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Defence and International Security



Killing Mr Lebanon – The Assassination of Rafik Hariri and its Impact on the Middle East

By Nicholas Blanford

£17.99, 230 pages

I. B. Tauris, 2006

ISBN 1845112024

Modern historians tend to see impersonal social and political trends and not individual leaders as the driving force of history, but if ever the life of one 'great man' could be said to unlock the secrets of an age, it must surely be that of Rafik Hariri. Assassinated in Beirut on Valentine's Day 2005, Hariri proved to be no less of a dynamic figure in death as he was in life. The killing of the former Lebanese Prime Minister, popularly blamed on Syrian intelligence services, achieved what is in Lebanon the almost impossible – the unification of the country's squabbling sects, factions and political groupings in mass street protests and calls for political change, in what has since become known as the 'Cedar Revolution'. Of course, this unity was short-lived and soon fell prey to domestic political rivalries and external manipulations, but Hariri's accomplishments as Prime Minister and the circumstances of his death soon came to be placed at the very centre of an important and highly sensitive debate about the future of Lebanon, its role in the Middle East and its position within the international

political order. Opinions on Hariri are as much opinions on Lebanon as they are on the life of the man himself.

A well-established journalist long recognized for his insights into Lebanese politics, Blanford puts a decade of experience in Beirut to good use in elaborating the context in which Hariri's assassination took place. The title of the book is slightly misleading, for it provides much more than an account of his murder and much less than an analysis of its repercussions for the Middle East as a whole. Building on numerous interviews with Lebanese politicians as well as those people close to Hariri, Blanford does reconstruct a narrative of the day of his death and details the conclusions of the initial investigations but declines to participate in the more outlandish (and unsubstantiated) speculations over the assassination that characterized much of the media discourse at the time. He evidently leans towards the likely involvement of Syrian intelligence, given the complexity of the operation, the skill with which it was carried out and the amount of explosives used, but wisely refrains from polemics against the Syrian regime as a whole. Instead, he constructs a case carefully and with subtlety, allowing facts often overlooked by observers based in the West to speak for themselves. For example, he introduces the possibility that the 'Al-Qa'ida plot' against Italian targets in Beirut broken by Interior Minister Elias Murr in September 2004 may actually have been an earlier attempt by Syrian and Lebanese intelligence to eliminate Hariri. This would explain reports of Syrian intelligence chiefs' anger at Murr's

discovery of the cell, as well as how Al-Qa'ida were planning to transport a 300kg bomb under the noses of military officials manning checkpoints around the Italian Embassy on al-Nijmeh Square.

Where the book excels is in capturing the intrigues, personality politics and backroom deals of the Lebanese political scene over the last thirty years. By honing in on the figure of Hariri, Blanford is able to use him almost as a formal device to allow him to highlight how the processes of politics play out in Lebanon. Much of this revolves around the dynamics of sectarianism, which is best seen less as a permanent sociological feature of Lebanon and more as an energizing structure for political entrepreneurs seeking to mobilize communal identities to support their own advancement. While this background information is essential for newcomers to Lebanese history, it is often all too familiar to those who know the country well. Yet Blanford surpasses the usual clichés of sectarianism and religious division by adding another strand to his narrative: the political economy of law-making and corruption.

The intimate association of political power and profiteering is by no means unique to Lebanon, but the Lebanese do seem to have elevated the game to Grandmaster level. The government passes road safety legislation to prevent incendiary incidents and then forgets about it once the Minister sells off his recent shipments of fire extinguishers; defence budgets pay for officers' private mobile phone bills; and lucrative state contracts inevitably require hiring 'public relations' companies which take a 10 per cent commission for access to the minister who also happens to run them. Indeed, much of the anger directed at the Syrian army's domination of Lebanon seems to have come from the sheer crudeness in which they plundered the local economy: their 'smash-and-grab' techniques simply lacked the finesse of Lebanese corruption. In this, Hariri was no different than many of his contemporaries and happily conformed to the system in order to get

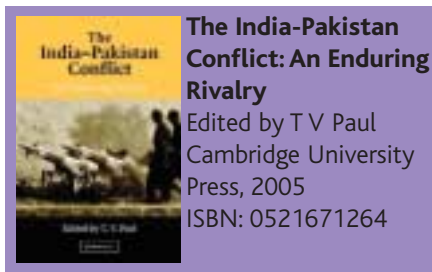
anything achieved: he established his own array of private companies and government agencies in parallel to the state bureaucracy to implement his economic policies of reconstruction. But Blanford points out that his aim was not personal enrichment – his wildly successful business career in Saudi Arabia had freed him from such material concerns – but rebuilding a country shattered by years of civil war.

Blanford explores how Hariri's death was hijacked by external forces – the phrase the 'Cedar Revolution' was actually coined by the US State Department, who were apparently reluctant to associate themselves with a movement described by the Lebanese as an *intifada* (uprising). American dreams of the Cedar Revolution leading to a 'democracy' in Lebanon, which would bring an end to Syrian influence and the awkward presence of Hizbullah, were doomed from the outset, as they fundamentally mischaracterized what was happening on the ground and demonstrated a wilful ignorance of the realities of Lebanese politics. What Blanford's book illustrates is that democracy is not simply a matter of who is in power, but how power operates: even US favourites like Saad Hariri, son and political heir apparent of Rafik, will inevitably be obliged to make the same kind of trade-offs, concessions and accommodations as his father before him. In the future, Lebanese politics may fragment even further, as Syria's withdrawal has ended the polarization of pro- and anti-Damascus forces in Lebanon. Old constraints have been removed and ancient faultlines eroded, while novel opportunities emerge and new alliances are forged. It is too much to expect Hariri's assassination to stimulate a transition to democracy in Lebanon: a continuation of the personality politics of corruption and backroom deals seems a much more likely outcome.

Daniel Neep

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This edited collection of conference papers attempts to tackle perhaps the most useful question about the conflict between India and Pakistan: why it endures. The authors, a group of primarily Canadian and American academics, come from two distinct academic traditions, international relations and comparative politics. They were assembled by T V Paul, a leading Canadian academic, in an ambitious attempt to bridge the gap between international relations theory and regional expertise. The book does not offer tremendous new insights on the India-Pakistan conflict, but it does manage to move beyond much of the existing literature precisely because it seeks to marry key conceptual and theoretical debates to the India-Pakistan case.

After a sometimes dense series of chapters reviewing the theoretical work on enduring rivalries and deterrence as they relate to India and Pakistan, the book opens up into a series of essays on the roots of the conflict between these two countries, assessing elements like irredentism, nuclear status, the role of major powers, national identity and institutional factors. The resulting analysis is for the most part pessimistic. The reasons for conflict between India and Pakistan are, some sixty years on, well rehearsed, although opportunities for resolution still pivot around the national security decisions of both Pakistan and India, in particular (but by no means exclusively) in the context of their dispute over Kashmir.

A couple of the chapters deserve specific mention. Vali Nasr's exploration of national identities offers a keenly observed account of the relationship between Islam, Islamism and Pakistani foreign policy. Recommended reading for analysts working on Pakistan. Ashok Kapur suggests that great power involvement in South Asia actually



helped to prolong the hostile India-Pakistan relationship given that Pakistan was able to draw on this external support. That the situation is now changing, he suggests, is in part down to the significantly changed positions of both the US and China towards South Asia, as well as being driven by Indian growth and Pakistani policymaking.

Russell Leng's chapter on Realpolitik and learning explores the types of lessons that Indian and Pakistani strategic elites have taken from crises past. In the process of doing so he makes a good case in support of 'prospect theory' (the argument that individuals will accept greater risks to avoid losses than to achieve gains). But he also takes the argument further with an analysis of what he dubs 'realpolitik experiential learning', showing that failed approaches to crises past encourage moves to more coercive tactics in future crises. This is borne out, he argues, by the growing seriousness of Indo-Pak crises and clashes between 1947 and 1971. He explores the 1999 and 2001/2 confrontations in the same way.

But is this so? The point about the 2001/2 crisis was that a full-scale war was averted: and averted primarily due to the strategic choices made by leaders in New Delhi and Islamabad. And the current peace process between India and Pakistan, although low-key, has delivered tangible outcomes, whether that be the much publicized bus links in Kashmir, or the underappreciated cease-fire along Kashmir's Line of Control, which markedly improved the lives of several hundred thousand people since it began in November 2003. And for all the temptation to assume that realpolitik discourages creative thinking, the very steps already taken by both India and Pakistan suggest otherwise.

This is a valuable text for scholars working on South Asia: although perhaps less compelling for policymakers or general readers. But there are interesting insights, including a fascinating chart that shows the frequency of dispute outcomes between the two states. Thirty-five of the forty-three disputes resulted in a stalemate, while over 65 per cent (twenty-eight disputes) were initiated by Pakistan, according to a

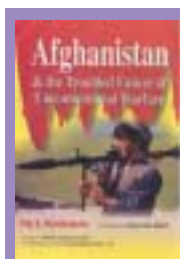
detailed analysis by Paul Diehl, Gary Goertz and Daniel Saeedi. Meanwhile, they add that while India 'won' three past clashes, Pakistan has never 'won' any.

Over the long term, of course, both countries have lost out. For evidence of this, look no further than Dubai. One contributing factor to the rise of Dubai is its extraordinarily active South Asian business community. Their very presence and success has drawn on the importance of Dubai's intermediary role when it comes to indirect trade between India and Pakistan. In short, India-Pakistan rivalry has impoverished both countries while benefiting a key major trading partner of them both. In terms of policy learning, the fact that key policymakers in both Delhi and Islamabad understand the potential for a huge economic peace dividend is a cause for optimism about their future relationship.

The challenge of building confidence and a sustainable peace between India and Pakistan remains, but meanwhile T V Paul and his colleagues have made a useful contribution to analyzing some of the drivers that have underpinned their decades-long rivalry.

Alexander Evans

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Afghanistan & the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare

By Hy S. Rothstein
£19.99 218 pages
Manas Publications, 2006
ISBN 8170493064

Afghanistan & the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare is an excellent contribution to the discussion on the future of warfare and America's ability to fight unconventional conflict. Written by a Naval Postgraduate School

professor who served as an active duty special forces officer for thirty years, this book combines an inside knowledge of special forces with a thoughtful and considered analysis of American operations in Afghanistan. Drawing on a host of excellent academic literature from Rosen to Van Creveld and Cohen to Clausewitz, Rothstein fuses the theoretical with the practical, applying his first hand knowledge and original interviews to document the short-lived US 'victory' over the Taliban.

Rothstein argues that although the US Department of Defense (DoD) repeatedly stated that the War on Terror needed to be fought through unconventional means, the US operations in Afghanistan were decidedly conventional. The book is dominated by three main themes that outline why the US fails to be effective in waging unconventional wars. First, the organizational nature of the US military and its command structure, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is predisposed to the use of conventional military forces in conventional conflicts. Secondly, the emphasis on 'transformation' of the military and the increasing technological reliance of the US armed forces means that service personnel are poorly equipped to deal with situations that, at the core, are low-tech operations. Thirdly, the training of conventional service personnel is not adequate for unconventional warfare. These three arguments are embedded within a review of organizational theory and contingency theory, which Rothstein utilizes to illustrate the difficulties for the predominately conventional US force to fight an unconventional war. This review will focus less on the sound theoretical underpinnings of this book, concentrating rather on the three points highlighted above.

The problems the US faces in waging unconventional war start at the very top. The US system favours the promotion of a set organizational cultures and prevailing assumptions, ideas and norms that influence action. The need for unanimity among the Joint Chiefs related to policy recommendations means that dissenting, and perhaps more original

ideas, get short shrift. Furthermore, training and prior experience of US military personnel do not equip them to perform joint operations well. Instead, single service careers and training tend to serve those best that aspire to top commands in their respective service. Interestingly, none of the six men who have commanded US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) have had 'relevant unconventional warfare experience'. Therefore from the top down the US armed forces tend to be predisposed to using overwhelming mass and superior firepower to achieve mission goals. Essentially the US military is oriented towards conflicts of attrition. This is diametrically opposed, however, to manoeuvre warfare, which is the inherent nature of special operation forces (SOF). Despite the presence of an SOF component in the US forces, the predisposition of the leadership at all levels of the command structure to attritional methods means that America fights wars in the same predictable manner.

After dissecting the organizational issues at the DoD and in the services, Rothstein moves on to assess what he refers to as the 'implications of processes of innovation'. Here one finds a rather stern indictment of the US military's use of high-tech weapons. While Rothstein admits that such weapons are useful in certain types of conflict, he comes down wholeheartedly against an over-reliance on them in unconventional war. Furthermore, although instant communication throughout the military is generally regarded as advancement in warfare, the author argues that instead it hampers effective command and control, allowing military leadership trained in conventional warfare to micromanage SOF forces to a degree that nearly eradicated their effectiveness in the field. Technology can be helpful, but it tends to stand in the way in the conflicts that the US is fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Finally, the book explores how training plays a major role in how a military fights. This argument covers the

leadership at the top and how they strategically plan the war, right down to the tactical decisions by soldiers on the ground. Rothstein quotes a brigade commander from the 101st who said, 'We train the way we're going to fight' meaning that the troops also fight the way they are trained. Although the military has attempted to institute additional training for troops overseas, the authors believe that it is against the nature of conventional forces to adequately manage counter insurgency operations. As he points out, young soldiers need 'clear and simple rules'.

Rothstein concludes by looking at how the US military can change to better fight unconventional wars, with particular attention devoted to transforming special operations forces for this task. In short, special forces will need a willingness to put less emphasis on the skills of the commando and more effort into applying military, civil and psychological capabilities at the tactical and operational levels. This change must start at the top. However, at the national policy level, it needs to be part of a broader conceptual shift within the military.

While this book was extremely informative and thought provoking, the major drawback is its organization. It seemed to bob and weave between subjects, making it difficult to connect the entire argument together. While the knowledgeable reader will be able to overcome this fault, it is a shame that the editors did not push the author to make the book more readable. That said, the author's clear and concise writing style is a welcome change for anyone accustomed to reading overly jargoned academic studies. One can only hope that the leadership in Washington takes a look at this most interesting contribution to the current debate on unconventional warfare.

Dr Michael Williams

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Editor of *Power in World Politics* (Routledge 2007). ■

Reviews



Blind Spot – The Secret History of American Counterterrorism
By Timothy Naftali
\$16.00, 387 pages
Basic Books, 2006
ISBN: 0465092829

Blind Spot is a history of US efforts to counter terrorism from just after Second World War until the present day. The author characterizes the American approach to terrorism during this period as 'feast or famine', one 'lurching back and forth between neglect and alarmism', thereby making it difficult to establish a sustained effort. The history in this book portrays a pattern that emerged between 1969 and 1998, 'time and time again, policy-makers had to be shocked into changing their minds', to see terrorism as the grave threat that it represented. Timothy Naftali is an associate professor at the University of Virginia's Miller Center for Public Affairs. He is qualified to author a book on this subject in another key way – he worked in 2003-2004 as a contractor with the National Commission on Terrorist Acts Upon the United States, known otherwise as the 9/11 Commission. Since *Blind Spot* is a long book with some detail, this review harvests the essential pieces and distills them to briefly illuminate some deleterious historical trends that aggregated to create a blind spot in the fight against terrorism. This book is salient reading for all coalition civilian and military practitioners and scholars of counterterrorism and international security because it offers a quite readable and well researched appraisal of America's longstanding battle against terrorists.

The author foreshadows one harmful trend at the very beginning of the book with his suggestion that, if an FBI agent had been in charge of the Office of Strategic Services, then perhaps, 'the active and debilitating rivalry between the OSS and later the Central Intelligence Agency's counter-espionage officers and the FBI might have been



averted or at least would have been considerably muted'. Instead, however, the US government created two separate services which subsequently undertook the counterterrorism mission, with two distinct and divergent approaches. The lack of interagency integration, or even co-operation, between the FBI and CIA, that Naftali aptly elucidates in *Blind Spot*, created a seam in the US capacity to prosecute counterterrorism. What's more, the globalization and fragmentation engendered by the end of the Cold War, coupled with the proliferation of non-state armed groups, exacerbated this divide, ultimately making it a critical vulnerability. In the first half of the book, one can also discern two other relatively coincidental events, the consequences of which aggregated against the FBI's and the CIA's capacity to harmonize their counterterrorism efforts.

The first was the Church Committee's investigation, which in 1975 ultimately culminated as the Levi Guidelines, which significantly restricted the FBI from collecting domestic intelligence beyond that required for an open criminal investigation. The book reveals a 1976 discussion about the Levi Guidelines, when then Associate Deputy Attorney General Rudolph Guliani presciently observed that 'under the new guidelines there is difficulty in collecting domestic intelligence unless there was some indication that there had been a violation of the law'. Guliani also argued in favour of the need to make intelligence collection and sharing between the FBI and the CIA easier, to no avail. The second event in 1975, about which the CIA warned, but which relatively few perceived as a harbinger, was the splintering of the PLO. This augured a new category of transnational terrorism that would rely less on state sponsors. Naftali quotes a 1976 CIA conclusion that 'the wave of the future seems to be toward the development of a complex support base for transnational terrorist activity that is largely independent of – and quite resistant to control by – the state-centered international system'. Thus, even before the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet

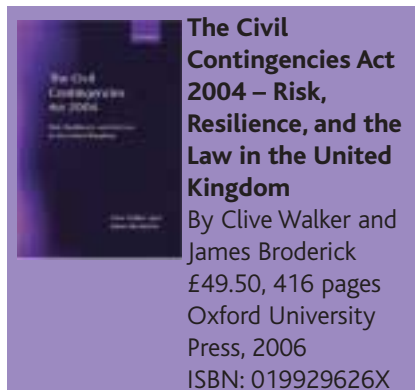
Afghan War, the FBI had been handicapped, and not unified with the CIA to fight terrorism, while non-state terrorism was emergent. This '*Blind Spot*' expanded just when the terrorism threat was about to become more significant.

This work points to another enigma, an innovation linked to a harmful trend, and one found in the creation of a special counterterrorist military capability that was on the shelf, but seldom used, due to a general reluctance to employ special mission units in a direct counterterrorism role before 11 September 2001. *Blind Spot* briefly examines the 1977 initiation of Operation Blue Light, 'a special unit from within the existing Special Forces' that served as a stop-gap measure until Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta became fully operational in early 1978. Delta Force, along with Seal Team Six, matured and developed into premier counter-terrorism units from the mid-1980s onward, but, according to Naftali there was a risk-averse mindset in the National Security Council and in the conventionally-inclined Joint Staff which combined to preclude the use of these units in a direct action role, particularly during the second half of the 1990s. Even during the Reagan White House, which was ostensibly but not actually that tough about striking back at serious terrorist threats, *Blind Spot* highlights a reluctance to employ special mission units in covert roles in the Middle East and the Levant. The emergence of the Weinberger Doctrine, articulated by the Defense Secretary in a November 1984 speech at the National Press Club, which codified a last resort use of overwhelming and conventional force, certainly did not favour the use of elite units in a direct action role. During the 1980s, when Hezbollah represented the most serious terrorist threat in the Middle East, the author explains that 'the US military's reluctance to use force as a tool in counter-terrorism and the President's own reasonable doubts had prevented any real test of the military option.'

The attacks of 11 September impelled more rapid innovation, better fusion and the integration of a host of military and civilian intelligence

agencies, and the direct use of special mission units and aerial platforms to expunge or capture terrorists associated with Al-Qa'ida. The last part of the book is the most topical and valuable as it describes the lessons learned and the innovations in American counterterrorism since September 2001. The conclusion also provides a candid assessment of agencies and policies that still require improvement or adaptation. Given that the corpus of current American national security and military strategy documents describe the war against Al-Qa'ida and other state-sponsored and non-state terrorist groups as a perennial conflict that may last for decades, *Blind Spot*, especially the last third of the book, should be required reading for all professionals with a purview of counterterrorism.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert M. Cassidy
US Army officer and Fellow, Center for Advanced Defense Studies. Author of *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror: Military Culture and Irregular War*. ■



If legislation is the last refuge of the politician what are we to make of those academics who devote their time to writing about it? This is a question best answered by this admirable book by Walker and Broderick, which represents a forensic examination of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) and the contemporary risk and resilience landscape to which the Act responds.

Walker has spent his academic life probing and dissecting the minutiae of terrorist legislation, exposing the flaws,

questioning the logic and demanding more of our public servants. He now brings this incisive talent to bear on the CCA with the able support of Broderick. But the book is much more than a critical analysis of legislation, important as this endeavour may be in holding our law-makers to account. This book has big concepts in its sights such as governance, modernity, security and liberty, and it soundly hits its targets.

The CCA emerged through the apparent inadequacies of previous emergency legislation to deal with the changing security environment. As Walker notes, '(n)ew risks and vulnerabilities were said to be to blame along with the increasing demands of the public.' But the authors do not settle for such straightforward representations, embarking on a search for alternative origins. Through the signal first chapter, they explore and expose the relationship between risk and modernity, the reflexive imperatives of state responses to uncertainty, and the new forms of governance that emerge through the demands for security. In essence, they deliver a genealogy of resilience that runs as a golden thread through the book, challenging and unsettling the Act's representations of risk and contingency and exposing its inherent dangers and flaws.

The subsequent methodology they employ requires a steady eye and stout heart as the book descends into a smorgasbord of laws, sub-sections and clauses. The Act is mauled as it pounces on a succession of shortcomings and omissions with devastating penetration. But the authors ensure that this scalpel approach continues to serve the key themes of the book: the Act's 'bottom-heavy' approach that fails to properly position central government's responsibility or role (the ghost in the machine); the danger of an over-protective 'insider' mentality associated with a developing *securitocracy*; the requirement to continue a language of rights that encompasses security and liberty; the location, understanding and impact of risk in modern society; and the representation of the public as a passive recipient of the 'good' of resilience. The authors are much kinder

to Part 1 of the Act (the resilience planning component) than they are to Part 2 (the emergency powers component) describing Part 2 as containing '...within it the tools for dismantling civil society.' And it is here where the book is at its best, devastatingly critical and lucidly persuasive, demonstrating the tension that exists between the two parts of the Act and the consequences of the Sisyphean struggle of imposing order and control within a risk economy of future uncertainty.

In many ways, the CCA emerges from the book as a very British approach to the politically charged concept of Homeland Security – understated, functional, and with genuine reach of intent (if not application). In the final chapter, this Homeland security 'elephant in the room' is briefly acknowledged with an all-too-short comparison of approaches to civil protection from New Zealand and, most importantly, the United States. The authors resist the call for an equivalent UK Department of Homeland Security but see merit in the Federal Emergency Management Agency, despite its poor showing during Hurricane Katrina. They note that UK civil contingency provision suffers from a lack of centralized co-ordination and remains faceless due to the lack of ministerial lead. But the book provides only cursory thoughts on how such issues may be addressed. The centrality of national security and resilience strategy and architecture within current Government debate suggests that the matter deserves greater attention within a book on the CCA; one can only hope it will be the subject of future attention.

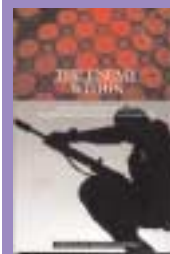
The authors are correct in concluding that this Act is as much about introducing cultural change across the public sector in respect of resilience as it is in implementing the mechanics of civil protection. They believe the act 'is in principle justifiable' playing an important role in engendering social solidarity but remaining wary of elevating contingency planning above other critical social policies or perpetuating a state of insecurity. What this detailed and authoritative study achieves is to pull

back the fig-leaves of legislative certainty on which the politicians have invested such faith to reveal the foundational dilemmas and tensions that should inform the concept, construction and oversight of resilience, revisiting fundamental questions of governance, liberty, security and justice. As the resilience sector continues to grow, it is in all our interests that they retain this appetite for fig-leaves.

Neil Ellis

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Armed Forces in Africa



The Enemy Within – Southern African Militaries' Quarter-Century Battle with HIV and AIDS

Edited by Martin Rupiya
Price R100 [£10.00], 218 pages
Institute for Security Studies, 2006
ISBN: 1-920114-03-3

HIV/AIDS is arguably the greatest problem facing southern and central Africa. Violent conflict, involuntary displacement, environmental crises and political instability are perennial problems, but HIV/AIDS, unlike conflict, is not something that can be mediated with, fled from, or disarmed. There has been no shortage of research and publications on HIV/AIDS in Africa, but there has been relatively little written about the effect that AIDS has had on African armed forces. This is a glaring omission in the canon of HIV/AIDS literature; the defence forces of southern Africa are designed to be the guardians of national sovereignty, and, in conjunction with the police, they should function as the guarantors of human security. Yet the AIDS pandemic has resulted in regional militaries which are often literally unfit for purpose. A serious work which analyses the impact of



HIV/AIDS on the military and society in the sub-region, is therefore long overdue.

The Enemy Within is a collaborative work in which defence and health practitioners, and security and civil society analysts from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, have contributed chapters on the impact of HIV/AIDS in the civilian and military sectors of their countries. The first part of the book examines how HIV/AIDS has impacted the armies of Botswana, Swaziland and Zambia. The contributions are made more trenchant because they are written by serving medical officers within those armies. All the chapters have been carefully researched and are well-presented, but it is the article on Botswana which is the most impressive. Raymond Molatole and Steven Laki Thaga give an illuminating overview as they trace the history of the epidemic in Botswana, and review its impact on the general population and the state's response. The rest of the section then assesses the history and impact of the disease on the Botswana Defence Forces (BDF).

The figures, both for the general population and the BDF, are shocking – revealing a huge surge in the rate of infection and the known statistics of infection. In June 1992, there were a reported 3,500 cases; but by 2005, more than 300,000 were officially listed as being HIV positive – nearly a quarter of the population. This also impacts on the military. Although authors Molatole and Thaga admit that they cannot precisely quantify the statistical levels of HIV/AIDS within the BDF, they estimate that approximately 60 per cent of deaths in the BDF are as a result of this. The structures and programmes established by the BDF to meet this challenge are also discussed and evaluated. The authors make some interesting recommendations, of which arguably the most important is the need for increasing the participation of the Officer Corps within the HIV/AIDS programme.

The chapter which follows, on the Umbuto Swaziland Defence Force (USDF) highlights a health and developmental crisis facing a nation

which, in relative terms, is facing an even graver risk than Botswana. Authors Simelane et al estimate an HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 42 per cent of the national population. They also postulate 'an infection rate among young women aged 15 – 19 of 32.5 per cent.' The USDF has, since 2001, embarked on a comprehensive, military specific HIV/AIDS Programme. However, there is little doubt that traditional cultural practices and the historical momentum of learned behaviours impact negatively on efforts to deal with the problem. This factor is also highlighted in the chapter on the Zambian Defence Force (ZDF) in which the authors detail the difficulties of synergizing state and military responses to the crisis.

The second part of the book examines HIV/AIDS and the military in Tanzania and Zimbabwe from a civil society, as well as a military perspective. These chapters are replete with useful facts and figures, but there is also a subtle shift of analysis away from the specific focus on HIV/AIDS and the military to discussions on how best the military can be incorporated into national HIV/AIDS strategies. As is so often the case when dealing with HIV/AIDS, even the good news is often laced with pessimism: writing about AIDS in Zimbabwe, Matchaba Hove points out that, 'The latest [2005] figures show some decline in prevalence in the adult population. This [decline] is now estimated at 20.1 per cent, compared with 24.6 per cent in 2002 and 31 per cent in 2000.' This should be cause for optimism, but it is not, largely because of ambiguities about the real meaning of the data. Matchaba Hove states that, 'the decline in [HIV] prevalence could be due to the increase in deaths among AIDS sufferers; in addition, the statistics on prevalence do not reflect the accumulated backlog of infection over more than a decade.'

In the last section of the book, Martin Rupiya analyzes key lessons of this study, and he makes practical recommendations on how the militaries of the sub-region can best tackle this mutual challenge. Whilst some of his recommendations, in particular the issue of homosexuality in the armed forces,

are certain to be contentious, there can be no doubt that continued denial is costing more lives. Homosexuality in general and particularly in such repositories of male power and prestige as the armed forces is 'taboo' in most African societies. But it is also a historical and modern fact of life in Africa, as elsewhere. As Rupiya points out, 'This dimension cannot be wished away or legislated against, but has to be addressed head on.' Where homosexuality is most likely to intersect with HIV/AIDS, is in the domain of voluntary 'same sex' unions. More deadly, though, are certain 'hidden' behavioural and socio-cultural practices which involve coercive same sex unions (most commonly with anal sex/rape in the prisons and/or older men raping younger male relatives). This is also an issue in the armed forces. So too is the issue of sexual coercion of female recruits in the armed forces – this often acts as an HIV/AIDS 'conveyor belt'.

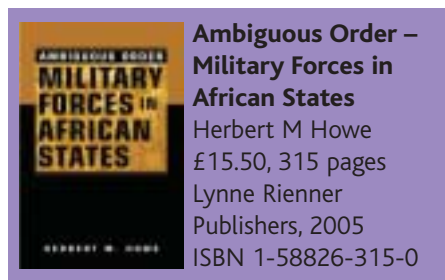
An odd omission in this book, though, is any sustained discussion of the South African National Defence Forces (SANDF) and South African state policy on HIV/AIDS. Such an inclusion would surely have added greater lustre to this regional analysis. It might also have been beneficial to discuss in greater detail, the impact on national and regional security of having armies which are literally full of 'walking wounded.'

Nevertheless, *The Enemy Within* is a book which will enlighten both specialists and the general public. The book shows how HIV/AIDS has impacted on the armed forces in southern Africa over a generation, and is mercifully free of cant or grandiose sentimentality. What emerges very clearly from the book is how HIV/AIDS, like modern conflict, is transmitted through social networks and its durability is accentuated by persistent cultural narratives and behaviours. There is no doubt that engaging with cultural beliefs and practices must form the basis of any sustainable HIV/AIDS strategy, both for the armed forces and civilian society. But it is an immense task. *The Enemy Within* is an important and necessary work which examines an aspect of HIV/AIDS

in southern Africa which had hitherto received scant coverage. It is a commendable effort.

Tapera Knox Chitiyo

Nelson Mandela Africa Research Fellow,
RUSI ■



The discourse on conflict in Africa is familiar territory. Much of the civil-military relations analysis focuses on the mechanics of military takeovers – the provenance of a coup, its inception and how the armed forces function when they are in power. The armed forces, being the most powerful group, can challenge a civilian or military state for control of state resources, and they will do so when opportunity coincides with motivation and armaments.

Although he does survey the politics of African civil-military relations, the major thrust of Howe's study is an assessment of the military and the professional capabilities of post-independence sub-Saharan African armies. The author focuses on 'political responsibility primarily in relationship to military operations and their conduct toward the civilian population'. A major thesis of the book is that the lack of military professionalism within Africa's armies generate violence within and between Africa's nation-states. Unprofessional military forces forsake their notional role as the guardians of security and function instead as the engines of disorder. Professional in name, but unprofessional in practice, these 'formal' forces generate tidal currents of conflict. Violence becomes fetish, and peace becomes taboo.

The chapter on 'African Military Unprofessionalism' traces the history of 'unprofessionalism' in Africa's armed forces. During the colonial era, the

Western powers required obedient armies. There was a lower premium for military competence which was often perceived as a threat to the state. The racial culture of colonialism mandated military professionalism as a 'white' prerogative. For the indigenous rank-and-file soldiery, 'ethnicization' was the institutional culture. In the post-colonial era, 'ethnicization' was fused with the 'personalization' of politics – often with disastrous results. The status of national armies as the 'keepers of the state armoury' often emboldens them to challenge or replace the state. In Howe's opinion, the political leadership often compounds the problem by encouraging 'unprofessionalism', in order to limit the likelihood of a coup. One way the leaders do this is by developing 'parallel' forces, as counterweights to the regular forces. These 'parallel' forces can usurp the professionalism of the 'established' forces.

Howe's major thesis is that the majority of sub-Saharan national – and, often, multinational armies – are operationally mediocre, even by the relative yardstick of 'Third World' armies. Corruption is a major reason – the culture of personal advancement at any cost, which permeates both civilian and military leadership, is incompatible with military and institutional effectiveness. The existence of 'parallel forces' such as insurgents, militias, and mercenaries can further undermine professionalism. 'Atrocious wars', in which horrific crimes are routinely committed, and 'feral violence' becomes the norm and gone are any notions of just wars and professionalism.

In his chapter on 'ECOMOG and Regional Peacekeeping', Howe gives a detailed critique of the West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group [ECOMOG] interventions in Liberia [1990–1998] and Sierra Leone [1998–2004]. The ECOMOG mission oscillated between peacekeeping and peace enforcement – with decidedly mixed results. The mission was hamstrung by problems of funding, logistics, Command and Control, weapons interoperability, and mandate. Nevertheless, Howe admits that the intervention was not a disaster: the Nigerians funded the mission for the

duration and imposed – albeit controversially – some clarity of purpose. And ECOMOG, despite heavy criticism for its lack of impartiality, did save lives and was considerably less brutal than other forces in the conflict.

The author contrasts the ambiguous competence of ECOMOG with that of the private security company Executive Outcomes, 'the world's first fully equipped corporate army'. Their forces played a key role in helping bolster the forces of the ruling MPLA against a resurgent UNITA in 1994. The mercenary forces did, however, demand their pound of flesh, with the impoverished Angolan and Sierra Leone governments having to pawn national mineral rights as payment. The chapter which follows analyzes the African Crisis Response Force [ACRI]. Howe makes the point that ACRI has been hampered by many of the same conceptual and real problems which 'helped to sink Nkrumah's All-African High Command proposal in 1960.'

Ambiguous Order is a rich, densely textured work, replete with interesting detail and insights; even the footnotes resonate. It is, however, an imperfect odyssey – the [O]AU Peacekeepers are barely mentioned, nor are they compared with ACRI and other multinational forces. His withering critiques of West African militaries are perhaps justified, but they seem at times to be infused with a sanctimonious pessimism – the wrath of an outraged seer. But most worrying is the metronomic undercurrent of a racial imperative. The tone of the book seems to imply that it is white soldiers who have shown military competence in sub-Saharan (especially in West African) conflicts. Is Howe saying that military professionalism in Africa is a 'white' prerogative? That, surely, is the low, low road.

Caveats aside, this is an excellent, if flawed, work. Analysis of military efficiency has been the void in the heart of the discourse on African civil-military relations. Howe's book plugs that gap. For saints and sinners alike, it is required reading.

Tapera Knox Chitiyo

Nelson Mandela Africa Research Fellow,
RUSI ■



Military History



In the Service of the Sultan – A First Hand Account of the Dhofar Insurgency

By Ian Gardiner
£19.99, 189 pages
Pen and Sword, 2006
ISBN: 184415467X

The name Ian Gardiner is one that has been regularly cited in books concerning the Dhofar campaign. It is therefore welcome then that Gardiner himself has finally penned his own account of this particularly successful British counter-insurgency operation of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The work is not a disappointment. Gardiner, in describing his experiences as a young officer on secondment to the Sultan of Oman's Armed Forces, writes with an easy, lucid and, indeed, erudite, style. Initially, he ably fills in the background to the conflict and the strategic importance of Oman, commanding as it does the Straits of Hormuz and thus the flow of oil to the West. He then goes on to describe a host of colorful characters, a life of considerable adventure and how capabilities were developed that led to the defeat of an insurgent foe in the Middle East. Here, there is the type of soldiering that especially appeals to the British mentality: small-scale, exotic location and one where actually winning was not an inconceivable proposition.

Above all, the book brings across well the sense of Gardiner and similar officers in his position becoming immersed in the job they were doing. There was nothing about these men that told of exporting a small slice of Britain to some obscure corner of the world. Rather, there is a lot about British officers (and NCOs) adapting to and fitting into the particular environment in which they found themselves. In so doing, they came to understand not only the indigenous soldiers they commanded but also the enemies they faced. Such understanding played a very large part in ensuring the type of 'victory' in a counter-insurgency campaign that

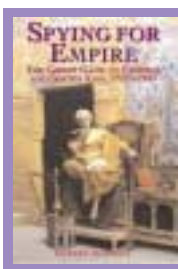
appears so hard to engineer in the current era.

Of course, we must be careful. Setting out to read the likes of Gardiner and the raft of other works on this particular conflict with a view to drawing 'lessons' has its problems. The campaign conducted by the British in Dhofar was very much of its time and place. It was a restrained and constrained campaign, fought at a very low level against a poorly equipped and poorly motivated enemy. Above all, and especially important when fighting in Muslim lands, the British were able to say, quite convincingly, that they were fighting on the side of Allah against godless communists. If only the same were true today.

One might quibble at the number of events that have been described elsewhere in other books but readers new to the subject will find Gardiner an entertaining and informative read. Indeed, he does provide fresh insight in a number of areas. This is a book to be recommended and one that anyone keen on soldiering will enjoy.

Rod Thornton

Defence Studies Department, King's College London, author of *Asymmetric Warfare: Threat and Response in the 21st Century*. ■



Spying for Empire – The Great Game in Central and South Asia 1757-1947

By Robert Johnson
Greenhill Books, 2006
ISBN 1-85367-670-3
£16.50, 320 pages

This book takes us back into the Pamirs and the Hindu Kush to find the real-life equivalent of Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*. But rather than simply adding to the corpus of work that has flowed from the pens of the principal chroniclers of these events, Peter Hopkirk and John Keay, Robert Johnson seeks to expand the field by focusing for the first time on the role played by native agents from the Indian Raj and neighbouring Afghanistan and Persia in the Great Game.

The high-minded aim is not without challenge as the identities of Asian agents are as scarce as the records of their exploits and the book fails to deliver as fully as a reader would like on that promise. No doubt this is in part due to the fact that these agents worked for hard cash, rather than the Royal Geographical Society Gold Medal based on exploration journals which appeared to be the motivating force for the British officers and gentlemen explorers. The failure is, however, not due to lack of research, which takes the author into the India Office (now at the British Library and National Archives) files and the preamble to the bibliography testifies to the serious scholarly research he has undertaken.

The reader palpably feels the frustration of the writer when a promising lead on an agent peters out after one or two documents. The difficulties faced by the author mirror the risks faced by native undercover agents, which were considerably higher than those of British officers. One suspects, however, that in part those in power were not keen to advertise their reliance on their Asian spies and the value of the intelligence they gathered for their masters in Simla or in Whitehall.

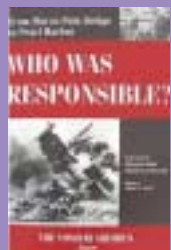
The bulk of the book is concerned with the nineteenth century, when the game was probably at its height. The treatment of the shoulder periods from the 1750s onwards and the twentieth century is disappointing, although these have been covered by other historians. The largest gap is, however, the Great Game which continued into the 1980s when the Russians finally achieved their aim of gaining control of Afghanistan, if only briefly and at tremendous cost, in political as well as military terms. By then the US had taken over the role of Empire and India had moved much closer to Russia; although it is probable that Britain too played a role, the extent of this will have to await receipt of the papers at the National Archives.

The author writes in an easy style and helpfully provides maps of the North West Frontier Province and the battleground of the Great Game.

George C Kieffer FRAeS

RUSI Member ■

The Second World War



From Marco Polo Bridge to Pearl Harbor – Who Was Responsible?

Edited by James E Auer
£20.35, 410 pages
The Yomiuri Shimbun,
2006
ISBN: 4643060123

Some things cannot be translated. National character – if it exists – has practices and sentiments for which other nations have no words. When we wish to distance ourselves from behaviour we consider foreign, we borrow foreign words. You can sense disapproval in the way these words are proudly mispronounced. In the West it's hard to be a Kamikaze. Culture does not travel well. Instrumental rationality usually does. The Japanese imported the idea of a nation state from the West after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, including universal conscription (which broke the old feudal link between social status and the military profession). But if hardware can be imported, software is very different. Culture can be transplanted onto a political body but the graft won't always take. The body's antibodies may reject it. More likely it will be adapted, not adopted, to fit the host.

Towards the end of the Second World War, the appearance of the Kamikaze genuinely shocked the Americans for it was quite foreign to the warrior tradition the West thought it had exported to everyone else. The US Marine Corps may have had as its motto 'Death before dishonour' but no Marine was ever expected to interpret this literally. Indeed, he was instructed that there was no dishonour in surrendering to an enemy one respects, or even an enemy one despises, provided one has put up a good fight. Characteristic was the view of the American Marine, Chester Biggs, who was captured by the Japanese early in the war: 'It's all right to die for a cause if the cause is a good one, but to die just for the sake of saying "we fought to the last man and didn't surrender" is not a very good cause'. The whole point of being a US

Marine is to know when to stop, and going a bit further. Suicide, however, is not part of the deal.

In the book under review, the decision to employ the Kamikaze is rightly singled out as a criminal act for which Japan must accept responsibility. Even earlier, the *Banzai* brigades were despatched into battle with orders to get close enough to the opposing soldiers, trucks, tanks and jeeps, and blow themselves up, taking dozens of Americans with them. A suicide bomber was a cheap and effective weapon. He was a kind of 'smart' shell able to use his senses and intelligence to zero in on a target with the added advantage of not being wed to a predetermined trajectory. The Kamikaze pilots can be brought into our own age, too, if we see them as essentially cruise missiles with a human guidance system. And there was the OKA flying bomb (with no propeller, or landing gear, only a pilot, it was nothing more than a man missile). The point about all of these responses to the growing prospect of defeat was that they achieved absolutely nothing. Out of fifty-five OKA missions, only two resulted in a direct hit on an American ship. As for the Kamikaze attacks, which were much more serious, the Americans soon found an answer for them too. They bombed their bases, co-ordinated well-trained anti-aircraft batteries at sea and sent out superior Hellcats with better pilots miles from the fleet to shoot down outclassed Zeros. Asked why the Samurai tradition disappeared from Japan after 1945 and we need mention only Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was rendered ridiculous by the atomic bomb: the act of atonement was useless in an atomic age. The *bushido* ethos is now to be found in the workplace, not the battlefield: like the rest of us, the Japanese have become post-heroic.

What makes the present book all the more remarkable is that it is published by the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the daily with the largest circulation in Japan, and one generally identified as a conservative newspaper. In August 2005 (on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War) it began publishing a series of articles examining the issue of war responsibility. It is to the immense credit of the paper's

editor-in-chief Watanabe Tsuneo, who provides a foreword to the book, that he was willing to embark on what is a far from dry-as-dust revisiting of old issues. History carries a political charge.

The Yasukuni Shrine with its alleged 'Class A' war criminals was among the central issues in the debate that accompanied last September's election to decide the next president of the Liberal Democratic Party. The past has to be confronted head on, not only for national self-esteem. It arises from the inescapable need for Japan to rebuild its diplomatic ties with its East Asian neighbours, particularly China and South Korea. This is not helped by the fact that the Chinese themselves have a selective memory of their own history. Chinese schoolchildren are encouraged to remember the atrocities of the Sino-Japanese War (1937-45). What they will not find in their own history books is any reference to their country's war against Vietnam in 1979, and certainly none to Tiananmen Square. Even the websites are blocked in a bid to manipulate the truth.

What the Western reader will find in this book is a very balanced discussion of some familiar issues: the responsibility of those who stood trial at the Tokyo War Crimes in 1946; the issue of the Emperor's guilt or innocence; and, of course, actions which hurt the Japanese themselves most, including the Kamikaze. As Tsuneo adds, the Special Attack Forces were in no way a laudable aspect of Japan's war effort. Most of the men who volunteered were brow-beaten into taking their own lives, and their leaders knew it. Vice-Admiral Onishi considered it 'a depraved act of leadership', though he bears responsibility for going ahead nonetheless. At least, he took his own life at the end of the war in atonement for his actions. Others, including Minoru Genda, who gave the OKA missiles their name (in Japanese the word means 'cherry blossom') survived the war and even became Chief of Staff of the Air Self-Defence Force. The man who came up with the idea of the OKA, Ota Shoichi also survived (though he went into hiding), eventually becoming



a black marketeer. He died as recently as 1994.

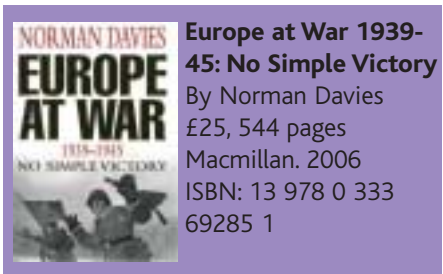
Readers may inevitably draw parallels, of course, between the Kamikaze and today's suicide bombers in the Middle East, but as Tsuneo writes, we should be unwise to do so. The suicide bombings carried out today by Islamic fundamentalists are inspired by blind faith and directed by the mind control of religious leaders. They bear no relation to the Kamikaze attacks which were directed through a military chain of command, even if they, too, relied largely on moral coercion.

This is a brave book, given the rise of Japanese nationalism in recent years. What is its chief lesson? The project began with one of the most important 'what-ifs' of history – what if Japan had not been so foolish as to adopt the policies and strategies that it did? What if 2.3 million young Japanese had not lost their lives on battlefields as far afield as Saipan and Burma? What if ten million citizens in the Greater Co-prosperity Sphere had not died as well? The Japanese are right to remind their former enemies that they committed war crimes too (including the Soviet Union, which continued attacking Japanese forces well after their country's unconditional surrender, removing some 600,000 prisoners to labour camps in Siberia, where 50,000 died). They are right to insist that most of Japan's war leaders were not war criminals like Tojo but deeply patriotic men.

Yet patriotism can be corrupting, especially when it takes the form of aggressive nationalism. The main lesson of this book is that nationalism itself is to blame. We should always heed the wise words of Brecht: 'the man who speaks of the enemy is the enemy himself. When it comes to marching many do not know that the enemy is marching at their head'.

Christopher Coker

Professor of International Relations,
London School of Economics and
Political Science ■



The Second World War remains contested ground. It was in more senses than one the central event of the twentieth century, and yet even after nearly seventy years historians continue to debate almost everything about it. There is not even universal agreement over its dates. The average Briton would say it took place between 1939 and 1945; an American or a Russian might offer the dates 1941 to 1945; a Chinese might argue that their war began in 1937 or even 1931. A Pole could conceivably argue that the German and Soviet invasions of September 1939 marked the beginning of a fifty year period of war and occupation, 1945 merely marked the swapping of one set of oppressors for another. All of these views are valid from their national perspective, and point towards the fact that what we call 'the Second World War' was a highly complex series of interlocking crises and conflicts. In the words of Norman Davies's subtitle, there was 'no simple victory'.

Professor Davies's *Europe at War 1939-45* is a wide-ranging doorstop of a book in the tradition of its successful predecessors, *Europe: A History* (1996) and *The Isles: A History* (1999). However, his most relevant book is *Rising '44*, a masterly account of the battle for Warsaw in 1944. Even if one did not know that Davies was a specialist in Polish history, one could detect from various references in *Europe at War* that Poland was close to his heart.

He argues with passion and conviction that the traditional Western, and especially British, version of the war needs to be substantially revised. The heart of the conflict, where the mass killings took place and where the issues of victory and defeat were decided, was located in Eastern and not Western Europe (and certainly not in the

Mediterranean). Moreover, the customary narrative of Good overcoming Evil, which perished in the ruins of Berlin in 1945, is far too simplistic. The war centred around two bloody tyrants at the head of monstrous regimes, not one. In 1939 they combined to destroy the existing status quo and plunge Europe into war, before falling out in 1941. It was Hitler's decision to attack his ally Stalin that pushed the USSR into an uneasy coalition with the Western powers. The Grand Alliance, as Winston Churchill called it, was thus even more than most international combinations a marriage of convenience rather than a love match. The compromises the West was forced to make to accommodate their co-belligerent meant that many in East and Central Europe simply swapped Nazi for Soviet occupiers. These facts, Davies argues with some justice, are all too often overlooked by Anglophones.

All this makes for a hugely stimulating book, which should certainly be read by all students of the Second World War. Davies eschews a conventional narrative in favour of a thematic approach laid out in six chapters: 'Interpretation'; 'Warfare' 'Politics'; 'Soldiers' 'Civilians' and 'Portrayals' with some 'Inconclusions' (sic) as a coda. There is no disputing the power of his central arguments. As a teenager in the 1970s I was greatly influenced in my view of the Second World War by the landmark TV series *World at War* and the book that accompanied it. These fairly reflected the prevailing view by underplaying the role of the USSR and overplaying that of the Western allies. Likewise, while the Gulags have scarcely been a secret for the last thirty or so years, they have not been given the same historical prominence as the Nazi death camps.

However, over the last quarter of a century English-language historiography has increasingly reflected the sort of concerns that Davies raises. The works of John Erickson, for instance, have fundamentally reshaped our understanding of the military conduct of the war in the East (although from a couple of tart asides, it seems that Professor Davies has some reservations

about Erickson's books). By the late 1980s, anyone who kept up with the current literature could not help but be aware of the decisive importance of the Eastern Front in the defeat of Germany. Similarly, since the end of the Cold War a number of books (recently, those of Anne Applebaum and Simon Sebag-Montefiore) have brought home the horrors of Stalin's regime to a wide audience. Davies's complaints are no doubt still true of popular history, and possibly of teaching in schools, but are much less relevant to academic history. I suspect that this book will appeal to people who already have a reasonable understanding of the Second World War, and thus he might end up preaching to the converted.

Unfortunately, Davies over-corrects existing biases by underplaying the importance of the Western allies in the defeat of Hitler. An important development of recent years, for instance, has been to reassess the Anglo-American strategic bombing campaign. While it did not deliver the promised 'knockout blow', the bombing tied down large numbers of German troops on the Home Front and diverted important resources away from other theatres. The effects of the bombing offensive appeared to be rather more significant than seemed to be the case fifteen years ago. Davies is aware of this school of thought but does not give it prominence. Likewise he gives the revisionism of recent historians on the performance of Anglo-Canadian armies short shrift, preferring the more negative views of Max Hastings. Davies's unfortunate statement that 'Soldiering in the Western Armed Forces was not particularly hazardous' is likely to raise the blood pressure of Cassino and Normandy veterans, and is (presumably) a carelessly expressed comparison with the statistical rates of loss on the Eastern Front; if so, it conceals as much as it reveals.

There are other comments about the British war effort which are debatable or plain wrong. These range from the minor – a reference to a then non-existent regiment, the Blues and Royals, which did not come into being through amalgamation until 1969 – to more

important points. His assertion that the British Army 'was condemned by its political superiors to ultra caution' would no doubt have produced a wry smile from generals Wavell and Auchinleck, the victims of constant prodding from a Prime Minister demanding immediate – often premature – action.

These blemishes should not be allowed to distract from the great value of *Europe at War 1939-45*. It is a book to be read, re-read, pondered upon and debated. There are more balanced books on the Second World War, but few that are as challenging.

Gary Sheffield

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Department of Modern History
University of Birmingham ■



The Fire – The Bombing of Germany, 1940-1945

By Jörg Friedrich
£21.95, 532 pages
Columbia University Press, 2006
ISBN: 0231133804

Jörg Friedrich caused something of a firestorm with *Der Brand* when it was first published in Germany in 2002. Previous authors had examined the Second World War strategic bombing offensive from the German perspective, but they tended to be from the victor nations. The Japanese, having never tried to destroy New York or even Honolulu, felt able to examine the flattening of Tokyo and Hiroshima but German historians steered clear of the topic. Perhaps with the Luftwaffe having set the pace from Guernica to Coventry, they felt uncomfortable about critically examining what was unleashed thereafter from Lübeck to Dresden.

Friedrich, born in 1944, is of the post-war generation that rightly feels unencumbered by the old taboos. As the title of the book implies, he is fascinated by incendiary bombing and the consequent firestorms that ravaged cities such as Hamburg. There was much

scientific basis to all this. Cities were too large to close down by high explosive but they could be channelled into destroying themselves if the half-timbered old town centres were used as firefighters. My geography professor, who made his name with *The Towns and Cities of Germany* before the war, was co-opted into the allied war machine to identify those parts of his beloved cities that would burn. This was not confined to the allies though. The aiming point for German V-2 rockets was the fire station on Southwark Bridge Road, based on the impeccable logic that if the firefighters were killed they could not stop any conflagration from taking hold.

The rather portentous PR blurb says that *The Fire* draws on 'a wide range of eyewitness accounts as well as official reports from both sides. . . This is the definitive account of how and why half a million German civilians died and millions were made homeless. . . But above all it is an elegy for the human beings who suffer in a total war.' Being prepared for another 'Churchill and Arthur Harris were no better than Hitler' polemic, I was pleasantly surprised to find otherwise. The first half of the book covers the politics, doctrine and mechanics of the strategic air offensive. The author comes up with no new insights on the Bomber Command and USAAF air effort, relying as he does on landmark works by Nobel and Frankland, Craven and Cate, John Terraine, Roger Freeman and Martin Middlebrook. But Friedrich synthesizes and condenses their findings in exemplary fashion, even if he doesn't really understand the mechanics of 'precision' bombing back then. During the Second World War, the USAAF Eighth Air Force found it took two full combat wings, a force of 108 B-17 bombers crewed by 1,080 airmen flying in six combat 'boxes' dropping 648 1,000lb bombs, to guarantee a 96 per cent chance of scoring just two hits (the minimum necessary) to disable a single power generating plant measuring 400ft × 500ft. During *Desert Storm*, one F-117 dropping two precision-guided bombs achieved the same effect. For all the fine claims made for Norden bombsights, the USAAF engaged in area bombing of precise targets. Five times as many



Dutch citizens were killed by allied bombing as by their German occupiers. Democracies caught on the hop are forced to fight wars as they must, not as they would like.

It would have helped if Friedrich had interviewed some bomber veterans. I found it slightly surreal that the index had ten entries for Charlemagne, four for Charles V but none for the greatest RAF master bomber and post-war wrestler with the morality of it all, Leonard Cheshire. But in general, the first half of the book is as good a summary of the strategic bombing strategy and weaponry as you are likely to find.

The second half of *The Fire* is devoted to the impact of the strategic bombing campaign on Germany. Friedrich devotes separate sections to the regional geography and the impact on major cities, society, infrastructure and the individual. The historical aspect is overlong, largely because it keeps harking back to the Middle Ages as if to show that Germany was really a great cultural centre apart from a temporary aberration between 1933-1945. There is a very good section on civilian air raid protection and the 1943 shift in propaganda emphasis as civilian workers were elevated into warriors and Dr. Goebbels was double-hatted as Reich inspector for civil air-raid defence. Once again, I found it strange that Friedrich could talk about German responses in the face of mass allied bombing without examining the motivation of night fighter aces such as Heinz-Wolfgang Schnaufer, or the thoughts of Luftwaffe Inspector General of Fighters Adolf Galland. There are six index references to Goethe but none for resourceful Gauleiters such as Hildebrandt of Mecklenberg, who were sustained by loyalty to the Führer and the brave new Third Reich rather than any atavistic attachment to medieval stonework and heritage. We still await a serious German explanation of how Hitler and Nazism inspired aerial warfighters and ground defenders alike.

Friedrich has been accused of using emotive language and statistics to imply that the Germans were right to defend Hitler's regime and that the bomber barons were wrong to attack it in the way they did. I don't read the book that way. Many on the allied side are in denial about the nature of the bomber offensive. The Casablanca Directive made it quite clear that, in addition to the list of war industries to be crushed, the mission was 'the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened.' There was nothing to be ashamed of in that Directive. I attended a symposium in 1994 where the chairman proclaimed that Bomber Command had never gone deliberately for civilian targets. 'Rubbish,' said a former bomber leader sat next to me *sotto voce*, 'one of my targets was a post office.' Fudging the targeting issue has hindered efforts to accord RAF bomber crews the credit and campaign medal that their nightly bravery richly deserved.

Strategic bombing was the only means of taking the battle to the enemy in the dark days of 1942 and 1943, and the evocative drone of Lancasters, Halifaxes and Stirlings climbing to height sustained British civilian morale when it could so easily have succumbed to despair over Singapore or Tobruk. If Britons were uplifted by the Thousand Bomber Raid on Cologne, it was because the Germans totally destroyed 225,000 British homes in the war and severely damaged another 550,000. One hole in Friedrich's analysis is the implied assumption that the allies knew the war would be over in 1945. They might have believed this by the autumn of 1944, but before that it was vital to crush the holistic German war effort between the twin mangles of the Soviet Army on the Eastern Front and the strategic bomber offensive. The greatest density of bombs was dropped from autumn 1944 onwards, but that was only because the mass of Germans continued

to believe in Hitler and his wonder weapons and they had to be convinced otherwise to get the whole beastly business over with as quickly as possible.

The Fire forces us to stop hiding behind Churchill's dictum that 'They that sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind.' Those who sowed the wind – Hitler, who loved to watch film of the 1939 bombardment of Warsaw, or Göring – copped out before getting their just desserts. Field Marshal Hugo Sperrle, who as commander of Luftflotte 3 led the bombing of Coventry and London that killed thousands of British citizens, was never tried for the offence after the war. Friedrich shows us that it was the common people who reaped what their leaders had sowed.

In sum, this is a well-written and diligently researched book. It lays the blame for Germany's ruin firmly on Hitler. It includes a mass of fascinating information, such as that twenty million helpers reported to fight the damages of the air war. That amounted to a quarter of the population, which were otherwise prevented from maximizing the output of new U-boats or Junkers bombers. The best part of the book is the second half, where Friedrich's outline of the impact on German history, culture and society of the bombing campaign breaks new ground. But while *The Fire* reveals that individual Germans were willing to see their first sweetheart sent to the gallows for saying that their society was responsible for the bombs raining down, it does not explain the extent to which Hitler and National Socialism inspired awesome sacrifice and loyalty under constant bombardment long after the German cause was lost. There is still much German ground to be covered on the more sensitive aspects of strategic bombing now that Friedrich has shown the way.

Andrew Brookes

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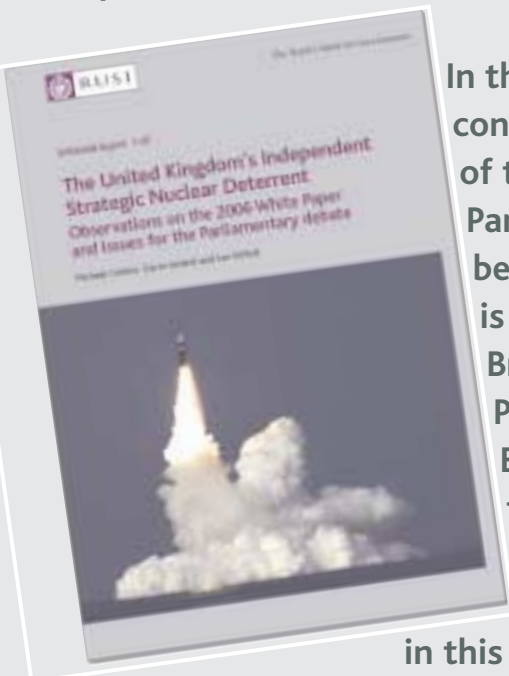
The United Kingdom's Independent Strategic Nuclear Deterrent

Observations on the 2006 White Paper and Issues for the Parliamentary debate

Michael Codner, Gavin Ireland and Lee Willett



This *Whitehall Report* has been produced in response to the UK Government's White Paper on the future of Britain's nuclear deterrent, published in December 2006.



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The Author

Lord (Peter) Truscott of St James's is a Labour peer and is Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Energy at the Department for Trade and Industry. He is a former departmental liaison peer to the Ministry of Defence. In the European Parliament he represented Hertfordshire (1994–99), and was Labour's Foreign Affairs and Defence spokesperson, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and Vice-President of the Security Sub-Committee. He was also a member of the European Parliament's delegation for relations with the Russian Federation. He has written extensively on foreign and security policy. His major publications include *Russia First* (1997), *European Defence* (2000), *Kursk* (2002), and *Putin's Progress* (2004).



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