

REVISITING THE GULF WAR: A REVIEW ESSAY

By HARRY G. SUMMERS, JR.

Critical analysis, like theory, observed Carl von Clausewitz in *Von Kriege (On War)*, can become a guide to anyone wanting to learn about war from books. While not a recipe for action, "it is meant to educate the mind of a future commander, or, more accurately, to guide him in his self-education." Critical analysis is "the application of theoretical truths to actual events," he warned. To be effective "the language of criticism should have the same character as thinking must have in wars; otherwise it loses its practical value and [loses] contact with its subject."

But as in Clausewitz's day, that is often not the case. Readers of much of what passes for critical thinking today from academe and think-tanks will recognize Clausewitz's complaint that "our theoretical and critical literature, instead of giving plain truths, straightforward arguments in which the author at least always knows what he is saying and the reader what he is reading, is crammed with jargon, ending at obscure crossroads where the author loses his readers."

"Sometimes," he adds, "these books are even worse: they are hollow shells. The author himself no longer knows just what he is thinking and soothes himself with obscure ideas which would not satisfy him if expressed in plain speech. . . . The light of day usually reveals them to be mere trash, with which the author intends to show off his learning."

Memoirs

"In the art of war," according to Clausewitz, "experience counts more

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The Commanders
by Bob Woodward
New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991.
398 pp. \$24.95.
[ISBN 0 671 41367 8]

It Doesn't Take A Hero
by H. Norman Schwarzkopf,
with Pete Petre
New York: Linda Grey/Bantam, 1993.
530 pp. \$30.00.
[ISBN 0 385 42584 8]

Desert Victory:
The War For Kuwait
by Norman Friedman
Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1991.
435 pp. \$24.95.
[ISBN 1 55750 254 4]

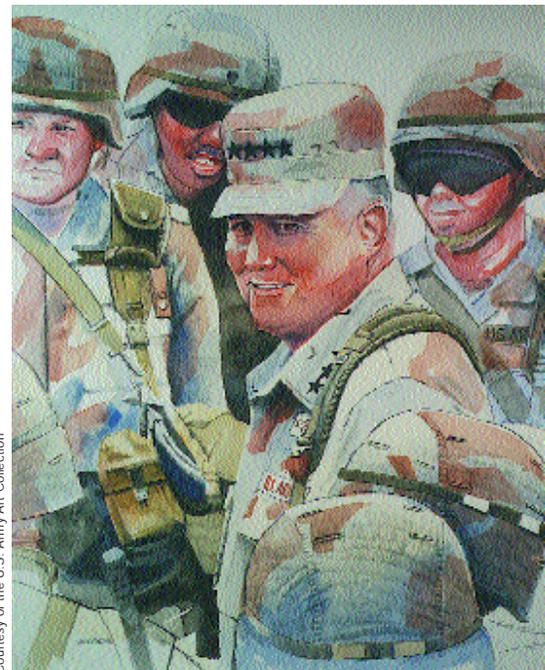
Storm Over Iraq:
Air Power and the Gulf War
by Richard P. Hallion
Washington: Smithsonian Institution
Press, 1992. 383 pp. \$24.95.
[ISBN 1 56098 190 3]

Moving Mountains:
Lessons in Leadership and
Logistics from the Gulf War
by William G. Pagonis
and Jeffrey L. Cruikshank
Boston: Harvard Business School Press,
1992. 248 pp. \$24.95.
[ISBN 0 87584 360 3]

Storm Command:
A Personal Account
of the Gulf War
by Peter de la Billière
London: HarperCollins, 1992.
248 pp. £18.00.
[ISBN 0 00 255138 1]

She Went To War:
The Rhonda Cornum Story
by Rhonda Cornum,
with Peter Copeland
Novato, California: Presidio Press, 1992.
203 pp. \$19.95.
[ISBN 0 89141 463 0]

Hotel Warriors:
Covering the Gulf War
by John J. Fialka
Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center
Press, 1992. 78 pp. \$9.75.
[ISBN 0 943875 40 4]



Courtesy of the U.S. Army Art Collection

"The Man of the Year (The Bear)."
Portrait by SFC Peter G. Varisano, USA.

than any abstract truth." When it comes to critical analysis "if the critic wishes to distribute praise or blame, he must certainly try to put himself exactly in the position of the commander; in other words, he must assemble everything the commander knew and all the motives that affected his decision."

"[A] situation giving rise to an event can never look the same to the analyst as it did to the participant," Clausewitz noted. "These can only be discovered from the memoirs of the commanders, or from people very close to them."

Fortunately for anyone exploring the theoretical truths of the Gulf War, such works are at hand. Five of the eight books reviewed here are from commanders or participants, and the balance from "people very close to them." Their accounts of actual events provide a basis for examining such theoretical truths as unity of command, Total Force, joint and combined warfare, women on the battlefield, and the state of media-military relations.

Bob Woodward's *The Commanders* provides insights into the effects of the Goldwater-Nichols Depart-

ment of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 on unity of command, especially as it impacted on the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He also tells of the President's decision to mobilize the Reserve and seek congressional approval for the war. In *It Doesn't Take a Hero* the impact of the Goldwater-Nichols reforms on the Commander in Chief of U.S. Central Command (CINCCENT) in the Gulf is recounted by the CINC himself. And General Schwarzkopf illuminates another truth, the criticality of joint operations. Richard Hallion in *Storm Over Iraq* argues the case for airpower. Norman Friedman's *Desert Victory* heralds Navy and Marine Corps contributions to the war. In *Moving Mountains* General Gus Pagonis details not only the importance of logistics, but the enormous contribution of the Reserve components as well.

Combined operations is a focus of Schwarzkopf's book as he discusses coalition war both in terms of allied forces under his direct command and through cooperation with the Arab coalition commander. That story is reinforced by the account of the British commander, General Sir Peter de la Billière, in *Storm Command: A Personal Account of the Gulf War*.

Another major truth to emerge from the Gulf War was the role of women in combat. Major Rhonda Cornum's *She Went to War* debunks much of the myth about women's unique battlefield vulnerability in relating her experiences as a prisoner. Finally, with *Hotel Warriors*, John Fialka of *The Wall Street Journal* provides a scathing indictment of the military and the media as both failed to live up to the theoretical truth of the importance of keeping the American people informed.

Unity of Command

One of the key principles of war is unity of command. It has been argued that the violation of this principle alone was a major factor in the loss of the Vietnam War. In the wake of that conflict Congress reformed the military chain of command, primarily through the Goldwater-Nichols Act which gave increased power to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the principal mili-

tary advisor to the President and increased the authority of the CINCs of the unified commands.

How did Goldwater-Nichols work in practice? From the senior editor of *The Washington Post* comes an unparalleled inside look at decisionmaking in the White House and Pentagon. Invited into the inner circles of the defense community to recount the military's side of the Panama invasion, Woodward, who served in the Pentagon as a naval lieutenant in 1969-70, was literally present at the creation of the Gulf crisis. The result is *The Commanders*, a book which appeared in 1991 a scant three months after the end of the Gulf War. While not without its faults, this account provides an unprecedented look at how the top-level of the chain of command really works. "It is above all a book about how the United States decides to fight its wars before shots are fired," says Woodward. Using the Chairman, General Colin Powell, as protagonist, he focuses on the machinations of the Washington bureaucracy rather than the war itself.

Among the many insights is the role of the President in the decision-making cycle. Unlike Vietnam, there was no dithering about National Command Authorities, a catchphrase for whoever it was, if anybody, who made the critical decisions in Washington. This time there was no doubt about who was in charge. Another departure from the Vietnam War was the Chairman's role. As Goldwater-Nichols had envisioned, he proved to be the principal military advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the President. Conversely, as Woodward reports, while "Powell had used the service chiefs quite effectively . . . in fact they played almost no role in the decisionmaking. Their influence hovered around zero."

Not so for General Schwarzkopf. Goldwater-Nichols gave enormous new powers to the heads of unified commands and Schwarzkopf was quick to use it. As his autobiography recounts, he had total operational command in Southwest Asia and

power over the manpower and material assets of all the services. As General Pagonis, Schwarzkopf's logistics chief, told Senator Sam Nunn, he could not have done his job before Goldwater-Nichols.

But not everything ran smoothly. In an incident that would be repeated in the opening days of the Clinton administration, there was a brouhaha when Woodward's book was published about his revelation that Powell disagreed with President Bush's going to war, preferring instead to allow more time for sanctions to work.

Asked about this apparent "insubordination," Bush said "as far as Colin Powell goes, he owes the Commander in Chief his advice. When the Commander in Chief makes a decision, he salutes and marches to the order of the Commander in Chief.

"And if there is anybody that has the integrity and the honor to tell a President what he feels, it's Colin Powell. . . . Colin couldn't have given me more sound advice along the way and couldn't have been a better team player and couldn't have been a more sterling military commander."

Senator Nunn, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, took a more jaundiced view. In October 1991, at the confirmation hearing for his second term as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Powell was questioned sharply, as *The Washington Post* put it, "for apparently telling more to Woodward than [he] told the committee during the Persian Gulf War." Nevertheless, Senator Nunn, who had been severely criticized for supporting sanctions and opposing Bush's decision to go to war, allowed the confirmation to proceed.

Woodward's description of President Bush at an eleventh-hour meeting to decide whether to get congressional approval before taking the Nation to war is far-reaching in its implications. The decision and vote were both close, but they marked the return to a constitutional warmaking framework that had been abandoned with disastrous consequences over Korea and Vietnam.

Total Force

Closely tied to the decision to seek congressional approval for the war was the mobilization of the Reserves. As Woodward notes, "Certain critical military specialties such as logistics, transportation, medical services, construction, and intelligence were concentrated in the Reserves." This was not accidental. "Frustrated by President Johnson's refusal to fully mobilize the military during Vietnam by calling up the Reserve for any major military action . . . the Reserve call-up was inevitable. Bush now authorized it."

It was a momentous decision, for the war could not have been fought without them. "At the peak of Desert Shield," Schwarzkopf said, his logistics command "had 94 different Reserve and National Guard units under [its] command," some 70-plus percent of its personnel. As important as their physical contribution was to the operation, their psychological impact was even greater. In 1964 when then Army Chief of Staff General Creighton Abrams devised the Total Force concept, he realized that the Reserve was a bridge between the active force and the public. "When you come to war you bring the American people with you," General Ed Burba of U.S. Forces Command remarked to a Reserve audience after the Gulf War.

Joint Operations

Mobilizing the Reserve and the Nation was only one of many ways the Gulf War differed from Vietnam. Another was organizing for combat. "MACV [Military Assistance Command Vietnam] functioned not directly under the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington but through CINCPAC [Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command in Honolulu]," said General William Westmoreland in his memoirs. "What many fail to realize was that not I but [CINCPAC] was the theater commander in the sense that General Eisenhower . . . was the theater commander in World War II." By contrast Schwarzkopf was very much in the Eisenhower mode. Instead of

headquarters being 6,000 miles from the battlefield as it was in Vietnam, Schwarzkopf moved U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) from its peacetime location at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, by late August 1990 where it was to remain for the duration.

While in reality he acted as his own ground force commander, Schwarzkopf had a classic joint chain of command. He exercised command of Army forces through Lieutenant General John Yeosock (commander of 3^d Army), Marines through Lieutenant General Walter Boomer (commander of I Marine Expeditionary Force), air forces through Lieutenant General Charles Horner (commander of 9th Air Force), and naval forces through Vice Admiral Hank Mauz, and his successor, Vice Admiral Stanley Arthur (commander of 7th Fleet).

"Officially, as a commander in chief, I reported to Secretary [of Defense Dick] Cheney," Schwarzkopf wrote, "but Colin Powell was virtually my sole point of contact with the administration. 'It's my job to keep the President and the White House and the Secretary of Defense informed,' Powell would say. 'You worry about your theater and let me worry about Washington.' This arrangement was efficient. . . . But I also found the arrangement unnerving at times, because it kept me in the dark. Often, after White House meetings, Powell would call with questions that made me wonder whether our civilian superiors had grasped military realities." One such case was the decision to begin the ground war, which Schwarzkopf describes as a shouting match with Powell. "You are pressuring me to put aside my military judgment for political expediency," he said at one point. Another was the decision on ending the war. "Frankly my recommendation had been, you know, continue the march," he commented to television interviewer David Frost in March 1991. "I mean we had them in a rout." But after White House and Pentagon remonstrances that he had recommended no such

thing, he apologized for a "poor choice of words."

In an address at the U.S. Naval Academy in May 1991, Schwarzkopf said that Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm were certainly "the classic example of a multiservice operation, a truly joint operation." But *It Doesn't Take a Hero* focuses on the ground attack. The Navy gets short shrift from Schwarzkopf as it did from the media. "During Desert Storm courageous [Navy] air crews . . . literally decimated major-league targets," complained Rear Admiral R.D. Mixon, commander of Battle Force Red Sea. "Navy strike aircraft flew 23 percent of all the combat missions." The problem is that no one knew it. "We tend to avoid the press," Mixon said, an omission his service paid for dearly.

To compensate for that omission we have Norman Friedman's *Desert Victory*. While not a participant in the war, Friedman—a respected defense analyst who writes a monthly column for the Naval Institute's *Proceedings*—is certainly close to those who were there. A chapter in his book entitled "The Seaward Flank" and an appendix on "Naval Forces in the Embargo and the War" detail the Navy's role in the Gulf. Friedman's analysis is not confined to naval operations but covers the air campaign as well. He is particularly critical of the rigidity of the Air Force computer-driven Air Tasking Order (ATO) system. While acknowledging the success of air operations, he believes that it could never be decisive. "Saddam never did decide to surrender to air attack," he concludes, "but the coalition always had to be aware that he had the option of stopping the attack before its real objective (the elimination of Iraq as a regional threat) had been made." When it appeared Saddam Hussein might do just that with his overtures to the Soviet Union for a "peace plan" in February 1991, the decision was made to launch the ground attack.

In *Storm Over Iraq*, another respected analyst, Richard Hallion, takes a different point of view. The author of a number of books on the subject, Hallion believes airpower was decisive in the Gulf. "Simply (if

boldly) stated," he avers, "airpower won the Gulf War." One may disagree with his conclusions, but it is impossible not to be impressed with the scope of his analysis, which traces the impact of airpower from its beginnings. His arguments were deemed so persuasive that selected portions of his book were excerpted by the Air Force and published as part of "Reaching Globally, Reaching Powerfully: The USAF in the Gulf War," that service's "quick look" at what the air war had accomplished. Quoting a comment by Defense Secretary Cheney approvingly, that the Iraqis "didn't fight back because the air war turned out to be absolutely devastating," Hallion concludes that "airpower can hold territory by denying an enemy the ability to seize it and by denying an enemy the use of its forces. And it can seize territory by controlling access to that territory and movement across it. It did both in the Gulf War."

While the debate continues over whether airpower alone can be decisive, there is no argument with Lieutenant General William (Gus) Pagonis's account of the decisive role logistics played during the Gulf War in *Moving Mountains*. A total of 122 million meals were served, 1.3 billion gallons of fuel pumped, 52 million miles driven, 32,000 tons of mail delivered, 730,000 people processed through aerial ports—just some of the statistics from the logistics of the war. Making it all possible was Gus Pagonis, Schwarzkopf's Deputy Commander for Logistics responsible for "fuel, water, food, vehicles, ammunition, all classes of supply (except equipment spare parts) for the Marine Corps, Air Force, and the Army." From a 20-man team, Pagonis's force grew to some 88,000 individuals, including 39,925 soldiers. "I owe much of the success of my command to the talents of our flexible and well-trained Reserve component (National Guard and Reserve) units," he writes. "At the height of the Gulf conflict, the 22^d Support Command drew a full 70-plus percent of its personnel from Reserve units; and we're lucky we were able to do so." As director of host-nation support, Pagonis built

REFUSING TO REFIGHT THE LAST WAR

... America's hands were no longer tied. Unlike North Korea's Kim Il Sung and North Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh, Saddam Hussein was not shielded by the skirts of China and the Soviet Union. American military strategy had come full circle, and in many important respects was back to World War II again. Like Adolph Hitler, to whom he has been compared, Saddam Hussein was to feel the full fury of America's conventional military might.

Gradualism and stalemate were out the window. "Prior to ordering our forces into battle," said President Bush, "I instructed our military commanders to take every necessary step to prevail as quickly as possible and with the greatest degree of protection possible for American and allied servicemen and women.

"No President can easily commit our sons and daughters to war," he concluded. "They are the Nation's finest. Ours is a volunteer force—magnificently trained, highly motivated. The troops know why they're there."

And that was more than just rhetoric. Because of the renaissance in military thinking in the 1970s and 1980s, our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and coast guardsmen were the best-trained and best-prepared military force that the United States had ever committed to action.

From *On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*
by Harry B. Summers, Jr.
New York: Dell Publishing, 1992.
[ISBN 0 440 21194 8]

an effective in-country supply base for food, water, and ground transport. "Conducting business with the Saudis and other Middle Eastern nationals was an ongoing educational experience," he says, in what is a masterpiece of understatement.

Combined Operations

Pagonis was not the only one dealing with foreign nationals. Operation Desert Storm not only represented a Total Force operation—with both active and Reserve components of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard—and a joint operation involving a team effort by all the services—but it was also a combined operation involving military contingents from some forty allied nations. Crucial to prosecuting the war was the cooperation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

"Without Saudi Arabia—without its harbors and airfields, military bases, housing, transportation systems, money, fuel, and friendly environment—the war would have been far more difficult and dangerous to wage, if it could have been waged at all," said Schwarzkopf's Saudi counterpart, Lieutenant General Prince Khalid Bin Sultan al-Saud. The son of the Saudi Minister of Defense, Khalid was educated at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst; attended the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base; and holds a master's degree from Auburn University. While Schwarzkopf exercised unity of command as sole commander of all U.S. forces, such an arrangement was not politically feasible for control of combined forces. Instead there was a cooperative, dual command: Schwarzkopf commanded the American, British, and French forces, and Khalid commanded the forces of Saudi Arabia, Gulf states, Egypt, Syria, and the other coalition partners. "Schwarzkopf and I had a successful and friendly partnership," Khalid noted, "and I would like to think we both acquitted ourselves well." Unfortunately this spirit did not survive the publication of Schwarzkopf's book. "It is not unusual after a war for generals to magnify their own achievements and belittle those of others,"

Khalid wrote. "I regret to say that . . . my comrade in arms during the Persian Gulf War has succumbed to this temptation . . . he gives himself all the credit for the victory over Iraq while running down just about everybody else."

More forgiving is *Storm Command: A Personal History of the Gulf War* by General Sir Peter de la Billière, commander of British forces in the Gulf. An Arabist with 15 years experience in the Middle East, Sir Peter, Britain's most decorated serving soldier, spent most of his career in the Special Air Service (SAS), the British army's premier special operations unit. Accustomed to avoiding the limelight, de la Billière nonetheless had a major impact on the war. For one thing, he was instrumental in increasing British ground contributions to a full division and then gaining his 1st Armoured Division an independent battlefield mission. For another, his SAS forces operating behind enemy lines drove the SCUDs out of range of Israel. Reportedly these efforts led the way to increased use of U.S. Special Operations Forces in covert operations on the battlefield.

Unfortunately, there has been little written—in English at least—on the contributions of the French 6th Light Armored Division and the Saudi, Egyptian, and Syrian divisions. Friedman does discuss, however, the contributions of allied navies. Likewise, Hallion has a very moving section on allied participation in the bombing campaign where eight Tornado aircraft were lost, including six from the Royal Air Force, one from the Saudi air force, and one from the Italian air force.

Women on the Battlefield

Another theoretical truth of the Gulf War was the affirmation of the role of women on the battlefield. Women had served in past wars, mostly as nurses or clerical personnel, but for the first time they served in large numbers in combat support and combat service support units. Some 41,000 women served in the Gulf. There were 27,000 in the active force, but the highest proportion—

13 percent of the total—were Reservists, including 21.3 percent of the Reserve officers. As Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said on March 2, 1991, "Women have made a major contribution to this effort. We could not have won without them." And Schwarzkopf was equally complimentary. "Discussion with the congressional delegation led by Congressman Ford," reads his war diary for March 16, 1991. "One issue was women in the military—how did they do? The CINC said 'Great!'" One major fear was the public reaction to women coming home in body bags—though some 200 military nurses were killed in World War II and eight in Vietnam—and what would happen if a woman was taken prisoner, forgetting that during World War II 79 Army and Navy nurses were held as POWs by the Japanese.

She Went to War is Army Major Rhonda Cornum's account of her captivity at the hands of the Iraqis. A flight surgeon and helicopter pilot, she was shot down while on a search-and-rescue mission over southern Iraq. Her matter-of-fact tale of what she went through, and her subsequent revelation that she had been sexually molested—what she called "an occupational hazard of going to war"—does much to refute the idea that women are somehow peculiarly vulnerable in battle and unable to withstand the rigors of combat. Be that as it may, while the argument continues over assigning women to direct combat, there can no longer be any doubt over women's legitimate role on the battlefield. As Cornum says, "The qualities that are most important in all military jobs—things like integrity, moral courage, and determination—have nothing to do with gender."

The Media

The final theoretical truth is that, like it or not, the news media are an essential part of the American way of war. In November 1984, in a discussion of the necessary preconditions for going to war, then Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger said that there must be some reasonable assurance of public and congress-

sional support. But how do you get that support? "A Gallup public opinion poll in early 1991 showed 85 percent of the public had a high level of confidence in the military," noted Rear Admiral Brent Baker, the Navy's Chief of Information. "Where did the public get its perception of the military's professionalism? They got it from news media reports."

After the Gulf War there was much whining and sniveling from the media, much of it antiwar diatribes cloaked in First Amendment pieties. But there has been legitimate criticism as well, and the military ignores it at its peril. Among such criticisms is *Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War* by John J. Fialka, the war correspondent of *The Wall Street Journal*. Finding fault with both the media and the military, he argues that the present system serves neither journalists nor soldiers. "The basic point that John Fialka makes," says the Library of Congress's Peter Braestrup, "is that the Nation and the Armed Services are best served . . . by competent firsthand reporting of military performance, good or bad."

Some argue that it is too soon to make a critical analysis of the Gulf War. Others argue that it was an anomaly with no lessons to proffer. But such arguments miss the point. "The military student does not seek to learn from history the minutiae of method and technique," said then Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur in 1935. "In every age these are decisively influenced by the characteristics of weapons currently available and the means at hand for maneuvering, supplying, and controlling combat forces.

"But research does bring to light those fundamental principles, and their combinations and applications, which in the past have been productive of success. These principles know no limitation of time. Consequently the Army extends its analytical interest to the dust-buried accounts of war long past as well as those still reeking with the scent of battle." JFQ

THE MILITARY COST OF DISCRIMINATION

A Review Essay by ALAN L. GROPMAN

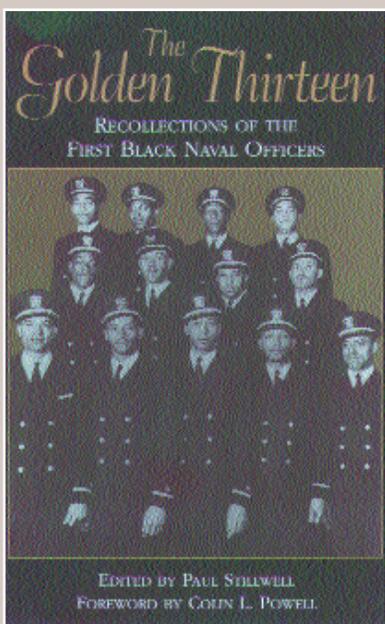
The Golden Thirteen:
Recollections of the
First Black Naval Officers
edited by Paul Stillwell,

foreword by Colin L. Powell

Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1993.

304 pp. \$21.95.

[ISBN 1 55750 779 1]



The Navy commissioned its first black officers—twelve ensigns and one warrant officer—in April 1944, thereby ending symbolically and painfully 146 years of racial discrimination. The Golden Thirteen is an oral history recounting the wartime experiences of eight surviving members of that first cohort of black naval officers. Their

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reminiscences are complemented by interviews with white officers who both trained and commanded the Golden Thirteen during World War II. This book is a clear reminder of a long and painful chapter in U.S. military history in which the combat potential of black soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen was lost to the Armed Forces.

Recruiting the Thirteen

The Golden Thirteen was a successful group of enlisted men who trained for ninety days in early 1944 at Great Lakes Naval Training Station to provide a token complement of commissioned blacks. The group was made up of solid performers, better educated than many white officers of the period. Several were exceptionally well qualified. Samuel Barnes, for example, was a college graduate and athlete who later earned a doctorate; Frank E. Sublett had completed three years of college and gained a national reputation as a football player; Graham E. Martin, who had excelled both academically and athletically at Indiana University, starred on the Great Lakes football team which ranked among the best in the country; and William S. White had been graduated from the University of Chicago Law School and served as an assistant U.S. Attorney before his induction into the Navy. But because they were black, no assignments other than menial jobs were open to White and other members of the Golden Thirteen when they enlisted. In fact, if they joined the Navy on December 7, 1941, their only choice of assignment would have been mess steward.

The Navy had stopped enlisting blacks in 1919, by which time Afro-American sailors were relegated to duties as stewards and cooks. In 1932 the Navy opened up enlistment once again, but only to those blacks who agreed to wait on tables or work in the kitchen. But assigning blacks to servile duties had not always been the Navy's practice. From the days of John Paul Jones to the Civil War, and as recently as the Spanish American War (in which a black sailor earned the Medal of Honor), blacks had

served in combat. In fact, until the closing years of the last century blacks made up a higher percentage of the naval combat force than their share of the national population. Yet by 1932, although they made up over 10 percent of the U.S. population, blacks had fallen to less than 1 percent of the Navy's enlisted force. (By the end of World War II black sailors made up about 5.5 percent of the Navy.) In other words, the pervasive racism of the early 20th century influenced attitudes in the Navy to the extent that the service was denied the contributions of qualified warriors solely on the basis of their race. During the 18th and 19th centuries, when slavery had been legal and racism common, the Navy had overcome prejudice to employ blacks profitably and in integrated fashion on warships. But by the early 20th century, race rigidity had become so severe that the Navy denied itself fighters and humiliated tens of thousands of blacks.

The Golden Thirteen, proud of being commissioned, suffered their share of indignities. The commander at Great Lakes, for instance, ordered the new ensigns not to enter the officers' club. The Bureau of Naval Personnel, moreover, had no plan for using these unique officers, so many of the thirteen served in billets beneath the level of white officers. For example, two went to the West Coast to jointly command a yard oiler, a job previously held by a single enlisted man.

Had it not been for President Franklin Roosevelt the Navy would have not permitted blacks to serve outside the mess, but because of the Commander in Chief's pressure, the Navy permitted blacks to compete for general service positions after June 1942, though duty was still limited to shore installations and small local-defense craft. In the fleet blacks could serve only in messes. The Navy, moreover, barred any serving messman from transferring from that specialty to the general service, claiming that such transfers might cause a shortage of servants. Roosevelt also forced the Navy to open its naval commissioning program known as V-12 to blacks on a

nondiscriminatory basis, but this program was not advertized widely and many blacks never got the word.

Assistant Navy Secretary Adlai Stevenson convinced Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox that the service would be less subject to criticism by the black press and leadership if a dozen blacks could complete an abbreviated officer training course before the first black V-12 people were graduated. The Golden Thirteen thus sprang from Stevenson's intervention. Throughout the war the Navy commissioned only 60 blacks compared with more than a hundred thousand whites.

Elsewhere in the Department of the Navy, the Marine Corps was infected by the same racial poison. Before World War II the Marines had accepted no blacks. In April 1941, as his service rapidly expanded, the Commandant of the Marine Corps went on the record as follows: "If it were a question of having a Marine Corps of 5,000 whites or 250,000 Negroes, I would rather have the whites." While many blacks were qualified for duty in the infantry or combat aviation, segregation prevented them from being warriors. The Marines actually instructed medical examiners to simply disqualify black applicants during enlistment physical exams (the Army Air Force acted similarly). The Marine Corps leadership denied blacks combat positions during and even after World War II, but today blacks make up more than 20 percent of Marine riflemen.

Blacks in the Army

The Navy and the Marine Corps were not the only services that refused to assign blacks to combat during the war. Despite a heritage of black service in the Civil War, Indian campaigns, and Spanish American War, the Army reacted similarly. In the interwar years fewer than 2 percent of the Army was black, and those few black soldiers were relegated to support duties.

Although the Army studied ways to employ more blacks, bigotry blocked the beginning of actual reform. During World War I blacks constituted a much smaller percent-

age of the Army's combat force than it did of the population, thus the fighting and dying burden disproportionately fell upon whites. The General Staff directed the Army War College to study the underuse of blacks in combat, and it did on numerous occasions. But each time the question was examined racist myths and stereotyping interfered with the ability of the War College's students and faculty to make useful recommendations. The class of 1925, for example, asserted its racist findings in a report that stated blacks had smaller craniums than whites, and that the black brain weighed 20 percent less. The authors also concluded that blacks were instinctively cowardly. Despite these blatantly false conclusions, the students and faculty argued that blacks ought to serve in combat for manpower considerations, though always under white officers and within segregated units because social inequality made

The Golden Thirteen were not activists. None of them had sought to make history. The Navy's leaders had simply decided that it was past time to bring down the barriers to opportunity in the fleet; and as a consequence, these thirteen sailors were plucked out of their separate lives to learn the ways of officership.

Yet from the very beginning they understood, almost intuitively, that history had dealt them a stern obligation. They realized that in their hands rested the chance to help open the blind moral eye that America had turned on the question of race.

And they recognized that on their shoulders would climb generations of men and women of America's future military, including a skinny seven-year-old kid in the Bronx named Colin Powell.

*From the foreword to
The Golden Thirteen
by Colin L. Powell*

"close association of whites and blacks in military organizations inimicable to harmony and efficiency." Nine subsequent War College reports presented such pseudoscientific generalizations which cost the Army full use of black soldiers. Blacks comprise nearly 30 percent of the Army today, even higher percentages in the combat arms, whereas in 1940 black soldiers constituted only 1.5 percent of the total enlisted force, with none being truly combat soldiers.

The war expanded the number of blacks in the Army exponentially. Some did see combat in segregated units and, by 1945, a few thousand were actually fighting beside whites in essentially integrated units. The Army's racial experience was unhappy, however, because its leaders, including those in the Army Air Corps, both civilian and military, remained deeply prejudiced

Tuskegee Airmen Go to War

In 1940 the Army Air Corps had no blacks serving in any capacity and wanted to retain that status quo. But as in the case of the Navy the President forced the War Department to change its policy. Consequently, in 1941, the Army was forced to establish a training base for black aviators, and it did so near Tuskegee, Alabama. The graduates of Tuskegee Army Air Field, still known as "Tuskegee airmen," were formed into the 332^d Fighter Group and the 477th Medium Bombardment Group.

The 332^d got into action and built a fine record flying from bases in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy. The group flew about 1,500 missions during the war, more than 15,000 sorties in all, shot down more than 100 enemy aircraft in air-to-air combat, destroyed more than 150 others on the ground, and sank a destroyer with machine gun fire (a unique achievement). Most significant of all, the 332^d never lost an escorted bomber to enemy fighters in 200 escort missions. Tuskegee airmen flew over some of the most heavily defended enemy targets, among them the Ploesti oil fields in Romania and Berlin itself. The success of the 332^d in escort missions was also unique.

No other unit with a similar number of missions had comparable success.

The triumph of the 332^d, however, while publicized in the black press, was not advertised widely by the Army; so during the balance of the war the achievements of the Tuskegee airmen did not bring about increased opportunities for blacks. In fact, the unit remained segregated, its airmen often treated badly and frequently humiliated by prejudiced leaders. Thus deprived of their rightful due as heroic aviators the men of the 332^d could not stand as role models for recruitment. By the end of the war blacks still formed only about .5 percent of the pilot force.

Perhaps the most egregious example of the damage done to the war effort by bigotry—and an instance of how prejudice can drive officers who were otherwise professional to act against the national interest—was the provoked mutiny of officers in the 477th Medium Bombardment Group. The 477th was a four-squadron B-25 unit formed in January 1944 at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan. It was initially earmarked for the European theater, later for the Pacific. However, the group commander, Colonel Robert E. Selway, instigated an uprising that destroyed unit morale, thereby dashing the group's chances for getting into combat.

Selway selected only whites to staff his headquarters and command the flying squadrons. All the other aviators as well as the mechanics and support specialists were blacks. In the 477th, the policy was that no black could command a white despite the fact that many black veterans of the 332^d had flown numerous combat missions and had volunteered for more combat with the 477th. None of the white officers had combat experience.

Selway, moreover, himself refused to associate with blacks by visiting the officers' club. Because of his example the white squadron commanders did likewise. Fearing a negative reaction from nearby Detroit with its large black population, Selway moved the 477th south to an inadequate airfield. He anticipated that the relocation would offer him

better control over his troops, although in fact they had caused no trouble to that point. The move set back the training schedule, and since the airfield was poor, he had to relocate again in March 1945 to catch up on training.

At the new base, Freeman Field in southern Indiana, he constructed one officers' club for his white cadre and another for blacks. The action violated Army regulations and drove the black aviators of the 477th to exercise their rights. When they informed Selway of their intention to enter any club he opened, he threatened them with prosecution, issued an order specifying by name who could enter the white club, and finally arrested (and manacled) 61 black aviators who disobeyed his regulation. These men were shipped out, and his outfit, supposedly on its way to war, stood appreciably short of aircrews. He then compounded the injustice by ordering the remaining officers to certify by signature that he was not discriminating against blacks on the basis of race. All the whites complied and, because it was a direct order in time of war, about 300 black officers also signed, but 101 blacks refused even under threat of arrest and worse. Selway arrested these men and shipped them off as well, leaving his outfit short of 162 pilots, navigators, and navigator-bombardiers. The 477th was dead.

In his actions, Selway was supported by superiors who, in turn, were backed by general officers in the Pentagon, including the Deputy Commanding General of the Air Corps. Thus in a time of war, when the country was counting on every asset, bigotry not only drove senior officers to violate their oaths, but also to deprive the Nation of the combat services of skilled and dedicated aviators.

Racial integration and the full utilization of human resources based upon ability rather than race came to all the services within six years of World War II, sooner in the cases of both the Navy and the newly established Air Force, evidence that the costly discrimination of the war years could have been abandoned. Read *The Golden Thirteen* and learn

of the trials and triumphs of a fine group of Americans, and let this latest entry in the record of black military history serve as a painful reminder for all who wear the uniform that intolerance is destructive. In this current era of constrained resources, the defense establishment cannot afford to waste any human asset. JFQ

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE INTERWAR YEARS

A Book Review by BRIAN R. SULLIVAN

The Roots of Blitzkrieg:
Hans von Seeckt and
German Military Reform
by James S. Corum

Lawrence, Kansas: University of
Kansas, 1992. 274 pp. \$29.95
[ISBN 0 7006 05 41 X]

Those who find themselves dismayed by impending cuts in the Armed Forces can take considerable heart from a new study of the German army between 1918 and 1933. James Corum, who teaches in the School of Advanced Airpower Studies at the Air Command and Staff College, has written an engrossing history of the *Reichswehr* that serves as an antidote to worries over declining force structures.

The Versailles Treaty compelled the Weimar Republic to reduce the strength of the German army to 100,000 men. (With a German population of 63 million in 1925, this was proportionate to a U.S. Army of 400,000 today.) Furthermore, the Allies forbade the *Reichswehr* to possess aircraft, armor, antiaircraft guns, medium and heavy artillery, and poi-

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son gas, as well as limiting it to 1,926 machine guns and 252 mortars. The force structure was set at seven understrength light divisions and three brigade-size cavalry divisions. The establishment of a General Staff was outlawed. But despite these restrictions, the author demonstrates that the German army soon was “the best-led, best-trained, and arguably the most modern army in the world.” In fact, Corum observes, this “small, lightly armed *Reichswehr* became the best trained army . . . in carrying out large-scale operations.”

The principal credit for this extraordinary achievement goes to General Hans von Seeckt, who headed the German army from 1919 to 1926. While Seeckt employed a number of methods, he emphasized a scrupulous system for selecting both officers and enlisted men plus a demanding regimen of formal education and an uncompromisingly realistic approach to field training. Despite the care with which they were chosen and the size of the manpower pool (in the late 1920s there were 15 applicants for each enlisted slot and fewer than 200 officer candidate positions each year), the *Reichswehr* ruthlessly weeded out those who

failed to meet its iron standards. Officer candidates were required to serve 18 months in the enlisted ranks before undergoing 30 months of pre-commissioning training. And each year scores of candidates were found lacking and dismissed.

Recruits were subjected to crushing pressure while doing 6 months of infantry training, followed by equally rigorous specialized branch training. Enlisted men were issued tactical handbooks and compelled to study them with the same diligence as medical or law students. Promotion even to the rank of lance corporal required demonstrated leadership capabilities and the successful completion of extremely demanding written and oral examinations.

The Versailles Treaty permitted Germany to have an officer corps of only 4,000 but placed no limit on the number of NCOs. Taking full advantage of this loophole, Seeckt eventually created 19,000 senior NCOs, while restricting the total number of field grade and general officers to 920. He also limited the size of division staffs to 32 officers, a level the *Wehrmacht* retained. Senior NCOs commanded platoons, received training to lead companies or

batteries, and were expected to employ combined arms in battle. The *Reichswehr* did not use majors as office managers, nor staff sergeants to make coffee. But it was able to expand from 100,000 in January 1933 to 3.7 million in September 1939, then smash its enemies and overrun Poland, Scandinavia, and Western Europe in ten months.

The *Reichswehr* also laid the foundation for the later victories of the *Wehrmacht* on brilliant tactical and operational doctrine, modern and extremely efficient weapons and equipment, and the development of mechanized and air-ground warfare. But as Corum notes, Seeckt’s *Reichswehr* did not propagate doctrine. “The American term implies a rigidity of tactics, the ‘proper’ way to employ the principles of war. . . . The closest equivalent term that the Germans had was concept. Military tactics were general guidelines—they were not meant to be literal formulas or principles of warfare.” This intellectual flexibility, combined with Seeckt’s encouragement of dissent, allowed the *Reichswehr* to push very far and rapidly beyond the thinking of 1918.

WORLD WAR II REMEMBERED



THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR II is being commemorated in various ways, including publication by the services of monographs and pamphlets on the European and Pacific theaters as well as the homefront. Some titles are reprints of works which originally appeared during or shortly after the war and offer contemporary accounts of many of the most important joint and combined operations in military history. Among the publications issued by the Army and Air Force are those listed below; titles published by the Navy and Marine

Corps will be found next time in “Off the Shelf.”

The U.S. Army Center for Military History is developing a series of brochures for distribution during the commemorative period entitled “The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II.” Of those titles in the series already in print, the following are focused on the war in the Pacific:

“Philippine Islands, 7 December 1941–10 May 1942.” CMH Pub 72–3. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 23 pp. [ISBN 0 16 035879 5]

“Central Pacific, 7 December 1941–6 December 1943.” CMH Pub 72–4. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 23 pp. [ISBN 0 16 035880 9]

“India-Burma, 2 April 1942–28 January 1945.” CMH Pub 72–5. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 26 pp. [ISBN 0 16 035881 7]

“Aleutian Islands, 3 June 1942–24 August 1943.” CMH 72–6. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 26 pp. [ISBN 0 16 035882 5]

“Papua, 23 July 1942–23 January 1943.” CMH 72–7. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 22 pp. [ISBN 0 16 035883 3]

The Center for Air Force History is reprinting a series entitled “Wings at War” which was first issued by the Army Air Forces. It includes the following titles on air campaigns in Europe:

“The AAF in the Invasion of Southern France.” *Wings at War*,

Clandestine development and testing in foreign countries of prohibited weaponry—particularly trials of tanks, aircraft, artillery, and gas in Russia—allowed the *Reichswehr* to validate new concepts of war. (The book's superb illustrations document this story well.) Once Hitler ordered rearmament in 1933, the German army could put prototypes into full-scale production. Describing the process, Corum explodes some myths about Seeckt's attitudes toward armored and air warfare. Contrary to Heinz Guderian's self-promoting claims, Seeckt and the *Reichswehr's* armored enthusiasts developed ideas and equipment that made possible the panzer division. Nor were such ideas taken from Liddell Hart or Fuller. In fact, German armor experts did not learn of Liddell Hart's bizarre tank warfare concepts until 1945. As for Fuller's influence Corum says the *Reichswehr's* armor theorists "were, in the main, critical readers who carefully chose concepts—Fuller's and others'—that seemed reasonable and practical and discarded the rest."

The 180 officers Seeckt appointed to his shadow air force were familiar with the theories of Douhet, Trenchard, and Mitchell. But the fu-

ture leaders of the *Luftwaffe* came to the same conclusion as Seeckt and rejected such thinking. Their analysis of strategic bombing concepts convinced them that such attacks would lead to unacceptable losses. Instead, "the *Reichswehr's* air staff . . . developed a comprehensive air doctrine that emphasized the tactical role of the air force in supporting ground forces. Even [when] the *Luftwaffe* was established as a separate branch of the armed forces, the overwhelming majority of officers had been trained to think of airpower in terms of just one element of a combined arms effort. . . ." The *Luftwaffe* failed, however, to develop strategic bombers and long-range fighters to accompany them. But the *Reichswehr's* air officers did initiate the air component of the *Blitzkrieg* that proved so successful in 1939–42.

The *Reichswehr's* accomplishments are best appreciated by contrasting them with developments in the British and French armies during the same period. Corum's work should be read in conjunction with Shelford Bidwell and Dominic Graham, *Fire Power: British Army Weapons and Theories of War, 1904–1945* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982), and Robert A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster: The Development of French Army Doctrine, 1919–1939* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1985). For the consequences which resulted from the impact of the twenty years of German military innovation on a generation of French army torpor, see Doughty, *The Breaking Point: Sedan and the Fall of France* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1990).

The Roots of Blitzkrieg offers healthy reassurance to those who may feel desperate over the financial stringencies of the 1990s. Seeckt's *Reichswehr* suffered from a nightmare of restrictions and economies compared to those that face the U.S. Armed Forces today. But the narrow material parameters of 1919–33 offered no effective barrier to revolutionary *Reichswehr* advances in tactics, operations, weapons, and equipment. Many of the same intellectual and organizational methods of seventy years ago remain applicable today, under the far more advan-

tageous circumstances enjoyed by the American military. But they are also available to our less fortunate potential opponents. For anyone interested in turning adversity into advantage, read *The Roots of Blitzkrieg*. JFO

BOOKSNOTED

NEW ARRIVALS

The following list contains some recently published titles on defense studies and military affairs. Beginning with the next issue of *JFO*, "Off the Shelf" will feature a quarterly annotated roundup of books, articles, and monographs dealing exclusively with joint and combined warfare.

Thomas A. Cardwell III. *Airland Combat: An Organization for Joint Warfare*. Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Air University Press, December 1992. 269 pp.

Kenneth W. Condit. *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy, 1955–1956*. The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Volume 6. Washington: Historical Office, Joint Staff, 1992. 326 pp.

Trevor N. Dupuy et al., editors. *International Military and Defense Encyclopedia*. 6 vols. Washington: Brassey's (US), 1993. 3,132 pp. [ISBN 0 02 881061 9 (vol. 1)]

William Jackson and Edwin Bramall. *The Chiefs: The Story of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff*. London: Brassey's (UK), 1992. 508 pp. [ISBN 0 08 040370 0]

Anthony James Joes. *Modern Guerrilla Insurgency*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 1992. 248 pp. [ISBN 0 275 94263 5]

Brian W. McLean. *Joint Training for Night Air Warfare*. Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Air University Press, October 1992. 103 pp.

Donald M. Snow. "Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peace-Enforcing: The U.S. Role in the New International Order." Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, February 1993. 40 pp.

Ghulam Dastagir Wardak et al., compilers. *Issues of Operational Art. The Voroshilov Lectures: Materials from the Soviet General Staff Academy*. Volume 3. With an introduction by David M. Glantz. Washington: National Defense University Press, 1992. 568 pp. JFO

no. 1. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 60 pp. [ISBN 0 16 038133 9]

"Sunday Punch in Normandy."

Wings at War, no. 2. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 32 pp. [ISBN 0 16 038134 7]

"Pacific Counterblow." Wings at

War, no. 3. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 56 pp. [ISBN 0 16 038130 4]

"Airborne Assault on Holland."

Wings at War, no. 4. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 57 pp. [ISBN 0 16 038135 5]

"Air-Ground Teamwork on the

Western Front." Wings at War, no. 5. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992. 50 pp. [ISBN 0 16 0381232 0]

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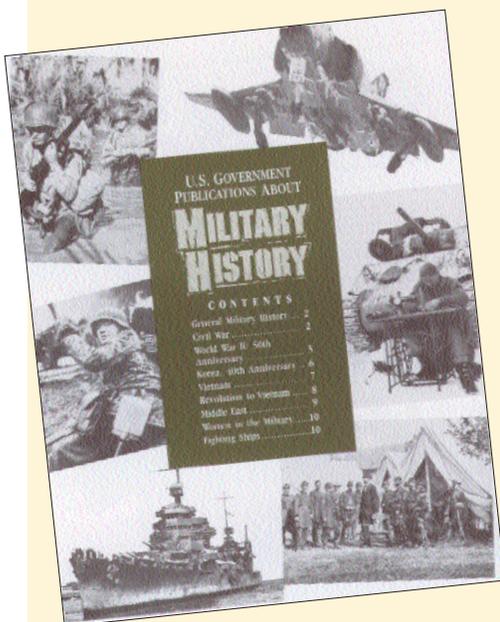
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