "certain basic principles remained constant throughout the war and formed the true heart of German doctrine" and that the "German Army's defensive methods were derived from four basic principles: depth, maneuver, firepower, and counterattack."

He discusses the influence Adolf Hitler exerted on the German Army's methods of fighting on the Eastern Front, and the continuing arguments between German infantry and armor commanders about the use of armor in defense. These arguments, he points out, became "heated because there was little possibility for compromise."

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 do not sell books. We will furnish a publisher's address on request.

Although the author touches only lightly on the German Army's use of its field artillery units, he gives full credit to the German infantry divisions that, after all, did much of the defensive fighting in Russia. He also attacks a few of the "myths" that have developed over the years about this massive conflict.

- **A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON LIGHT INFANTRY.** By Major Scott R. McMichael. Research Survey Number 6. 1987. 239 Pages, Softbound. In this study, the author addresses such questions as: What is the precise meaning of the term "light infantry"? How does light infantry differ from regular or conventional infantry? Are light infantry forces specialized elite forces or not? He concludes that "light infantry is, in fact, unique and distinct" and that "a light infantry ethic exists and manifests itself in a distinctive tactical style, in a special attitude toward the environment, in a freedom from dependence on fixed lines of communication, and in a strong propensity for self-reliance."

He does not feel that such specialized infantry organizations as Rangers, Commandos, and airborne units deserve to be considered light infantry because of "their costly, specialized training, privileged access to resources, and unusual capabilities."

He arrives at his conclusions by offering an analysis of the operations of four separate light infantry forces that were used during World War II or in the years immediately following that war - the Chindits in Burma in 1944; the Chinese Communist forces during the Korean War; the British operations in Malaya and Borneo from 1948 to 1966; and the World War II Canadian-American First Special Service Force.

Not everyone will agree with the author's conclusions, or with his choice of historical examples. But his study

does offer food for thought and should be consulted by those individuals in today's Army who are charged with developing light infantry doctrine.

Here are a number of our longer reviews:

JANE'S ARMOUR AND ARTILLERY, 1987-1988. Eighth Edition. Edited by Christopher F. Foss (Jane's, 1987. 1,062 Pages. \$152.50).

This edition of a splendid reference series covers all armored fighting vehicles and crewed guns (both self-propelled and towed) in current service throughout the world, plus their armament and ammunition; their engines, transmissions, and powerpacks; and their deployment. It also has sections devoted to surface-to-air missiles and to multiple rocket launchers, while a six-page addenda section contains the latest information (correct to 1 September 1987) and photographs on certain of the items discussed in the book's main sections. The editor has added one new section for this edition—it is titled "armored fighting vehicle families" and covers in some detail today's three main armored fighting vehicle families.

COMBAT LEADER'S FIELD GUIDE. 10th Edition, Revised and Updated. By James J. Gallagher (Stackpole Books, 1987. 271 Pages. \$10.95). Reviewed by Captain Thomas M. Jordan, United States Army.

This handy little reference book, which has been designed to assist combat leaders in the field, is arranged in two parts—unit combat operations and soldier combat skills. It can be easily carried in a shirt pocket, and its total focus is on company level operations, individual skills, and field expedient techniques. Administrative data is not provided; this is a book on how to fight.

Although much of the unit combat operations portion is oriented on the Bradley-equipped mechanized infantry company, this does not detract from its usefulness for the light infantry soldier. The ideas discussed are conceptually

applicable to all units.

In some cases, however, brevity is a disadvantage. The guide does touch briefly on the major tenets of AirLand Battle, rules of combat, and troop leading procedures. But because of its small unit focus, a somewhat wider theoretical perspective is needed. As a minimum, there should be some discussion of the fundamental principles of war, the combat imperatives, and the fundamentals of the offense and the defense.

The reader should not confuse the material in this publication with official Army doctrine. What we cannot find easily, however, is an official doctrinal publication that has such a variety of generally useful information in a condensed form suitable for use as a quick reference by a trained leader. Although it is somewhat expensive, I would recommend this book to all infantry company grade officers and noncommissioned officers.

THE KEY TO FAILURE: LAOS AND THE VIETNAM WAR. By Norman B. Hannah (Madison Books, 1987. 335 Pages. \$19.95). Reviewed by Doctor Joe P. Dunn, Converse College.

Quite a debate continues over the nature of the Vietnam War. Was it primarily a revolutionary struggle for power between contending elements in South Vietnam or should it have been perceived as a conventional external aggression by North Vietnam? The correct strategy to be employed—counterinsurgency or conventional mid-intensity warfare—should have followed from the definition of the primary threat.

Retired foreign service officer Norman Hannah clearly asserts that the war was the latter, and that our strategy was tragically wrong. In particular, he finds "the key to failure" in our inability to stop Hanoi's infiltration down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. He contends that this could not have been accomplished by bombing and agrees with Colonel Harry Summers (who wrote the book's foreword) that it called for ground action across the Laotian pan-

handle at an early stage in the conflict.

Hannah explains that this was not done at any point during the war because the U.S. compartmentalized the war into three Indochina theaters and employed an incremental approach rather than an overall grand strategy. The Kennedy administration and its successors believed they had shelved the Laotian problem with the Geneva Accords of 1962, which neutralized the area, and then by the 1963 "tacit agreement," which ignored Hanoi's violations of the earlier agreement in return for the North Vietnamese not taking over the northern part of the country. Thus, the feeble efforts by the U.S. to deal with the Ho Chi Minh Trail problem throughout the war paved the way for eventual victory by the North Vietnamese.

Hannah's book reminds me very much of Richard Nixon's *No More Vietnams* (1985). Both works are provocative, make valid points, and offer necessary correctives to much of conventional wisdom. But both are too simplistic, sanctimonious, and unduly judgmental. They reduce complex matters to morality plays of good guys and knaves or fools. Both proclaim rather than prove their case.

Hannah directs our thinking to important questions, but the volume affords insufficient answers. Despite its slow and repetitive development, the ideas that the book raises are well worth serious contemplation.

THE SEEDS OF DISASTER: THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH ARMY DOCTRINE, 1919-1939. By Robert Allan Doughty (Archon Books, 1985. 232 Pages. \$27.50). Reviewed by Doctor Charles E. White, USAIS Historian.

"Thank God for the French Army," Winston Churchill said when Adolf Hitler assumed power in Germany.

But in 1933 the French Army was no longer the superlative weapon it had once been. And in one of the finest analyses of French interwar doctrine, Robert Doughty has written an excellent study of an army that formulated a doctrine, devised a strategy,

organized and equipped its units, and trained its soldiers to fight the wrong kind of war.

He shows that French military thinking between the world wars became wholly defensive in nature, ignoring Napoleon's maxim that the side that stays within its fortifications is beaten. Significantly, the French had helped introduce the tank and the airplane, but now did little to extend their use.

From 1919 to 1939 French military manuals devoted page after page to the methodical, set-piece battle of World War I. Because of France's great loss of life in that war, French military thinking spurned any notion of taking the offensive. Ironically, the Maginot Line actually protected Germany better than it did France. Paralyzed by its past, the French Army in 1940 simply could not react in time to the imaginative, daring, and well-designed German plan.

It would be a great mistake, though, to think that the *Wehrmacht* was solely responsible for its stunning victory in 1940. As Doughty clearly demonstrates, France defeated herself, and this is why his book is so instructive for both soldiers and civilians. France was a victim of her own historical experience, her geography, and her political and military institutions.

DEATH VALLEY: THE SUMMER OFFENSIVE, I CORPS, AUGUST 1969. By Keith W. Nolan (Presidio, 1987. 316 Pages. \$17.95).

INTO LAOS: THE STORY OF DEWEY CANYON II/LAM SON 719, VIETNAM 1971. By Keith W. Nolan (Presidio Press, 1987. 387 Pages. \$18.95). Both books reviewed by Doctor Mike Fisher, Kansas State University.

With these two books, Keith Nolan brings full circle the historical trilogy he began with his 1983 monograph, the *BATTLE FOR HUE*. In all three works, Nolan, a 24-year old Missourian, emphasizes the role of the foot soldier in the Vietnam War and reconstructs the ebb and flow of battle from a combination of personal interviews

with survivors and after action reports of the units involved.

Nolan has successfully developed his central theme—the American soldier in Vietnam performed with courage and skill when he was properly led. As individual and collective enthusiasm for the war eroded, though, especially in the conflict's later years, the infantryman often fought with a resolve and fatalism that contrasted sharply with our country's seeming lack of national purpose.

DEATH VALLEY chronicles the savage fighting between two U.S. regiments—one Army, one Marine—and a well trained, heavily armed enemy force. During the summer of 1969, President Nixon announced the coming phase-out of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. *DEATH VALLEY* was the first major engagement by U.S. ground forces following that announcement.

Nolan explores in detail the problems of battlefield discipline, drug abuse, and racial tension that severely affected many U.S. units in Vietnam at this time. He also contrasts the performance of the 7th Marine Regiment with that of the Army's 196th Infantry Brigade. The reader tracks the two regiments into the foreboding gloom of Hiep Duc, or "Death" valley, a mountainous, heavily jungled area southwest of DaNang. Problems with race, drugs, and discipline disappeared as the two units fought for survival.

INTO LAOS takes the reader into the perhaps reluctant and last major U.S. ground offensive of the war, Dewey Canyon II. Simply, the plan called for U.S. infantry units to secure the ground east from the storied Marine base at Khe Sahn while South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) units would leapfrog into Laos along this secured route, setting up a series of support bases and interdicting the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

What followed the initiation of the plan in the spring of 1971 dominated television screens in the U.S. as Lam Son 719 ended. Americans at home gaped as they watched U.S. helicopters bringing in the survivors of the operation, many ARVN soldiers hanging to the skids in a desperate effort to escape

the North Vietnamese. Unreported by a then often biased media were the terrible casualties suffered by the enemy forces—nearly 20,000 dead—and the fact that the last U.S./ARVN ground operation had been more success than failure.

Current military leaders can benefit from Nolan's ability to record and analyze complex operations from eye level, recreating battles from the forward outpost lines back to the infantrymen who were most intensely involved. The military funnel, after all, that emptied nearly one million Americans into Vietnam between 1965 and 1972 placed only a small number at the cutting edge in the Army infantry and Marine rifle companies.

Those men and their story consume Nolan, and a careful reading of his books can profit those who one day may lead similar men and units into combat.

GREEN BERETS, SEALS, AND SPETSNAZ: U.S. AND SOVIET SPECIAL MILITARY OPERATIONS. By John M. Collins (Pergamon-Brassey's, 1987. 174 Pages. \$15.95, Softbound). Reviewed by Leroy Thompson, Manchester, Missouri.

Originally commissioned by the U.S. House Armed Services Committee, this work was intended to be a general overview of the special operations capabilities of the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

It does this quite well, considering that the author compiled his information from unclassified sources and intended his book for broad circulation. In particular, it is quite useful as a vehicle to acquaint those who are unfamiliar with special operations with the various missions and methods involved in this type of warfare. It would do the author a disservice, though, to imply that even those readers with special operations experience and knowledge will not find some value in his book.

The various charts that illustrate, for example, special forces (in the generic sense) missions and organization should be of interest even to specialists.

The glossary should also be of use to those with all levels of special operations background since it offers a standard working definition of terms not often included in military dictionaries. Almost a third of the book consists of source notes and an index, thus making it most useful to the scholar as well.

I recommend this book most highly to readers who are not specialists in unconventional warfare, as well as to those who have special operations backgrounds. It offers a primer on what is available in unclassified documents and, therefore, what can be discussed in articles or interviews without the bother of possibly compromising self or security.

CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE AND TOTAL DETERRENCE: ASSESSING NATO'S STRATEGIC OPTIONS. By Robert B. Killebrew (Scholarly Resources, 1986. 159 Pages. \$24.95). Reviewed by Colonel James B. Motley, U.S. Army, Retired.

The thesis of this book is that "the conventional defense of Europe is achievable today, or in the near future, provided NATO is willing to think through the consequences; modify national and Alliance strategies; and accept a slightly higher, but not unacceptable, degree of near-term risk."

Aside from the "purely military questions of resources, operations, and assets," the author (a serving Army lieutenant colonel when he wrote this book) writes that the difficulties of coming to grips with NATO's conventional defense within the existing framework of political and military realities revolve around three issues. First is NATO's political sensitivity to any apparent weakening of nuclear deterrence. Second is the difficulty of arriving at a consensus on the nature of the threat. And third is the difficulty of "building a box," or of defining the objectives and restraints of a strategy of conventional defense for the Alliance.

Arguing that the continued defense of NATO and deterrence of a war in Europe are vital to U.S. national secu-

rity, Killebrew feels that if NATO can get a clear view of the objectives and can make maximum use of the forces it has available, the Alliance appears to have sufficient conventional forces on hand to blunt an initial Soviet attack. He further contends that nonnuclear defense means a whole new relationship between Western arms and strategy and the Alliance's policies.

Drawing heavily from many of the standard works, the author has written an informative book that will appeal to the defense specialist. Maps, tables, diagrams, chapter endnotes, and a six-page selected bibliography complement a well-written book.

RECENT AND RECOMMENDED

THE DESTRUCTION OF CONVOY PQ-17. By David Irving. A revised and updated version of the 1968 edition. Richardson and Steirman, 1988. 415 Pages. \$19.95.

MODERN MILITARY HELICOPTERS. By Paul Beaver. Sterling, 1987. 168 Pages. \$7.95; Softbound.

U.S. ARMY RANGERS AND LRRP UNITS, 1942-87. By Gordon L. Rottman. Color Plates by Ron Volstad. Osprey Elite Series Number 13. Osprey, 1987. 64 Pages. Softbound.

THE AMBIGUOUS RELATIONSHIP: THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND ALFRED THAYER MAHAN. By Richard W. Turk. Greenwood, 1987. 183 Pages. \$32.95.

THE DARK SUMMER: AN INTIMATE HISTORY OF THE EVENTS THAT LED TO WORLD WAR II. By Gene Smith. Macmillan, 1987. 314 Pages. \$22.50.

SIEGE: MALTA, 1940-1943. By Ernie Bradford. William Morrow, 1986. 304 Pages. \$19.95.

FROM THE BARREL OF A GUN: ARMIES AND REVOLUTIONS. By Anthony James Joes. Pergamon-Brassey's, 1986. 225 Pages. \$14.95; Softbound.

ARMS CONTROL VERIFICATION: THE TECHNOLOGIES THAT MAKE IT POSSIBLE. Edited by Kosta Tzispis, David W. Hafemeister, and Penny Janeway. Pergamon-Brassey's, 1986. 419 Pages. \$34.95.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE MACHINEGUN. By John Ellis. With a new Foreword and Bibliographical Essay by Edward C. Ezell. Originally published in 1975. The Johns-Hopkins University Press, 1986. 192 Pages. \$8.95; Softbound.

THE PARAS. By Frank Hilton. Presidio, 1986. 248 Pages.

HELL ON WHEELS: THE 2d ARMORED DIVISION. By Donald E. Houston. A reprint of the 1977 edition. Presidio, 1986. 466 Pages. \$12.95; Softbound.

THE LONGEST BATTLE: THE WAR AT SEA, 1939-1945. By Richard Hough. William Morrow, 1987. 371 Pages. \$19.95.

THE INTELLIGENT LAYPERSON'S GUIDE TO "STAR WARS": 16 QUESTIONS

AND ANSWERS ON STRATEGIC DEFENSE AND SPACE WEAPONRY. By Joyce E. Larson and William C. Bodie. National Strategy Information Center, 1986. 59 Pages. \$6.95; Softbound.

MILSPEAK: A DICTIONARY OF INTERNATIONAL MILITARY ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS. Compiled by Andy Lightbody and Joe Poyer. North Cape Publications, 1986. 91 Pages. \$5.95; Softbound.

REBEL: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN SINGLETON MOSBY. By Kevin H. Siepel. A reprint of the 1983 edition. St. Martin's Press, 1988. 346 Pages. \$8.95; Softbound.

U.S. MARINES IN LEBANON, 1982-1984. By Benis M. Frank. USMC History and Museums Division, 1987. 196 Pages.

DRAGONS AT WAR: 2-34th INFANTRY IN THE MOJAVE. By Daniel P. Bolger. Presidio Press, 1987. 338 Pages. \$18.95.

THE BOMBERS: THE ILLUSTRATED STORY OF OFFENSIVE STRATEGY AND TACTICS IN THE 20th CENTURY. By Robin Cross. Macmillan, 1987. 224 Pages. \$22.95.

THE ORDNANCE SURVEY COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS OF BRITAIN. By David Smurthwaite. First published in hard cover in Great Britain in 1984. Viking Penguin, 1987. 224 Pages. \$14.95; Softbound.

SAUDI ARABIA IN THE OIL ERA: REGIME AND ELITES, CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION. By Mordechai Abir. Westview Press, 1988. 247 Pages. \$38.50.

ARMS CONTROL AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS: U.S. POLICIES AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST. Edited by W. Gary Nichols and Milton L. Boykin. Contributions in Military Studies Number 59. Greenwood Press, 1987. 135 Pages. \$29.95.

PERSPECTIVES ON NUCLEAR WAR AND PEACE EDUCATION. Edited by Robert Ehrlich. Contributions in Military Studies Number 60. Greenwood Press, 1987. 242 Pages. \$37.95.

CAST-OFF YOUTH: POLICY AND TRAINING METHODS FROM THE MILITARY EXPERIENCE. By Thomas G. Sticht, et al. Praeger, 1987. 216 Pages. \$39.95.

THE DICTIONARY OF SDI. By Harry Waldman. Scholarly Resources, 1988. 182 Pages. \$35.00.

A CODE TO KEEP. By Ernest Brace. St. Martin's Press, 1988. 264 Pages. \$16.95.

THE BRITISH ARMY ON CAMPAIGN, 1816-1902 (2): THE CRIMEA, 1854-1856. By Michael Barthorp. Color Plates by Pierre Turner. Men-at-Arms Series Number 196. Osprey, 1987. 48 Pages, Softbound.

PRUSSIAN RESERVE, MILITIA, AND IRREGULAR TROOPS, 1806-1815. By Peter Hofschoer. Color Plates by Bryan Fosten. Men-at-Arms Series Number 192. Osprey, 1987. 48 Pages, Softbound.

POLISH ARMIES, 1569-1696 (2). By Richard Brzezinski. Color Plates by Angus McBride. Men-at-Arms Series Number 188. Osprey, 1987. 48 Pages, Softbound.

KOREA: THE WAR BEFORE VIETNAM. By Callum A. MacDonald. The Free Press, 1987. 320 Pages. \$24.95.

FROM OSS TO GREEN BERETS. By Colonel Aaron Bank. Originally published in 1986. Pocket Books, 1987. 236 Pages. \$3.95; Softbound.