

REVIEW ESSAYS

JUTLAND: ACRIMONY TO RESOLUTION

Holger Herwig

Jutland: The Naval Staff Appreciation, ed. William Schleihauf. Barnsley, U.K.: Seaforth Publishing, 2016. 316 pages. \$34.95.
The Jutland Scandal: The Truth about the First World War's Greatest Sea Battle, by J. E. T. Harper and Sir Reginald Bacon. Barnsley, U.K.: Frontline Books, 2016. 252 pages. \$24.99.
Jutland: The Unfinished Battle, by Nicholas Jellicoe. Barnsley, U.K.: Seaforth Publishing, 2016. 402 pages. \$35.95.

Shortly after 2 PM (GMT) on 31 May 1916 the Danish tramp steamer *N. J. Fjord* blew off steam and came to a halt in the North Sea just west of the Skagerrak, the maritime strait between Denmark and Norway. To the northwest, its captain spied the British light cruiser HMS *Galatea*; to the southeast, the German light cruiser SMS *Elbing*. Thus was established the first contact in what the British would call the battle of Jutland, and the Germans *die Schlacht vor dem Skagerrak*: 151 ships of 1,700 guns and 60,000 sailors under the command of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, and 100 ships of 900 guns and 45,000 sailors under the command of Vice Admiral Reinhard Scheer. In the ensuing twelve hours, there took place several battles: the initial battle cruiser engagement; the British Battle Cruiser Fleet's "run to the north"; two main fleet engagements; and finally several violent and confused night actions by light cruisers and destroyers. About 6,800 British and 3,000 German sailors died or were wounded. The Royal Navy lost three battle cruisers, three armored cruisers, and eight destroyers of 115,025 tons; the High Sea Fleet, one battle cruiser, one predreadnought, four light cruisers, and five destroyers of 61,180 tons.

Holger H. Herwig is professor emeritus at the University of Calgary.

Conventional wisdom has it that the battle was a German tactical victory but a British strategic victory. There should have been little controversy about the only great sea battle of World War I, but controversy there was. Roughly 458,000 Google hits for the entry “battle of Jutland” attest to the ferocity of the “real war” waged, especially in Britain in the 1920s between the supporters of Admiral Jellicoe, commander in chief of the Grand Fleet, and Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty, commander of the British Battle Cruiser Fleet. The four books in the three volumes under review will give the reader an appreciation of that acrimony—and, it is hoped, offer resolution.

Why was Jutland not a second Glorious First of June 1794? The nation demanded an answer—but it got none. In fact, the Germans won the opening round in the public relations campaign over Jutland when its admiralty staff, on the morning of 1 June 1916, issued a formal press communiqué listing the heavy British losses while downplaying their own. A terse British Admiralty statement, which hit the newspapers on 3 June 1916, seemed merely to confirm the German accounts of the battle. The “magic of Trafalgar [1805],” Kaiser Wilhelm II crowed, “has been broken.”

To mitigate the continuing public relations disaster, in January 1919 the first sea lord, Rosslyn Wemyss, appointed Captain John Harper to “prepare a record” of “what actually happened in the battle.” Harper and his team worked fast, completing their report early in October of that year. It was cold, clinical—and devastating. Beatty, having been promoted to full admiral and appointed Wemyss’s successor, was livid. The “Harper Record” threatened to tarnish Beatty’s public image as the hero of the battle of Jutland. For, in the first phase of the battle, Harper noted, it was “extremely unpalatable” that Beatty with a force of four battleships and six battle cruisers “failed to defeat a weaker enemy who made no effort to avoid action” (Vice Admiral Franz von Hipper’s five German battle cruisers), “but in the space of 50 minutes, suffered what can only be described as a partial defeat.” Moreover, Harper charged that Beatty on HMS *Lion* repeatedly had kept Jellicoe on HMS *Iron Duke* ignorant of the enemy’s position, that when closing up with the Grand Fleet his battle cruisers “puzzlingly” had performed a complete circular turn, and that Beatty’s signaling during the battle had been abysmal. Unsurprisingly, the new first sea lord made certain the “Harper Record” never saw the light of day; it was consigned to the shelves of the British Library archives.

Still, not even David Beatty could kill the nation’s interest in Jutland. In November 1920, as pressure from within the service mounted to set the Jutland record straight, the first sea lord asked Captains Alfred and Kenneth Dewar, both strong supporters, to write up a staff appreciation of the battle of Jutland. In 1922,

the Dewars published the *Naval Staff Appreciation*—the most “grotesque account of the battle,” in the words of official historian Sir Julian Corbett (*History of the Great War, Naval Operations*, vol. 3).

Beatty was the hero; Jellicoe was the villain. With regard to the first phase of the battle, the Dewars laid the blame for the ten-mile separation between the Battle Cruiser Fleet and the 5th Battle Squadron squarely on the latter’s commander, Rear Admiral Hugh Evan-Thomas, for having failed to follow Beatty’s signal to close up. They declined, however, to mention that Beatty had failed to signal Evan-Thomas by searchlight after wind and smoke had obscured flag signals. Nor did they mention that faulty signaling resulted in a mistaken distribution of fire, leaving SMS *Derfflinger* undisturbed. Again, there was no mention of Beatty’s steaming in a complete circle with *Lion*, *Princess Royal*, *Tiger*, and *New Zealand* after the “run to the north”; nor of his failure to communicate the whereabouts of Scheer’s Main Fleet between 5 and 5:30 PM. Front and center, on the other hand, was the Dewars’ criticism of Jellicoe’s decision to deploy on his port wing (to the south) at 6:54 PM, which, in their view, moved him away from the guns of the High Sea Fleet and denied him a “second Trafalgar.” In fact, the deployment on a southeast-by-east course put Jellicoe between Scheer and his bases, gave the gunners of the Grand Fleet the best light, and exposed the High Sea Fleet to the fire of the maximum number of British ships.

Perhaps the most mischievous statements in the *Naval Staff Appreciation* were that the Grand Fleet “was only occasionally in action,” that its actual firing was “confined to two intervals of about [a] quarter of an hour each,” and that after Scheer’s brilliant “battle turn away” to the west, “no attempt was made to follow” on Jellicoe’s part. The “idea of attack was lacking.” This smacked of incompetence, if not downright cowardice. Finally, the Dewars detected the Nelsonian touch in Beatty’s dramatic signal at 7:47 PM, “Submit that the van of the battleships follow me; we can then cut off the whole of the enemy fleet.” Seeing that “alone and unsupported he could not engage the whole of Scheer’s Battle Fleet,” Beatty had called on Jellicoe finally to join the fight. Instead, the commander in chief had altered course “two points away from the enemy.” After the High Sea Fleet had swept safely across the stern of the Grand Fleet during the night, the latter returned home “with two killed and five wounded. It had never been seriously in action.”

Rubbish. John Jellicoe’s Grand Fleet at Jutland fired 1,539 shells from the main batteries, scoring 57 hits; David Beatty’s Battle Cruiser Fleet loosed 1,469 shells for 21 hits. Put differently, the battleships were the source of 35 percent of the heavy-caliber gunfire and scored 46 percent of the hits the British fleet obtained.

But in critiquing the Royal Navy’s hallowed single-line deployment and the embodying doctrine of centralized command, the Dewars had gone too far:

Beatty immediately called back all copies of the book, and in 1928 his successor, Admiral Charles Madden, ordered all copies destroyed. Four survived, and they formed the basis for William Schleihauf's critical and annotated 2016 reprint of *Jutland: The Naval Staff Appreciation*.

Nonetheless, the Dewars' damning indictments were taken up quickly by public writers. First off, in 1923 Winston Churchill took up the cause in *The World Crisis*, volume 3, 1916–1918. Recognizing that he had “only the vaguest idea of what had taken place” at Jutland, the former first lord of the Admiralty called on David Beatty for assistance. The first sea lord could help: he recommended none other than Kenneth Dewar! The result was predictable: Churchill's graphic prose and Dewar's mean-spirited attack on Jellicoe. The latter had been obsessed with the system of centralized command. He had shackled his commanders. He had refused to show initiative. He had possessed a “defensive habit of mind.” He had been “ponderous.” He had clung to the old single-line formation. Churchill's oft-repeated comment that Jellicoe was the only man who could have lost the war in an afternoon was not meant as praise; its corollary was that Jellicoe was the only man who could have *won* the war in an afternoon.

Churchill was not regarded as a true “navy man,” and hence his *World Crisis* treatment of Jutland caused only a minor uproar among Jellicoe's supporters. The same could not be said of Filson Young, the author of a glowing 1921 account of Beatty entitled *With the Battle Cruisers*. In the *Sunday Express* in 1924 and in the *Daily Express* in 1925 Young published articles in which he claimed that Admiral Scheer in an interview in effect had confessed “how I escaped at Jutland.” Scheer, of course, was furious. But Young went on to state that, in Scheer's view, Jellicoe, with his cautious approach to the battle, had squandered a perfect opportunity to annihilate the High Sea Fleet. It was now Jellicoe's turn to be furious. All this was but the prelude to two knights in shining armor riding to Jellicoe's defense: Rear Admiral John Harper and Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon.

Livid at Young's treatment of Jellicoe, Harper in 1927 dusted off his unpublished and virtually banned “Harper Record” and published it as *The Truth about Jutland*. It has been reprinted in *The Jutland Scandal* (2016), with only minor editorial corrections. Harper, no longer bound by Admiralty oversight, gave full vent to his deepest emotions. Beatty, the putative hero of Jutland, was unmasked. In the first phase of the battle, he had made the initial “fatal and elementary mistake of dividing his forces.” Moreover, by stationing *Barham* five miles distant, Evan-Thomas could not read Beatty's flag signals, with the result that the 5th Battle Squadron was soon some ten miles distant. This, and this alone, Harper argued, had brought about the loss of the battle cruisers *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary*. As well, Beatty had failed in his primary role: reconnaissance. Jellicoe was reduced to visual signals: “Where is enemy's battle fleet?” With the two fleets closing at

thirty-five to forty miles per hour, time was critical; yet one hour passed without Beatty sighting Hipper's battle cruisers. And hours passed before Beatty informed his commander in chief of the critical losses to his Battle Cruiser Fleet. Harper's final verdict was damning: "Beatty did not maintain contact with the enemy, he lost touch shortly after his turn to the northward, and sent no reports to Jellicoe during the time when accurate information would have been of inestimable value to him." To those in the service who had read the internal "Harper Record," only the harsh tone of *The Truth about Jutland* came as a surprise.

The same could not be said about a second defense of Jellicoe in the face of the Churchill/Young attacks: Admiral Bacon's *The Jutland Scandal*, first published in 1925. It also is included in the 2016 reprint, *The Jutland Scandal*. Like Harper, Bacon sharply criticized Beatty for dividing his forces at the start of the battle, for not closing up with the 5th Battle Squadron sooner, for not keeping Jellicoe informed about the location of Scheer's High Sea Fleet, and for steaming 360 degrees around the Main Fleet after his "run to the north." But Bacon saved his most savage attack for Vice Admiral Beatty's signal at 7:50 PM for Jellicoe's battleships to follow his battle cruisers and "cut off the whole" of Vice Admiral Scheer's battle fleet. "As a matter of fact," Bacon acidly remarked, "there was nothing from which the battle cruisers could cut the German battle fleet off! They had already been cut off from their harbours."

It came as no surprise that First Sea Lord Beatty was annoyed by "that bloody Bacon book," and that it had only added to his "despondency" concerning his waning influence with the government and the navy. Churchill, likely embarrassed by his amateur treatment of the battle of Jutland in *The World Crisis*, in February 1940 vetoed the Royal Navy's suggestion to name its new *King George V*-class battleships *Jellicoe* and *Beatty*.

It now has been one hundred years since the battle of Jutland. Beatty and Jellicoe both rest in the crypt of Saint Paul's Cathedral in London. Armies of naval historians have dissected every aspect of the battle, and have come up with intriguing names such as "Flawed Victory," "Distant Victory," "Jutland Scandal," "The Riddle of Jutland," "The Truth about Jutland," "The Jutland Epic," "The Blindfold Game," "The Rules of the Game," "The Smoke Screen of Jutland," "Sins of Omission and Commission," and "Our Bloody Ships or Our Bloody System," among countless others.

Thankfully, we now have a superb analysis, *Jutland: The Unfinished Battle* (2016), from Nicholas Jellicoe—the admiral's grandson. This source at first sight might seem to be prejudiced, but that is not the case. Obviously aware of the possible suspicion of bias because of his last name, Nicholas Jellicoe has gone out of his way to offer both the general reader and the naval expert a balanced,

measured, and yet nuanced account of the greatest sea battle of World War I. He weighs and measures. He offers conflicting accounts and interpretations. He evaluates sources. He compares British and German eyewitness and official accounts and statistics. He judiciously examines the accounts by John Harper, Reginald Bacon, and the Admiralty discussed above. And then he offers his own best opinion. Along the way, he provides the layman with text boxes and sidebars to explain the complex naval systems in place at Jutland, and he further includes countless diagrams to explain ship locations and movements.

Nicholas Jellicoe apportions praise and criticism in equal amounts. Tactically, Jutland was a German victory and a “bad blow” for both the Royal Navy and the nation. Hipper’s leadership of the German battle cruisers had been “brilliant,” Scheer’s two “battle turns away” and his ultimate escape “remarkable.” German signals and communications had been “exemplary,” those of the British “lamentable.” Jellicoe’s system of command had been rigid, a “vestige of the Victorian past.” Beatty’s reconnaissance and reporting had been a “failure.” Beatty’s obsession with rapid firing and the resulting storage of cordite next to the gun turrets, rather than improper flash protection, had caused the loss of the battle cruisers. The role of the new weapons of the day—mines, torpedoes, and aircraft—had been overrated before the battle, and negligible in its outcome. Both navies had fought the battle unexpectedly and discovered it to be highly complex, and had fought under difficult conditions of wind, rain, smoke, heavy seas, and fading light. Both sides regarded it as an “unfinished battle.”

Strategically, Nicholas Jellicoe joins the bevy of historians who have argued that Jutland was a British victory. “The issue at stake,” he writes, “had been sea power.” One side exercised it; the other sought to gain it. Afterward, the arteries of seaborne commerce, Alfred Thayer Mahan’s maritime highways, remained open to Britain and closed to Germany. Reinhard Scheer, the putative “victor of the Skagerrak,” accepted this reality when, in his after-action report of 4 July 1916 to Wilhelm II, he forsook future “Jutlands” in favor of “the defeat of British economic life” by way of unrestricted submarine warfare “against British trade.” The High Sea Fleet, in Churchill’s stinging remark of February 1912, indeed had been but a “luxury” fleet.

STRATEGY, OPERATIONS, AND THE MARGIN OF VICTORY

Dov S. Zakheim

Margin of Victory: Five Battles That Changed the Face of Modern War, by Douglas Macgregor. Foreword by Robert M. Citrino. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2016. 288 pages. \$34.95.

Douglas Macgregor, a decorated Army tank commander who has gone on to become a leading iconoclastic—and prescient—military intellectual, has produced an ambitious evaluation of five key twentieth-century battles and the strategic and operational assumptions that led up to them. *Margin of Victory* examines in great yet readable detail the strategic 1914 battle of Mons and the strategic withdrawal that followed it; the 1937 Japanese battle for Shanghai; the 1944 Soviet destruction of the Wehrmacht's Army Group Center in and around the Belorussian swamps; the Israeli counterattack across the Suez in the 1973 Yom Kippur War; and the crushing American defeat of Saddam Hussein's forces in the 1991 battle of 73 Easting. Taken together, Macgregor argues, these battles have much to offer those who formulate contemporary American strategy and plan its military operations. Indeed, he goes further: those who ignore the lessons of these battles do so at their peril. As he states in his introductory paragraph, "Hell . . . can be defined in three words: defeat in war. *Margin of Victory* is about avoiding hell."

Macgregor devotes a chapter to each of the five major battles he has chosen as object lessons for current civilian and military policy makers. His account of the battle of Mons is actually a panegyric to Richard Haldane, Britain's secretary of state for war from 1905 to 1912. Facing unstinting opposition from a hidebound officer corps wedded to operational concepts that had failed miserably in the Boer War and confronting budget constraints that prioritized the modernization of the Royal Navy, Haldane nevertheless managed to create a general staff, transform the army into a capable expeditionary force, organize a trained reserve, emphasize realistic training, and inaugurate a regimen of professional military education. His reforms, Macgregor states, would be called today "disruptive innovation." As a result, the seriously outnumbered British Expeditionary Force was able both to force the in-

vading German forces to alter their plans for the attack on Paris and to slow them sufficiently to enable the Allies to mount the defenses that stopped the attackers at the battle of the Marne, thereby preventing an attack on the French capital. As Macgregor concludes, "by the standards of the early twentieth

Dov S. Zakheim was Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) from 2001 to 2004 and Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Planning and Resources) from 1985 to 1987.

century, Haldane's reforms achieved miracles." They also prevented what otherwise might have been a quick German victory in what became known as World War I.

Macgregor's account of the battle of Shanghai is essentially a discussion of what happens when a modernizer's efforts are ignored or overridden. General Kazushige Ugaki, Japanese minister of war from 1924 to 1927 and 1929 to 1931, identified the Soviet Union as Japan's primary potential adversary and recognized that, as Macgregor puts it, "in the future the IJA [Imperial Japanese Army] would need the mobility and firepower to conduct sweeping flank attacks, enveloping or encircling the Russian enemy."

Ugaki also challenged the prevailing Japanese view that budgetary priority should be assigned to naval force modernization and expansion. Few of his reforms to realize his objectives outlasted his terms in office, however. As a result, Japan conducted a bloody and far too costly campaign to seize Shanghai from Chiang Kai-shek's more numerous but vastly outgunned and poorly trained troops, only succeeding thanks to firepower support from Japanese naval and air forces. Japan then successfully conquered eastern and southern China, but, as Macgregor points out, "Japan's war with China not only delayed and disrupted the IJA's modernization; it also fatally crippled Japan's northern strategy to defeat the Soviet Union, while putting Japan on a collision course with Britain and the United States. Thus, where Haldane succeeded, at least in part, to the benefit of his country's forces, Ugaki failed completely, to the costly detriment of Imperial Japan."

Ugaki's failures pale by comparison with the mad strategy that propelled Hitler into invading the Soviet Union and then refusing to implement a planned withdrawal that could have saved huge numbers of his troops. It was true that during the 1930s the Germans had increased their tactical fighting power by focusing on attacks at the point of impact. Nevertheless, the Soviet military, recovering from Stalin's purges, centrally driven from the top, with unity of command, and indifferent to massive personnel losses, successfully focused on "integrating and concentrating combat power on the operational level for strategic effect." The results of Hitler's mistakes and the Soviet transformation played out in 1944, when the Red Army was able to destroy the German Army Group Center. Until it was clear all was about to be lost, Hitler vehemently opposed any withdrawal in the face of the advancing Soviet troops, insisting that his soldiers "fight to the last man." His generals, many of whom were nonprofessional party hacks, were unable or unwilling to challenge his decision. Even when he finally consented to an organized withdrawal to more-defensible positions, Hitler insisted that forces remain behind to defend the various towns from which they had operated. As a result, the Soviets were able to bypass what Hitler termed "fortified places," encircle and destroy the retreating army group, and take the towns as well. In Macgregor's

words, the Soviet transformation, encompassing changes in “command structure, organization for combat, and supporting doctrine for the application of military power in the form of strike—artillery, rockets, and airpower—with operationally agile maneuver forces created a margin of victory that changed the course of European and world history.”

Macgregor’s fourth case study, that of the Israeli counterattack across the Suez Canal, is meant to demonstrate how a culture that fosters flexibility and independent initiative and leadership enabled the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to offset intelligence misreadings of Egyptian preparations to cross the canal. He also points to Israel’s merit-based promotion system and the IDF’s recognition that “one size does not fit all”—in other words, its diversity of capacity. Macgregor allows that Ariel Sharon went beyond mere initiative and flagrantly disobeyed orders. But Macgregor also notes that Sharon’s admittedly costly efforts to surprise, and contribute to the encirclement of, Egypt’s Third Army were a major factor in the success of the Israeli counterattack. Macgregor credits Anwar Sadat with the foresight to recognize that only by redeeming Egypt’s honor, which had been crushed in the Six-Day War, could Cairo finally achieve peace with Israel, one that has stood the test of the region’s endless crises and wars for the better part of four decades.

Macgregor led a tank battalion in the battle of 73 Easting, a major American triumph in the 1991 war with Saddam Hussein and another source of lessons for achieving a “margin of victory.” Macgregor has written about this battle before: in 2009 he devoted an entire volume, entitled *Warrior’s Rage: The Great Tank Battle of 73 Easting*, to the events of 26–27 February 1991. The book offers an account of the actions of the 2nd Squadron of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment (“Cougar Squadron”), which surprised and crushed an Iraqi Republican Guard armored brigade by charging out of a sandstorm during Operation DESERT STORM in what became the U.S. Army’s largest tank battle since World War II. Macgregor’s purpose in repeating the tale is to argue that President George H. W. Bush ordered a cease-fire prematurely, while Norman Schwarzkopf, who commanded Operation DESERT STORM, essentially let fifty thousand Republican Guards escape virtually unscathed, only to be rearmed by Saddam to fight another day. Macgregor is also bitterly critical of the American military’s failure truly to integrate its forces, so that the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines continue to seek service self-sufficiency, at a cost to overall operational effectiveness.

Macgregor’s description of each of the foregoing battles is gripping and fast paced. It is unfortunate that the maps that accompany his prose often do not include the towns, and at times the rivers, to which he refers, so the reader loses track of the tactical ebb and flow of battle. Macgregor’s editors also should have ensured a consistent approach to the spelling of towns and other locales whose names are central to the battles. For example, at times the book simply misspells

names, as in Chongming Island (which Macgregor spells *Changming*). Macgregor also is not consistent in his use of romanized forms of the place-names he cites: Chinese place-names employ pinyin, the system introduced by the Communists in 1949, although he is writing about battles that took place when the Wade-Giles system was still in use. On the other hand, he mentions Cheju-do Island, spelled as it was in 1937; the current Korean spelling is Jeju.

One might quibble with other elements of Macgregor's history. He writes of Field Marshal French's argument with Lord Kitchener in Paris without explaining when French got there, since French last had been mentioned in the context of the battle of Le Cateau. At one point Macgregor erroneously calls Shanghai the capital of Nationalist China. He does not mention that Germany was able to provision the Wehrmacht with considerable matériel thanks to Jewish, Polish, and other slave labor. Nor does he mention the diversion of resources from Wehrmacht fighting power owing to Hitler's mad preoccupation with the extermination of Jews, even as the fortunes of war turned against his forces. And Macgregor does not note that the fact that Sadat ordered his forces to cross the canal on Yom Kippur, when Israelis were preoccupied with the holiest day on their religious calendar, certainly contributed to the Egyptians achieving strategic and operational surprise.

All told, however, Macgregor has written another powerful critique of the American way of planning and developing strategy for war. His lesson for policy makers and strategists alike is that "whenever new military concepts and technologies appear, the complex interaction of national culture, bureaucratic interests, and economic power does not automatically work to support them. . . . [W]hen conditions change and the margin of victory suddenly narrows, frailties and vulnerabilities concealed from view inside the armed forces . . . suddenly produce catastrophic failure." He asserts that Washington needs to focus on its long-standing and still primary strategic concern, namely, prevention of a hostile power from dominating the Eurasian lands. He argues that the American military must increase its force levels, notably those of the Army. And he advocates for the creation of what he terms a "national defense staff" (in other words, a general staff) "to guide the application of American military power," encompassing integrated capabilities across service lines.

Not everyone will agree with Macgregor's prescriptions. Often he has been a lonely voice in the wilderness. Yet as America transitions to a new administration, it would do well at a minimum to pay close attention to what Macgregor has to say. Because one thing is certain: America's next war certainly will not be like those it is fighting today, and those who make the all-too-frequent error of fighting tomorrow's war with today's assumptions and experience surely will regret doing so, as Macgregor has demonstrated so ably yet again in his latest volume.

ECONOMICS AS A SOURCE OF NATIONAL POWER

John A. Cloud

War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft, by Robert D. Blackwill and Jennifer Harris. Cambridge, MA: Belknap of Harvard Univ. Press, 2016. 384 pages. \$29.95.

In *War by Other Means*, Robert Blackwill and Jennifer Harris are striving to put the *e* (for *economics*) back into the playbook of American power. They argue that the “military-heavy approach” the United States has taken over the past fifteen years is inappropriate to respond to the challenges we face today, which they see coming not from terrorism but from what they call “geoeconomics.” In fact, Blackwill and Harris argue that the “current tools of U.S. statecraft, dominated by traditional political-military might, are uniquely unsuited” (p. 7). For example, on an issue on which I have written previously,* they note that there has been “no comparable discussion in Washington of returning Ukraine to economic viability as a way to check . . . Putin” (p. 2). They appear to agree with many of our military leaders, who argue that we need to use all our tools of national power (usually described as DIME, for *diplomacy, information, military, and economics*) to meet future challenges.

Blackwill and Harris focus on the use of economic power to achieve geopolitical, not economic, objectives. This is what they term “geoeconomics.” The book is replete with examples of not only how the United States used to use geoeconomics but how our so-called near-peer competitors, particularly China and Russia, are using it today as an asymmetric method to accomplish their foreign policy objectives. The authors argue that the United States has neglected this area since Vietnam. While they see it as essential that we become more skilled in the use of geoeconomics, they acknowledge that we will not necessarily be as nimble as China and Russia, given the greater control the Chinese and Russian regimes have over their respective economies.

In taking this position, the authors demonstrate the courage to be out of step within the current political debate. While both parties’ nominees are critical of trade deals and of using economics for noneconomic ends, Blackwill and Harris strongly promote exactly that. For example, they argue for the ratification of the

Ambassador John A. Cloud (Ret.) is a professor of national security affairs at the Naval War College. During his diplomatic career, he served as U.S. ambassador to Lithuania and as senior director of international economics on the National Security Council staff (2001–2003).

*John A. Cloud, “Ukraine’s Next Big Battleground,” *The National Interest*, 4 June 2015, nationalinterest.org/.

Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the successful conclusion of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP).

In another area in which the authors defy conventional wisdom, Blackwill and Harris press for the United States to move significant (but unspecified) budgetary funds from the U.S. military to the State Department and other agencies involved in geoeconomics. At a time when the political class is arguing for more money for the military, they argue that “the United States too often reaches for the gun instead of the purse in its international conduct.” They further ask, “[W]hat, in power-projection terms, is the United States getting for all of this military spending?” (p. 221).

Blackwill and Harris are up-front in claiming that China is “America’s most important foreign policy challenge” (p. 179). They see China as the “leading practitioner of geoeconomics” (p. 11). Their chapter “Geoeconomics in Chinese Foreign Policy” is particularly compelling as it outlines five different uses of geo-economic tools by China to advance its interests in Taiwan, North Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia and in its relationships with Pakistan and India. They note that “nations do not fear China’s military might; they fear its ability to give or withhold trade and investments” (p. 94).

The authors spend considerable time discussing the energy revolution and the effects of high commodity prices. It is unclear to me how the recent decline of both energy and commodity prices affects their argument. However, I would agree that the use of innovative ways to recover petroleum products—if a sufficient equilibrium price can be found—should have profound implications for the potential for the United States to use geoeconomics.

Blackwill and Harris argue that the United States no longer uses geoeconomics. On the basis of my experience, I disagree. If that were the case, most of the George W. Bush trade negotiations would not have happened. The authors do acknowledge that the trade agreements with Bahrain, Kuwait, and Morocco had counterterrorism goals (p. 175). I would argue that all these agreements had geopolitical as well as economic goals. In fact, it was not until the agreement with South Korea that we had an agreement with significant economic purpose, even though this agreement had important geopolitical goals as well.

Blackwill and Harris also argue that the TPP “was conceived primarily as an economic project” (p. 181). I again disagree. Where I would agree with the authors is that the geoeconomic aspects of these agreements are prominent at their conception and at the end; they are of lesser import in the middle. While the National Security Council system and staff were deeply involved in picking the countries and launching the negotiations, once launched the negotiations quickly devolved to being run by the responsible departments, and the organizational behavior of these departments took over. At that point, the agenda of the

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce, their respective congressional committees, and USTR's congressionally mandated advisory committees took precedence over our geopolitical goals. This is, in part, because of the narrow congressional majorities that have supported these agreements in the recent past. Our trade negotiators cannot afford to alienate any interest group that could tip the scales against an agreement. It was only in the endgame that the geopolitical aspects became prominent again.

Another example would be U.S. assistance to eastern Central Europe during the administration of George H. W. Bush—an issue in which Ambassador Blackwill was deeply involved. The United States used economic tools to help integrate these countries into the West and, indirectly, into the European Community. It was only later that the military and NATO became our major tool of integration.

The authors, in their review of the history of U.S. use of geoeconomics, date its decline to Vietnam. I would argue that it was Congress's creation of the Special Trade Representative in the Trade Act of 1962 that precipitated this decline. At that time, Congress removed the trade negotiating lead from the State Department—an agency with geopolitical responsibilities—and put it in the White House. This was done, according to Blackwill and Harris, because “congressional leaders complained that the State Department neither understood nor represented U.S. economic interests” (p. 169).

Blackwill and Harris attribute this change not to Congress but to economic insecurity and to U.S. policy makers who “began to see economics as its own distinctive realm, to be protected from the whims of statecraft” (p. 153). The authors argue that U.S. economists have succeeded in separating economic policy from national security policy (p. 6). I suspect that this statement surprises no one more than U.S. economists. Yes, U.S. economists argue for wise economic policies. They argue against geoeconomic measures that could undermine the fundamental strength of the U.S. economy. As we learned during the Clinton administration, they are mindful of the import of bond traders and others who influence the economy. But in my experience, economists do not see economic policy as a distinct area in which national security goals have no legitimacy. I frequently found that when policy makers were averse to using economic tools it was because those tools were either bureaucratically difficult or their implementation, timing, and effect were believed to be less certain than those of other means.

Robert Blackwill and Jennifer Harris have written a timely and compelling book that provides an important contrary perspective for U.S. national security policy making. It will be fascinating to watch whether and how these ideas get incorporated into the next administration's national security policy.