

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### VALUABLE LESSONS FOR THE LEADERS OF TODAY

Husted, Stewart W. *George C. Marshall: Rubrics of Leadership*. Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College Foundation, 2006. 259pp. \$23.95

In recent years a veritable avalanche of monographs and manuscripts has examined corporate and military leadership. Recognizing the need for a book about leaders of character, Stewart Husted selected as his model one of America's most admired figures, General George C. Marshall. This work examines Marshall's leadership and its impact on the world throughout his career as a military officer, Army chief of staff during World War II, secretary of state, and secretary of defense.

Husted is hardly a stranger to the study of General Marshall. He is a former business school dean, a retired U.S. Army Reserve officer, and the inaugural John and Jane Roberts Chair in Free Enterprise Business at the Virginia Military Institute, Marshall's alma mater. Writing primarily for the military market, Husted draws heavily upon historian Forrest Pogue's masterful four-volume biography of Marshall, the private and public papers of General Marshall housed at the Virginia Military Institute's Marshall Foundation, and the Preston Library.

Husted has chosen well in selecting Marshall to exemplify leadership during trying and difficult times. No leader better encapsulated moral and ethical leadership than George C. Marshall. In the words of General Colin Powell, "We have so much to learn from Marshall—from his character, from his courage, his compassion, and his commitment to our nation and to all humankind." Using Marshall's career as a foundation to examine contemporary leadership, Husted cites numerous "untold stories" that not only are entertaining reading but also serve as "tried-and-true examples of how today's leaders of government, the military, and business can demonstrate character, competence and skill." *Rubrics of Leadership* addresses such diverse topics as managing and planning the impossible, turning crisis into success, dealing with communications, and conflict resolution and negotiation.

By far the most interesting chapter is that on civil-military relations. Husted examines Marshall's contributions over a period of two decades and provides valuable insight into his subject's nonpartisan

approach to complex problems. This chapter concludes with a call to develop military and political strategy that demonstrates the importance of nation building in the aftermath of war—a valuable lesson to current leaders attempting to cope with the ongoing global war against terrorism.

On the debit side, Husted's approach is frequently choppy and lacks adequate transitions. Though he provides a list of Marshall's salient leadership principles throughout the text, a concluding paragraph summarizing each section's salient points would have greatly enhanced the overall text. So too would an introductory chapter outlining the broad context of the areas on which the author concentrates.

These observations aside, Husted has produced a valuable leadership primer that will be well received by military officers, regardless of rank or position. As do the military's senior service colleges, *Rubrics of Leadership* urges understanding of the importance of positive relationships with civilians at all levels of government and business. It is here that Husted makes his greatest contribution.

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Toll, Ian. *The Six Frigates: The Epic History of the Founding of the U.S. Navy*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2006. 592pp. \$27.95

Many books have been written about the history of the American navy, but this one is of particular excellence. While truly a scholarly work, this book contains many attributes of a historical novel. Any reader with an interest in

either the U.S. Navy or early American history will find it hard to put down.

Toll begins his story with a review of the Continental navy and its limited value during the American Revolution, then moves seamlessly into the post-revolutionary period. America's colonial experience and the needs of the newly formed nation had a direct effect on the founding of a navy. Pro-navy views were largely tied to the merchant interests of the north, championed by leaders such as John Adams and Alexander Hamilton. The foes of a naval force were essentially southern based and included James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, who favored domestic development, westward expansion, and agrarian interests.

In March 1794, these political and economic interests were rooted deeply in the American experience, and were the seeds of an acrimonious debate in Congress that preceded House and Senate authorization for the construction of six frigates to keep the sea-lanes safe for America's large merchant fleet. They were originally designated merely as frigates *A* through *F*. The first five names—*United States*, *President*, *Congress*, *Constitution*, and *Constellation*—were chosen by George Washington from a list of alternatives suggested by the War Office; subsequently, the *Chesapeake* was named.

The debate over the question of who would design the ships began in the wake of the authorization to build them. The nation's most respected ship designers, Joshua Humphreys and Josiah Fox, clashed over the most desirable warship design, with Humphreys being the victor. In the end, the six frigates emerged as the most powerful of their type in the world, equipped to serve as the nation's first blue-water force.

The first trial by combat of the new navy was against the French in the undeclared “Quasi-War” of 1797–1800, which was fought to protect American merchant shipping. The next naval action occurred in the Mediterranean during 1803–1805, when war was waged against the pirates of Tripoli. However, the true test for the Navy, of course, occurred during the War of 1812, when the value of the ships and their crews was proved beyond doubt. The author’s descriptions of the ships, their handling, and the combat actions is excellent, and his portrayal of the people is equally impressive. The positive and negative characteristics of the civilian leaders—including John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison—as well as of the naval officers who became well known in American history (Stephen Decatur, William Bainbridge, Thomas Truxtun, Edward Preble, and James Lawrence) are all examined.

This is Ian Toll’s first book. It is a product of his sailing experience, interest in the period, writing skill, and thorough research. The result is an excellent work that should become a permanent part of the library of anyone with an interest in American naval history.

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O’Rourke, Ronald. *The Impact of Chinese Naval Modernization and the Future of the United States Navy*. New York: Nova, 2006. 106pp. \$79

Well written, succinct, and timely, this balanced assessment of Chinese naval weaknesses and strengths offers specific technological development and procurement alternatives to inform

Washington’s decision making. O’Rourke is a naval issues analyst for the Congressional Research Service (CRS) of the Library of Congress. Specialists will want to consult his related product, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress*. First published in November 2006, the latter report has been updated regularly. Each report contains details that the other does not.

Like its CRS counterpart, O’Rourke’s present study draws on a variety of U.S. government analyses; congressional testimony; and articles from the media, think tanks, and academia. Additional details are provided in an appendix. Charged with presenting different points of view, with an emphasis on official analyses, O’Rourke cannot be held responsible for disagreements concerning the underlying assumptions or conclusions of his sources. It should also be emphasized that Beijing’s continuing reluctance to offer detailed information on the purpose or scope of many aspects of its rapid military development both raises concerns in Washington and makes it difficult for policy makers there to rule out worst-case scenarios.

O’Rourke has explicitly chosen to focus his report by limiting the attention paid to such issues of potential relevance to the U.S. Navy as China’s aerospace development. In light of recent significant Chinese achievements in this realm (including the acknowledged testing of an antisatellite weapon on 11 January 2007), however, such factors should perhaps be integrated into follow-on studies by O’Rourke and his colleagues. After all, China’s ability to project naval power farther from its shores will hinge on developing effective air defense for surface assets. Certain military

scenarios, such as those involving Taiwan, might motivate China to attempt to deter American intervention by the threat of nuclear strikes or damage to U.S. space assets.

O'Rourke's study raises important questions as the United States develops a new maritime strategy. If preventing Taiwan independence and promoting reunification is the present focus of China's naval development, what other national interests might fuel such development in the future? What is the proper balance for the U.S. Navy between supporting operations in the global war on terror and maintaining (if not increasing) its presence and operational capabilities in the vast, strategically vital Asia-Pacific region? What resources will be required to meet the latter requirements, and how should they be allocated? Finally, what fleet and basing architecture can best accomplish this at sustainable cost to taxpayers?

Critical procurement decisions with ramifications for years to come are being made in Beijing as China develops a new five-year plan. As this dual strategic crossroads looms ever larger, it is to be hoped that the two Pacific powers can reach an understanding about their respective regional roles and thereby keep competitive coexistence from degenerating into a new cold war.

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Wortzel, Larry M. *China's Nuclear Forces: Operations, Training, Doctrine, Command, Control, and Campaign Planning*. Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2007. 51pp.

In *China's Nuclear Forces* Larry Wortzel has delivered an exceptional monograph that demands the attention of both nuclear strategists and China experts. The author, a leading authority on China, Asia, national security, and military strategy, is currently serving as a commissioner on the congressionally mandated U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. He previously served as the director of the Asian Studies Center and vice president for foreign policy at the Heritage Foundation. Wortzel's distinguished thirty-two-year career in the U.S. armed forces, during which time he served as both assistant Army attaché and then attaché at the American embassy in China, culminated with an assignment as director of the Strategic Studies Institute at the Army War College.

The title of this monograph promises an expansive scope, and Wortzel delivers quite ably. While the scale of the work is extremely helpful in keeping the various aspects and issues in perspective, the most important new contributions to understanding the evolving Chinese nuclear posture are Wortzel's treatments of "no first use" and nuclear command and control. As stated by the author, "The major insights . . . come from exploiting sections of . . . *A Guide to the Study of Campaign Theory*[,] . . . an unclassified 'study guide' for PLA officers on how to understand and apply doctrine." These insights, however, which Wortzel so adeptly lays forth, are corroborated in other reliable Chinese-language material.

It has become conventional wisdom among China scholars to take Chinese declaratory policy of "no first use" of nuclear weapons at face value, excusing away various past unofficial statements

suggesting that “no first use” ought not to be taken quite so literally. Wortzel offers a counterbalance to this view, elucidating both the concept of preemptive counterattack and the current debate within China on the viability and utility of adherence to “no first use.” His conclusion on this crucial issue is that the debate within China on “no first use” is real, that a new generation of officers, diplomats, and scholars leans significantly toward modifying or jettisoning such a declaratory policy. In fact, this conclusion is quite in accord with the one developed and briefed by the Mahan Scholars student research team at the Naval War College in the spring of 2007.

Regarding nuclear command and control, Wortzel finds that the originator of valid firing orders for the Second Artillery is the Central Military Commission (CMC), “the highest and most centralized level of military leadership in the Chinese Communist Party.” While we would agree that *tongshuaibu*, or “supreme command,” probably refers to the CMC in the context of nuclear release authority, this is not completely clear, and explicit phraseology to bolster that conception was uncomfortably dropped from defense white papers of 2004 to 2006. Furthermore, in other writings it appears that conventional-missile firing authority during conflict is certainly delegated downward, to the Second Artillery itself. Such delegation is, of course, to be expected, but in a conflict that involved the movement of nuclear forces and became intense, the concomitant risks of unauthorized or inadvertent nuclear missile launch would grow alarmingly.

In addition to solid scholarship regarding the question of “no first use” and

nuclear command and control, this monograph offers substantial original material on missile-force readiness levels, survivability issues, and targeting. Overall, as expected from an academician of Wortzel’s caliber, this work expands our understanding of the Chinese nuclear posture. As such, it demands the attention of all China specialists and nuclear strategists.

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Sawyer, Ralph D. *The Tao of Deception: Unorthodox Warfare in Historic and Modern China*. New York: Basic Books, 2007. 489pp. \$29.95

Ralph D. Sawyer, noted scholar of Chinese strategic thought, has produced an enlightening study of the beginnings and the evolution of deception in Chinese political and military history. Contrary to some contemporary commentators, China has a long martial tradition. Warrior leaders and military heroes permeate both historic and contemporary Chinese literature, as well as modern movies. Deception has long been an integral part of Chinese warfare. Drawing on the classic works of Chinese military thought, Sawyer demonstrates that deceptive practices and unorthodox approaches are the norm rather than the exception. Deception is a fundamental tenet of Chinese strategic culture, one that permeates strategic thinking not only in the military realm but also in the diplomatic, information, political, and economic spheres. (Readers of Sawyer’s previous work, *The Tao of Spycraft*, reviewed in the Winter 2007 issue of this journal, will recall that

Chinese states were using “all elements of national power” several millennia ago.)

The reader can conclude from this work that Chinese military thought places deception on an equal level with fire and maneuver. In this it differs from Western military thought, which fundamentally considers deception as “unsportsmanlike” and relegates it to the operational and intellectual fringes. Deception and unorthodox approaches afford ways for the inferior to defeat the superior force. The “stronger” force, as judged by conventional military standards, is not necessarily more likely to win in battle. Rather, the force that applies the orthodox and the unorthodox in a way that fits the situation better is more likely to prevail. The book abounds with examples of how a little deception or unconventional application can have a great effect on outcomes.

The relationship between military operations and statecraft is another fundamental thread through this book. Subversion of an enemy state begins well before military conflict, and ideally it makes conflict unneeded. Bribery, assassination (both physical and character), dissension, and distraction are all basic tools of statecraft, as well as of war. Fundamentally, Chinese thought makes no real distinction between the two.

The final chapters address the ongoing renaissance of traditional Chinese military thought in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The once-despised classic works are now widely used in PLA institutions.

Several years ago, two PLA officers published a book, *Unrestricted Warfare*, that describes unconventional approaches for defeating a superior force. In light of Sawyer’s new work, Western

scholars should reinterpret *Unrestricted Warfare*. Rather than being an exception to PLA military thought, it may well reflect current, core thinking.

Sawyer argues that “China has a lengthy heritage of conceiving and implementing systemic programs for subverting other states.” It would be interesting for scholars of contemporary Chinese diplomacy to compare the “active measures” stratagems outlined in the book against current U.S.-China events.

This book reads well. A dynastic chronology helps place the events in historical (Chinese, if not world) context. However, maps would have greatly assisted understanding.

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Shirk, Susan. *China, Fragile Superpower: How China’s Internal Politics Could Derail Its Peaceful Rise*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007. 336pp. \$27

According to Susan Shirk, China suffers terribly from the “wag the dog” syndrome. Shirk argues rather persuasively that China is saddled with a host of internal problems, ranging from widespread social unrest to rampant political corruption, that have sharply intensified insecurities among Chinese leaders with respect to their hold on power. Such perceptions of vulnerability have in turn heightened Chinese sensitivities to slights by Japan, Taiwan, and the United States, slights that accordingly threaten to arouse potentially uncontrollable national passions and, in the process, stimulate regime-toppling impulses at home. For Shirk, this volatile

nexus of domestic and foreign pressures means trouble for regional stability in Asia. As Chinese citizens increasingly scrutinize Beijing's relations with the outside world, the Chinese Communist Party can ill afford to look soft on hot-button foreign policy questions. The party's obsession with internal stability thus compels Beijing to guard vigilantly against foreign insults to China's national honor—a critical source of the regime's legitimacy. Consequently, more than ever before, Beijing is primed to overreact to external crises and trigger confrontations that might otherwise have been averted by more temperate responses.

Overall, Shirk makes a compelling case about this peculiar dilemma that Beijing confronts. Although the proposition that the international community ought to be more concerned about China's weaknesses rather than its strengths is not new, her coverage of its domestic challenges is quite informative. In particular, Shirk provides a useful framework for understanding Beijing's internal priorities—leadership unity, social harmony, and tight control of the military—that would be instantly recognizable to those familiar with Clausewitz's famous “paradoxical trinity.” The analysis of China's prickly ties with Japan, Taiwan, and the United States, however, covers well-trodden ground, material that has been widely documented in other studies.

As a former deputy assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Shirk writes with authority on U.S. diplomatic encounters with the Chinese during the Clinton administration. Her extensive interviews with Chinese policy makers, senior military officers, scholars, students, and “netizens”

not only attest to the unusual degree of access she has accumulated during her tenure but enliven the narrative with fascinating vignettes.

Nevertheless, this study is hobbled by an apparent reluctance to revisit basic assumptions about the regime itself, which, after all, the author contends, is fragile. Shirk does not render crucial judgments about the viability of China's regime-sustaining strategies, vaguely observing that “[Beijing] may be capable of surviving for years to come so long as the economy continues to grow and create jobs.” Thus the validity of the book's findings rests almost entirely on the premise that the Chinese Communist Party in its current form will endure indefinitely. The analytical consequences of this unwillingness to explore alternative futures are evident from the author's boilerplate policy prescriptions for the United States, including an injunction that Washington must live with China's repressive domestic policies.

But what if Shirk's cautious optimism about the regime's longevity is wrong? This unsettling question awaits another forward-thinking China watcher.

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Alexander, Yonah, ed. *Counterterrorism Strategies: Successes and Failures of Six Nations*. Dulles, Va.: Potomac Books, 2006. 283pp. \$24

Zimmermann, Doron, and Andreas Wenger, eds. *How States Fight Terrorism: Policy Dynamics in the West*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2006. 269pp. \$55

Since the attacks of 11 September, a kind of conventional wisdom about

counterterrorism has emerged. On one hand, the “new terrorism” involves the violent expression of a radical religious agenda, suicide attackers, and mass-casualty violence. It is, therefore, both harder to deter and more destructive than the old ideological and ethno-nationalist varieties of terrorism, whose practitioners, in Brian Michael Jenkins’s now classic (and obsolete) formulation, wanted a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead. On the other hand, the takedown, led by the United States, of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan forced the operational core of al-Qa’ida to disperse and the transnational terrorism network to become even more flat and decentralized. This meant that operational initiative was increasingly left to local “upstart” cells, which, though perhaps aided by al-Qa’ida middlemen, were merely inspired rather than directed by the central leadership.

The upshot is that the new foot soldiers of the global jihad may be motivated less by the cultural humiliation of Islam at the hands of the West or Osama Bin Laden’s redemptive grand vision of a global caliphate than by local or regional social conditions, onto which they simply graft that ideal and thereby generate greater energy, purpose, and focus. In Europe, the main culprits may be the political and economic marginalization of Muslims in their host countries and their bitter memories of colonial abuses. In the Middle East, the gravamen of the radical Muslim complaint could be the plight of the Palestinians or the perceived co-optation of Arab regimes by the United States and other Western powers. In the Philippines, it might be the refusal of the state to accord Muslims political parity and a measure of autonomy.

In accord with these views, the perception has evolved among counterterrorism experts that containing the Islamist terrorist movement requires disaggregating it into regional and sometimes local elements and devising customized policies to deal with them. Effective policies will inevitably entail direct applications of soft as well as hard power—in particular, conflict resolution and state building. Also, successful applications of soft power are likely to have a more positive effect on Muslim perceptions of non-Muslim governments than are exercises of hard power. Two new edited volumes of essays, Yonah Alexander’s *Counterterrorism Strategies* and Doron Zimmermann and Andreas Wenger’s *How States Fight Terrorism*, approach the challenge of terrorism in the post-9/11 world on a state-by-state basis. In doing so, they appear to certify this evolving view, and with it the corollary that although the global jihadist movement is in many ways transnational and virtual, it admits of no holistic solution. Even if there was, one might add, existing multilateral and supranational organizations would be incapable of implementing it.

Alexander’s book is a workmanlike and highly competent compendium of substantially descriptive historical case studies of counterterrorism approaches in the United States, selected European countries (France, Germany, and Italy), one Arab state (Egypt), and Sri Lanka, bracketed by the editor’s introduction and summary with conclusions. Those conclusions are perhaps the probative elements of the volume, as Alexander in them attempts to distill from the case studies a range of constructive counterterrorism policies. But the proffered list tends either to

state the obvious (“prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to rogue states and terrorist groups”) or confirm admonitions that have already been made in abundance (“increase cooperative relationships and alliances with like-minded nations”). Furthermore, probably because Alexander’s study was initiated in 1998—that is, before 9/11—the choice of case studies is arguably misaimed. Egypt’s pre-9/11 experience is relevant precisely because it is a formative aspect of the transnationalization of Islamist terrorism and the rise of al-Qa’ida, and the Tamil Tigers’ activity in Sri Lanka is worthy of study also because of their persistence and innovation (for instance, suicide attacks). However, one key European state, from a counterterrorism standpoint—the United Kingdom—is completely excluded.

Zimmermann and Wenger’s book, unlike Alexander’s, was undertaken at the specific prompting of the 9/11 attacks and jihadist terrorism. It constitutes a more incisive and structurally oriented look at issues and challenges, namely, those peculiar to counterterrorism in the post-9/11 epoch. Indeed, following a trenchant introduction outlining the contemporary challenge, the first chapter, by Laura K. Donahue, deals comprehensively with the United Kingdom, aptly summing up the British dispensation as having “not been a radical departure from the previous state of affairs but rather an acceleration of the state’s counterterrorist strategy.” This volume also contains chapters on countries like Norway that have had little counterterrorism experience and those like Canada whose security policies are overdetermined by strong and

prominent neighbors. Given the wide transnational presence of the global jihadist movement and the potential problems it poses to states heretofore untouched by (or at least insulated from) terrorism, the inclusion of such states seems wise. The chapter on the United States by RAND analyst William Rosenau is nuanced and marked by calm pragmatism. Rosenau stresses that even transnational Islamist terrorism as perpetrated by al-Qa’ida does not qualify as an existential threat to the United States and intimates that treating it as such could unduly skew national priorities—and may already have done so. Martin van Creveld’s fine but largely historical treatment appears at first blush to be something of a non sequitur, but it may have been included to illustrate (as it does) the attritional effects that a long-term terrorist campaign can have on a modern state and military in the absence of political resolution.

Rohan Gunaratna’s thorough but familiar assessment, entitled “Combating Al-Qaida and Associated Groups,” counsels that “governments should move from traditional cooperation to collaboration,” if the global network is to be neutralized. It characterizes the war in Iraq as counterproductively antagonistic to radical Muslims and suggests that regional conflicts will have to be ameliorated to tame them. Such recommendations, while generally sensible, may get ahead of the other material in the book. However, the editors’ excellent concluding essay nicely grounds the volume by casting the central counterterrorism task as striking a “balance . . . between the efficiency of the legal, political, civilian and military means used to combat terrorism, on the one hand,

and their legitimacy in the eyes of the affected constituencies, on the other.” Overall, the two books do an estimable job of delineating programmatically what states seeking to counter terrorism can and need to do. In so doing, they also invite more specific and granular analyses of precisely how to do it.

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Alleg, Henri. *The Question*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2006. 74pp. \$16.95

During France’s Algerian War (1954–62), the French journalist Henri Alleg sided with the insurgents. Arrested by French authorities in June 1957, Alleg was detained and tortured. During his confinement he managed to write and smuggle out an account of his experiences. Originally published in 1958, *The Question* was quickly banned by the French government, the first such action France had taken since the eighteenth century. The book nonetheless became a sensation.

Reissued after half a century, this new edition retains its preface by French novelist and philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, now supplemented with a foreword by author Ellen Ray, an introduction by author James D. Le Sueur, and a new afterword by Alleg himself.

The book’s title euphemistically refers to torture. In calm and lucid prose, Alleg describes his fate at the hands of his captors. Held for a month in Algeria’s El Biar prison, Alleg was tortured by French *paras* (paratroopers) before being transferred to another prison, where he composed *The Question*. His “interrogations” ranged from beatings

to electric shock and water boarding. He was even administered Pentothal, or “truth serum.” Despite these outrages, Alleg refused to break, earning him both wrath and grudging respect from his tormentors. He escaped from prison in October 1961, just months before the war ended.

Fifty years later, Alleg’s voice remains as reasoned and penetrating as ever. He laments that France’s political elite have attempted to purge the Algerian War and its attendant horrors from the country’s official memory; many military men responsible for these crimes, he notes, have received not only amnesty but promotion and praise. Only in 2000 did the French government admit that it had perpetrated widespread torture and other abuses during this period. Ironically, one former torturer proudly admitted to his actions in a 2001 book, causing such a backlash that he was punished, albeit lightly. However, Alleg insists that even this slap on the wrist signals a shift in official French thinking.

The accompanying essays deserve mention. Ray minces no words, accusing the United States of pursuing a “strategy that incorporates racism, torture, and murder” in its current conflicts. Seeing America as headed down a moral slippery slope, she wonders if it might go the way of the French Fourth Republic or whether “Americans might be the defendants in future war crimes trials.”

Le Sueur provides background on Alleg’s experiences and the debate that *The Question* aroused in France. He argues that present-day France has yet to come to grips with its sordid conduct. In fact, the French parliament passed a law in February 2005 enjoining educators to teach the “positive role” of

French imperialism and to recognize the “sacrifices” made by France’s armed forces in the Algerian War.

Sartre is biting in his psychological dissection of both torturer and victim. He maintains that torture stems from racial hatred and that only by believing an individual to be less than human can one justify torture.

We should be grateful for this timely republication of *The Question*, as it reminds France of a chapter in its history it has tried hard to forget. It is also evidence that fighting terrorists by sacrificing one’s humanity ensures not just a long war but an endless one.

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Evans, Michael. *The Tyranny of Dissonance: Australia’s Strategic Culture and Way of War, 1901–2005*. Duntroon, ACT, Australia: Land Warfare Studies Centre, 2005. Available online at [www.defence.gov.au/army/LWSC/Publications/SP/SP\\_306.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/army/LWSC/Publications/SP/SP_306.pdf).

In this excellent monograph, Michael Evans argues that Australia has a distinctive way of war that focuses on continental defensive strategies. These strategies, for most of its history, have been abandoned by statesmen upholding Australia’s extended vital interests in a favorable regional and world order. In other words, Australian military strategists instinctively think about homeland defense, especially of the air and sea-lanes connecting Australia to the world, but their political leaders inevitably require them to adapt their strategies to intervening around the world as a member of coalitions of like-minded liberal democracies. In the

United States, we call this a “policy-strategy mismatch,” but Evans calls it the “tyranny of dissonance,” with the interventionist tradition of Australian foreign policy pulling one way and the more isolationist official Australian military strategy pulling another. In that respect, Australia resembles Britain and the United States, which have also been torn between “splendid isolation” and foreign intervention in different periods of their histories.

Evans is as relentless as a fly at a picnic in the Australian outback in demonstrating his thesis, which makes his style sometimes just as annoying. He might have limited his analysis to a few archetypal case studies and so made his point with greater power in fewer words. He does prove, however, that both the geographical position and unique political culture of Australia have inclined its military leaders to treat their continent as an Anglo-Saxon island in the middle of Asia, one that needed to be isolated from the rough-and-tumble of regional and global conflicts. Time and again, however, Australia’s dependence on great powers (first Britain, then the United States), as well as the broader vision of Australian political leaders, compelled it to adopt a coalition strategy of “limited liability.” Both to avoid overextension and to demonstrate their bona fides to Australia’s allies, statesmen “down under” have consistently made limited commitments to imperial, later international, security in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Like more unilateral interventions in East Timor and the Solomon Islands, these expeditions demonstrate that official Australian defense strategy is often out of sync with Australian foreign

policy. More precisely, these trends show that official strategy will probably have to be abandoned again, so Australians will have to develop the expeditionary means to back up their interventionist interests.

So, what are the Australians to do about this tension between their cultural instincts and their strategic necessities? Evans, who served as a major in the Zimbabwean army before emigrating to Australia, is hopeful that Australia's gradual shift from its "white only" culture of the early twentieth century to a more pluralistic society in the twenty-first century will increase the growing tendency of Australians to see themselves as stakeholders in both the

international system and the regional balance of power in the Pacific and Asia. Echoing contemporary American misgivings about poor interagency cooperation in the United States, Evans also calls for what he refers to as the "whole government approach" that matches Australian foreign policy and defense strategy, so neither is formed in a vacuum. Australians would still make limited-liability investments in foreign interventions but would have a better chance to develop strategies and force structures suited to their extended interests in a liberal world order.

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