

BOOK REVIEWS

NEW INTERNATIONAL ENERGY ORDER

Klare, Michael T. *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008. 352pp. \$26

In this timely volume, Michael Klare, author of thirteen books, including *Resource Wars* and *Blood and Oil*, provides in-depth projections of global demand and supply for all forms of energy, including petroleum, natural gas, coal, and uranium. A key theme is the confluence of two troubling trends. The first is the unprecedented height of future energy demand (one estimate foresees a 57 percent increase in global energy consumption by 2030). China and India are expected to account for nearly half of this increase. “Peak oil” is shorthand for the second trend. The world has been “seeking more” and “finding less.” “Easy oil” is displaced with higher-cost “tough oil,” found in unstable or inaccessible regions and therefore more difficult or expensive to extract. Other nonrenewable energy resources show a similar trend. Further, increasing carbon emissions make the use of more abundant coal resources problematic.

Klare assesses in detail the geopolitics of energy region by region, with a replay of “the Great Game,” as nations compete for access, power, and control.

Russia’s rise as “an energy juggernaut” under former president Vladimir Putin is particularly impressive. Putin concluded that energy was the key strategic factor in securing Russia’s economic security, and as such must be commanded by the state. Klare details how Putin successfully renationalized control of energy resources, with the value of Gazprom (the largest Russian extractor of natural gas in the world) rising from \$9 billion in 2000 to \$250–\$300 billion in 2006.

To avoid a replay of Cold War–like energy competition, Klare argues, cooperation between nations is necessary—and should begin between the United States and China, which will account for 39 percent of international energy consumption by 2030. Proposals he discusses include developing petroleum alternatives; increased industrial efficiency; climate-friendly coal; and collaborative efforts in these and other areas with Russia, Japan, India, and Europe. Klare’s comprehensive assessment of a “new international energy order” will be invaluable to strategists as they strive to better understand what is

driving nation-states and international relations today.

RICHMOND M. LLOYD
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Smith, Paul. *The Terrorism Ahead: Confronting Transnational Violence in the Twenty-first Century*. New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2007. 258pp. \$79.95

Paul Smith's *The Terrorism Ahead* is a superbly written blend of history, contemporary analysis, and personal reflection. It is the product of thorough research and study plus a decade's worth of vigorous debate with an international cast of students, colleagues (Smith is currently a professor at the Naval War College), counterterrorism practitioners, and academic specialists. The author's arguments thus merit serious and thoughtful consideration. As a participant in many of these debates (I am a former colleague of Smith's, and we did not always agree), I can attest to the "trials by fire" to which the ideas expressed in this book were subjected.

The Terrorism Ahead provides a comprehensive, balanced, yet succinct overview of the key contemporary debates in terrorism studies. Smith skillfully examines terrorism in its wider historical, geopolitical, and technological contexts. This contextualization of the global environment in which terrorism lives and evolves is the book's great strength, and what makes it a valuable contribution to the literature.

Chapter 2, "Historical Evolution," is one of the best one-stop short histories of terrorism in print. One might also single out chapter 8, where Smith tackles terrorism financing and associated

legal issues. The closing chapter presents a compelling analysis of the "root causes" debate and its implications for U.S. policy, plus a thought-provoking look at the future. In this chapter, Smith argues that five conditions will shape terrorism in the years ahead: demography, globalization, transnational crime, weak/failed states, and climate change. Smith is one of the few people working in terrorism studies to seriously consider the implications of climate change.

Throughout the work, Smith also explains how changes in communications, information, and weapons technologies have helped shape the conduct of terrorism. It would have been interesting, therefore, if he had added a discussion of emerging and predicted advances in technologies—such as nanotechnology and genetic engineering—that may provide future tools for terrorists.

All in all, *The Terrorism Ahead* is an engaging, comprehensive, and thoughtful consideration of the challenge of terrorism. It should find itself equally at home on the bookshelves of specialists, general readers, and students.

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Cordesman, Anthony. *Salvaging American Defense: The Challenge of Strategic Overstretch*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2007. 488pp. \$49.95

Anthony Cordesman, current holder of the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at the Center for International and Security Studies in Washington, D.C., is one of the most prolific defense analysts in the United States today. *Salvaging*

American Defense is much like the extant body of research produced by Cordesman over the last few decades. It is filled with information that is intended to be comprehensive, even encyclopedic. Yet this approach can have its drawbacks. The book's subtitle promises to discuss "the challenge of strategic overstretch" and its chapters are organized around ten specific challenges, yet the author fails to offer a sustained argument about how to grapple with them. Instead, the chapters offer program-by-program vignettes, military service-by-military service comparisons, and agency-by-agency descriptions of difficulties. Within the vignettes, comparisons, and descriptions are piecemeal solutions—some of which make an enormous amount of sense, while others smack of improvisation or are contradictory to diagnoses and solutions offered pages earlier.

Evaluating the individual parts of so massive a work is difficult. Absent expert knowledge of an extremely wide range of issues and programs, this reviewer is left to seek out those modest areas of national security where he has some competence or general insight. Here the news is largely positive. Cordesman's discussions of U.S. Navy force structure, policies, and programs seem largely sensible, even when his language is somewhat intemperate. It is hard to argue with the author's diagnoses and solutions when he uses the words of public officials and military officers, not to mention the analyses of seasoned analysts, to underpin his arguments. His account of military "transformation" is reasoned, although in my judgment Cordesman may be a bit too enamored of the promised benefits of transformation and too hopeful that the

national security establishment can overcome what is perhaps the largest problem with transformation: "It is brutally clear that strategy and planning documents that are not integrated with force planning and long-term budgets become hollow wish lists or—at the minimum—more of a problem than part of the solution."

Like many defense experts, Cordesman is not shy about offering recommendations to fix what is wrong with U.S. national security policy. In his final chapter, he offers fourteen "major changes," all of which are ambitious. Unsurprisingly, given the enormous scope of these recommendations, Cordesman offers few details about how they might be implemented.

PETER DOMBROWSKI
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Thornton, Rod. *Asymmetric Warfare: Threat and Response in the 21st Century*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2007. 256pp. \$69.95

Asymmetric warfare, although anything but new, is among the current political-military hot topics of the day. The success of al-Qa'ida in striking the World Trade Center, and the difficulties encountered by the United States and its partner countries in achieving stability and security in Iraq and Afghanistan, has convinced some observers that those who would wage asymmetric warfare against powerful states may now have the upper hand. Other analysts, less willing to go quite so far, agree that asymmetry will be a notable facet of most military conflicts for the foreseeable future.

Unfortunately, discussions of asymmetric warfare all too often devolve into efforts to push pet programs or ideas, attack or defend political leaders, and substitute emotion for understanding. Thankfully, *Asymmetric Warfare* is cut from a different cloth. Dr. Rod Thornton, an authority on security issues at King's College London, has produced a practical and useful primer on this important subject. In doing so, he also dispels several common misconceptions, including the ideas that *asymmetric* means *unequal*, and that asymmetric warfare is solely a tool of the weak.

While asymmetric warfare can be practiced by any actor, it is the modern terrorist who creates the most concern. Thornton takes a close look at terrorists as adversaries and how "new" terrorists differ from their historical predecessors. He identifies three characteristics as particularly important: an increased degree of fervor, an increased ability to implement attacks, and an increased ability to cause mass casualties. The author takes the time to explain why these changes have occurred and how they might manifest themselves in future attacks.

Thornton does not overlook the relationship among terrorism and asymmetric warfare and strategic communication. In addition, he explores how an asymmetric opponent would seek to win a war through attacks on infrastructure and the use of deception, electronic warfare, and psychological operations. Each of these issues is dealt with in some detail.

Asymmetric Warfare is not a perfect book. A deeper discussion of historical examples of asymmetric warfare would have been a powerful addition to the work. It may also be that Thornton

overstates the vulnerabilities of some of the unmanned systems he examines. However, these flaws are minor at best. *Asymmetric Warfare* is a valuable addition to current security-related literature. It is especially useful for readers new to the field who are seeking a cogent and readable description of asymmetric warfare, its various facets and aspects, and potential methods that might be used to deal with asymmetric foes.

RICHARD NORTON
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Kamphausen, Roy, and Andrew Scobell, eds. *Right-Sizing the People's Liberation Army: Exploring the Contours of China's Military*. Carlisle, Pa.: Army War College, 2007. 582pp. (Information about free copies can be obtained at www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs.)

This edited volume combines high-level inquiry into the larger purposes and dimensions of People's Liberation Army (PLA) reforms with fresh data that are difficult to find elsewhere. Its overall theme, the likely future dimensions and missions of China's military, is addressed in contributions from leading experts in the field.

The chapters, organized by service, are solidly grounded in Chinese sources and knowledge of Chinese organizations. In a characteristically sound overview of China's national military strategy, David Finkelstein is scrupulous in his explanation of the relative authority of various Chinese military documents. Evan Medeiros assesses that while Chinese nuclear doctrine has become increasingly sophisticated (while remaining opaque to foreign analysts, particularly in the

area of “no first use”), “the development of conventional missile doctrine is . . . potentially incomplete.”

There is attention to both hardware and software, with particular focus on the human dimension of PLA capabilities. In a persuasive defense of the value of open-source research, Dennis Blasko explains that the ground forces, which still dominate the PLA, are modernizing and undertaking new nontraditional missions, including domestic and international humanitarian operations. While restructuring and modernization are likely to occupy the ground forces for years, Blasko notes that salaries for many PLA personnel doubled in 2006.

A wide range of possibilities is considered. Phillip Saunders and Erik Quam offer several alternative scenarios for PLA Air Force (PLAAF) force structure, and insights into the key factors that shape them. In assessing future PLAAF operational concepts, Kevin Lanzit and Kenneth Allen state that the PLAAF is trying “to become actively involved in managing China’s military space program with an emphasis on the informatization aspects.”

While the authors are careful to offer balanced assessments of capabilities and limitations, it is clear that dramatic new possibilities are emerging for the PLA. In his chapter on command, control, and targeting, Larry Wortzel judges that PLA “informatization” could be remarkably rapid and successful. “PLA officers seem convinced that using ballistic missiles to attack naval battle groups is a viable concept, and they obviously are actively pursuing the capability,” Wortzel asserts, adding that “the PLA will have near real-time regional intelligence collection capability from space in a few short years, if it does not already have it.” On this note, Michael McDevitt estimates that China “currently

has seven satellites in orbit that can contribute to ocean surveillance.” China’s first radar satellite, launched in 2006, “can probably inspect objects as small as twenty meters in length and is thus excellent for identifying ships.” While Chinese nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN) development faces a high barrier to entry in terms of acoustic signature reduction, McDevitt judges, China’s navy may be preparing “to arm nuclear attack submarines with nuclear-tipped cruise missiles.” Bernard Cole projects that, despite current limitations in naval aviation and training, “the PLAN of 2016–17, at three times its present size, will dominate East Asian navies, with the possible exception of the JMSDF [Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force] . . . and will offer a very serious challenge to the U.S. Navy when it operates in those waters.”

In the final chapter, Ellis Joffe concludes that the need to deter Taiwan from declaring independence has driven much of China’s recent military modernization, and Beijing is growing increasingly confident in this regard. Yet Beijing remains far from reaching its presumed goal of achieving a “paramount position in the East Asian region.” It is hoped that this volume’s contributors will continue to probe the possibility of such a transition occurring—with the understanding that much may remain unclear to Beijing’s leaders themselves.

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Yoshihara, Toshi, and James R. Holmes, eds. *Asia Looks Seaward: Power and Maritime Strategy*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2008. 226pp. \$49.95

As the first decade of the twenty-first century draws to a close, the most

comprehensive changes in global economic activity, the global correlation of military force, and relationships among globally significant political actors are taking place in Asia. The fact that so many Asian nations rely heavily on oceanborne commerce for petroleum is but one reason why the course of these developments must depend on how the parties concerned exercise sea power. Thus, Toshi Yoshihara and James Holmes's volume of essays by leading academics on Asian nations' experiences and practices of maritime strategy is timely. Yoshihara sets a high standard for the other authors in his introduction, where he specifies issues he intends for the work to address, and identifies the key questions hanging over contemporary Asian maritime affairs with unusual clarity of thought and equally exceptional clarity of expression.

Different chapters address Yoshihara's questions from different perspectives. chapter 2 presents a broad narrative of Chinese maritime activity, while chapters 3 and 4 present detailed historical studies of Anglo-Japanese relations and the U.S. Navy's operations in the Pacific region, respectively. The book then returns to twenty-first-century concerns, with chapters on the People's Republic of China's (PRC) ongoing naval buildup, the PRC's oil tanker fleet, Indian maritime activity, Japanese maritime thought, and China's maritime relations with Southeast Asia.

All these chapters are relevant to Yoshihara's initial questions. The questions, however, raise more issues than any book could possibly address. Readers of Gabriel Collins's study of the PRC's tanker fleet, for instance, are likely to want a comparative analysis of how other Asian countries transport

their oil. Chapters on India, Japan, and Southeast Asia are invaluable, but Russia, the Republic of China, and the Republic of Korea surely deserve attention as well. Numerous authors mention Alfred Thayer Mahan, but none explore the points he raises in *The Problem of Asia and Its Effect upon International Politics* (Little, Brown, 1905). *The Problem of Asia* emphasizes the importance of Africa and the Middle East to what twenty-first-century writers might call Asia's sea lines of communication. A chapter on the PRC's trade and diplomatic activity in those regions could have been revealing, whether or not the author shares Mahan's views. Since this book could never have covered all aspects of Asian maritime strategy completely, Yoshihara might have helped readers understand its particular contribution by including a conclusion summarizing the steps the authors had taken toward that goal. Readers are, however, almost certain to find this book valuable in their own studies of sea power in Asia.

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Oren, Michael B. *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. 800pp. \$17.95

Michael Oren's *Power, Faith, and Fantasy* is an indispensable historical account of America's encounters with the volatile Middle East. A renowned historian, Oren fills a vacuum in the literature, as most of it dates to the post-World War II era.

Oren begins by identifying the central motifs (the "golden threads") of America's involvement in the region since the

1700s. As he notes, “The most tangible and pervasive of [these] themes is power.” During the Barbary Wars, the United States Navy displayed its newfound power to good effect. The second theme is faith. He portrays this in his description of the countless American missionaries who toiled under the harshest conditions. The third theme is fantasy—that is, the region’s exotic and mysterious images and stereotypes. Consistent throughout the book is the discussion of how crucial the U.S. Navy was to the region. Naval War College readers will enjoy the insight into the Navy’s earliest ventures and missions in the Middle East.

In spite of the massive changes that have occurred in the region since 1776 or indeed over the last century—the discovery of oil, the two world wars, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the peace process, and terrorism—Oren makes a good case that today’s problems between the United States and its various Middle Eastern partners and adversaries revolve around these same intersecting threads. He emphasizes in particular the dire need to make a shift from “fantasy” to reality in U.S.–Middle East relations generally.

This extensively researched book is well written, comprehensive, and fascinating. Given our dilemmas in U.S.–Middle East relations today, policy makers and the general public alike will benefit greatly by reading it.

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Bodansky, Yossef. *Chechen Jihad: Al Qaeda's Training Ground and the Next Wave of Terror*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. 464pp. \$27.95

The importance to the global jihad of the Chechen wars that have roiled the Caucasus region for more than fifteen years is something Western commentators on terrorism persistently underestimate. For most Western observers, the battle for Chechnya has more to do with tribal-cum-national conflicts and human rights abuses than fighting against the forces of armed radical Islam. Russian claims that it, too, is waging its own “war on terror” (a view that held currency in the United States only briefly after 9/11) now fall on deaf ears. For most people outside the former Soviet Union, the arduous Russian struggle against Chechen mujahideen has evaporated from the headlines and amounts to a forgotten war.

This is unfortunate for many reasons, not least that al-Qa‘ida considers the jihad in the Caucasus to be a major front in its global campaign. The first Chechen war (1994 to 1996) was a humiliating debacle for Moscow that resulted in the establishment of a Chechen pseudostate, which soon fell under the influence of Islamic radicalism. Al-Qa‘ida believed this to be a clear win for its cause.

The second Chechen war, which began in 1999 and coincided with the rise of Vladimir Putin, presents a much different picture. For all intents and purposes, Russia has won—Moscow has successfully reestablished its authority over most of the breakaway region. For al-Qa‘ida, by the same token, Chechnya today is a much less promising venue than it was a decade ago.

The continuing neglect of Chechnya in the “terrorism studies” canon is, therefore, a problem. Chechnya has much to teach Western counterterrorists about

effective tactics, techniques, and procedures against the mujahideen. Russia's trial-and-error efforts there could prove important to Western audiences. A good book on this subject is therefore something very much to be desired.

Unfortunately, Yossef Bodansky's *Chechen Jihad* is not that book. The author is a prolific writer on terrorism in general and its radical Islamic variant in particular, but his viewpoint lacks perspective and subtlety. Bodansky's treatment of the Chechen conflict follows his usual pattern of offering a detailed, chronological narrative, veering into a "you are there" account, devoid of any real analysis. Moreover, the author boasts of many unnamed sources in Moscow's security and intelligence agencies that have given him the "real" story to which others are not privy. The reader is bluntly told that all is to be taken on faith, with no endnotes, as is customary in Bodansky's writings, so as to protect his sources. It is, therefore, impossible to determine where the author gets his material or what its validity may be. In this connection, Bodansky's silence on many controversies relating to Russian intelligence in its struggle with the mujahideen is both revealing and troubling.

In spite of all this, however, a close examination by anyone well versed in the subject will reveal that most of Bodansky's information is in fact gleaned not from clandestine meetings in dark alleys but from (translated) press accounts (it appears that Bodansky knows none of the relevant languages). In other words, the author is relying on practices associated with sensationalist journalism, not serious analysis, much less scholarship.

Chechen Jihad is best left on the shelf; it

has nothing of substance to offer serious students of al-Qa'ida and terrorism.

JOHN R. SCHINDLER
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Scahill, Jeremy. *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army*. New York: Nation Books, 2007. 480pp. \$26.95

Jeremy Scahill, an investigative journalist for *The Nation*, takes on Blackwater and the privatization of war and security with a vengeance. His fervor and intensity, no doubt prized characteristics in the world of investigative journalism, are on display here in spades. Scahill deconstructs the legal, political, and moral issues that are interwoven with the use of private security contractors like Blackwater Lodge & Training Center, Inc., in admirable fashion, pointing out the substantial and vexing issues that are presented by corporations engaging in activities formerly and traditionally reserved for the armed forces of nation-states. Regrettably, however, his passion generates stray voltage as his manuscript degenerates into an attack on the Bush administration's Iraq war policy, and further regresses into an assault on the Bush administration generally, political conservatism, and the Christian right. By the final pages, Scahill's vitriol discredits him and takes the wind out of the sails of any reasonable argument he otherwise presents regarding the dangers posed by Blackwater and its sister companies. This is too bad, because the author's meticulous research and willingness to take on an administration patsy are commendable and necessary.

A cursory review of Scahill's online postings, blogs, and congressional testimony reveals a clear and evident bias. But hardly any reasonable military professional would argue that the actions of companies like Blackwater have not harmed the coalition forces' counterinsurgency effort in Iraq. Downstream and third-order effects of these sometimes reckless and frequently arrogant mercenaries are not part of the calculation—they get paid for keeping the principal alive and unharmed. On the other hand, Scahill's rejection of private security companies as a *concept* leaves little room for the possibility that companies like Blackwater could be useful in the national security apparatus if future administrations and Congress could muster the political will to control them under an effective and feasible system of accountability. Moreover, while there is plenty to condemn about Blackwater's legacy, tactics, and management, that is only half of Scahill's story. That Blackwater founder Erik Prince is a deeply and evidently religious conservative is *prima facie* evidence, according to Scahill, that he and his business is or should be thoroughly discredited.

Finally, Scahill laments that Blackwater has been able to recruit seasoned intelligence and operational professionals, such as Cofer Black, without acknowledging that it is a common practice for corporations to recruit talent from the government, and vice versa. He paints Black, in particular, as a sellout, when Black's hiring by Blackwater only follows the typical pattern of Washington professionals across many vocations. Faulting his decision to move to the private sector is shallow and naive.

The bottom line on *Blackwater* is that it is worth reading. The book is a useful

medium to take stock of the myriad issues that confront policy makers on this controversial subject. Yet Scahill's antipathy toward all things Bush, Republican, and the Christian right ultimately takes over. Coupled with untidy organization and the author's tendency to repeat himself, this renders his work less constructive and credible than it otherwise might have been.

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Slim, Hugo. *Killing Civilians: Method, Madness, and Morality in War*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2008. 300pp. \$29.95

Hugo Slim has written a remarkable and disturbing book that everyone concerned with the safety of "civilians" should read—and then join the public debate about protecting them. Slim states that while the word "civilian" has long been an ambiguous concept, it is one we must do more to support because it is grounded in basic Western values. He encourages wide public discussion about defending and expanding the civilian concept in an age of terrorism, failing states, and ethnic strife. He has fulfilled this purpose admirably, with a deep and wide breadth of scholarship that should spark serious debate at all levels.

This book is remarkable because the author, who has worked in humanitarian assistance for more than twenty years, tells of the horrendous evil that men do with a dispassionate tone that allows both the deadly logic of civilian killing and its terrible results to seep into the reader's mind. It is disturbing. This

reader was taken aback to realize that rather than build revulsion, the accumulation of damning evidence created the same “not my job” effect that allows nations to ignore atrocities against whole peoples.

Slim describes in detail the “seven spheres of civilian suffering”: direct violence (murder, genocide, etc.), rape and sexual violence, forced movement, impoverishment, famine and disease, emotional suffering, and postwar suffering. The book’s most disturbing aspect is the six chapters that describe the painful details about civilian killing. Only one chapter is dedicated to promoting civilian protection. This offers practical expressions of philosopher Howard Gardner’s seven “levers” for changing human minds as Slim’s answer to the dilemma: reason, research, resonance (emotion and morality), representational redescription (shared identity), resources and rewards, real world events, and resistance. Oddly, Slim’s suggestions as to how to apply these levers, such as international criminal courts, fail to resonate with the same passion as the myriad justifications for civilian killing. But this may be the point: killing results from the strongest passions, while the act of sparing life results from the more enduring, yet more difficult to evoke, feelings of mercy, compassion, and love.

ROBERT L. PERRY
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Gati, Charles. *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt*. Cold War International History Project. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2006. 264pp. \$49.95

Historians are charged with applying twenty-twenty hindsight to incidents that, at the time, seem to be only a curious combination of blurring events. Charles Gati, a leading commentator on Central European history and politics, does just that in *Failed Illusions*, his study of the abortive Hungarian Revolution of 1956 against the Soviet Union. His book was fifty years in the making, partly because many of his primary sources have only recently been made available. Although he was a firsthand observer of events in Hungary in the 1950s, Gati delayed this work to ensure that it reflected an appropriate level of objectivity. Gati was in Budapest at the time of the revolution, having recently been fired from a state-run newspaper for no ostensible reason. While this made him sympathetic to the revolution, he readily admits to a certain naiveté about why it was happening. This work is largely a result of his personal quest to retrospectively understand this seminal event that shaped his life. He emigrated to the United States shortly after the revolution.

Imre Nagy, prime minister of Hungary and the leader of the revolution, is the story’s protagonist. Through superb usage of primary and personal sources, Gati humanizes this ultimately tragic figure. The book’s most profound insights are in its handling of the decision makers in Moscow and Washington. Moscow possessed the ultimate power and was responsible for the decisions that led to the Soviet invasion of Hungary in November 1956. However, Gati’s use of recently opened records proves conclusively that Soviet leadership was not “trigger happy.” It is eye opening to see just how close the Soviet politburo came to allowing Hungary to

embark on its “Titoist” escapade. The de-Stalinization theme set by the Twentieth Communist Party Congress of the Soviet Union in February 1956 made a major impact on Soviet thinking. Nikita Khrushchev, Anastas Mikoyan, and even such hard-liners as Mikhail Suslov seemed predisposed to allow Budapest a significant degree of autonomy in its interpretation of communism. Were it not for the massacre of party officials in Budapest’s Republic Square, Gati argues, the revolution stood an excellent chance to succeed.

Perhaps the bigger nemesis was Washington. The combined incompetence of the Central Intelligence Agency; the misguided, provocative propaganda of the Radio Free Europe (RFE) team in Munich; and the White House refusal to focus on the plight of Budapest during the Suez crisis created a “perfect storm”—encouraging the Hungarian Revolution without any serious thought of ever supporting it. This would not have been so painful had not 96 percent of all Hungarians, most of whom ravenously devoured the RFE reports, thought that the United States would provide unlimited support for the revolution.

This account certainly warrants reading by history buffs and public policy makers alike. Gati has a way of personalizing the day-by-day accounts of the action in Budapest that makes for an easy read. However, the reader is left with a series of provocative questions. What made the Soviet politburo overturn its decision and ultimately send in tanks to Hungary? Was Washington capable of focusing on more than one flash point at a time? Would at least one fluent Hungarian-speaking CIA agent in Hungary have made a difference in U.S. policy? Fortunately for his readership, Gati

is not short of hindsight on any of these questions.

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Pearlman, Michael D. *Truman and MacArthur: Policy, Politics, and the Hunger for Honor and Renown*. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2008. 352pp. \$29.95

Michael D. Pearlman retired in 2006 as professor of history at the Army Command and General Staff College. He now offers a complete history of the political, diplomatic, and military factors leading to President Harry S. Truman’s April 1951 firing of General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander, Far East. A presentation at times overdone for general readers, this scholarly work will interest those who specialize in American strategic and diplomatic decision making from post–World War II through the Korean War.

Problems between Truman and his viceroy in Asia began early in the Korean War. In August 1950 Truman ordered MacArthur to rescind a public statement sent to the annual convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, in which MacArthur advocated preserving Taiwan for a future attack on mainland China. This statement was in direct conflict with White House policy to keep the war in Korea limited.

Late in December 1950, after the Chinese attacked across the Yalu River in Korea, MacArthur responded to a Joint Chiefs of Staff message with a counterproposal. He advocated these decisive destructive blows: a blockade of Chinese coastal areas, destruction of Chinese industrial capacities to wage

war, and Nationalist Chinese forces to counterattack on the mainland.

Early in 1951, when the Chinese communist forces began to falter in the face of tougher American and allied resistance, MacArthur became bolder and attacked the Truman administration's concept of limited war in Korea. On 24 March MacArthur preempted the administration by announcing his willingness to negotiate with enemy commanders.

Truman conferred with his key advisers and a consensus emerged that MacArthur's insubordination called for his dismissal. The occasion, though not the cause, was a letter from MacArthur to Joseph Martin, the senior Republican in the House of Representatives. The letter, which praised a speech of Martin's calling for a second front in China, was read into *The Congressional Record* on 5 April. Six days later, MacArthur was fired.

Pearlman's credentials are manifest. He has produced a thorough account of decision making, bureaucratic and partisan politics, and old grudges and resentments. The latter are sometimes extraneous, but to his credit, he also examines another aspect of the Korean conflict—events behind closed doors in Beijing and Moscow. The work offers valuable information on Sino-Soviet relations during this period, though the author might have expanded on this subject beyond the limited issues of Stalin's fear of an American nuclear attack and his sales of arms to Mao Tse-tung.

In sum, this is a first-rate research effort by a distinguished historian, writing in a lively style that somewhat counterbalances the book's density, and of considerable value and interest to students of the period.

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