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British Appeasement Policy and the Military Disaster in 1940

PETER NEVILLE

Abstract
This article focuses on the onslaught which has been made on British appeasement policy in the 1930s, while linking it to the military disaster in France and the Low Countries in 1940. It argues that it has been too easy to condemn politicians like Neville Chamberlain for errors which were the responsibility of supposed experts in the Service Ministries.

This article highlights the extent to which Britain's armed forces in 1939-1940 were part of a military alliance led by France. It was General Maurice Gamelin who was responsible for the catastrophic Breda Variant. The British Expeditionary Force was not involved at all in the Ardennes sector, where the decisive German thrust was made.

This article disputes the charge of British unpreparedness in 1940 stressing the superiority of British fighter aircraft developed under Baldwin and Chamberlain. It also questions German planning by pointing out that Britain, not Germany, had plans for a heavy bomber in 1936.

This article addresses the debate about appeasement arguing that it was a realistic policy in following the Ten Year Rule, which had cut British forces in the 1920s. Also, the shadow of the Great War was bound to influence Britain's attitude towards the prospect of war. Thus, a reluctance to commit a large army to the continent was understandable and the emphasis on air and naval power both sensible and traditional.

Keywords: appeasement; Anglo-French; Ardennes; Belgium; bomber; Breda; Chamberlain, Neville; Churchill, Winston; France; Gamelin, Maurice; Holland; intelligence; *Luftwaffe*; Maginot Line; Manstein Plan; Meuse; rearmament; strategic; tank; totalitarianism; Treasury

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In the pejorative onslaught on Britain's appeasers in the 1930s, it has been constantly stated that Ramsay MacDonald, Stanley Baldwin, Neville Chamberlain, and their colleagues were to blame for the Allied disaster in May and June 1940 because they led an under-armed Britain

into the conflict. The onslaught began as early as July 1940 in the famous polemic *Guilty Men*, which was published under the pseudonym "Cato." Coming only a month after the Dunkirk evacuation and as the Battle of Britain began, *Guilty Men* savagely castigated Britain's leaders. Cato proclaimed:

> Here is an epitaph which should be placed on the grave of every British airman killed in this war, every British civilian killed by Nazi bombers, every little child in this kingdom who may be robbed of life and happiness by high explosive or splintering metal rained down on this island by Marshal Goering's air-force.[1]

And so it went on. Dunkirk was "the story of an Army doomed *before* they took the field," while the *Kriegsmarine* was "the Navy that Sam built," which referred to Sir Samuel Hoare's sponsorship of the 1935 Anglo-German Naval Treaty.[2] Famously, Chamberlain was lampooned as "the Umbrella Man" and his Minister for Defence Coordination, Sir Thomas Inskip, as "Caligula's Horse." (Churchill had already ridiculed Sir Thomas's appointment as the worst since Caligula made his horse a consul.) Chamberlain died that November, thus avoiding the worst of the brickbat from vengeful anti-appeasers, but Baldwin lingered on until 1947, and even his estate gates were not safe from his enemies. The hero of the 1936 Abdication Crisis had become a bungling defeatist.[3]

The attempt to blame Baldwin and Chamberlain for Britain's military deficiencies is, to say the least, gravely flawed, and at worst, somewhat perverse as this article will show. Indeed, there is a good case for arguing that as the junior partner in an alliance, which relied on French military expertise and judgement, the British found themselves badly let down in the summer of 1940. Everyone in the British political and military establishment believed in the invulnerability of the great French Army and its Maginot Line, which collapsed so spectacularly in those balmy weeks of summer. Churchill himself after all famously cried "Thank God for the French Army" in 1934. It has been convincingly argued, too, that the Anglo-French problem in 1940 was overconfidence, an assumption that Germany would be defeated based on technical superiority evinced through the Maginot Line (one of the wonders of the age), and the heavily armored Somua and Char B tanks, which bettered anything the Germans had (as did the British Matilda tank, which embarrassed General Erwin Rommel in an action at Arras). It needs to be

1. Cato, *Guilty Men* (London: Victor Gollanz, 1940), p. 110. "Cato" was in fact a pseudonym for three *Evening Standard* journalists; Michael Foot, Frank Owen, and Peter Howard.
2. Ibid., p. 16.
3. Ibid., p. 38.

stressed, however, that it was the military establishment in both Britain and France which was too confident. Nevertheless, as a leading U.S. historian has argued, "the defeat of France [and Britain] was not...foreordained."[4]

Following this logic, it should be obvious that politicians will be led by their so-called defense experts. And it would be a brave prime minister (in peacetime, at least) who challenged what his experts were telling him. A man like Chamberlain who had never served in the armed forces would obviously show, on occasion, a lack of familiarity with matters military. Thus, on 16 December 1936, some months after Hitler's Rhineland coup, Chamberlain stressed his opposition to a large continental expeditionary force by saying in Cabinet that "He himself doubted whether we were right in equipping the territorial force for the trenches."[5] This revealing comment shows both an emotional linkage to the Great War (Chamberlain had never forgotten the premature death of his beloved cousin Norman in France in 1917), and an unfamiliarity with modern developments. But, it has to be admitted that the supposed experts in the defense establishment were little better in their understanding of new theories of warfare. The famous British tank expert Major-General J.F.C. Fuller became so disgusted with the "cavalry colonels" in the War Office that he resigned in 1933, claiming that they would show no interest in the tank "until it had been developed to shit and eat hay."[6] British generals in the main, it has been suggested, lagged behind the Germans (though they, too, had technological Luddites) in their appreciation of armored warfare, as did their French counterparts. Chamberlain, a mere civilian, did his best where army tactics were concerned and did at least read B.H. Liddell Hart's *The Defence of Britain* written in 1939.[7] Liddell Hart shared Fuller's interest in tank warfare, but argued that an attacking force would need a three-to-one superiority in any forthcoming war. This was what Chamberlain and his colleagues wanted to hear. Surely, the great French Army would be able to secure the borders of France and Belgium (and ultimately Holland) against attack? This would preclude the need for a large British expeditionary force, which would be both expensive and potentially costly in terms of bloodshed (the shadow of the Great War always lay behind any inter-war British government). Liddell Hart's analysis suggested that sending a seventeen or thirty-two division force to France would be wasteful. Analysis of the 1940

4. Ernest R. May, *Strange Victory: Hitler's Conquest of France* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), p. 459.
5. "The Role of the British Army," National Archives, Kew (NA), CAB 75 (36) 3.
6. Edward Ranson, *British Defence Policy and Appeasement Between the Wars, 1919-39* (London: The Historical Association, 1993), p. 11.
7. B.H. Liddell Hart, *The Defence of Britain* (London: Faber and Faber, 1939).

campaign, in which the Germans achieved a total strategic surprise, must suggest that such an expansion would merely have created an even more catastrophic Dunkirk, preventing the British from giving Mussolini a bloody nose in North Africa later in the year.

In fact, by the late 1930s the British favored an updated version of the old "bluewater strategy," which avoided large continental entanglements. British naval power would now be supplemented by a modern potent air-force. The army would be primarily for imperial service with a small expeditionary force, to allay (if never pacify) French complaints about the size of Britain's continental commitment. Only very late in the day did the British succumb to French complaints by introducing a modest form of conscription in April 1939. Even then the period of military service was only for six months and of the extra 200,000 troops, 80,000 were to serve in anti-aircraft units leaving only 120,000 men to serve in front-line combat units. Four divisions were sent to France in September 1939, although a decision was taken to create a thirty-two division army within twelve months of the outbreak of hostilities in February 1939.[8] The assumption underlying British strategy, therefore, was that the French could hold the fort in what was expected to be a war of attrition in which greater Anglo-French naval and economic power would prevail. Even on the German side, some believed that Hitler had taken an under-prepared Germany into a reckless adventure.

This is an important point. The German victory in 1940 has been cast as an inevitable one, and at least one classic military study has linked it to French defeatism just as "Cato" blamed supine appeasers for a woeful British performance in that year.[9] This inevitability has been linked to virile totalitarianism and ruthless will which (allegedly) outmatched the dithering democracies. In fact, Nazi Germany was as prone to planning gaffes both before and during World War II as were Britain and France. A celebrated one took place in 1937 when the Germans decided not to build a heavy four-engined bomber, seeing the main role of the *Luftwaffe* as being one of army support. The absence of heavy bombers in 1940-1941 means that the *Luftwaffe* was quite unable to pulverize Britain's main cities in the way many in Britain had feared (severe though the sufferings of Londoners and others were). By contrast, in 1936 the Air Ministry asked for the heavy bomber designs that would permit the RAF to devastate cities such as Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, and Nuremberg between 1942 and 1945.[10] Reference has already been

8. P.M.H. Bell, *The Origins of the Second World War in Europe* (London: Longman, 1986), p. 176.
9. Alistair Horne, *To Lose A Battle: France 1940* (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 58-59.
10. Peter Neville, *Hitler and Appeasement: The British Attempt to Prevent the Second World War* (London: Continuum, 2006), p. 127.

made to the superiority of French tanks in 1940, and the British had in the Spitfire a monoplane which was superior to anything the Germans could offer. This classic fighter was a product of the Chamberlain-sponsored strategy which gave priority to fighters above bombers in the shorter run.

It is, of course, possible to criticize aspects of the British defense policy in the 1930s, but to do so involves analysis of the whole inter-war period starting in 1919. In August of that year the Cabinet decided that: "It should be assumed, for framing revised Estimates, that the British Empire will not be engaged in any great war during the next ten years, and that no Expeditionary Force is required for this purpose."[11] The prime minister who initially presided over this decision was none other than the great war leader, David Lloyd George. He was abetted (when he rejoined the Tory party) by Winston Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer between 1924 and 1929. In the immediate post-war period the Ten Year Rule made some sense, but it then, as one analyst has observed, "took on a life of its own, became endowed with its own mystique and aura of infallibility."[12] Indeed, it was Churchill, the leading critic of appeasement in the 1930s, who urged an extension of the rule in 1928. The Cabinet then decided to put the rule on a daily moving basis, meaning that unless an alteration was made, there was a permanent assumption of ten years peace, and thus in 1928 a presumption that there would be no war until 1938. In the first volume of his war memoirs, *The Gathering Storm*, published in 1948, Churchill defended his action:

> I felt so hopeful that the peace of the world would be maintained that I saw no reason to take any new decision: nor in the event was I proved wrong. War did not break out till the autumn of 1939.[13]

This line of argument is tenuous, to say the least, as it put Britain behind the authoritarian states in the longer run. But if Churchill, with all his empathy with the military world, was so optimistic about the prospects of peace, Baldwin and Chamberlain were entitled to have such hopes also. This had implications for Britain's defense spending.

The other point that needs to be made is that there was a good deal of consensus between the military and political establishments when the 1930s began. The shadow of the Great War overhung successive governments, but Britain's imperial commitments were also paramount. The concept of "imperial overstretch" is now a very familiar one in the litera-

11. Quoted in Brian Bond, *British Military Policy Between the Two World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 24-25.
12. Ranson, *British Defence Policy*, p. 7.
13. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. 1, *The Gathering Storm* (London: Cassell, 1948), p. 40.

ture of the period with its emphasis on Britain's finite resources at a time when the economy was in recovery mode after the Depression. Britain was indeed fortunate that Gandhi and Nehru were apostles of peaceful protest in India, otherwise the Raj would have been confronted with the sort of uprisings the British faced in Iraqi Kurdistan and Palestine. As it was, the military chiefs and their civilian bosses faced the prospect of a war against three totalitarian powers (Japan was one in all but name) simultaneously, which they rightly predicted would be unwinnable.

But they did not fail to identify the peril facing Britain. In 1933, the Defence Requirements Committee (DRC) was set up which correctly recognized Germany to be the primary threat, followed by Japan (there was a tendency to exaggerate the Italian threat, but this was an intelligence failure rather than a military one). The debate then became one about how much Britain could afford to spend on rearmament not about the principle of rearmament itself (whereas "Cato" had questioned the British government's whole commitment to rearmament).

At the outset, British caution about defense spending was understandable. In 1935, for example, a two-power navy (which the DRC had recommended), a modernized RAF, and a partly-mechanized field force set up over the period 1936-1940 would have eaten up 67% of defense expenditure (amounting to £1,037.5 million by the end of the period).[14] At a time of economic depression, it was hardly surprising that the Treasury blinked. Chamberlain as Chancellor wanted to avoid a budgetary deficit, a *sine que non* for Tories which continued to exist for decades thereafter. He has been criticized for wanting to protect the ordinary business cycle, but it needs to be recalled that even J.M. Keynes, the advocate of deficit spending as an answer to recession, still believed in 1936 that rearmament must not interfere with normal business and trade. Only in 1937-1938 did Keynes come to believe that more state intervention was needed to speed up rearmament. It is hardly surprising then that Neville Chamberlain went along with the orthodoxy of the Treasury knights.

These same knights did not though lack commitment to the rearmament program, any more than did Chamberlain himself. The Treasury thought of finance as the "fourth arm of defence" which would allow Britain (and France) to win because the Nazis would run out of raw materials and foreign exchange. A long conflict would allow the British to use the blockade weapon, which had brought Germany to its knees in 1914-1918.[15] This may have been an optimistic prognosis, but it was not

14. G.C. Peden, "Keynes, the Economics of Rearmament and Appeasement," in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Lothar Kettenacker, eds., *The Fascist Challenge and the Policy of Appeasement* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1983), p. 143.
15. G.C. Peden, "A Matter of Timing: The Economic Background to British Foreign Policy," *History*, vol. 69 (1984), p. 16.

unreasonable or defeatist. The Permanent Under Secretary at the Treasury, Sir Warren Fisher, supported Chamberlain's views on rearmament and was an active member of the DRC.[16]

Chamberlain realized that his preference for a small expeditionary force and a strong RAF, with a bias towards its fighter component, might open him to criticism for choosing the cheaper option. But his thinking about defense was coherent and clear-cut. This could not always be said about his military advisers. Lieutenant General Henry Pownall, for example, referred to "our poor little army" while complaining at the same time about the French wanting "to get us nicely committed and tied by the legs not merely militarily but politically as well."[17] The whole point of a larger army that Pownall seemed to want was to offer greater assistance to the French, which he seemed to object to doing.

Similar confusion existed in the Air Ministry. It started by underestimating the threat from the *Luftwaffe* in the mid-thirties, and then after 1937 overstated "both the immediacy of the Luftwaffe menace and the capacity of its bombers to deliver a knock out blow."[18] Wild rumors about a "knock out" blow against London, which would kill hundreds of thousands, circulated in both the military and political leaderships in Britain in the winter of 1938-1939. The former, especially the Air Ministry, were primarily to blame. By 1939, Britain was rapidly catching up with German front-line strength and needed a more balanced perspective about the German air threat. The Cabinet Secretary, Maurice Hankey, had it right when he wrote in 1934: "The Cabinet are overrating the imminence of the German peril [thanks to the Air Ministry]. The peril is there all right, but it will take more than five years to develop in the military and air sense."[19] By which time the Air Ministry, in particular, had become hysterical about the issue, inadvertently feeding Churchill, with his private army of informers inside the system, with a stick to beat the government.

It is hard to argue that the British government had its essential defense priorities wrong. These were spelled out by the much-mocked Sir Thomas Inskip in a cabinet paper in December 1937. Firstly, to protect the United Kingdom from air attack; secondly, to safeguard the trade routes of Britain; thirdly, to defend Britain's overseas territories; and

16. Robert Paul Shay, Jr., *British Rearmament in the Thirties: Politics and Profits* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).
17. Brian Bond, ed., *Chief of Staff: The Diaries of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Pownall*, Vol. 1, *1933-1940* (London: Leo Cooper, 1972), 25/9/38, p. 161; pp. 126-129.
18. Christopher M. Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann, 1985), p. 390.
19. Quoted in Richard J. Overy, "German Air Strength, 1933-39: A Note," *Historical Journal*, vol. 28 (1984).

lastly, to cooperate in the defense of Britain's wartime allies.[20] The assumption was that the French Army would be more than adequate to defend France and the Low Countries so the British land role would be merely supplementary. This view proved to be flawed, but the French themselves believed that they would be able to throw back any German assault. When France's much-esteemed Commander-in-Chief, Maurice Gamelin (faithful aide to the doughty General Joseph Joffre in the Great War), heard of the German offensive on 10 May, he was seen to be "pacing up and down the corridor of the barracks humming audibly with a martial air."[21] This apparent confidence was exactly what Chamberlain (and indeed Churchill) would have expected.

But Chamberlain did not stint on Britain's rearmament program. He noted in a Cabinet meeting late in 1938 that "In our foreign policy we were doing our best to drive two horses abreast, conciliation and rearmament. It was a very nice art to keep those two steeds in step."[22] This may read like backsliding, but in fact, Britain's rearmament in the air was gathering pace. In the first six months of 1938 British factories had delivered 1,045 aircraft, but in the same period in 1939, 3,753 aircraft had been delivered. The priority remained the RAF, but within its own parameters, the British rearmament program was becoming formidable.[23]

No analysis of British appeasement policy and its link to the events of 1940 can disentangle it from its French counterpart. And here there is a central irony. Until at least 1938 it was the British who took the initiative in the appeasement of Nazi Germany, while the French seemed content to follow this lead. It was Chamberlain who flew to Berchtesgaden and Godesberg in September 1938 to meet Hitler. Only at Munich did a somewhat despondent Édouard Daladier appear on the scene. But in 1940 it was France which held the key to victory or defeat. The British Expeditionary Force might play a significant role, as it did in 1914, but this was only because of luck and an appropriate strategy by the French High Command.

It would be unwise, however, to read too much into French behavior up to 1938, or to ignore the considerable boost in national morale in 1938-1939. For whenever Daladier appeared in a bistro or an open place by the summer of 1939 people would stand up and cry "Lead! We will follow you." In May 1940 a Danish journalist described Paris "as bubbling with enthusiasm."[24] Another myth was that the Popular Front peri-

20. Quoted in Peden, "A Matter of Timing," p. 153.
21. Quoted in G.C. Peden, *British Rearmament and the Treasury, 1932-1939* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979), pp. 134-135.
22. CAB 23/95, Fols. 304-305; CAB 23/96, Fols. 92, 141-142. All NA.
23. M.M. Postan, *British War Production* (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1975), Appendix 4.
24. May, *Strange Victory*, p. 7.

od in 1936-1937 fatally weakened French resolve (the British certainly believed this). In fact, as a recent study has pointed out, the Popular Front presided over the most massive increase in rearmament in French history, no less than fourteen billion francs were set aside for rearmament in September 1936.[25] The problem has been that historians have looked wrongly for signs that a left-wing malaise fatally undermined France's resolve in 1940. The crucial point which this article seeks to underline is that the Fall of France was first and foremost a military defeat. All other factors were purely secondary.

To demonstrate this point, and link it to the rejection of the thesis that the British appeasers were somehow to blame in 1940, a detailed look at the outset of that campaign is required. The standard stereotypical view was that the French, undermined by lethargy and communist propaganda, collapsed before a virile, mechanized *Wehrmacht* which ruthlessly exploited its deficiencies.

This is a myth. The disaster of 1940 was in the first instance the consequence of defective planning. In particular, Gamelin's "Breda Variant," a movement of first-line units into Holland, and not just Belgium. This was, as Professor Ernest May has rightly judged, "a tragic mistake."[26] For what it did was to send the French Seventh Army with its modern armored forces to cover the left of the Belgian forces at Antwerp and link up with the Dutch as far north as Breda. This division should have acted as a strategic reserve, but Gamelin's decision to push it northwards meant that it could not be used to counteract the major German armored penetration on the Meuse between 10 and 15 May. Worse, the Dyle-Breda plan, to give it its full name, completely altered the balance of Allied forces placing thirty French divisions in Belgium and Holland, instead of the ten originally set aside for operations in the north. Two of France's new armored divisions, five of its seven motorized divisions, and all of its three Light Mechanized Divisions (*Division Légerè Mécanique* or DLM) were now to be fighting in the Low Countries.[27] This was where Gamelin and his generals expected the major German thrust to come. They were out of luck. A freak plane crash at Mechelen, Belgium meant that the original German invasion plan which did focus on the north, as the 1914 Schlieffen Plan had done, was altered when German plans fell into Allied hands. Crucially, the revamped "Manstein Plan" provided for a primary armored thrust through the heavily-wooded Ardennes at the intersection of the Franco-Belgian borders. Gamelin, fixated by the north and sure that the Maginot Line would hold off any German attack in Al-

25. Julian Jackson, *The Fall of France: The Nazi Invasion of 1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 13.
26. May, *Strange Victory*, p. 4.
27. Horne, *To Lose A Battle*, p. 110.

sace-Lorraine, crucially neglected this sector. Stationed there were the inferior second-line units (in the main) of General André Corap's Ninth Army and General Charles Huntzinger's Second Army. These troops bore the brunt of the assault by General Heinz Guderian and Rommel's crack panzers after 10 May. Unsurprisingly, although individual units fought bravely, they could not hold their positions when subjected to devastating air assault and audacious armored attack after 10 May. Had the original German plan been adhered to, the Germans would have only been confronted by first-line French units (like General René Prioux's excellent DLM) and the outcome of the battle would have been completely altered.

As it was, the Allies were far too slow to react to the German thrust through the Ardennes and fatally neglected to bomb the log jam of German armored vehicles in the forests of the Ardennes until it was too late. The Germans achieved complete surprise, but the victory that followed was the work of highly talented individuals like Guderian and Rommel, rather than the German High Command as a whole. The bulk of historians of this period, both political and military, have chosen to forget that "Germany's generals…believed to a man that Hitler had gotten the country into a war for which it was not prepared and which it might well lose."[28] The German Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal Walther von Brauchitsch believed that "armoured divisions were wasteful – wars would continue to be decided by foot soldiers and horses." Thus, computer simulations continue to predict an Allied victory in 1940.[29] Far behind the armored spearheads in 1940 were the straggling columns of men and horses by which von Brauchitsch set such store. He was no more advanced in his thinking than the "Cavalry Colonels" in the British War Office who drove J.F.C. Fuller to despair.

It is untrue that all the German general staff read and understood the writings of Fuller and B.H. Liddell Hart. It was the enlightened few, like Guderian, who did so. The rest were either ignorant of, or nervous about, the emphasis on armored spearheads and expected the Ardennes offensive to come to grief.

The evidence about what might have happened if the original German plan had been adhered to is there, and it is convincing. In a fierce tank battle at Hannut in Belgium between 12-15 May 1940, the two divisions of General Prioux's DLM lost 105 tanks while destroying 160 German tanks, with proportional numbers of tanks damaged.[30] It was a clear

28. May, *Strange Victory*, p. 7.
29. Ibid., p. 6.
30. Karl-Heinz Frieser, *Blitzkrieg-Legende. Der Westfeldzug 1940* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 302. See also May, *Strange Victory*, pp. 400-404, and Horne, *To Lose A Battle*, pp. 196-197. The contrast between May and Horne is sharp, the latter only mentions the

French victory in which the superiority of the French Char B and Hotchkiss H-39s, with their heavier armor and guns, over the German panzers (commanded in this instance by General Erich Hoepner) was evident. But Prioux's victory has subsequently been forgotten or understated because of the disaster on the Ardennes Front.

The devastating speed with which the Germans developed their bridgeheads on the Meuse, unhindered by last minute desperate Anglo-French air attacks, traumatized the French political leadership and shocked the British one now led by Churchill, a man who had devoted a lifetime to military matters, and who had ridiculed Sir Thomas Inskip's lack of expertise. Churchill himself was taken aback. He wrote subsequently: "Not having had access to official information for so many years, I did not comprehend the violence of the revolution effected since the Great War by the incursion of a mass of fast-moving armour."[31] This was disingenuous. The books by Fuller and Liddell Hart were available to him just as they were to Hans Guderian. If he had read them and understood their contents, he would surely not also have written, referring back to the German breakthrough in March 1918, about the need for the panzer spearheads to stop for five or six days for supplies. By 17 May, Rommel had reached Le Cateau near Avesnes, at which point Hitler ordered the panzers to halt, but this was because he was becoming nervous about the sheer speed of their advance, and the possibility of Anglo-French flank attacks. In this situation, the British were helpless, their army endangered because of Gamelin's mistaken strategy. They thought only of saving their army, and what was left of the RAF, which had suffered serious losses in France. For this Churchill could not be blamed, but neither could Chamberlain, his loyal Cabinet supporter as Lord President of the Council. Nothing was more admirable in Chamberlain's life than his solid support for a former rival and critic in his last months.[32]

The essential point about the British establishment in May and June 1940 was the devastating way all its assumptions about defense strategy were blown apart. The chief victim was Churchill, rather than Chamberlain who might (arguably) have been wiser to stand down as premier in September 1939. He had toured the Maginot Line and reported that the Germans visible across the frontier seemed "dead beat, or half starved or both." By contrast, the French troops he saw in what the French called "*le trou*" showed "calm and resolute morale."[33] And, of course, this was very likely true. The Maginot Line was manned not by the Category B reservists in Corap's unlucky 9th Army, but by regular troops who would

French losses and plays down the French victory.

31. Quoted in Horne, *To Lose A Battle*, p. 333.

32. For detail, see Neville, *Hitler and Appeasement*, pp. 200-202.

33. Quoted in May, *Strange Victory*, p. 309.

have been of superior quality to their German counterparts in the Siegfried Line. But what has stuck in the minds of historians has been General Alanbrooke's depressing portrait of the troops in Corap's army when he visited them in November 1939. Alanbrooke was disgusted by how badly turned out Corap's men were, but on an earlier visit to the Maginot Line he, too, had noted the high morale of the fortress troops.[34] Nevertheless, it has been Corap's army that has come to be symbolic of the French defeat, not Prioux's fine armored force. At the time, British belief in the great French Army remained almost absolute, despite Alanbrooke's reservations. No one foresaw the rapid and crushing German victory.

It was to a considerable degree a result of superior use of air power. A recent study of the Fall of France has lamented the fact that the French High Command had failed to realize what was happening in the Ardennes with "the huge concentration of German armour moving through the tangled roads…[which] would have offered an easy target to Allied bombers."[35] On the British side, the virtually obsolete Fairey Battle bombers attacked German bridgeheads on the Meuse with reckless courage, but they were not escorted by fighters and suffered catastrophic losses. It would be possible (albeit Cato-like) to blame Chamberlain, Baldwin, and company for the fact that Britain had no heavy bomber available, but then neither did the Germans. Their most potent weapon in the sky over the Meuse was the Ju-87 "Stuka" dive bomber, which in different circumstances proved to be useless in the Battle of Britain. Even so, matters could have gone differently if firstly the Allied air forces had not been sent in such numbers to cover Gamelin's Dyle-Breda plan, and secondly they had adopted the tactic of fighter support for bombers earlier. Gamelin also failed, as has been seen, to appreciate the importance of the Meuse sector until too late. Belgium and Holland were but "the Matador's cloak" in the Manstein Plan.

The tragedy was that the French airforce had been allowed to decline from the strength of 1918. There was no lack of will in the Popular Front government with regard to aerial rearmament. Plan II, which was drawn up in 1936, provided for 1,339 bombers and 756 fighters because the Minister Pierre Cot was a convert to the theory of the primacy of strategic bombing. But nationalization and a confusion of plans left France behind the Germans, and like the British, the French later gave priority to fighters. Vast sums of money (four billion francs between 1938 and 1940) were allocated. Even the pessimistic General Joseph Vuillemin, the air force chief who had been taken in by Hermann Göring's confidence tricks on a visit to Germany's factories in 1938, believed in August

34. Quoted in Horne, *To Lose A Battle*, pp. 160-161.
35. Jackson, *The Fall of France*, p. 40.

1939 that in six months Allied production could match Germany's (Britain's already was). But problems arose because of the very rapid pace of French air production, so that spares and accessories lagged behind, and the disruption caused by the mobilization of skilled workers who had been sent home. Big orders for aircraft had to be placed in the United States, but this is hardly a manifestation of the *je m'en foutisme* and defeatism portrayed in older studies.[36] There is a better case for saying that constant changes of government made continuity in planning difficult, but that is a different matter from charging French governments with a lack of will where airforces were concerned.

French difficulties did perhaps make them over-reliant on the bombing capacity of the RAF. The British were caught in mid-stream between the development of an excellent fighter wing and what would be a potent bomber force. But it has to be admitted that strategic bombing by the Blenheims and Hampdens available to the RAF in 1939-1940 showed considerable deficiencies. On 14 May 1940, seventy-eight Hampdens, Whitleys, and Wellingtons bombed north-west Germany, but only twenty-four claimed to have even found the oil plants they were sent against.[37] Conversely, it would have been difficult even for these limited machines to have missed the enormous columns of tanks, armored cars, and trucks in the Ardennes in the crucial May days had Gamelin used them for bombing.

Did Baldwin and Chamberlain get their priorities wrong with regard to the RAF? Fighters were cheaper to produce and between April and November 1938 the Cabinet agreed to accelerate and increase fighter production. By November, they had decided to give priority to fighter production as British air strategy became largely defensive (emphasis also being placed on the development of radar stations).[38] Both Baldwin (who had famously remarked in 1932 that "the bomber will always get through") and Chamberlain (alarmed by the sight of defenseless London when he flew to Germany) were keenly aware of the air threat to Britain. His ambassador in Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson, had written to the former Secretary of State for Air, Lord Londonderry, on 12 December 1938 about Britain's need for "anti-aircraft guns and a British air equivalent of the Maginot Line."[39] Chamberlain would have agreed. The "Maginot Line" provided by Britain's radar stations, Spitfires, and Hurricanes won the Battle of Britain in 1940. By contrast, the bomber deterrent failed in

36. Here, Jackson, *The Fall of France*, pp. 17-21, can be profitably compared with Horne, *To Lose A Battle*, pp. 70-73.
37. Horne, *To Lose A Battle*, p. 322.
38. CAB 23/92, Fols. 215-221; CAB 23/96, Fols. 156-173. All NA.
39. Henderson to Londonderry 12/12/38, Londonderry Papers, Durham County Record Office.

1940 largely because it was too technically unsophisticated to damage Germany in the way its admirers hoped. In the special circumstances of May-June 1940 the army support role of the *Luftwaffe* proved more relevant. In the long run, the much criticized appeasers were proven right. Superiority in the Battle of Britain in 1940 laid the platform, and provided the time, for the later deadly bomber offensive against Germany. For this, the appeasers deserve credit. Neither can they be blamed for the problems of the French airforce.

Another important aspect of the period 1938-1940 was the real change in Anglo-French opinion, which took place at this time. Munich had been popular in both countries (Daladier had been taken aback by the hero's welcome he received at the time), but this euphoria did not last. In Britain, early opinion polls in 1939 showed a complete turnabout in opinion with regard to confronting Germany. The same was true in France, as has already been suggested. The swing in Britain was impressive. A February 1939 poll showed that only 28% believed Chamberlain's appeasement policy would lead to an enduring European peace.[40]

It is, of course, plausible to argue a case against Chamberlain's continuance of appeasement into 1939, beyond Hitler's last peacetime coup in Prague on 15 March. But that is an entirely separate issue from the military events of May-June 1940. The tendency to conflate appeasement and military disaster has confused the issue with history being read back to front. This can be attributed no doubt to the catastrophic loss of human life in World War II, and the search for scapegoats. This process was triggered by the publication of *Guilty Men* in 1940 and continued thereafter.[41] It may also be a result of the tendency to compartmentalize diplomatic and international history from military history. Study of the military campaign in 1940 provides conclusive evidence for the belief that the Anglo-French defeat was not in any way certain. Once this fact is accepted, the possibility has to be faced that had Germany been defeated, the whole critique of Anglo-French appeasement itself would have been overthrown. Victory in 1940 would have destroyed the rationale behind Cato and the anti-appeasers; that is that inevitable defeat followed a collapse of will and resolve in the western democracies. Defeat came it is true, but not because of a lack of resolve, or indeed of confidence, but rather the opposite.[42]

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40. R.A.C. Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement: British Policy and the Coming of the Second World War* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), p. 327.

41. A notable example of an historian who tried to argue that appeasement was intrinsically immoral was Sidney Aster. See his "'Guilty Men': The Case of Neville Chamberlain" in Robert W.D. Boyce and Esmonde M. Robertson, eds., *Paths To War: New Essays on the Origins of the Second World War* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 233-268.

42. There is considerable scholarship on the French recovery in 1938-1939. For a good

In the case against the British appeasers, the thread of criticism runs beyond the outbreak of war in September 1939, into the period of the so-called "phoney war" between September and May. In this scenario, British inactivity has been lampooned as a further example of inept, if not indeed craven, leadership. Most memorably in the 1963 study, *The Appeasers*, by Martin Gilbert and Richard Gott, when a government minister allegedly objected to the bombing of arms dumps in the Black Forest because it was private property.[43] Both the British and French continued to show anxiety about civilians being bombed, but this reflected a belief that they should protect their civilian populations, and that the war could be won by other means. It was true in any case that the French Army was put on full alert on 14 January 1940 when the Belgians seemed to want French intervention in their country to counteract the possibility of a German attack.

> In the event no German attack came but the French (and the B.E.F. with them) were prepared to move in most adverse weather conditions with heavy snow and below zero temperatures. Sending troops slithering "through calf-high snow" to the crossing points into Belgium hardly smacked of lack of resolve.[44]

On the British side, men who had been closely linked to appeasement seemed to develop convenient amnesia once war had been declared, and suddenly became critical of the government. An example being Thomas Jones who was very close both to Lloyd George and Baldwin. On 11 February 1940, Jones wrote in his diary that "No one is satisfied that Neville C is directing the war with the necessary energy and ambition." But even Churchill was not satisfactory either, he had "bursts of output but he is far from being the Winston of 1914-18."[45] This was almost exactly three months before Churchill became premier and nobody faulted him for lack of energy then. Jones seemed to have forgotten the excessive enthusiasm he and his mentor Lloyd George showed when they visited Hitler at Berchtesgaden in 1936.[46] Other examples could be cited.

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summary of this revisionism, see Robert J. Young, "A.J.P. Taylor and the Problem with France" in Gordon Martel, ed., *The Origins of the Second World War Reconsidered: The A.J.P. Taylor Debate after Twenty-five Years* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1986), pp. 110-115. Revisionist works by May and Jackson appeared after Young wrote in 1986.

43. Martin Gilbert and Richard Gott, *The Appeasers* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), p. 328; the source used was L.S. Amery, *My Political Life*, vol. 3, *The Unforgiving Years, 1929-1940* (London: Hutchinson, 1955), p. 330.

44. May, *Strange Victory*, p. 319.

45. Thomas Jones, *A Diary with Letters, 1931-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), 11/2/40, p. 454.

46. Antony Lentin, *Lloyd George and the Lost Peace: From Versailles to Hitler, 1919-1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 89-105.

In fact, Chamberlain and Churchill worked well together throughout the period between September 1939 and Chamberlain's forced resignation because of ill-health in September 1940. But recognition of Churchill's qualities does not preclude acknowledgement that his behavior as First Lord of the Admiralty under Chamberlain verged on the harebrained. He presided over the fiasco in Norway in April 1940, showing a cavalier attitude to its rights as a neutral state (as he was to do in the case of the Irish Free State). But he had Chamberlain's support nonetheless. And Chamberlain continued to be a doughty supporter during the critical summer of 1940. He wanted Churchill to persuade the new French premier, Paul Reynaud, to fight on in the dark days of June.

It was because of the consequences of the Allied defeat in 1940 that the military campaign has been dovetailed with the failed attempt to appease Hitler. Appeasement did fail because it could not prevent the outbreak of war in 1939. But this did not mean that the appeasement policies of Britain and France meant that their countries were unprepared for war, contrary to long-held belief.

A mass of solid research, done in the 1980s by historians such as Gunsberg, Alexander, and Doughty, undermined preconceptions about French weakness and portrayed the events of 1940 in a wider Allied dimension while rejecting the accusation that the French high command was made up of "a group of doddering incompetents."[47] Gunsberg and Doughty, in particular, were impressed both by the technical proficiency of the French Army in 1940 and the superiority of their tank forces.[48] If one adds to this the superiority of British monoplanes over their German equivalents, and the undoubted Anglo-French naval superiority which worsted the Germans in Norway, the case for military incompetence and vulnerability disappears. Gamelin made a flawed strategic decision for which he paid in full measure by way of a brilliant and audacious German counterstroke. But one can not, and should not, deduce from this that the Allied forces were incompetently led, and lacking in resolve.

The reputations of Baldwin, Chamberlain, and their colleagues also sank with the tattered defenders along the Meuse. Somehow in the years after 1940 they were made responsible for a tragedy in which they could only be bit players. The terrible consequences of 1940 have put the historical record out of kilter. Much of France was occupied, together with

47. Young, "A.J.P. Taylor and the Problem with France," p. 112.

48. See Jeffery A. Gunsberg, *Divided and Conquered: The French High Command and the Defeat of the West, 1940* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1979); R. Doughty "French Mechanized Forces: The Tank as Infantry Support Weapon," Northern Great Plains History Conference, September 1938; Martin S. Alexander, *The Republic in danger: General Maurice Gamelin and the politics of French defence, 1933-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Peter Neville, "Why France Fell – 50 Years On," *Modern History Review*, 2:1, Sept. 1990, pp. 20-21.

Belgium, Luxemburg, and Holland. Britain was threatened with invasion and heavily bombed. But other aspects of the war in Europe were the consequence of Hitler's genocidal impulses. The savage war in the East and the mass murder of Jews can not be attributed to Britain's pre-war leaders and neither should they be. Had matters gone differently in those six short weeks, much of the later suffering and devastation might have been avoided altogether.

Responsibility, too, lies on the shoulders of Germany's senior soldiers. Men like General Franz Halder and Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt flirted with the idea of opposition to Hitler, or even his deposition, but ultimately they accepted the trimmings of victory. Those like Field Marshal Erwin von Witzleben who flirted with conspiracy in 1938 during the Czech crisis, still led armies into Poland in 1939 and France in 1940. If ever there was a malaise of resolve, it was in Germany in 1938-1940. The glittering prizes of victory were too tempting for generals who purported to despise the Nazis.[49]

The British appeasers foresaw how terrible a forthcoming conflict could be. They sought zealously to avoid such a conflict and can hardly be criticized for that, even if critics felt that the big rearmament push in 1938–1939 came rather late. Even the anti-revisionist historians of the 1990s such as R.A.C. Parker, while critical of appeasement, recognized the folly of the line taken in *Guilty Men*. Parker wrote in 1993 of how "the efficiency of the air force and navy in 1940 refutes their denunciation of Chamberlain as irresponsibly reckless."[50] What is beyond dispute, in the opinion of this writer, is that the attempt to implicate Baldwin, Chamberlain, Hoare, Inskip, and others in the military catastrophe of 1940 is maladroit and flies in the face of the known facts about the preparation for, and management of, that campaign. Churchill, who made exactly the same military assumptions as those who held office before September 1939, later wrote:

> Those who are prone by temperament and character to seek sharp and clear-cut solutions of difficult and obscure problems, who are ready to fight whenever some challenge comes from a foreign power, have not always been right. On the other hand, those whose inclination is to bow their heads to seek patiently and faithfully for peaceful compromise are not always wrong.[51]

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49. The issues surrounding the German *Widerstand* have been exhaustively chronicled in such works as Peter Hoffmann, *Widerstand, Staatssreich, Attentat. Der Kampf der Opposition gegen Hitler*, 3rd ed. (Munich: Piper, 1979) and Gerhard Ritter, *Carl Goerdeler und die deutsche Widerstandsbewegung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1984).
50. Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement*, p. 346.
51. Quoted in Peter Neville, *Winston Churchill: Statesman or Opportunist?* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1996), p. 60.

Baldwin and Chamberlain did "seek patiently and faithfully for peaceful compromise" between 1935 and 1939. They failed to achieve this because of the nature of the unscrupulous totalitarian regimes with which they were confronted. Even then, the defeat of the western democracies in May-June 1940 by the most obdurate and militaristic of these regimes was by no means certain.

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Surrender in Singapore: A Multinational Perspective

E. BRUCE REYNOLDS

Abstract
Although secondary to the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945, the British considered the formal surrender of representatives of the Japanese Southern Army to Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten of the Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) ten days later as a very important means of humbling the Japanese and facilitating the re-establishment of European colonial control in Southeast Asia. Because British ambitions of restoring the pre-war status quo were doomed to long-term failure, the event is little remembered today outside of Singapore where the event was staged. However, the surrender ceremony and the emotional response of the throngs in the streets outside made a vivid impression on the victors, the vanquished, and Singaporeans who had endured three and a half years of harsh occupation. This article re-examines the events of 10 September 1945 from the varied perspectives of several participants and observers.

Keywords: European colonialism; Hirohito, Emperor; Itagaki Seishirō; Lee Kuan Yew; MacArthur, Douglas; Malaya; Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA); Mountbatten, Lord Louis; Nakamura Aketo; Percival, Arthur; Prisoners of War (POW); Slim, William; South East Asian Command (SEAC); Singapore; Surrender (Japan – World War II); Terauchi Hisaichi; Wheeler, Raymond

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Although most people are aware of only one surrender ceremony marking the end of World War II in the Pacific – in Tokyo Bay aboard the USS *Missouri* (BB-63) on 2 September 1945 – another significant one occurred ten days later in Singapore, when representatives of the Japanese Southern Army surrendered to Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten of the British-led Southeast Asia Command (SEAC). Already, in addition to the well-known general surrender in Tokyo Bay, representatives of Japan's Southern Army had accepted surrender terms after meet-

ings with Mountbatten's representatives in Rangoon, Burma on 28 August, and the local army commander, General Itagaki Seishirō, had signed yet another surrender document aboard a British warship on 4 September, the day before British troops of the Fifth Indian Division began landing in Singapore.[1] Thus, the 12 September event was more symbolic than substantive, but the British saw it as an important aspect of their plans for humbling the Japanese and re-establishing European colonial control in Southeast Asia.

The Allies had established SEAC in 1943 in an effort to invigorate operations against the Japanese in the region. The charming, energetic Mountbatten, catapulted into the position despite his relatively junior status, served as its supreme commander from SEAC's inception, basing his headquarters first in India, then in Kandy, Ceylon. Originally, the British intended that the theater include Burma, Malaya, Sumatra, Thailand, and French Indochina, but the Americans pointed out that both Indochina and Thailand had been previously allocated to Chiang Kai-shek's China Theater. A compromise decision – one on which Chiang was not consulted and never really accepted – split the difference, leaving Indochina as part of the China Theater. Mountbatten and Chiang subsequently reached a "gentleman's agreement" that either could operate in Thailand or Indochina, but the absence of a more formal accord inevitably led to a number of jurisdictional clashes. At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945 the Americans and British agreed to divide Indochina between the two theaters and further expanded SEAC jurisdiction to include the entirety of the Netherlands East Indies.[2] Mountbatten noted in his diary that the expanded SEAC encompasses "a million and half square miles of territory, has a population of 128 millions, nearly half a million Japs and over 200,000 prisoners of war and internees to be repatriated."[3]

U.S. involvement in Mountbatten's theater had been secondary and relations between the allies were often strained. In part this reflected American pre-occupation with operations in China, but also it resulted from conflicting attitudes concerning the future of Southeast Asia. Eager to re-assert authority over valuable colonies from which they had been humiliatingly ousted more than three years earlier, the British also supported the French and Dutch in their determination to reclaim their lost

1. Romen Bose, *The End of the War: Singapore's Liberation and the Aftermath of the Second World War* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2005), pp. 1-13.
2. Louis Mountbatten (Vice-Admiral the Earl Mountbatten of Burma), *South East Asia 1943-1945, Report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1951), pp. 3, 6-7, 181.
3. Louis Mountbatten, *Personal Diary of Admiral the Lord Louis Mountbatten: Supreme Allied Commander South-East Asia, 1943-1946*, ed. Philip Ziegler (London: Collins, 1988), p. 238.

colonies. Americans, in contrast, generally opposed the re-establishment of old-style colonialism in the region, viewing their pre-war commitment to independence for the Philippines as the appropriate example for other colonial powers to follow. Convinced that the British were less concerned about forcing Japan's early surrender than recovering their colonies, American critics suggested that SEAC really stood for "Save England's Asian Colonies."[4] Although when the war abruptly ended in August 1945 only Burma had been reclaimed by force, an amphibious attack on the Malayan Peninsula had been scheduled for the following month.

British determination to restore their prestige and re-establish colonial rule certainly influenced the planning for the Singapore surrender. Although not yet fully aware of the extent to which the Japanese interregnum had influenced public attitudes in the region, the British considered an impressive show of power essential to their effort to restore the *status quo ante* in the Malayan peninsula. Thus, they decided to return to Malaya in force by carrying out the previously planned amphibious landings, even though the Japanese government's decision to end the war seemingly made such action unnecessary. At a 20 August staff meeting, Mountbatten further declared that

> since the efforts of the scientists had brought the war to an end before the British could be visibly re-established, it was essential that the ceremony in Singapore should be so arranged as to leave both the inhabitants of Malaya and the Japanese in no doubt concerning the power of the Allied forces.

Thus, in Singapore he wanted "an inter-service display of force, with a battleship tied up alongside in Keppel Harbour, troops formed up on the quay side and the Air Force flying overhead."[5]

Just as General Douglas MacArthur dominated the Tokyo Bay surrender ceremony, its Singapore counterpart would bear the personal stamp of Mountbatten, who understandably considered the event the high point of his career. As biographer Philip Ziegler points out, Mountbatten's vanity rivaled MacArthur's, and as a great grandson of Queen Victoria and a cousin of King George VI he had a keen sense of rank, ceremony,

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4. On rivalry between the Americans and British in the theater, see Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Richard J. Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War Against Japan: Britain, America and the Politics of Secret Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and E. Bruce Reynolds, *Thailand's Secret War: OSS, SOE and the Free Thai Underground during World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

5. Minutes of SAC's 270th meeting, 20 August 1945, SEAC War Diaries, Box 83, RG 331, U.S. National Archives, College Park, MD (hereafter NARA).

and protocol.[6] He, however, claimed to have no illusions about chivalry in modern warfare. He told another biographer shortly after the war that he had been disabused of such notions when German planes strafed the survivors after sinking his destroyer (HMS *Kelly*) in the Mediterranean in May 1941. "I learned that you don't fight on your own terms, or on any preconceived ideas of chivalry, but you fight on the enemy's terms," he recalled.[7] In a similar vein, his ideas about the way the surrender should be implemented were shaped by his perceptions of how the Japanese had prosecuted the war.

Mountbatten acknowledged a deep personal distaste for and distrust of the defeated enemy. Although he later claimed to have disliked the Japanese from 1921 when he judged them as "hard people with hard eyes" during a visit to Japan, his strongly negative view seems in large part a direct response to the Japanese mistreatment of Allied POWs, "the one thing during the war that seared my mind," as he later recalled. "There were no extenuating circumstances, and I could find no compassion for them at all," he added. "I loathed them. That's why I didn't go to the Tokyo Bay surrender – I just couldn't have stood the sight of them. My own ceremony in Singapore – well, duty obliged me to be there. But I didn't like it."[8]

Mountbatten's attitude also reflected his impression of "surly and ill-disciplined" Japanese captives during an April 1945 visit to a POW camp in India. "When I think of the way the Japanese overwork their prisoners of war and flog them at the slightest excuse," he wrote in his diary, "I am horrified to think that when the Japanese are the prisoners of war and we are the jailors they seem to get the better of us."[9]

Mountbatten made clear his determination to deal firmly with the Japanese. In a letter to MacArthur the day after the Japanese surrender was announced he expressed concern that the sudden end to the war would "enable the Japanese leaders to delude their peoples into thinking they were defeated only by the scientists and not in battle, unless we can so humble them that the completeness of defeat is brought home to them." He added: "unless we really are tough with all the Japanese leaders they will be able to build themselves up eventually for another war." Five days later in a letter to General Adrian Carton de Wiart, his liaison officer in China, he expressed regret that the war had not ended with the Japanese Emperor personally surrendering in Manila, an act that "would

6. Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), p. 297. Ziegler offers an insightful comparison of the two commanders.
7. Quoted in Ray Murphy, *The Last Viceroy: The Life and Times of Rear-Admiral the Earl Mountbatten of Burma* (London: Jarrolds, 1948), p. 16.
8. Quoted in Richard Hough, *Mountbatten: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 1981), p. 209.
9. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, p. 201.

have destroyed for all time the feudal and militaristic structure of Japan, which now looks [as if it is] being saved." At a staff meeting on 23 August he expressed qualms about MacArthur's policy of repatriating Japanese forces as soon as they were disarmed and transportation was available, considering it "inequitable, in the highest degree, that Allied manpower should be used to repair damage committed by the defeated enemy…"[10] Most remarkably, according to the diary of American General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, Mountbatten favored the liquidation of the Japanese royal family, describing its members as "all morons, inbred and degenerate."[11]

Despite his troubled relations with the irascible General Joseph Stilwell and problems with former subordinate General Albert Wedemeyer, after the latter replaced Stilwell in China, Mountbatten took pride in his ability to work with American officers. He had developed a particularly good rapport with General Raymond "Speck" Wheeler, whom he once described as "one of the nicest men I have ever met."[12] Wheeler had spent the entire war in India and had become the commander of the American India-Burma Theater and concurrently Mountbatten's deputy in June 1945. Upon assuming these positions, Wheeler had ordered his staff to cease carping about the British and their methods, a stance Mountbatten greatly appreciated.[13]

Mountbatten made sure that Wheeler, who had already received his next assignment as commander of the Army Corps of Engineers, would participate in the Singapore ceremony before departing for Washington.[14] Wheeler would take with him his beloved only child, daughter Peggy, who since 1944 had served as a civilian employee of Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Detachment 404 at Mountbatten's headquarters in Kandy, Ceylon. Although Mountbatten resisted Wheeler's efforts to get Peggy one of the coveted seats inside the council chambers of the Singapore Municipal Building where the surrender ceremony would be held, he placed her with his wife Edwina on the second-floor balcony at

10. Minutes of SAC's 272nd meeting, 23 August 1945, SEAC War Diaries, Box 83, RG 331, NARA.
11. Quotations from Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, pp. 302-303.
12. Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, p. 248.
13. "Talk by General R.A. Wheeler in Delhi to Staff Officers India-Burma Theater," 23 June 1945 in Raymond B. Wheeler Papers, Box 10, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA (hereafter Hoover Institution). Wheeler said that "There must be no destructive or malicious criticism of the British, not even informally…British methods differ from ours in many respects. We shall be irked by delays and resentful of their methods. Nevertheless, I will not have individuals entering into arguments or making statements derogatory to the British under the pretext of standing up for American rights. When difficulties occur, conduct discussions dispassionately, and if of sufficient importance, inform your next superior. It will be my job to seek correction."
14. Mountbatten to Wheeler, undated letter, Wheeler Papers, Box 10, Hoover Institution.

the front of the building.[15]

Wheeler's American party of fourteen arrived in Singapore on the morning of 10 September on a C-54 that also carried a jeep for the general's personal transportation. British Indian troops had first landed in the city only five days earlier and Wheeler was warned that all Japanese troops had not yet been brought under control, but all he encountered appeared "perfectly docile." Following an afternoon tour of the POW camps, he wrote to his wife: "The things we saw are almost unbelievable. It is inconceivable that military prisoners of war should be so treated. There will most surely be many trials of war criminals."[16]

Wheeler went to the airfield on 11 September to greet Mountbatten and join him in inspecting the preparations for the following day's ceremony. A British non-commissioned signals officer attached to Mountbatten's party, Sergeant Richard Munby, recalled:

> During the 10-mile drive to Singapore, we were greeted joyously by the crowds who had assembled to line the route; most houses and shops…displayed either the Chinese National Emblem or the Union Jack and many of the menfolk jumped to attention as we passed and saluted us, whilst the women and girls smiled charmingly, momentarily forgetful of their natural eastern modesty.[17]

As part of the British effort to humble the Japanese, surrendered troops had been ordered hurriedly to fill in air raid trenches dug in the *padang*, the large open plaza in front of the Municipal Building. Sergeant Munby observed:

> …we saw hundreds of Japs being marched under Indian guards…under the eyes of a mocking crowd. The Japs passed within three feet of where I was standing and it was interesting to note the expressions on their face[s]. Some showed signs of great humiliation and were probably unwilling tools forced to carry out their Government's orders; others were arrogant, brutal creatures to whom the catcalls and derision of the crowd meant not a thing. These are the men, if they can be sifted out, who should be made to pay for their country's merciless inhumanity.[18]

Mountbatten also commented on the scene, writing with satisfaction of the "colossal crowd" of Singaporeans that had gathered for "the most

15. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, p. 245.
16. Raymond B. Wheeler to Olive Wheeler, 12 September 1945, Wheeler Papers, Box 15, Hoover Institution.
17. Quoted in Bose, *The End of the War*, p. 112.
18. Ibid., p. 100.

pleasant sight which the population that had been suffering under the Japanese yoke for 3½ years could possibly wish to see."[19]

The grand Government House, which had previously served as a headquarters for Itagaki, had been prepared for the important visitors, but economic circumstances in Singapore were strained and food was in short supply. While smartly dressed Chinese waiters welcomed Mountbatten's party with glasses of sherry, the rations proved less appealing. Sergeant Munby noted that "It was rather amusing to watch the Supremo and Lady Louis – when she arrived – eating the same hard, butterless dog biscuits about which the troops on exercise back in England used to grumble so incessantly."[20]

A minor crisis developed when Mountbatten discovered that his batman had failed to bring the ribbons worn with his dress uniform. Munby noted that the Admiral dispatched a special plane to Kandy to retrieve them, while the batman worked feverishly to put together a substitute array of decorations just in case. The plane, however, returned with ribbons in time for the next day's ceremony.[21]

The Japanese Southern Army commander, Field Marshall Terauchi Hisaichi, incapacitated by a stroke, remained in Indochina, leaving the next most senior officer, General Itagaki, commander of the Singapore-based Seventh Area Army, the duty of heading the surrender delegation. From an Allied perspective, a certain karmic justice could be seen in the fact that Itagaki, a key instigator of the 1931 Manchurian Incident and a prominent army hardliner who initially was inclined not to accept the decision to surrender, had to carry out the humiliating chore. Subsequently, the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal would convict and execute Itagaki as a Class A war criminal.

Among the other six Japanese officers who would face Mountbatten, Wheeler, and other Allied officers at the surrender was General Nakamura Aketo, commander of the 18th Area Army based in Bangkok, Thailand. General Nakamura, who had been assigned in Bangkok since early 1943, in compliance with British orders flew to Singapore, arriving on the afternoon of 11 September. At British headquarters he met another participant, General Kimura Hyōtarō, commander of the Burma Area Army. Ignored and left cooling their heels for two hours, the two finally decamped to Itagaki's headquarters. There they witnessed one of the "dispirited" Japanese labor units returning from the hard day's work. The officer in charge complained: "It's completely against the laws of humanity. It's retaliation, isn't it?"[22]

19. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, p. 245.
20. Quoted in Bose, *The End of the War*, p. 113.
21. Ibid., p. 115.
22. Nakamura Aketo, *Hotoke no shireikan* [The Buddha's Commander] (Tokyo:

At dinner, Itagaki apologized for the poor fare, but urged his fellow officers to "relax and drown a thousand regrets in a cup of sake." During the meal the officers discussed an imbroglio with the British concerning Mountbatten's determination to receive Terauchi's sword. The field marshall's sword presented by then Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki in 1943 was in the hands of Terauchi's family in Tokyo. The Japanese considered his everyday sword inappropriately plain and adamantly refused to surrender it, but had offered to obtain a better one from Tokyo for later presentation.[23]

The British took the sword issue very seriously because Mountbatten and his best-known subordinate General Sir William Slim, victor of the Burma campaign, considered the public surrender of commanders' swords essential in convincing the Japanese rank and file of defeat, thereby averting the emergence of a "legend of an unconquered army" as in post-World War I Germany. "No Japanese soldier who had seen his general march up and hand over his sword would ever doubt that the Invincible Army was invincible no longer," Slim believed. This idea ran counter to General MacArthur's instructions – which had described the surrender of swords as "archaic" – and warnings from Japan experts that the swords were so important to Japanese officers that demanding them might invite continued resistance, hamper their authority to command, or incite them to suicide. To the latter arguments, Slim bluntly replied that he was ready in case of continued resistance. Moreover, he planned to separate commanders from their men, and "any Japanese officer wishing to commit suicide would be given every facility."[24]

As the Japanese generals and admirals assembled at their headquarters on the morning of 12 September, several British officers appeared to inspect them. One, presumably a doctor, used a shoehorn-like device drawn from his pocket to inspect the throats of the seven Japanese officers. "He didn't once disinfect it, wash it or wipe it," Nakamura noted with disgust. "This is something a doctor from an enlightened country would not do. This was our first impression of the surrender ceremony."[25]

Preliminary events on the *padang* commenced under cloudy skies with Royal Navy ships providing an impressive backdrop in the harbor. Because Indian troops had carried out the occupation of the city, some 4,000 sailors had been given shore leave to add much desired Caucasian

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Shūhōsha, 1958), pp. 155-156.

23. Ibid., pp. 156-157. The Associated Press report (*The New York Times*, 13 September 1945) on the surrender ceremony quoted Mountbatten as saying that Terauchi's sword "is the one thing I want out of this war."

24. Field-Marshal Sir William Slim, *Defeat Into Victory* (New York: David McKay, 1961), pp. 441-442.

25. Nakamura, *Hotoke no shireikan*, p. 158.

faces to the scene. Mountbatten and Wheeler arrived together in an open car driven by a recently released POW. They reviewed the honor guards, with the commander stopping to speak with several of the troops. Formations of planes passed overhead.[26]

Cars had meanwhile carried the seven Japanese officers to the vicinity of the Municipal Building, but armed guards escorted them the last hundred yards on s single-file march through a gauntlet of predominantly Chinese spectators. Lee Kuan Yew, the future leader of independent Singapore, had joined the throng and later recalled the scene:

> The crowd hooted, whistled and jeered but the Japanese were impassive and dignified, looking straight ahead…the seven generals who now walked up the steps of the city hall represented an army that had not been routed in battle. They would have fought to the death and they left the people of Singapore in no doubt that they would have preferred to have gone down in flames, bringing everyone down with them, rather than surrender.[27]

Straits Times reporter Harry Miller noted the "pale and expressionless" faces of the Japanese. "It was a tense moment," he added. "The crowd watched them grimly, wondering what were the thoughts in those bowed heads."[28]

The seven climbed the twenty-five steps to enter the Municipal Building, flanked by lines of Royal Marines. Just inside they passed between lines of resistance fighters from the communist-affiliated Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) that had cooperated with the British clandestine service Force 136. Sergeant Art Heeman, an American military journalist who watched as the Japanese were ushered into an anteroom, reported: "A tough looking Aussie next to me muttered some very impolite language, then turned to a British ATS girl near him and apologized. The girl smiled and said, 'If I weren't of the weaker sex, I'd join you. No apology is necessary.'"[29]

Mountbatten entered the building about 1045, basking in the cheers of the crowd, waving, and saluting. In the council chambers long tables covered with green cloth awaited the delegates. Armed honor guards, in-

26. *Straits Times*, 13 September 1945 and Bose, *The End of the War*, p. 111.
27. Lee Kuan Yew, *The Singapore Story: Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1998), p. 84.
28. *Straits Times*, 13 September 1945. The long article on the surrender ceremony was unsigned, but Bose, p. 116, identifies the reporter as Miller, who had spent the war in Singapore as a civilian internee.
29. Heeman's account of the events of 12 September was published in the 20 September 1945 edition of the army newspaper *India-Burma Theater Roundup*. A copy was found in the Wheeler Papers, Box 2, Hoover Instution.

cluding American Sergeant John M. Turner, stood in front of the council room's eight columns, representing the various Allied nations.[30]

The select audience of some 200, including officers, released POWs, and such dignitaries as the sultan of the neighboring Malay state of Johore and the Anglican bishop of Singapore, a former internee who had been tortured by the Japanese, filed in. The ten officers representing the Allied forces took their places at long tables, with Wheeler and Slim positioned on opposite sides of the podium. All remained seated as the seven Japanese moved into position at a parallel table facing the victors.

"I looked at the dull impassive masks that were the faces of the Japanese generals and admirals seated opposite," Slim wrote.

> Their plight moved me not at all. For them I had none of the sympathy of soldier for soldier that I had felt for Germans, Turks, Italians, or Frenchmen that by the fortunes of war I had seen surrender. I knew too well what these men and those under their orders had done to their prisoners.[31]

As he observed his Allied counterparts, General Nakamura felt that they were "identifying suspects," noting that they averted their gaze when eye contact was made. Under the mistaken impression that General Arthur E. Percival, who had surrendered to the Japanese in Singapore in 1942, was present, Nakamura speculated that Percival would have preferred to have the man who had humbled him, General Yamashita Tomoyuki, in Itagaki's place.[32] In fact, Percival, who had participated in the Tokyo surrender ceremony, could have been in Singapore, but Mountbatten vetoed this, no doubt considering the presence of the defeated general, emaciated and haggard from his long ordeal as a POW, precisely the wrong sort of symbolism.[33]

All were instructed to stand. Writing in the racist vein of the time, Sergeant Heeman noted that "the hot glare of the floodlights beat down on the shaven heads of the Nips, who looked like monkeys with billiard balls for heads as they stood stiffly at attention awaiting the entrance of Mountbatten."[34] Offstage, Mountbatten "felt like some actor taking a cue at the climax of a great opera."[35]

After a pregnant pause, the doors were flung open. Mountbatten surged in "sublimely resplendent in white tropical admiral's uniform, and looking thirty rather than forty-five," as a biographer described him. "His expression, as always on ceremonial occasions of great moment, was one

30. *The New York Times*, 13 September 1945.
31. Slim, *Defeat Into Victory*, p. 442.
32. Nakamura, *Hotoke no shireikan*, p. 159.
33. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, pp. 240-241.
34. *India-Burma Theater Roundup*, 20 September 1945.
35. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, p. 247.

of solemn exaltation, like an archbishop about to grant his blessing to the universe."[36] From Nakamura's perspective, Mountbatten had "the look of an elegant young nobleman," with a manner "extremely grand."[37]

At the podium, Mountbatten dramatically read a letter from the ailing Field Marshal Terauchi. He revealed that he had sent his personal doctor to confirm that Terauchi was unable to travel before agreeing to accept the surrender from Itagaki. He added that Terauchi would have to surrender to him personally when his health permitted. Describing the magnitude of the British forces landing in Malaya, Mountbatten sternly declared: "I wish to make this plain; the surrender today is no negotiated surrender. The Japanese are submitting to superior forces, now massed here in the Port of Singapore."[38]

After Mountbatten read aloud Itagaki's credentials and the instrument of surrender, General Ronald Penney passed the eleven copies of the latter document back and forth between Itagaki and Mountbatten for their signatures. In addition to signing, Itagaki stamped the papers with an official army seal and his personal seal. Nakamura found Itagaki's composure "magnificent," describing his strong technique in sealing the documents as "machinelike" and "very impressive."[39]

Itagaki's comportment, dignified from Nakamura's perspective, appeared menacing to Sergeant Heeman. In his view, Itagaki demonstrated that he was "not kowtowing to anyone…There was nothing in his behavior that indicated he was beaten."[40] Slim noticed that as Itagaki pressed his seal to one of the documents "a spasm of rage and despair twisted his face. Then it was gone, and his mask was as expressionless as the rest."[41]

Some British participants thought that the constant flashing of bulbs from a corps of press photographers detracted from the solemnity of the event. Admiral Arthur Power complained that the press had been "allowed to make the scene resemble a football match" noting with disgust that "one of these creatures came up to the signing table behind the Supreme Commander and, from a range of a few feet, 'shot' him…"[42] Sergeant Heeman recorded a similar incident involving General Numata Tokazō, Terauchi's chief of staff. "Arrogant like all Japs," he wrote of Numata, "when a photographer flashed a bulb practically under his left nostril, the question arose whether he would retain his dignity or sock the photographer. He retained his dignity."[43]

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36. Hough, *Mountbatten*, pp. 203-204.
37. Nakamura, *Hotoke no shireikan*, p. 160.
38. *Straits Times*, 13 September 1945.
39. Nakamura, *Hotoke no shireikan*, p. 160.
40. *India-Burma Theater Roundup*, 20 September 1945.
41. Slim, *Defeat Into Victory*, pp. 442, 443.
42. Quoted in Bose, *The End of the War*, pp. 125-126.
43. *India-Burma Theater Roundup*, 20 September 1945.

In sharp contrast, Mountbatten, who appreciated the power of the media and valued publicity, had no complaints about the photographers. In fact, he noted with amusement that China's representative, General Feng Yee, whipped out a camera and began taking pictures of the Japanese during the signing ceremony. Mountbatten wrote:

> The Japanese delegates looked absolutely furious for to be photographed from the opposite table, and by a Chinese, must have been particularly galling to their pride. Not even Hollywood, had they been called upon to stage such a ceremony, could have thought up the idea of the Chinese delegate taking pictures from the table.[44]

Mountbatten described the end of the ceremony:

> The signatures completed, I invited the Japanese delegation to withdraw. With the exception of Numata, who looked almost human, I have never seen six more villainous, depraved or brutal faces in my life. I shudder to think what it would have been like to be in their power. When they got off their chairs and shambled out, they looked like a bunch of gorillas with great baggy breeches and knuckles almost trailing on the ground.[45]

Sergeant Heeman noted that as the Japanese filed out Mountbatten slowly shook his head and whispered something to Wheeler.[46] It may well have been a comment along the lines of the diary entry above, as in a subsequent letter to his wife describing the event Wheeler expressed a similar impression: "As I watched the tough-looking faces of the Japs, I felt grateful that I was not on their side of the table with them on my side."[47]

While this view of the Japanese as evil but formidable creatures seems to have predominated in the minds of most of the Western observers, General Carton de Wiart, whose role in the Pacific War had been military liaison rather than command of troops, apparently had not moved beyond the dismissive prewar racial hubris that had led the Allies to underestimate Japanese military potential. "In a way the ceremony was impressive," he recalled, "but the Japs looked such insignificant little objects that I could not help wondering how they had kept us occupied for so long."[48]

When the Japanese representatives left the building, they faced a

44. Mountbatten, Personal Diary, p. 249.
45. Ibid.
46. *India-Burma Theater Roundup*, 20 September 1945.
47. Raymond B. Wheeler to Olive Wheeler, 12 September 1945, Wheeler Papers, Box 15, Hoover Institution.
48. Adrian Carton de Wiart, *Happy Odyssey* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1950), p. 272.

gauntlet of public derision. Nakamura recalled that

> the jeers of the crowd calling "Bakayarō! Bakayarō!" [Fool! Fool!] nearly deafened me. Gradually the crowd, wild with excitement, had almost overflowed the city hall area. The crowd, which packed roofs, eaves, and windows made fists, raised their arms, and defamed us to their hearts content. The people on the road, like raging billows came to strike the cars.

Although the situation seemed sufficiently threatening that Nakamura was thinking of *karate* as a last resort means of self-defense, the guards effectively protected the Japanese delegation.[49]

Although he had other matters on his mind, Nakamura could not help considering why the Japanese army had come to be so hated in Singapore. He contrasted the situation with Bangkok where the army had a much better reputation and where even in defeat it was not unusual for people on the street to offer soldiers gifts of fruit. He acknowledged that in part the difference reflected Singaporean anger about the *sook ching*, the massacre of thousands of young Chinese suspected of loyalty to Nationalist China, after the Japanese seizure of the city in 1942.[50]

With the Japanese gone, Mountbatten addressed the throng from the steps of the Municipal Building, reading his order of the day. Referring to Terauchi's absence and his determination that the Field Marshal surrender directly to him, he emphasized that he would not permit "any evasion or trickery on the part of the defeated Japanese, however important he may consider himself." Mountbatten declared:

> They are finding it very hard to accept defeat and may try to wiggle out of the terms of surrender. They may behave arrogantly. You will have my support in taking the firmest measures against any Japanese attempt at obstinacy, impudence or non-cooperation.[51]

Mountbatten's determination to treat the Japanese firmly would not weaken in the subsequent weeks, despite the fact that the British would have to rely on their forces to maintain order across much of Southeast Asia. He resolutely vetoed a proposal to commend Japanese who were particularly cooperative, responding to an advocate of leniency:

> If I had my way I would shoot about twenty of them – you have to do something to satisfy the bloodlust. Then I'd officially kick about 200 or 300 of them in the arse in front of the rest, and I'd let them go back to their countries with reprimands. And that

49. Nakamura, *Hotoke no shireikan*, p. 158-159.
50. Ibid., p. 161.
51. *The New York Times*, 13 September 1945.

would be the end of the whole show, old man.[52]

In late November Mountbatten would fly to Saigon to redeem his pledge to get Field Marshal Terauchi's sword. He actually received two swords, one for presentation to the King ("the smarter" one) and one for himself (the older one). Although presentation of the swords in boxes seemed suspicious at first, Mountbatten was reassured to learn that it was "a sign of special humility to a high personage to place them in a box." In a singular expression of pity for a defeated Japanese foe, he recommended that Terauchi not be prosecuted as a war criminal since he was "practically ga-ga…semi-paralysed and walks with a stick."[53]

Time would not diminish Mountbatten's hostility toward the Japanese. In 1971 he attended a reception for Emperor Hirohito in London only on command of Queen Elizabeth II. Although present, he avoided shaking hands with the Japanese monarch. He also pointedly excluded any official Japanese presence at his funeral in plans he had drawn up prior to his assassination by Irish Republican Army terrorists in 1979.[54]

American representatives in Singapore echoed Mountbatten's warnings about the defeated enemy. "The Japanese shall have to be carefully watched in the future," General Wheeler declared, "for a people constituted like they are always possess a latent sense of hostility to their conquerors."[55] Sergeant Heeman shared his commander's concern, writing in a newspaper column:

> If the Japanese Army personnel at Singapore considered themselves beaten, they made a colossal and successful effort to disguise their individual feelings.
>
> The Singapore Japs were tough, arrogant looking soldiers. There was nothing humiliated or servile about their demeanor. That went both for the generals and admirals at the surrender ceremony in the Municipal Building and for the enlisted men sullenly swinging picks and shovels in the parks under guard of Indian troops.[56]

His concerns about the future notwithstanding, Wheeler thought the Singapore event had achieved its purpose:

> I think the ceremony went off very well. It was firm, impressive, brief. In my opinion the attitude of the Allies was that of Christian nations living up to the concepts of the things we be-

52. Quoted in Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, p. 303.
53. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, pp. 265-266. A photograph of the sword presentation appears in Murphy, *The Last Viceroy*, opposite p. 209.
54. Hough, *Mountbatten*, p. 209.
55. *India-Burma Theater Roundup*, 20 September 1945.
56. Ibid.

> lieve. I also think the Supremo's pronouncement to the Japs before the signing was very firm, leaving no doubt in their minds as to our beliefs and intentions.[57]

For his part, Mountbatten praised General Brian Kimmins, the chief planner of the ceremony, for having "staged a marvelous show."[58] He reported in a memorandum for the Government of Australia that "the whole ceremony was carried out with the fullest dignity and smartness, and was so deeply impressive as not to easily be forgotten by any of the participants or audience. There were no incidents."[59]

Mountbatten particularly enjoyed his exhilarating exit from the stage. After presiding over the raising of a Union Jack hidden away by an internee during the years of the Japanese occupation, at 1130 he departed by car for Government House. He wrote:

> By this time the crowds that had collected all along the road were so dense and cheering so wildly that I felt (foolish as it may seem) it would be better to stand up. My doing so was a signal for renewed outbursts of cheering and I had the amazing experience of driving though two miles of densely packed crowds to one never-ending thunderous roar of cheers.[60]

Ziegler, Mountbatten's biographer, believed that in the euphoria of the moment the Admiral erred in thinking that the crowds were cheering the return of British rule rather than simply celebrating the defeat of the hated Japanese.[61] For his part, Sergeant Heeman sensed that the predominantly Chinese Singaporeans were happiest about the latter, pointing out that flags of the pro-communist resistance "outnumbered Union Jacks 5-1 on one street" and noting a "big communist parade" on the night of 11 September. He also observed that as the Allied representatives filed out of the Municipal Building, the Chinese delegate "received the greatest applause" and "was almost mobbed by cheering Chinese."[62]

Lee Kuan Yew, speaking in an emotional political mode as Singapore's leader, famously declared in 1961:

> My colleagues and I are of that generation of young men who went through the Second World War and the Japanese Occupation and emerged determined that no one – neither the Japanese nor the British – had the right to push and kick us around. We

57. Ibid.
58. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, p. 246.
59. Mountbatten, "Report on the Surrender of Japanese Forces…," September 1945, SEAC War Diaries, Box 90, RG 331, NARA.
60. Mountbatten, *Personal Diary*, p. 250.
61. Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, p. 303.
62. *India-Burma Theater Roundup*, 20 September 1945.

were determined that we could govern ourselves and bring up our children in a country where we can be proud to be self-respecting people.

When the war came to an end in 1945, there was never a chance of the old type of British colonial system ever being re-created. The scales had fallen from our eyes and we saw for ourselves that the local people would run the country.[63]

But several decades later, writing more reflectively, Lee acknowledged that Singaporean attitudes were more diverse and complex in 1945 than his 1961 remarks suggested. He acknowledged that not only was a portion of the Chinese population strongly pro-British, but the public at large was "generally happy to welcome the British back." He attributed this to unrealistic expectations of a return to "the good old days" that had developed during the onerous Japanese Occupation. "Our hopes, based on nostalgia, were too high and we were bound to be disappointed," he wrote.[64]

In the contemporary editorial view of the strongly imperialist *Straits Times*, however, the raising of the Union Jack unequivocally symbolized a proper restoration. No longer would Singaporeans be subject to an "alien and incomprehensible culture" imposed from "that strange and remote group of islands in the north-west Pacific." The editorialist exulted:

> And so Singapore is, again Singapore. "Syonan" [Shōnan] already seems like a bad dream, and the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" has passed into the limbo of history. Singapore is what it has always been in the wider world: the headquarters of a British Crown Colony, the commercial capital of Malaya and the entrepot of British commerce in South-East Asia: a colonial city British in origins, traditions and governance, bestowing upon its citizens the cultural heritage of the English-speaking world, but withal one of the great cities of modern Asia, linked by immutable ties with China, India and Malaya.[65]

But once the shouts ceased and the flags were furled, Mountbatten and his staff had to face squarely the myriad problems of attempting to occupy and control a vast region awash with weapons. Faced with economic disruption and consequent privation, a rising tide of anti-imperialist sentiment, and a simmering stew of ethnic hostilities, the war-weary

63. Quoted in Yeo Kim Wah and Albert Lau, "The Transition to Independence," in Ernest C.T. Chew and Edwin Lee, eds., *A History of Singapore* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 117.
64. Lee, *The Singapore Story*, pp. 85-86.
65. *Straits Times*, 13 September 1945.

and bankrupt British soon realized the necessity of scaling back their ambitions of imperial restoration and began their relatively orderly retreat from Asia. Accordingly, in retrospect, the Singapore ceremony can best be viewed as a final display of imperial martial glory before the British Empire in Asia followed the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity sphere into the "limbo of history."

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Questions and Answers: Erminio Bagnasco

ROBERT VON MAIER
VINCENT P. O'HARA

Lieutenant Commander Erminio Bagnasco retired from the Italian Navy in 1972 and became an industrial manager. He is the editor of *STORIA militare*, a magazine he founded in 1993. A distinguished naval scholar, he is the author of numerous books, including *I sommergibili della seconda guerra mondiale* (Parma: Albertelli, 1973), which was also published as *Submarines of World War Two* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1978) and as *U-Boote im 2. Weltkrieg* (Motorbuch Verlag, 2008); *Le navi da battaglia classe "Littorio" 1937-1948* [Littorio class battleships 1937-1948], with Augusto De Toro (Parma: Albertelli, 2007); and *La mimetizzazione delle navi italiane 1940-1945* [Italian Navy Camouflage 1940-1945], with Maurizio Brescia (Parma: Albertelli, 2006).

Q: Are there any Second World War scholars who have been an important influence on you as an historian?

A: I think the person who – back in the 1960s – decisively encouraged my historical studies was Admiral Aldo Cocchia, then head of the *Ufficio Storico della Marina* [Historical Office of the Italian Navy]. During the war, he had been an important protagonist in the "*guerra dei convogli*" [war of the convoys] in the Mediterranean. Afterward, he wrote several books and became one of the most clear-minded and brilliant critics of Italy's maritime war.

In my youth, another good teacher was Admiral Giuseppe Fioravanzo. He was a well-known and respected author who wrote many of the most important volumes of the "official" history of the Italian Navy in World War II.

I would also like to remember my friend Augusto Nani, co-editor of the *Almanacco Navale* [Naval Almanac] with Giorgio Giorgerini.[1] He

1. Giorgio Giorgerini and Augusto Nani, eds., *Almanacco Navale* (Rome: Stato Maggiore della Marina, published biennially).

provided many valuable and important technical lessons early in my studies, mainly oriented toward the history and development of naval ships and operations.

Q: If you were asked to recommend five Italian-language books that should be considered essential reading for anyone interested in the history of the *Regia Marina* in World War II, what works would you select and what are the specific reasons for your selections?

A: The five titles, in no particular order, would be:

Giorgio Giorgerini, *La guerra italiana sul mare. La marina tra vittoria e sconfitta, 1940-1943* [The Italian War on the Sea: The Navy between Victory and Defeat, 1940-1943].[2] An in-depth analysis, Giorgerini wrote this book almost sixty years after the war's end. It deals with the most important features of Italian conduct of the war at sea in World War II. Not sparing in his criticism, the author provides a clear and comprehensive evaluation.

Alberto Santoni, *Il vero traditore. Il ruolo documentato di ULTRA nella guerra del Mediterraneo* [The True Treachery: The True Role of the ULTRA Documents in the Mediterranean War].[3] Despite the polemical title with an Italian flavor, the book minutely details and recounts the impact of British decryption of Italo-German radio communications on military events, especially on offensive and defensive operations on seaborne trade and convoys. Originally published in 1981, this important volume has been reprinted several times.

Junio Valerio Borghese, *Decima flottiglia Mas. Dalle origini all'armistizio* [The Tenth Flotilla Mas: From Its Origins to the Armistice].[4] Written in the 1950s, these memoirs by one of the most important heads of the *Regia Marina's* assault craft arm have been translated into many foreign languages and reprinted many times. They are a primary resource for everyone writing about the history of the innovative assault craft and related operations of the Italian Navy in the Mediterranean during the Second World War.

Giuseppe Fioravanzo, *L'organizzazione della Marina durante il conflitto* [The Organization of the Navy during the Conflict].[5] In the 1970s,

2. Giorgio Giorgerini, *La guerra italiana sul mare. La marina tra vittoria e sconfitta, 1940-1943* (Milan: Mondadori, 2001).

3. Alberto Santoni, *Il vero traditore. Il ruolo documentato di ULTRA nella guerra del Mediterraneo* (Milan: Mursia, 1981).

4. Junio Valerio Borghese, *Decima flottiglia Mas. Dalle origini all'armistizio* (Milan: Garzanti, 1954). An English-language edition, *Sea Devils: Italian Navy Commandos in World War II*, was published by the Naval Institute Press in 1995.

5. Giuseppe Fioravanzo, *L'organizzazione della Marina durante il conflitto*, 3 vols. (Rome: Ufficio Storico della Marina, 1972-1978). Volume 1: *Efficienza all'apertura del-*

the *Ufficio Storico della Marina* published this three-volume work in which the author exhaustively and competently examines the organic evolution of the Italian Navy in all matters at sea and ashore.

Giovanni Bernardi, *La Marina, gli armistizi e il trattato di pace: settembre 1943 – dicembre 1951* [The Navy, the Armistice and the Treaty of Peace: September 1943 – December 1951].[6] Bernardi fully examines the naval features of the Italian armistice of 8 September 1943 and the later creation and implementation of the peace treaty that changed the naval balance in the Mediterranean.

For obvious reasons, I have not included my book, *In guerra sul mare. Navi e marinai italiani nel secondo conflitto mondiale* [In War at Sea. Ships and Italian Sailors in the Second World War], a vast photographic history with more than 1,000 photographs and long captions on Italy's naval war during World War II.[7] Published in 2005, I devoted the first eighty pages to a thoughtful, critical synthesis of operations and the general efficiency of the ships.

Q: For many English-only students of the war, the Italian point of view has been represented foremost by the works of Marc' Antonio Bragadin and James J. Sadkovich.[8] Will you comment on these works, and what other English-language books would you recommend for a balanced presentation of the Italian Navy in the Second World War?

A: The deficiency of *Che ha fatto la Marina?* [What Did the Navy Do?] by Marc' Antonio Bragadin is that he wrote it many years ago and the work lacks the many updates that have emerged in more recent years. Moreover, it is particularly uncritical of the activities and shortcomings of the Italian Supreme Naval Command [*Supermarina*] in which the author himself served, albeit in a non-decision-making capacity.

The work of James J. Sadkovich in the original English-language edition contains significant technical errors. For example, in the statistical section he sums up gross register tons with displacement tons, thus con-

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le ostilità [Efficiency at the Beginning of Hostilities]; Volume 2: *Evoluzione organica dal 10-6-1940 al 8-9-1943* [Organic Evolution from 10 June 1940 to 8 September 1943]; and Volume 3: *I problemi organici durante il periodo armistiziale* [Organic Problems during the Armistice Period].

6. Giovanni Bernardi, *La Marina, gli armistizi e il trattato di pace: settembre 1943 – dicembre 1951* (Rome: Ufficio Storico della Marina Militare, 1979).

7. Erminio Bagnasco, *In guerra sul mare. Navi e marinai italiani nel secondo conflitto mondiale* (Parma: Albertelli, 2005).

8. Marc' Antonio Bragadin, *Che ha fatto la Marina? 1940-1945* (Milan: Garzanti, 1949). See also Marc' Antonio Bragadin, *The Italian Navy in World War II* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1957); James J. Sadkovich, *The Italian Navy in World War II* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994).

fusing volume with weight! As for the book's general layout, it is good that the author declares his intention to clarify for English-language readers the lesser-known history of the Italian Navy. Sadkovich, however, sets this intent aside and takes on the role of a defense attorney for the *Regia Marina*, even in circumstances where it would be better to take a critical position. Recently, this work has been translated into Italian.[9] Augusto De Toro, who edited the Italian-language edition, corrected the technical errors. But, as I stated in the Foreword I was asked to write, it preserves its other defects. Once readers recognize them, they can enjoy the book's many important attributes, such as Sadkovich's analysis of the logistics of the "War of the Convoys."

Also available in English is another general work by Greene and Massignani, *The Naval War in the Mediterranean, 1940-1943*.[10] Published in Great Britain in 1998, the book contains a comprehensive, in-depth bibliography and new information on the war. The authors, however, rarely make their own judgments and mostly confine themselves to presenting different interpretations expressed in the literature. They leave to the reader the task of drawing interpretations and conclusions. Also, many of the notes are not supported by archival documentation.

Q: You are one of the very few Italian naval historians whose works have been translated into English, and you have witnessed the evolution of naval history since the late 1950s. In your opinion, what have been the major concerns of Second World War naval historians over the last half century, and how have those concerns evolved?

A: On the history of the *Regia Marina* in the Second World War the first phase of historiography in the immediate postwar years imputed Italy's defeat at sea mainly to technical and operational factors. These included the lack of aircraft carriers and radar equipment, fuel shortages, Malta's role, and ineffective aerial reconnaissance.

Later, influenced by Admiral Angelo Jachino's books, the second phase began. Historians criticized the conduct of naval operations by the *Supermarina* and accused it of interfering with naval commanders at sea at every level.

Next, a new line of thought emerged, generated by the book *Navi e poltrone* [Ships and Armchairs] by Antonio Trizzino.[11] The author, un-

9. James J. Sadkovich, *La Marina italiana nella seconda guerra mondiale* (Gorizia: Libreria Editrice Goriziana, 2006).

10. Jack Greene and Alessandro Massignani, *The Naval War in the Mediterranean, 1940-1943* (London: Chatham, 1998). See also Vincent P. O'Hara, *Struggle for the Middle Sea: The Great Navies at War in the Mediterranean Theater, 1940-1945* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, forthcoming 2009).

11. Antonio Trizzino, *Navi e poltrone* (Milan: Longanesi, 1963).

able to provide logical explanations for many tragic events, concluded they were the result of enemy intelligence operations and even alleged some admirals had become intelligence sources for the enemy. Harsh polemics and several legal battles ensued, but nothing was resolved. It was not until the 1970s with the revelations regarding the crucial role played by ULTRA and British cryptologists that the field was cleared of criminal suspects, and historical studies were restored to more orthodox levels.

Meanwhile, new research has modified many earlier assessments. Scholars are downplaying the questions regarding the lack of aircraft carriers, fuel shortages, and Malta's role, and increasingly highlighting other problems. These include the lack of sonar equipment until late 1941, the modest effectiveness of Italian submarines in the Mediterranean in the first two years of the war, and the slow pace of repairs and new construction in Italian shipyards.

Today, students of Italian naval history have at their disposal many excellent books detailing the history of the *Regia Marina* in the Second World War. And, when necessary, the authors of these works do not hesitate to be critical of the Italian naval and air chiefs in the Mediterranean as well as the occasional lack of operational imagination, or the mistake of taking too long to react to enemy operations by modifying or developing new tactics.

Q: Vis à vis the need for additional scholarship, what do you believe are the most under-examined aspects of 1) the *Regia Marina's* participation in the Spanish Civil War; 2) the Battle of the Atlantic; and 3) Italian naval aviation during World War II?

A: Various Italian books have adequately and accurately detailed the *Regia Marina's* naval operations in the Spanish Civil War as well as Italian submarine operations in the Battle of the Atlantic. A little different is the situation regarding naval aviation. First, during the Second World War Italy had no naval aviation, only some reconnaissance aircraft and some anti-submarine seaplanes provided by the *Regia Aeronautica* under naval control. All torpedo planes and bombers belonged to the *Regia Aeronautica* and were under its direct control.

Well, I think we have not sufficiently analyzed and evaluated naval reconnaissance by seaplanes and large, land-based aircraft employed by the *Regia Aeronautica*. The books published thus far, which specifically analyze these aircraft, have not comprehensively detailed their operational service, which the naval command generally deemed insufficient despite the support provided by the *Luftwaffe* after 1941. It would be useful to have a study that compares the actual performance of Axis reconnaissance in the Mediterranean with other operational theaters.

Q: To what extent did the British in North Africa benefit from the Italo-Greek War and Italian participation in the attack on Yugoslavia?

A: Contrary to what many believe, the Italian attack on Greece in October 1940 and the difficult campaign that followed had little influence on Italian operations in North Africa. The *Regia Marina's* commitment on this new front was modest, and hardly affected sea traffic with Libya, then facing little enemy opposition. The success of the British offensive along the Libyan-Egyptian border in December 1940 was not because Marshal [Rodolfo] Graziani had too few troops. To the contrary. Graziani had many, perhaps too many, men under his command. He failed because the Italian Army lacked sufficient mobility with too few trucks and armored vehicles. Its deficiencies in military doctrine and organization were even more important.

Some negative, though not decisive, effects on operations in Libya grew instead from the *Regia Aeronautica's* great effort in the skies over Greece and Albania, which weakened the bombing capacity on the African Front, especially by the new air groups of Ju-87 *Stuka* dive bombers just received from Germany.

In its first phase, the brief Yugoslavian campaign in April 1941 required only a few Italian troops, who were already near the country's northern and southern borders. Furthermore, the campaign did not require large commitments from either the navy or air force and did not adversely affect operations in other sectors. However, the occupation of the Balkan Peninsula, especially Greece, did affect British operations in the Mediterranean.

Q: The war in the Mediterranean is very important to many historians, and it has inspired a number of legends. Would you identify aspects of this war which you believe would benefit from critical scrutiny?

A: I don't know exactly what legends you are referring to. If you mean clever propaganda – obviously tendentious – widely spread at the time by the British, it is not worth talking about this again, except to say that the Anglo-Saxon world still remembers this misinformation more than sixty years after the war.

As for inaccurate versions of the events, today there is no excuse for their existence. Scholars have now studied every wartime operation and have reconstructed and evaluated them and have reduced the gray areas to minimal importance. Yet, there remain some aspects of the war in the Mediterranean which would be interesting to study in more detail.

First was the general Italian failure to use submarines for massive and offensive mine-laying operations off the enemy's principal naval bases, except for a few such missions conducted in the first days of the war.

Some have written that the mines were defective and that Italians urgently needed the mine-laying vessels for transporting materials to Libya, but they are not convincing. Moreover, if this had been the case, why didn't the Italians pressure the Germans to supply mines that normal submarines could lay through torpedo tubes, like those U-boats were deploying in the Mediterranean?

Second, why didn't the *Regia Marina* ever bombard British military installations in Malta at great distance by big-gun battleships, even if only as a demonstration of force? There were many favorable opportunities, given the absence of enemy naval forces at Malta, the superiority of Italo-German air forces in the skies over the island, and more. Such an operation would have received worldwide media coverage, as did Britain's bombardment of Genoa in February 1941. Likely, the answer lies not so much on the military side as the political.

Q: Had Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's insistence on advancing into Egypt in the summer of 1942 not drawn off the landing craft and other resources allocated for the invasion of Malta, would the Italians have actually invaded the island? If so, how would that have affected the war in the Mediterranean?

A: Rommel was correct. The invasion of Malta – a demanding operation which was planned too late – would have meant nothing without success in Egypt. It is likely, in this case, the Allies would have abandoned Malta, which would have been located outside their supply lines to the African front. Britain's decisive defeat of the Italo-German army at El-Alamein and the Anglo-American invasion of Algeria threatened the Axis' position. Italy's occupation of Malta would not have changed matters, except, perhaps, to delay Tunisia's surrender for a few months and to complicate slightly Operation HUSKY, the Allied invasion of Sicily.

As for the Italian conquest of Malta, it would have been easy if tried in late summer 1940 as the British expected. The necessary landing forces and craft should have been ready, but were not. Further, the *Regia Marina* would have had to risk its battle fleet, and for various reasons, I don't believe it would have entered into an unavoidable clash with the Royal Navy.

A landing force for invading Malta was finally assembled in the summer of 1942. Except for two divisions of paratroopers, one Italian and one German, and a number of modern landing craft that could have put ashore a few well-trained battalions, the rest of the *Forza Navale Speciale* [Special Naval Force] was a disparate group of troops, ineffective ships, and marines. They would have met with great difficulties and high losses on the inaccessible Maltese cliffs. The German high command, remembering that their conquest of Crete in the spring of 1941 had cost

them many experienced airborne troops, were never fully convinced of the feasibility of a Maltese landing. On the other hand, the Italians were unable to carry out the task independently. They depended on their allies not only for a significant contribution of troops and air forces, but also for the fuel which would have been necessary for the ships involved.

Q: To what extent did the Germans undermine Italian strategy?

A: Regarding general strategy and especially naval strategy, I do not think that German demands adversely affected Italian planning. Indeed, they often proded the *Regia Marina* to conduct its naval warfare more dynamically. For example, the Germans requested the "action in force" against enemy shipping in the mid-eastern Mediterranean in March 1941. This led to the tragic nighttime clash at Cape Matapan, but the German strategy had been fundamentally correct. It was the *Regia Marina* that decided to carry out this operation using a battleship, rather than relying on fast cruisers as would have been more logical. Therefore, what happened was not the German's fault.

It is also true that the *Kriegsmarine* often proposed risky ventures that led to severe losses for the *Regia Marina*. This mirrored the same reckless and often unsuccessful German strategy that considered major warships expendable. Only between the Italian Armistice of September 1943 and the Spring of 1945 did the *Kriegsmarine* radically redirect its strategy in the Mediterranean toward effective guerrilla tactics, which were conducted by light (formerly Italian) vessels.

Q: In *Naval Firepower*, Norman Friedman gives a brief treatment of Italian gunnery in World War II and concludes that gunnery was not effective.[12] He writes: "Guns suffered from excessive dispersion. Training was unrealistic... [the navy] had made no preparation for night action..." and that "overall...the Italian navy proved ineffective."[13] Do you have any comments on these conclusions, and were Italian naval guns more prone to dispersion than those in other navies?

A: Norman Friedman, in his notable *Naval Firepower*, referred to my *Le armi delle navi italiane nella seconda guerra mondiale* [Italian Naval Weaponry in the Second World War], but I think he has overly generalized his conclusions.[14] What he says about deficiencies in training for

12. Norman Friedman, *Naval Firepower: Battleship Guns and Gunnery in the Dreadnought Era* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2008).
13. Friedman, *Naval Firepower*, pp. 266-267.
14. Erminio Bagnasco, *Le armi delle navi italiane nella seconda guerra mondiale* (Parma: Albertelli, 1978).

nighttime gunfire for major warships is true, but it is also true that from mid-1941 on, the Italians updated their old-fashioned, pre-war standards, despite not having effective radar equipment.

The problem of excessive salvo dispersion must be viewed in relation to the guns produced before the early 1930s. Later, in all new guns, this problem was significantly reduced and reached average figures of other navies for guns of similar calibers at normal firing distances. The best weapons here were the modern 381/50 guns of the *Littorio*-class battleships, the 152/55 guns of the *Garibaldi*-class cruisers and the *Littorio*-class, and the 135/45 guns of the *Capitani Romani*-class of fast scouts [*esploratori*] and the modernized *Andrea Doria*-class of battleships. However, it is true that dispersal of the falling-points from the center of the salvo was always rather wide at maximum distances and with heavy seas because on Italian warships line-of-sight stabilization gears were not very effective.

Italian vessels suffered two serious defects. First was the firing accuracy of machine guns, especially heavy machine guns, employed as anti-aircraft weapons because there were no local gyroscopic firing directors. Second, Italy's major warships, as well as destroyers, lacked medium-caliber guns employable against surface targets and aircraft.

Q: Did the Italians need aircraft carriers? And if they had built them, how well would they have fared considering ULTRA, Force K, British radar, and other factors?

A: I think that one or more aircraft carriers would have been useful to the *Regia Marina* in 1940. The wide and successful use of them by Great Britain's Royal Navy throughout the war dramatically contradicts the idea that carriers were not necessary for operations in the restricted waters of the Mediterranean.

Looking back, 1933 would have been the last opportunity to lay the keel for an aircraft carrier that the *Regia Marina* could have used successfully from the beginning of the war. This was especially true given Italy's absolute lack of naval and aeronautical experience. Instead, the *Regia Marina* decided to build an aircraft carrier too late to enter service before the war's end, which halted the carrier's construction.[15] The most realistic forecast at the time was that the ship and its air wing would not have been combat ready before mid-1945!

It is correct to assume that if the Italians had put a carrier into service

15. The conversion of the SS *Roma* from a transatlantic liner to the aircraft carrier *Aquila* was begun in 1941. At the time of the Armistice, the conversion was nearly complete. See Erminio Bagnasco and Enrico Cernuschi, *Le navi da guerra italiane 1940-1945* [Italian Warships 1940-1945] (Parma: Albertelli, 2nd ed., 2005).

after 1940 they could have lost it in many ways, and they had no possibility of replacing it quickly. But it is also realistic to assume that, even with the ship's loss, the Italians would not have lost the vast experience of air and naval cooperation that an operational aircraft carrier necessarily brings with it. Such experience proved to be a truly grave handicap to the *Regia Marina* and the *Regia Aeronautica* in the Second World War.

Q: To what extent did inter-service rivalries hamstring the *Regia Marina* during the Second World War?

A: Contrary to what many historians have long believed, the *Regia Marina's* lack of aircraft carriers was not principally due to the hostility of the *Regia Aeronautica* (although it did exist) and its influence on Mussolini. The chiefs of the *Regia Marina* were the principal exponents of the belief that the Navy should renounce aircraft carriers in favor of other, more traditional and useful investments such as heavy cruisers, and battleships of 35,000 tons.

The *Regia Aeronautica*, however, bears the full responsibility for not developing specialized torpedo planes in the 1930s, which the Navy continually requested. The unconcealed motivation for this position was that torpedo planes were used only for naval warfare and that the *Regia Marina* would eventually request and receive operational control of them. This would have undermined the rigid philosophy that all offensive aircraft should be exclusively part of the *Regia Aeronautica*.

Q: Admiral Angelo Iachino, the *Regia Marina's* battle fleet commander, was a prolific writer after the war. How did he impact the historiography of his service, and do you believe he was an effective commander?

A: Admiral Iachino's books accurately reconstruct (for the most part) events and greatly influenced the drafting of the Navy's official history. They also provided a venue for the author to defend his actions as Commander-in-Chief of the Italian battle fleet during most of the war.

Iachino was not a lucky chief, especially at Matapan, but on other occasions as well. He also committed several serious errors of judgment, and it was not wise to keep him in command for so long, especially after the Second Battle of Sirte on 22 March 1942. Tactically, British Admiral Philippe Vian skillfully played him. Vian had under his command only light forces, compared with a modern battleship and two heavy cruisers on the Italian side. Inexplicably, Iachino fought the entire afternoon from the leeward side of the British smokescreen. He did not attempt to move his heavier ships to the windward side, as Vian feared. He could have done so, despite the rough seas.

Surprisingly, in his postwar books as well as in documents dating

back to 1942, Admiral Iachino strongly criticized his ships' equipment, especially the fire directors, which he had helped develop in the 1930s.

Q: How would you assess Admiral Carlo Bergamini's performance as a naval commander?
A: He was Commander-in-Chief of the Italian battle fleet from 5 April 1943 until 9 September, when he died aboard the battleship *Roma*, which was sunk by German aircraft. Since Admiral Bergamini had no opportunity to command his ships in battle, it is impossible to judge comprehensively his actions as a naval commander. However, he had a brilliant record as commander of a division of modern battleships, and later as Commander-in-Chief of the Italian battle fleet aboard a modernized battleship. This, plus the great trust he enjoyed among his crews, suggest he had great skills and an aggressive spirit far superior to that of his predecessor, Admiral Iachino.

Q: If you were asked to write a biography of one of the *lesser-known* World War II-era *Regia Marina* commanders, whom would you choose and why?

A: Although I do not think much of biographies as historical reference works, I think that a person not very well known but important to the history of the *Regia Marina* in the Second World War is Admiral Luigi Sansonetti. He commanded the 3rd Cruiser Division at Gaudo and Matapan in March 1941. Later, he became deputy Chief of Staff of the *Regia Marina*, the billet he held until the war's end. He headed the *Supermarina*, the highest operational command in Rome, and he played a primary role in planning and conducting Italy's naval air war. While he headed the *Supermarina*, his biography may well mirror the "real war" conducted until the summer of 1943 by Italian ships and sailors, focusing especially on the crucial, daily activities defending the convoys supplying the overseas fronts. This proved a heavy task that Italy's prewar planning had underestimated. In reality, it soon became the exhausting primary commitment of Italy's light naval forces, which served with honor but were decimated by the war. It is important to note that in 1945, at the end of the war, fourteen battleships and cruisers remained, compared with only nine destroyers of the initial fifty-nine, plus the twelve commissioned between 1941 and 1943.

Q: You are well-known for your photograph collection and for the quality of the illustrations you use in your books. Please tell us why unusual and high quality illustrations are important to the naval historian.

A: I have always been passionate about naval photography and in almost

fifty years of multi-discipline research I have collected more than 60,000 images of ships, mostly Italian, from 1861, some of which I have used to illustrate books I have published.

I believe that for scholars of contemporary military history, photography is irreplaceable for serious research. It is a document, if correctly interpreted and dated, that provides much incontestable information for confirmation and, occasionally, resounding denial. It is difficult for me to imagine a good work of naval history unsupported by high quality illustrations, well-selected, and amply annotated.

With this belief in mind, sixteen years ago I founded *STORIA militare* [Military History], and I have edited it since then. Distributed monthly at Italian newsstands, almost 50% of its total space is devoted to quality, contemporary illustrations and likely this is one of the main reasons for its successful distribution among scholars and enthusiasts.

Editor's Note: The editor would like to extend a word of thanks to Professor J. Calvitt Clarke III for assisting with the translation of Lieutenant Commander Bagnasco's answers, and to Dr. James J. Sadkovich for assisting with several of the questions.

Questions and Answers: Richard J. Overy

ROBERT VON MAIER
RAYMOND A. CALLAHAN

Richard J. Overy is Professor of History at the University of Exeter. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, Fellow of the British Academy, and Fellow of King's College London. Educated at Caius College, Cambridge, he is the author of numerous books, including *The Air War, 1939-1945* (London: Europa Publications, 1980); *The Origins of the Second World War* (London: Longman, 1987); *Why the Allies Won* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995); *Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow* (New York: TV Books, 1997); *Bomber Command 1939-45: Reaping the Whirlwind* (London: HarperCollins, 1997); and *The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia* (London: Allen Lane, 2004). Professor Overy has won several awards for his scholarship, including the 2005 Wolfson Prize for History and the 2005 Hessell-Tiltman Prize for History.

Q: Are there any Second World War scholars who have been an important influence on you as a military historian?

A: This is a difficult question to answer, partly because I have been affected by the work of many historians, not necessarily military historians, and partly because the origins of my interest in the history of the war go back a long way. If I had to pick out one particular influence it would be the American historian Gordon Wright, whose book on Total War published in 1968 was a milestone in World War II historiography.[1] I read it as an undergraduate at Cambridge and was struck at once by the fact that a book about war could embrace a variety of different narratives and not simply account for war itself. Wright's interest in culture, social questions, political resistance, economics, and genocide produced a distinct approach to the history of war as something experienced at many different levels and explicable as general history, not just as a set of mil-

1. Gordon Wright, *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

itary outcomes. I have his book on my students' booklists still, forty years later.

Q: If you were asked to recommend six English-language books that should be considered essential reading for anyone interested in the history of the Second World War, what works would you select and what are the specific reasons for your selections?

A: Picking just six from the mountain-range of books on World War II is a challenge. Gordon Wright's *The Ordeal of Total War* would have to be on the list for the reasons already discussed. The others are David Glantz and Jon House, *When Titans Clashed*, which opened up the whole history of the Eastern Front fully for the first time; Omer Bartov, *Hitler's Army*, which not only exposed the myths of the German Army's clean war, but more important than that, opened up the whole idea that the history of an armed force is about ideas, social relations, and environment, not just about battle; John Dower's *War Without Mercy* is a classic study of the terms of the Far Eastern war, and, like Bartov, has opened up the study of war as a set of ideas, prejudices, and expectations among those who fight it or are victimized by it; Gerhard Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, is a magisterial survey of the existing literature and an essential pathway through the complex politics and diplomacy of the war years; Mark Mazower's *Hitler's Empire* is a fine book on the history of German conquest in World War II and the many political, social, intellectual, and violent responses to the fact of German domination.[2] Many more could be added, but the six books here are thought-provoking, capable of making the reader reassess the war and want to read more about it.

Q: What were some of the influencing factors in your decision to write *The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia*, and which aspects of your research for the book were the most difficult?

A: My book on the two dictators, Hitler and Stalin, brings together two interests I have had for a long time, indeed since I was a student at school and university. The idea of putting them together is a challenging one, but anyone who works on the two systems will be struck by how many common intellectual and ideological roots there were, and by the

2. David M. Glantz and Jonathan M. House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995); Omer Bartov, *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986); Gerhard L. Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin, 2008).

extent to which these were two forms of common response to the temporary collapse of the world order, the capitalist economy and confidence in the future. The two systems are not the same for reasons that are obvious, but the forms of political practice bear very strong similarities. I wanted to learn more myself about what makes dictatorship, in a generic sense, workable. The writing drew heavily on existing secondary literature, but some sections – the chapter on "Moral Universes" for example – have tried to shape the approach to the subject differently from the conventional narrative.

Q: Another important addition to the literature is your *The Inter-War Crisis, 1919-1939*.[3] How did you come to write on this particular topic?

A: *The Inter-War Crisis* is part of a series of textbooks in which I have also contributed *The Origins of the Second World War*. The inter-war crisis has always interested me and my next book, *The Morbid Age*, will explore the idea of crisis in the context of inter-war Britain.[4] What particularly interests me is the way in which popular discourse can affect political, social, and cultural choices. I feel that for too long the history of the inter-war years has been dominated by diplomatic, political, and institutional history. The twentieth century also has a history of "mentality" which has to be reconstructed in the same way as the narrative of international relations if sense is to be made of the way people experienced the age.

Q: In the years since your acclaimed *Why the Allies Won* was first published the flood of books on the Second World War era has continued unabated. While many of these works are popular history and add little, if anything, to our understanding, there have been quite a few major pieces of scholarship (e.g., Ian Kershaw, Richard Evans, Mark Mazower, David Glantz). If you were preparing a new edition of *Why the Allies Won*, what revisions, additions, or changes of emphasis would you include?

A: The last revision of *Why the Allies Won* was made in 2006. The main changes incorporated into it derived from the wealth of new scholarship on the Soviet war effort (the work of David Glantz, Evan Mawdsley, Lennart Samuelson, and Mark Harrison represents a real breakthrough in our understanding of the subject). In the new preface I argued that the arguments about Allied victory "stand or fall today in much the same way

3. R.J. Overy, *The Inter-War Crisis, 1919-1939* (London: Longman, 1994).
4. Richard Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain Between the Wars* (London: Allen Lane, forthcoming).

as they did a decade ago." I think that is still true. Whatever perspectives seem deficient to others are matters of judgement rather than fact.

Q: The strategic bombing offensives against Germany and Japan have always been controversial, but lately there have been books – like *Human Smoke: The Beginnings of World War II, the End of Civilization* – whose deep absurdity has not prevented them from resonating with readers uneasy about the use of airpower against civilians in more recent conflicts.[5] Is this an example of an historical controversy that has escaped historians – one that even meticulous history, like Taylor's study of Dresden, will be unable to resolve?[6]

A: The arguments surrounding the legitimacy or otherwise of strategic bombing have certainly not been neglected. It can be traced right back to the arguments generated by the publication of Webster and Frankland's official history of RAF bombing in 1961 and the debate on Dresden generated in the 1960s by, among others, David Irving.[7] There is certainly a lack of clear historical questioning about the exact nature and purpose of the campaigns. Tami Davis Biddle's work has been an essential contribution to helping us understand the military intellectual frame within which Anglo-American air strategy matured.[8] The problem arising from the current debate is the confusion of moral discourse and history. Understanding why the powers engaged in bombing is a question of historical research and judgement; condemning them for killing women and children is a moral and legal question which has largely been articulated in an anachronistic and ahistorical way. The argument cannot be resolved because it is essentially intellectually asymmetrical. A better historical understanding of why bombing took the course it did and the motives of those involved is possible and is in need of responsible and informed scholarship, not polemic.

Q: The air war has produced controversies among historians, and many aspects of the war on land have been controversial. The war at sea has seen relatively fewer historical arguments over its conduct. Is this be-

5. Nicholson Baker, *Human Smoke: The Beginnings of World War II, the End of Civilization* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008).
6. Frederick Taylor, *Dresden: Tuesday, February 13, 1945* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004).
7. Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany, 1939-1945*, 4 vols. (London: HMSO, 1961); David Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden* (London: William Kimber, 1963).
8. Tami Davis Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare: The Evolution of British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

cause there is nothing to argue about – or because naval historians are a less argumentative group?

A: The war at sea in World War II was different in character from earlier naval warfare because of the dominant position of aircraft and submarines. There were few big ship engagements and perhaps as a result less room for argument. The naval war was also very asymmetrical – British and U.S. naval power soon overtook everyone else so that explaining why the German submarines or the Japanese fleet lost the war is also uncontentious.

Q: Vis à vis the need for additional research, what do you believe are the most under-examined aspects of 1) the first 120 days of the war in Europe; 2) the Soviet-German War; and 3) Italy's participation in the war?

A: There is not much space left for additional research and questioning for much of World War II history. On the first 120 days of war the big question that historians have shied away from is: why did the war not end after the defeat of Poland? The months of phony war are an under-researched area. What the rival populations did and thought during the months of inaction, and indeed how the states kept them in a condition of permanent mobilization, should not be taken for granted. Contrast it with 1914 (Marne, Tannenberg etc.).

On the German-Soviet War what is still missing is a proper history of the Red Army's war that matches the work of Bartov and others on the German side, not least what contribution Soviet soldiers made to the "barbarization of warfare."

On Italy the problem is not absence of research but the failure to get Italian-language publications into English. There is a wealth of fine Italian scholarship (Rochat, Gribaudi, Ferrari, Zamagni etc.) which has not yet reached an Anglophone audience.

Q: Who, in your opinion, was the best Allied commander of the Second World War, and why?

A: There were many fine commanders on the Allied side in World War II. My choice is a rather obvious one. Marshal Georgy Zhukov succeeded not only as a battlefield commander and operational chief, but he also succeeded in finding how to work with the capricious Stalin, how to keep Beria and state security from interfering too much in military affairs, and how to co-ordinate a war effort of prodigious size and difficulty. Unlike Eisenhower, Montgomery, and Marshall, Zhukov had to work with a state machinery, economy, and personnel which threw up many more basic problems than in the West. Zhukov was always fighting two

battles, against the German enemy and against the conditions of the Soviet home front.

Q: As a historian, do you believe there should be more effort expended to record the memories of Second World War veterans, and how much have you relied on oral histories while researching your own works?

A: I am confident that the many programs available for recording the memories of World War II veterans and victims will provide a rich archive for future historians. Many of these programs date back decades, others are relatively new. As a historian, I am most concerned about the survival of interview material generated by television and radio over the past two decades. Although there are important questions to ask about the conditions under which this oral material was obtained, much of it is invaluable. Unfortunately, regular archive access to this kind of material is arbitrary; much of the material is lost, or privately stored. I would like to see a central collecting point in each interested country where oral material can be stored, transcribed if necessary, and made openly available to researchers at all levels. A central oral archive/museum would also encourage those who currently hold material suitable for archiving to consider supplying it to the public domain. Ideally, this should not involve costs to the researcher in the way that photograph or film evidence currently does.

Q: Much World War II history is still being written as biography (e.g., the endless stream of books on Patton, not to mention the Churchill industry). Publishers encourage this because biography sells. If you were advising a doctoral student searching for a topic in World War II history, what would you counsel about the balance between biographical and other approaches to understanding issues?

A: As the author many years ago of a biography of Hermann Göring, I am very aware of the pitfalls of relying on biographical studies in understanding the history of war.[9] In my view, biography works best if it is a life and times, not merely the story of a life. Ian Kershaw's *Hitler* is a model of its kind; so too Ulrich Herbert's biography of Werner Best, a pioneering attempt to persuade a German historical audience that biography is a legitimate form of scholarly discourse.[10] Biography can be a crit-

9. R.J. Overy, *Goering: The "Iron Man"* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).
10. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris* (London: Allen Lane, 1998) and *Hitler, 1936-1945: Nemesis* (London: Allen Lane, 2000); Ulrich Herbert, *Best. Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft, 1903-1989* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 1996).

ical entry-point into understanding a subject (Cesarani's life of Adolf Eichmann does just that, for example), but to be really effective as a contribution to the history of the war it has to say something new about the relation between the individual's history and the wider context within which that history took place.[11] To the aspiring doctoral student it is important to stress that biography on its own is never quite enough.

Q: How would you describe the present state of Second World War scholarship?

A: The present state of research on World War II is healthier than ever. This is in part because it is no longer regarded simply as "military history" in a traditional sense, but supplies many opportunities for case studies of cultural and social issues, and as a test-bed for scholarly argument over, for example, the social psychology of atrocity. Two particular developments have opened up this scholarship. The first has been the growing interest in "victims" in the broadest sense of the term. This has helped to balance the experience of combat with the wider question of what total war does in social, cultural, political, and psychological terms. Second, there has been much more research on the ways in which ordinary people cope with the demands of war, not just in economic terms, but also in terms of constructing alternative wartime values, or in trying to construct daily lives outside the normative demands of the state (eg. rumor, black market, resistance). The third area where there is room for much more research is on what might be called the "sociology" of the armed forces. Joanna Bourke's work on killing, for all the criticism it has generated, has nevertheless reminded us that mass armies are strange institutions with a peculiar function and understanding how those armies work as institutions with their own values and normative behavior is an important part of explaining how modern states could mobilize to such an extraordinary degree and accept such high casualties.[12] This consequence was once taken for granted, but with the passage of time understanding how mobilization can be sustained and sacrifices demanded is not an easy historical question. On the other hand, issues to do more directly with armed forces' organization, science, technology, and tactics now involve questions to which we can give reasonably clear answers.

Q: Critics of military history often cite its excessive "nationalism," such as the belief held by some Americans that none of their allies were as important as they were in the defeat of Nazi Germany, or the (slightly

11. David Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes* (London: Heinemann, 2004).
12. Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth-Century Warfare* (London: Granta, 1999).

better grounded) Russian certainty that they alone smashed the Third Reich. This is an approach seen at its most intense in officially sponsored history, which often comes to be treated as a source, especially by popular writers. How can historians best counter this and encourage a more comparative approach?

A: Every nation involved in World War II has its own myths about the history that surrounds it. This is an inevitable result of the experience itself and the way in which the war has been memorialized or officially appropriated. It is certainly the historian's task to understand these myths and to explore how they have arisen; providing an alternative historical narrative is also important, but it is no guarantee that the myths will be set aside (for example, the belief embedded in the British popular mind that more women worked in the war than in any other country – even though the scholarship can show this not to be the case, the myth is part of the British self-image and serves a function that critical scholarship cannot supply). It is evidently imperative that historians present the past without a national agenda, but historians will have their own prejudices in the choice of subjects and the perspective from which they approach them. No history can in that sense be entirely neutral. Nor can we expect the wider public to accept the kind of open, critical, and exploratory narratives that historians construct. The reason why so many myths have survived is their social utility and their explanatory simplicity.

Q: Of the many lesser-known World War II-era German Army commanders, whom do you believe is most deserving of a detailed biography, and why? Also, within the same context, which British Army commander would you select?

A: Among the lesser-known German commanders I should like to see a biography of *Luftwaffe* General Josef Kammhuber who had the difficult task of organizing Reich air defenses from early in the war and of sustaining the capability to limit what the Allied air forces could do until swamped by numbers in 1944.

Among lesser-known British commanders it is hard to find someone who has not yet got a biography. I would like to see a full treatment of Lieutenant General Sir Richard L. McCreery, whose leadership qualities in the desert and Italy finally earned him command of the 8th Army in November 1944.

Q: To the self-exculpatory memoirs of Hitler's generals, there was added the work of historians like Martin van Creveld and Trevor Dupuy to create an image of a German Army that was largely apolitical and had a "genius for war." Then came another wave of books, spearheaded by

Omer Bartov, that made it clear that the *Wehrmacht* was up to its neck in the crimes of the Third Reich, and assessments by Geoffrey Megargee and others that questioned whether the German Army was even competent in its chosen field of operations and tactics. Have we reached a point where some consensus may be possible on this subject?

A: On the German army in World War II I think there is something of a consensus now. There is little argument about its fighting skills, despite recent reservations. It is evident that German commanders learned less than the Allies as the war progressed and were outsmarted in the field by their own skills borrowed by others. There is also no real disagreement over *Wehrmacht* participation in barbarous actions in Russia, Serbia, Greece, Italy etc. I think we don't yet have a full explanation for the decline in German military behavior, about which there is still considerable room for argument. On one point there is surely consensus and that is the hollowness of the claim that Hitler was the barrier to military success. German commanders were just as capable of making mistakes and misjudgments as their counterparts.

Q: Are you working on any World War II-related book projects and if so, would you share a few of the details regarding the work?

A: At present I am directing a three-year project under the title "Bombing, States and Societies in Western Europe, 1940-1945." The aim of the project is to explore in a comparative way the political, cultural, and social impact of bombing on Britain, Germany, France, and Italy. The end result will be a number of books and articles published by the research team of seven scholars. I intend to write a more general book on bombing in World War II, looking at it from both sides, the bombers and the bombed.

Author's Perspective

PHILIP W. BLOOD

Hitler's Bandit Hunters was the outcome of ten years research into German security warfare, 1815-1945.[1] This incorporates the study of a number of disciplines, including military history, civil-military relations, the politics of security, colonial administration, criminal policing, and anti-guerrilla warfare. Different German regimes imposed their ideological spin on security but it was the Nazis who attempted to establish a common security policy – in effect creating an integrated national security establishment. German political and military security was integrated, thus making police out of soldiers and soldiers out of the police. The application of this form of warfare, in the mindset of the German leadership, was believed to be highly rewarding. In security-management terms, in the wake of The Hague convention on the laws of war, this form of warfare tantalizingly dangled the prospect of illegal gain from plunder and exploitation. It was cost-efficient, allowing the deployment of lower quality troops and captured or sub-standard military equipment. In regards to discipline and order, it imposed a rigid organizational structure that suited a highly bureaucratized nation and army. In political-military terms, it was results-goals orientated. A win-win outcome was achieved in Namibia (1904-12), when Germany adopted genocide to suppress rebellious tribes, which became the norm, during the Second World War when security warfare was widely imposed on occupied Europe, to crush European resistance and making a significant contribution to the Holocaust of European Jewry.

Between 1815 and 1945, this form of warfare was conducted in Alsace-Lorraine, France, Russia, the Low Countries, the Balkans, Italy, Poland, North Africa, and many overseas colonies; but, it was not determined solely by terrain. Until 1918, the Imperial German Army was the undisputed authority for all matters of security, including the implementation and administration of annexation, occupation, and colonization. After 1918, political elites struggled for control of security in the power vacuum sealed by the Treaty of Versailles with the limitations imposed on the German Army. The growing political horizon of security among

1. Philip W. Blood, *Hitler's Bandit Hunters: The SS and the Nazi Occupation of Europe* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2006).

Hitler's cronies eventually led to the SS domination of law, order, and policing from 1936. The rapid expansion of the Third Reich's borders through war persuaded Hitler of the need for a national security policy. With the changing fortunes of war, from late 1941, the SS and the army were forced to re-examine their respective security performances in the face of the growing intensity of resistance, insurgency, and partisan movements. The army appeared impossibly hamstrung; at once trying to circumvent international law while adopting extreme measures of exploitation, under that dubious rubric of right through conquest.

In August 1942, the SS advocated a solution which became codified in *Führer* Directive No. 46, "Instructions for Intensified Action against banditry in the East" (*Richtlinien für die verstärkte Bekämpfung des Bandenunwesens im Osten*). This policy, simply known as *Bandenbekämpfung* (combating banditry), replaced in concept and abolished in practice the older term of *Partisanenbekämpfung* (anti-partisan warfare). This was more than a linguistic turn. In effect, all occupied territory, irrespective of whether the nation had been conquered or not, became subject to this code. All armed resistance to Nazi rule was criminalized; the legal status of the partisan was revoked; and Allied Special Forces personnel were outlawed through the directive's addendum, the infamous "Commando Order." German security forces, without exception, were authorized to hunt bandits (*Banden*).

Bandenbekämpfung was more than a euphemism for extermination. It was congruent with Nazi race programs (genocide and resettlement), and absorbed the additional task of securing economic exploitation of the occupied territories. Hitler placed Heinrich Himmler, chief of the SS, in command of *Bandenbekämpfung*. By 1944, the *Bandenkampfverbände* (combating-banditry formations), an SS-led umbrella organization, centralized the deployment of formations from the SS-Police, *Wehrmacht*, and civil authorities on a strict priority basis. It also established operational procedures, monitored performance, and imposed a unique bureaucratic culture. The initial adoption of *Bandenbekämpfung* underpinned the Nazi colonial policy of living-space (*Lebensraum*), annihilation of Jews, political opponents, and armed resistance to German rule. However, by the end of the war, *Bandenbekämpfung* had become a platform for keeping the Axis alliance together, intervening against wavering allies, and was fully integrated with frontline operations.

Allied intelligence during the Second World War studied the workings of Nazi security and became proficient in predicting its actions and reactions. Immediately after the war, the United States Army used captured German personnel and documents to investigate war crimes. The leading German perpetrators were incarcerated in Allied prisons, but there were no trial proceedings against Nazi *Bandenbekämpfung* irrespective of it's clear breach with the laws of war. The onset of the Cold

War triggered widespread research into Germany's security experience. This had predictable outcomes and consequences. Perhaps the most important hinged on the clear discrepancy between surviving documents and the retarded memories of former army and SS officers. The unqualified testimonies unfortunately became the preferred medium of interpretation. This led to the establishment of the myth(s) of German anti-partisan warfare and embellishment of the positive contribution made by the Soviet and Yugoslav partisans in winning the war. Scholarship denigrated German experience as a major reason for their losing the war, without really explaining the German way of security. At the scaremongering height of the Cold War, the "implications," however imprecise, were not lost on western political and military leaders – in the event of global war, Communist partisans threatened to be a war-winning weapon.

In November 1997, Professor Richard Holmes (Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham at Cranfield University in the UK) agreed to supervise a Ph.D. examining a very general question: why did the Nazis discard the term *Partisanenbekämpfung* and adopt *Bandenbekämpfung* if in practice the words meant the same thing? The original plan called for a typical analytical structure examining the origins, formulation, and the implementation of *Bandenbekämpfung*. The projected outcome was expected to extend the existing historiography by a small step; but fulfilling the requirements of a doctorate. The project entailed unravelling the story of *Bandenbekämpfung*; essentially peeling away the layers of myth and hearsay that had accumulated since the onset of the Cold War.

There was no previous study, in German or English, of *Bandenbekämpfung*; there is an extensive body of literature dedicated to the partisan and resistance movements in the Second World War. In the 1950s, scholars diligently attempted to explain Nazi crimes, especially in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Russia, in all their brutal complexities.[2] By the 1960s, the interpretation of superior partisan expertise over German incompetence had come to dominate the literature.[3] Then in 1976 Keith Simpson proposed an alternative viewpoint. In an article about German military security policy, Simpson disagreed with the prevailing opinion that German methods were a failure.[4] He suggested that while German methods were brutal they were "very effective," and for that reason remained in operation. Simpson based his opinion on the existence

2. Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945: A Study of Occupation Policies* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1957).
3. John A. Armstrong, ed., *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964).
4. Keith Simpson, "The German Experience of Rear Area Security on the Eastern Front 1941-45," *Royal United Services Institute Journal*, December 1976, pp. 39-46.

of a distinctly German security tradition that stretched from the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), through to the First World War (1914-18), Weimar (1918-33), and finally ending with the Nazis (1933-45). He argued that the Weimar period, contrary to the general opinion that it had not contributed to shaping security, was in fact the link between Imperial and Nazi epochs.

Although the research did not specifically focus on the German Army, its influence had to be examined, albeit superficially, given the divided opinion of its ethical standing under Hitler – had it been a willing accomplice or had it been coerced into committing war crimes? Although there was overwhelming evidence for the former, especially following several Nuremberg military tribunals, scholars appeared reluctant to come to a general conclusion. Then in 1986 Omer Bartov proved, through strong documentary research, that the army had embraced Nazi doctrines and was complicit in war crimes.[5] Following on from Bartov, the reputation of the army was further soiled by a large photographic exhibition entitled, "The war of destruction and the crimes of the Wehrmacht 1941 to 1944," which travelled to German cities.[6] Ben Shepherd's *War in the Wild East*, is a study of the German Army's 221st Security Division on the eastern front and reveals another aspect of the scale of complicity.[7] Since the 1990s, scholars have taken an interest in the Imperial German Army and its catalog of atrocities committed in Namibia (1904-12) and during the 1914 offensive.[8] Irrespective of the research into the crimes of the German Army, the struggle for its reputation has engaged political extremists, both left and right, and highlights the currency of the debate.

Firm historical research requires a comprehensive appreciation and assessment of the original documents. In regards to *Bandenbekämpfung*, this was less than straightforward. In July 1944, the SS leadership actually documented their destruction of the central records of the Office of the Chief of combating banditry formations (*Chef der Bandenkampfverbände*). The major challenge, therefore, was to track down any surviving papers and reconstitute the record. The most productive method was to

5. Omer Bartov, *The Eastern Front, 1941-45: German Troops and the Barbarisation of Warfare* (London: Macmillan, 1985).

6. Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann, eds., *Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1995); Hamburg Institut für Sozialforschung, ed., *Verbrechen Der Wehrmacht: Dimensionen Des Vernichtungskrieges 1941-1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002).

7. Ben Shepherd, *War in the Wild East: The German Army and Soviet Partisans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

8. Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); John Horne and Alan Kramer, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001).

use the distribution lists attached to the few scattered SS documents – in effect creating an index of recipients – reversing the process of the Nazi distribution system. The Nazi political administration is often referred to as polycratic, a political structure that propagated an abundance of competing leaders and authorities. This system was facilitated by the relatively free transfer of information, normally in report format, both as a means of promoting institutional performance, and advertising success against one's peers. In practice, it was common for one hundred copies of SS operational reports to be distributed to the army, navy, air force, and a plethora of civil institutions. Likewise, reports by the army and other institutions were similarly distributed – thus, tracking down documents became an exercise of running the "wrong way." To date, several thousand documents have been collated and digitized.

The archives holding document collections vary from nation to nation. Their performance fluctuates over time. In 1997-99, the most economic and efficient means to conducting large scale trawling of documents was in the United States. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at College Park Annex, in Columbia, Maryland, hold the captured German records collection on microfilm. The collection includes Heinrich Himmler's papers (chief of the SS), Kurt Daluege's papers (Chief of the Order Police), and Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski's papers (Chief of the Combating Banditry Formations). In addition, there are the captured documents of the *Waffen-SS*, Army, and *Luftwaffe*, including the remaining reports from *Bandenbekämpfung* operations. The German Federal archives, located in Berlin-Lichterfelde, hold the Nazi Party papers, while the German Army and *Waffen-SS* documents are maintained in the *Bundesarchiv–Militärarchiv* (BA-MA) in Freiburg im Breisgau, in south-west Germany. Working in German archives used to be laborious, restrictive, and frustrating; in recent years they have become highly effective in supporting and accommodating the researcher. Britain has numerous holdings of Nazi and Allied documents including the Public Record Office in London (since renamed the National Archives), the Imperial War Museum, and the Wiener Library. The Polish Underground Movement Study Trust in London also deserves a special mention for it was a member of their staff that recommended focusing on Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, the *Chef der Bandenkampfverbände* and destroyer of Warsaw (1944).

The research proceeded along predictable lines. Meetings and interviews with former German security personnel and "bandits" added an important oral input. The writing, however, was less than straightforward. Whether this was due to the fact that the records were scattered, rather than a central block, might have contributed to the problem. Even after several papers presented at academic conferences in the United States, Germany, and Britain, the breadth and depth of the subject re-

mained elusive. The basic problem lay in the technical language, its meaning and translation.

Words are important, especially in regards to the German language, which is so precise in its meanings and usage. Some German words do not translate well into English or lose their power when translated, and *Bandenbekämpfung* is one such example. It was derived from two words: *Banden*, which means criminal bands(s) or gang(s); and *Bekämpfung*, to combat or to fight. In effect, the compound form of *Banden* and *Bekämpfung* meant combating banditry or combating gangsters to their absolute eradication or extermination in a manner more akin to purging a disease or epidemic. The subtlety of the wordplay lay in the classification of a combatant. German military law and tradition had recognised the partisan as a legal combatant; whereas the bandit, or gangster, had always been criminalized. *Bandenbekämpfung* reclassified insurgents and Allied Special Forces as bandits, within German controlled territories, and made them subject to extermination. Nazi *Bandenbekämpfung* was neither old-style German *Bandenbekämpfung* nor *Partisanenbekämpfung* as has so often been assumed. However, after the war it was convenient for Allied war crimes prosecutors to adopt "anti-partisan warfare" as the simplest translation. Simplicity has its drawbacks. The German defendants, avoiding responsibility for war crimes, naturally preferred this sweeping translation. It rehabilitated a term officially removed by Hitler's 1942 directive. Unfortunately, this "vulgar" translation has shaped historical writing ever since.

One central theme of the research concentrated on examining the SS leadership. The power and dissolution of the SS-Police triumvirate (1936-43) of Heinrich Himmler; Reinhard Heydrich; and Kurt Daluege; the Chief of the Order Police (*Chef der Ordnungspolizei*), was the catalyst behind *Bandenbekämpfung*. The assassination of Heydrich in June 1942 triggered the planning process that led to Hitler's directive No.46. The forced retirement of Daluege (he suffered serious bouts of illness, which was diagnosed as congenital syphilis) in 1943, allowed Himmler to use *Bandenbekämpfung* not only as an institutional tool to further unify the SS and police, but also to stake a major claim in the running of Hitler's war. It was through the leadership of Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, Himmler's chosen field commander, that *Bandenbekämpfung* policy was transformed from an operational concept into a powerful strategic weapon. Bach-Zelewski's career of violence stretched from 1915 to 1945. He continually revamped his presence from a highly decorated combat officer into a politically motivated serial murderer, and eventually transforming himself into a foremost practitioner of genocide. Once Daluege and Heydrich were gone, Bach-Zelewski's ideas and methods were allowed to flourish.

In October 2001, the Ph.D. thesis – "Bandenbekämpfung: Nazi occu-

pation security in Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia 1942-45" – was submitted. The thesis concluded that *Bandenbekämpfung* was complex. It was neither anti-partisan warfare nor counter-insurgency, but a radical solution in the long history of German security policy. The roots of *Bandenbekämpfung* lay in Germany's past, in some respects as far back as antiquity, while its formulation into an operational concept took several deliberate stages. Security was central to German cultural and operational thinking and Nazi radicalization led to its predictable elevation as an independent strategic theater of the war. Significantly, this escalation of security was achieved through cost efficient measures and brought immediately observable and desired results.

While employed as a lecturer at the University of Aachen in Germany, further post-doctoral research focused upon law and order issues set against a larger canvas of German economic and social history. An important finding concerned the period between June 1936 and August 1943, when Kurt Daluege led Germany's uniformed beat police, quite successfully, through the process of institutional militarization. Daluege took the relatively insignificant Order Police, which possessed little social standing, were poorly armed, with an ill-defined purpose, and turned them into one of the most cohesive organizations within the Third Reich. Daluege and the police became central to Hitler's plan for *Lebensraum* and national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*). From 1943, the deployment of the Order Police across Europe contributed to forcibly holding the Axis alliance together and prevented internal collapse, making a major contribution to keeping Germany in the war. The Order Police became the backbone of Bach-Zelewski's order of battle and central to all mainstream security operations.[9]

In 2004-05, in the process of turning the thesis into a book, two important themes were reassessed. The first concerned the role of the *Luftwaffe* in security. The *Luftwaffe* proved, after extensive research, to be highly complex and worthy of a separate book. The other theme concerned the period January 1944 up to the conclusion of the Allied war crimes trials in 1950. From the Battle of Kovel (January-March 1944) in eastern Poland, through the Warsaw Uprising (July-October 1944), to the rear-area battles in western and southern Europe, there was clear evidence that the intensity and extremism behind security operations increased, rather than decreased as is so often assumed. In fact, it was German forces committed to *Bandenbekämpfung* that were the last to surrender on 20 May 1945, while still engaged in combating incursions by

9. In 2003, this work resulted in a conference paper, which was published as part of a collection. Philip W. Blood, "Kurt Daluege and the Militarization of the Ordnungspolizei," in Gerard Oram, ed., *Conflict and Legality: Policing Mid-Twentieth Century Europe* (London: Francis Boutle Publishers, 2003), pp. 95-120.

Tito's partisans. This period, therefore, was critical to explaining how *Bandenbekämpfung* achieved its most violent peak, but almost disappeared from the historical narrative.

It was during this reassessment that a significant finding emerged. Gerhard Weinberg had observed, "The Germans made certain to catch their victims completely by surprise and returned to the procedure of mass shootings that had characterized the early stages of the killing program in 1941."[10] Historians were well aware that *SS-Gruppenführer* Jakob Sporrenberg had replaced Odilo Globocnik as chief of the SS and police in Lublin (Poland) in time to command *Aktion Erntefest* in November 1943. This action saw the SS-Police execute 42,000 Jews, in just three days, through mass shootings. Sporrenberg was captured in Norway by the British – the interrogation record is located in London. Under interrogation he confessed to *Aktion Erntefest* and its dreadful results. Earlier that year, Sporrenberg had served under Bach-Zelewski in Russia, gaining experience in *Bandenbekämpfung* operational methods. It is clear from the evidence that Sporrenberg styled the killings on a *Bandenbekämpfung* operation – a clear connection with the Holocaust. The British extradited Sporrenberg to Poland where he was tried, found guilty, and executed.

Hitler's Bandit Hunters, unlike the Ph.D., is divided into three parts. Part 1 traces the origins of *Bandenbekämpfung*. Part 2 examines the Nazi concept of *Bandenbekämpfung* in detail, including doctrine, organization, and leadership; based upon operations in Soviet Russia. Part 3 examines the application of *Bandenbekämpfung* in Poland, Yugoslavia, Italy, and France and the Nazi's universal policy for occupation security. A final chapter examines the war crimes process, the difficulty of eradicating such a concept from the military mindset, and the impact of war crimes denial. The original photographs, held in Koblenz, Germany, were mainly contact prints, stuck in a ledger without title or date. By a process of elimination, photographs were identified in keeping with the manuscript. When the book was released in October 2006, the jacket carried a photograph of a German soldier with his hunting dog, examining tracks in the snow. The bridge between the book and the thesis was "security warfare" – what were the Germans attempting in regards to security? The simple answer is that unlike counter-insurgency, which is ostensibly defensive, security warfare suits conquest and the conqueror. In other words, security warfare was the aggregation of many policies implemented at the strategic and tactical level to maximize the returns from conquest. Thus, *Bandenbekämpfung* was a Nazi operational concept that bridged a politically directed national security strategy and politicized

10. Gerhard L. Weinberg, *Germany, Hitler, and World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

operational tactics in the field.

Two central elements of the Ph.D. retained their prominence in *Hitler's Bandit Hunters* – leadership and training. Hitler's *Bandenbekämpfung* directive envisaged a prominent role for recruits and the training facilities of the *Wehrmacht* and SS. Training facilities behind the front lines in Russia became centers of what the Nazis called passive security – reinforced as strongpoints or strategic hamlets. Recruits under training were also encouraged to participate in *Bandenbekämpfung* operations. The destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in 1943 was conducted by SS reserves under training. This was explained in the SS commander's official report, captured by the Allies in 1945, and known as the "Stroop Report." British interrogations of captured SS personnel revealed the pernicious nature of employing "boys" in conducting genocide in the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto.

The immediate future will take the research of German security warfare in a different direction. *Hitler's Bandit Hunters* focused upon the key "nuts and bolts" of *Bandenbekämpfung* – doctrine, leadership, manpower, and the operations of operational security. Deeper questions about security and its cultural relationship within German civil-military relations still requires serious investigation. Security warfare was an aggressive policy directed toward achieving political ambitions that embraced economic and social targets. In a modern world, fixated with ecological and environmental issues, it is quite sobering to discover that Germany was treating these problems as strategic security issues – long before 1945. Thus, the manner of Germany's search for security and sustainability through conquest, across two world wars, has obvious resonance with today and is the theme of a forthcoming book.

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Essay-Review:
Churchill's Wartime Travels

ANTOINE CAPET

Anybody who has visited the Churchill Museum in London will remember the excellent animated map of the Prime Minister's wartime travels, with an odometer adding the miles for each new trip – the total amounting to 105,728 miles (170,000 km), more than four times the circumference of the Earth. Brian Lavery's *Churchill Goes to War* is the perfect complement, in that it gives us the background behind this extraordinary globe-trotting, besides detailing the anecdotes and incidents – and there were many – which went with this feverish travelling activity.[1]

The format chosen – discussing each trip in chronological order – could have led to repetitiveness and tedium, but even if the destinations were often the same (North Africa/Mediterranean or North America), and if the means of transport were limited to ships and aircraft, one does not for one moment lose interest in the narrative. This word is used intentionally, because the book reads like an exciting adventure story. We know, of course, that the hero survives all the threats to his life coming from the perils associated with what remained the pioneering days of cross-Atlantic aviation or with the presence of German submarines (even when they were detected) not far from the sea routes followed by the ships which carried him.

For instance, when he discusses the use of a Boeing 314 ("Clipper") by Churchill on his return from the Washington Conference of December 1941 - January 1942, the author reminds us of the absence of substantial accumulated experience in flying over the Atlantic: "When they [the Americans] first set up a regular service on 28 June 1939, fewer than 100 aircraft had crossed the Atlantic successfully, and 50 more had

1. Brian Lavery, *Churchill Goes to War: Winston's Wartime Journeys* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press and London: Conway Maritime, 2007). Lavery is a naval historian and Curator Emeritus at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England. He is the author of several works, including *Hostilities Only: Training the Wartime Royal Navy* (London: National Maritime Museum, 2004); *Churchill's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation, 1939-1945* (London: Conway Maritime, 2006); and *In Which They Served: The Royal Navy Officer Experience in the Second World War* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press and London: Conway Maritime, 2008).

failed in the attempt."[2] So, even though we know that the flight ended safely, we are thrilled to read about all the difficulties which had to be overcome to make it a success. It is clear that Lavery writes for "the intelligent layman," and he takes it for granted that his reader knows little about the complexity of taking a large flying-boat over such long distances with the added headache (or "kick"?) of a possible encounter with enemy fighters in the last few hours of the flight – and then proceeds to explain the various elements in the equation in a non-technical, accessible way. One crucial problem was payload – incredibly small if one comes to think of it. The captain decided to take the maximum amount of fuel, 5,000 gallons (Lavery does not say whether they were Imperial or U.S. gallons – the difference in weight would be significant for such a large figure). This, we are told, raised the take-off weight to 88,000 lbs – already above the recommended limit. As a result, the plane could only take seven passengers – one being far above average weight, viz. the Prime Minister, at 210 pounds (a piece of information not commonly found in Churchill books). The calculation is quickly made if one accepts that there was some fuel left in the tanks when they "landed" in Plymouth (UK) harbor eighteen hours later: each passenger consumed some 700 gallons of fuel on this particular trip.

Lavery never makes any comments on the lavish lifestyle of the Prime Minister, who totally ignored the rationing or restrictions imposed on his fellow countrymen: he is content with describing his extravagant quantities of luggage (containing all his fancy suits and hats), giving us the menus with gourmet food and champagne served in the Clipper or insisting on the luxury standards of accomodation which he expected to find even in remote diplomatic posts when he descended upon them with his faithful valet and sometimes some members of his family. At a time when few civilians in Europe had enough to eat, limitless hospitality was dispensed at the Cairo Conference (November 1943): "All delegates are the guests of His Britannic Majesty's Government and they are requested to make no payment for any meals, drinks or services provided or to tip the hotel or villa staffs", a circular indicated. Again without any comments, Lavery gives us a number of figures: "Each day the conference consumed 80 bottles of whisky (half of them Scotch), 12 of brandy and 34 of gin, as well as more than 500 bottles of beer. It also needed 20,000 cigarettes, 20 ounces of tobacco and 75 cigars".[3]

Likewise, when Churchill decided to use the RMS *Queen Mary* on two occasions to cross the Atlantic, the luxury suites which had been dismantled and put in store "for the duration" since the liner was now used as a troopship had to be hastily re-mounted for the Prime Minister

2. Lavery, *Churchill Goes to War*, p. 90.
3. Ibid., p. 243.

and his family. Naturally, one can wonder whether the 200 skilled workers who assembled and removed the fitments twice could not have been assigned a task more obviously useful for the war effort.

These travels were not all brandy and cigars, however. The book gives excellent accounts of the incredible discomfort which Churchill – a sick old man, who could not fly too high in the converted military bombers which had no pressurised atmosphere for the passengers in the bomb bay – was prepared to put up with in order to satisfy his thirst for what he later called "summit" meetings. All his air travel was not effected in the luxurious Clipper (whose comfort and facilities are excellently illustrated in Boeing publicity material reproduced in the book). The Consolidated B-24 Liberator bomber had a range of 2,100 miles, and unlike the Clipper could land on conventional military airstrips. This was enough to convince Churchill to undertake a 17,000-mile return journey to Moscow via Gibraltar, Cairo, and Tehran in August 1942. The fuselage was not windproof (the leaks were more or less masked with blankets) and there was no heating. Incredibly, considering that he was so used to being "featherbedded" in the literal sense, Churchill was able to sleep on the crude bunk provided.

In a way, this self-imposed ordeal reveals the complexity of Churchill's character and his approach to sharing the hardship of the ordinary population. If discomfort could be avoided, if his exacting standards of a "decent" life could at all be met, then he did not hesitate to demand them, even in wartime. But if the exigencies of the war as he saw them made it inevitable that he should put up – admittedly for short periods – with the roughness of a soldier's life, he did not recoil. Lavery has dug up an excellent little-known photograph from the Imperial War Museum showing the elderly Churchill diffidently getting out of the Liberator in Moscow through a bomb trap barely wide enough for him – nothing like the "gung-ho" picture of him at the controls of the Clipper which adorns the end papers of the book.

Lavery also tries to unravel the mysteries of the Brest incident as recounted by Churchill in *The Second World War*.[4] According to the account of his journey back from the United States in the Clipper in January 1942, the plane followed a course which brought it dangerously close to the German batteries in Brest (France). Lavery located the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) files, which do not mention the incident in the records of the flight – and the captain wrote a long letter to *The Daily Telegraph* to deny the Churchill story, however diplomatically. In spite of the fact that it is "accepted without question in many Churchill biographies," Lavery concludes his six-page examina-

4. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. 3, *The Grand Alliance* (London: Cassell and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), p. 629.

tion of the evidence with a rejection of the Churchill account, clearly based on later hearsay and second-hand recollections.[5]

Naturally, one cannot compare, for instance, Lavery's treatment of Yalta in a book which covers every wartime journey abroad with that of David Reynolds in *Summits*: Lavery wisely sticks to his brief, that is he does not attempt to assess the wider political implications of the trip – but then the background information on the technical and physical conditions of the journey and stay is unparallelled.[6] Likewise, the psychological roots of Churchill's constant quest for "personal diplomacy" evidently find a more extensive treatment in Larres' book on the subject, but this does not mean that Lavery neglects it.[7]

In the conclusion, Lavery's critical distance is once more in evidence – as it should be – especially when he remarks on Churchill's favorite destinations during the war:

> Churchill's wartime travels did very little to support his idea of Empire and Commonwealth. The only parts of it he visited were Bermuda, Newfoundland and Canada, where he kept the respective governments at arm's length. Clearly visits to India, Australia or the African colonies were not essential to the war effort and one can excuse his failure to include them. But his travelling patterns reflected the new reality of the world, in which America, Europe and the Cold War with the Soviet Union would loom large in British foreign policy and the Commonwealth and the remnants of the Empire became less important except as sources of immigration.[8]

But then, was it worth the candle "despite the risks, time and discomfort involved"? Lavery has a carefully nuanced answer. From Churchill's point of view – that is, if one considers only the success of his strategy of persuasion vis-à-vis his American allies when the initial, central decisions were made – there is no doubt that it was:

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5. This may be true of the Official Biography by Sir Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill*, Vol. 7, *Road to Victory, 1941-1945* (London: Heinemann, 1986), based as it is on Churchill's papers, but no allusion was found in Roy Jenkins's major tome, *Churchill: A Biography* (London: Macmillan and New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), in Geoffrey Best's *Churchill and War* (London: Hambledon & London, 2005), or even (to contradict the Churchill version) in John Charmley's "revisionist" volume, *Churchill: The End of Glory: A Political Biography* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1993).

6. David Reynolds, *Summits: Six Meetings that Shaped the Twentieth Century* (London: Allen Lane and New York: Basic Books, 2007). See H-Diplo review, <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=14408>.

7. Klaus Larres, *Churchill's Cold War: The Politics of Personal Diplomacy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002). See *Cercles* review, <http://www.cercles.com/review/r7/larres.html>.

8. Lavery, *Churchill Goes to War*, p. 371.

> This gave him extra leverage in world affairs, at least until November 1943 when Roosevelt and Stalin got together for the first time and began to exclude him. It strengthened Roosevelt's resolve to treat the war against Germany as the main priority. It meant that Churchill's strategy for a Mediterranean campaign was accepted despite the doubts of the others.[9]

Yet, this personal success was perhaps not in the long-term interest of the Western Allies, since the time "wasted" in the Mediterranean theater inevitably delayed OVERLORD, thereby allowing the Red Army to penetrate deeper into central Europe. This is what Lavery diffidently suggests when he continues, "Whether that was correct or not is another question, and some historians suggest that the second front could have opened sooner."[10]

The volume has very useful maps (though, frustratingly, some do not have the essential scale of miles – e.g. that on the Cairo Conference) and interesting diagrams (like the "Layout of the C-54 Skymaster"), and the detailed Bibliography constitutes a superb guide to the archival sources on each conference, together with a substantial coverage of the technical aspects of the journeys.[11] The proofreading must have been meticulous – only one typographical error was detected (though recurrently because of "pasting"): Prime Minister becomes Prime Minster.[12] The Index is exemplary in its comprehensiveness. Nothing, therefore, seems to have been neglected for the comfort and enjoyment of the reader – this is not so common these days. The book is naturally unreservedly recommended for anyone who is interested in the War – as may be expected of *World War II Quarterly* readers.

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9. Ibid., p. 372.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 242 for Cairo Conference map; p. 300 for diagram of C-54 Skymaster.
12. Ibid., pp. 44, 82, etc.

Essay-Review:
Yugoslavia and World War II

JAMES J. SADKOVICH

Hitler's New Disorder: The Second World War in Yugoslavia grew out of an undergraduate course at the University of Southampton, and its purpose is essentially didactic – to "give a synthetic account, in less than 100,000 words, of the interconnected events that took place between 1941 and 1945, from the Alps to Macedonia, from the Adriatic coast to the Danubian plain."[1] To do so in 282 pages, Stevan K. Pavlowitch has eschewed the "full scholarly apparatus" and relegated most of his sources to a bibliography. But he has included a chronology and *Dramatis personae*, which, like the list of abbreviations and maps, are primarily useful to readers unfamiliar with Yugoslav history.[2]

The text consists of five chapters, organized chronologically, with topical sub-chapters. Pavlowitch begins with the period between the creation of an autonomous Croatian province in August 1939 and the Axis attack in April 1941, then describes Axis occupation zones, the formation of puppet states, and the organization of resistance movements during 1941 and 1942. His last two chapters discuss Italy's surrender, expectations of an Allied landing, and the Communist movement and the German withdrawal into Austria between 1943 and 1945. Pavlowitch ends by offering his views on the nature of collaborationist regimes and the reasons the Partisans rather than the Chetniks emerged triumphant. He also reminds his readers that while Serbs were treated as a "vanquished foe," Croats were welcomed into Hitler's "New Order."[3]

In his foreword, Pavlowitch cautions that "emotional revisionism" and "state-directed and state-distorted" accounts have marred Yugoslavia's historiography and that "original documents" need "careful examination" because many "have been doctored," creating a "carapace of truths, half-truths, non-truths and errors." He therefore stresses the need "to under-

1. Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Hitler's New Disorder: The Second World War in Yugoslavia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), p. x.
2. Ibid., pp. 291-298 for chronology, pp. 283-290 for *Dramatis personae*, p. xii for abbreviations, and pp. xv-xix for maps.
3. Ibid., pp. 271-282.

stand how all the players saw what was happening," avoid "anachronistic explanations," and "beware" of the manipulation of numbers to "improve one's victim status."[4] It is therefore difficult to understand why he does not cite, and discuss, his sources, leaving the reader with no way to gauge the credibility of his information and interpretations. For example, in a subsection on Slovenia he reports that in early 1942 the Italians questioned 18,887 people, of whom 878 were interned. "Supersloda data," he writes in a note, "indicate that in April 1943 there were 18,838 Slovene internees in Italy." He adds that "as many as 400,000 Slovenes may have gone through Italian camps in 1941-1943," but he does not cite a source for either statement.[5] That thousands were questioned seems credible; that 400,000 were interned does not, given the weak resistance in Slovenia, the internment of 878 people in 1942, and the 1931 Yugoslav census, which counted only 1.3 million Slovenes.

The uncertainty generated by the lack of citations is serious because the author has a definite point of view. Pavlowitch sympathizes with Yugoslavia's Serbs, whom he sees as suffering most under the occupation, and much of the book is an extended apologia for the passivity and collaboration of Serbs – whether peasants, "chetniks," political leaders, or Orthodox clergy.[6] He views Serb war crimes as responses to Ustaša atrocities, if occasionally exaggerated and misdirected, e.g., he notes that the "Serb revolt" took on "ethnic" overtones as Serb bands progressed "from self-defence against ustashas to attacking Muslim villages" in Bosnia and Herzegovina and that Serbs attacked Muslims in Sandžak, owing to "ustasha [sic = Ustaša] manipulation of...Muslims" there.[7] He thus blames the bloodletting on the Ustaša, who had the support of Croatia's Catholic clergy, and the Germans, whom he insists were responsible for the war crimes committed in Serbia, but not those in Croatia, even though his account suggests that Germany exercised tight control over the Ustaša-state.[8]

Pavlowitch's account of political events is therefore problematic. His coverage of military operations is haphazard, his treatment of Italians is stereotypical, and his discussion of the Partisan movement debatable, especially his claim that it consisted mainly of poor Serb peasants and that Croats were recruited only to give the movement in Croatia a Croatian patina.[9] Because he views events through a Serbian or a German lens,

4. Ibid., pp. vii-ix.
5. Ibid., pp. 139-146, especially p. 141, note 27.
6. Ibid., pp. 146, 44, 49, 52-58, 66-67, 91-104, 104-128, 154-158, 196, 223-231, 257.
7. Ibid., pp. 37, 78.
8. Ibid., pp. 27-29, 40-41, 49, 59, 71, 92, 100, 118-119, 134-138, 143-146, 154, 178-179, 185, 205-206, 273 for the Ustaša; pp. 49-72, 80, 84, 97-98 for the Germans in Serbia; and pp.135-139, 152, 175-177, 204, 243-244 for the Germans in the NDH.
9. Ibid., pp. 72-88, 104-114, 124, 188, 273 for the Italians; pp. 114-131, 215-237 for the

Pavlowitch tends to ignore his own cautions regarding documents and numbers, and his injunction to view events through the eyes of everyone involved. His is therefore a book for those who agree with him. The reader interested in more balanced accounts of wartime Yugoslavia would do better to consult the older studies in English by Matteo J. Milazzo, Walter R. Roberts, and Jozo Tomašević, or the considerable literature in the South Slav languages.[10]

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Partisan movement and 130, 202-203, 275-276 for its composition; and pp. 130, 249 for Croatia.

10. Matteo J. Milazzo, *The Chetnik Movement and the Yugoslav Resistance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975); Walter R. Roberts, *Tito, Mihailović and the Allies, 1941-1945* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1973); and Jozo Tomašević, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: The Chetniks* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975), and *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

Essay-Review:
A Pacific War Victory at Sea

LEO J. DAUGHERTY III

From December 1941 until August 1945, submarines of the United States Navy "ranged the broad Pacific, penetrating bays, harbors, and seaports of the enemy's innermost defenses," and sank an estimated 1,178 Japanese merchantmen and 214 warships totaling 5.3 million tons. Included in this number were eight aircraft carriers, a battleship, eleven cruisers, and numerous submarines and destroyers. Submarines also acted as supply ships, funneling aviation gasoline, ammunition, and spare parts to isolated U.S. forces throughout the Pacific Theater, as well as carrying United States Marine raiders and Navy and Marine Underwater Demolitions Teams. Submarines blocked – and then methodically choked off – the Japanese war machine to the point that it was barely able to continue fighting. *Submarine Commander*, which began as a collection of articles based on several voyages made by the author during the war, is a fine account of the struggle beneath the Pacific Ocean by the officers and enlisted men of the "Silent Service" against the Imperial Japanese Navy.[1] It is also a work that captures the intensity and drama of one phase of the naval war that may not be entirely familiar to many readers, but was possibly the most decisive phase in the U.S. Navy's overall victory against Japan.

Captain Paul R. Schratz, USN (Ret.) provides a very detailed account of life in the Navy for a newly-commissioned officer and of the bond that existed between him and his fellow Annapolis graduates. More importantly, however, is his description of the submarine service in the days immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor. After passing the rigorous exams and physical for the "silent service," Schratz reported for duty at the Navy's main submarine base in New London, Connecticut. Here, the Navy assigned Schratz to duty aboard the USS *Mackerel* (SS-204), where he became involved in training anti-submarine units, testing and evaluating new sonar gear developments at the Underwater

1. Paul R. Schratz, *Submarine Commander: A Story of World War II and Korea* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2000). This work was originally published by the University Press of Kentucky in 1988.

Sound Lab, and training commandos for operations from submarines, which, as the author remarked, "added to a fascinating pattern of duties."

As Schratz trained aboard the *Mackerel*, the German U-boat campaign was taking its toll against American shipping. Indeed, during the first full month of war against the United States, German submarines sank sixty-two ships of 327,000 tons off the Atlantic coast, while the U.S. Navy sank only five U-boats. Even as the *Mackerel* went to sea for the first time in April 1942, German U-boats continued sinking American shipping, sending 198 additional ships to the bottom of the Caribbean Sea. As Schratz recalled, this made duty aboard the *Mackerel* even more important as they tested new devices to stop the U-boat menace.

Shortly after returning from a brief tour of duty at sea, the Navy reassigned Schratz to the USS *Scorpion* (SS-278), the first of two new submarines to enter the fleet. As the fitting-out of a submarine took several months, Schratz was able to attend a variety of professional schools while at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, as well as become intimately acquainted with the crew of the *Scorpion*. In fact, this is one of the major strengths of the book: Schratz's description of the bonding that took place between the officers and enlisted men. Schratz wrote that because the officers and men lived in such close quarters with each other, one became very close to one's shipmates. Also, because each crew member was a true volunteer, there was a great deal of pride among the crew that they were members of an elite team. This was important, as the average age of the officers and enlisted crew members was twenty-two. It is worth noting that on Schratz's next submarine, the USS *Sterlet* (SS-392), the crew considered him "an old sea dog" at twenty-nine.

It was aboard the *Scorpion* that Schratz went to war, sailing first to Pearl Harbor then still recovering from the devastating Japanese attack of 7 December 1941. While at Pearl Harbor, Schratz and the crew of the *Scorpion* practiced firing torpedoes against escorted surface units. After taking on stores as well as twelve Mark 12 and ten Mark 10 mines, Schratz and the crew of the *Scorpion* set sail for their first destination: the waters east and west of Tokyo Bay. As her crew stood endless watches above and below surface, the submarine headed for enemy waters, practicing diving, testing the sonar devices, and practicing withstanding depth charge attacks. The first action of the *Scorpion* came on 25 April 1943, only three weeks out of Pearl Harbor. Spotting two *Shigure*-class destroyers that were protecting several freighters, including the *Yuzan Maru* (a passenger-cargo ship), the *Scorpion* rigged for silent running as she maneuvered herself into position to attack the cargo ship. Once in position, the submarine put four torpedoes into the *Yuzan Maru* causing damage to her stern. As the ship lay dead in the water, the two destroyers set out to locate the submarine. Passing overhead the *Scorpion*, one of the destroyers let loose a massive depth charge attack which

caused little if any damage, though surely shattered some nerves as the canisters exploded all about the ship. As the *Yuzan Maru* slipped beneath the surface, and with her first mission a success, the captain of the *Scorpion* decided to set sail for Midway Island. Here, the submarine refitted and took on fresh supplies. Schratz recalled that it was at this time that the Navy had resolved the crisis over the poor performance of its torpedoes.

Upon returning to Pearl Harbor, Schratz reported aboard the *Sterlet*, and it was with this ship that he would see extensive action. As the forces of General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz "leap-frogged" across the Pacific, the submarines of the U.S. fleet set out to pummel the vital Japanese sea lanes, sinking a massive amount of tonnage carrying vital war supplies.

In January 1945, Schratz reported aboard the USS *Atule* (SS-403). After refitting on Guam, the submarine resumed operations along the Chinese coastline, once again in search of Japanese transports and other vessels carrying troops and vital war supplies. Additionally, the *Atule* was involved in rescuing downed airmen.

Schratz finished the war aboard the *Atule* prior to being assigned to occupation duty after the surrender of Japan in September 1945. Here, Schratz inspected captured Japanese submarines and other ships at the naval base at Sasebo. Schratz wrote that one item high on his list was to investigate the Japanese Navy's use of soybean fuel to power her fleet, and to inspect the high-speed submarine *I-203*, which was developed late in the war. Schratz noted that externally the *I-203* was "a thing of beauty," but was not as impressive internally. Lacking the sophisticated electronic and communications gear found on American (or even German) submarines, the Americans inspecting the *I-203* considered her "primitive" by U.S. Navy standards.

After returning from occupation duty in late 1945, Schratz served ashore and afloat in a variety of assignments. With the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, he returned to duty aboard the USS *Pickerel* (SS-524) as its commanding officer. At the conclusion of his tour of duty aboard the *Pickerel*, the Navy assigned Schratz to the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations, where he served as the director of military and political policy.

As Schratz wrote, "submarine warfare is unique in many ways, different from...the visions of war by American military planners at the opening of hostilities on 7 December 1941." Throughout this excellent book, Schratz details just how different submarine warfare was from that experienced by his Annapolis classmates on or above the ocean's surface. In addition to the camaraderie and teamwork enjoyed by the submarine community, life aboard a submarine was confining and dangerous.

Schratz's description of life aboard a submarine is one of the single

best accounts of the "Silent Service" during World War II and the Korean War. However, if there is one flaw to be found in *Submarine Commander*, it is that the book abruptly ends with the conclusion of his tour aboard the *Pickerel*. This reviewer would like to have known about the remainder of what must have been an extraordinary naval career. Despite this minor shortcoming, the book is highly recommended.

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Book Reviews

The Great Crusade: A New Complete History of the Second World War, Revised Edition. By *H.P. Willmott*. Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2008. Illustrations. Maps. Notes. Index. Paper. Pp. xiv + 520.

The second edition of a work first published in 1989, this book displays all of Ned Willmott's skill, notably his erudition, range, and capacity for new insights. It is especially useful to see due attention paid to the Eastern Front and to an account of the war with Japan that devotes sufficient space to the situation in China. The latter indeed enables Willmott to provide a distinctive account of causes and consequences. Thus, he points out that, whereas in Europe the comprehensiveness of Axis defeat and the immediate reality of a new balance of power with the end of hostilities precluded further war, in the Far East 1945 ushered in over three decades of conflict before a form of stasis descended. Willmott is a specialist on the War in the Pacific and his expertise enables him to present developments there from a Japanese as well as an American perspective.

Willmott's account is notable for his crisp summaries of well-known episodes and also for including sections on what are often judged expendable in one-volume accounts. Thus, air power on the Eastern Front in 1943 is discussed. Willmott points out that the air battles over Kursk in July came as the climax to four months' sustained operations over the Kuban, eastern Ukraine, and Kursk that in scale and intensity eclipsed anything that took place during the Battle of Britain, with the *Luftwaffe* losing more than 1,000 planes. Furthermore, as he notes, the operations over Orel in July-August were the last occasion when the *Luftwaffe* was able to mount an effort with major repercussions on the course of operations on the ground: thereafter its dissipation and declining quality rendered it no more than an increasingly ineffective tactical response to a lost strategic situation. This argument is expanded to reduce the significance of the Combined Bomber Offensive in establishing Allied tactical air superiority on all fronts, although Soviet claims that therefore the situation in the air at D-Day owed much to them are contested.

A first-rate book. Willmott also offers a narrative of the Eastern Front that includes operations that are usually omitted in works of this type. Thus, there is due attention to the Western Ukraine offensive at the close of 1943. Willmott points out that, like the offensive against Army Group North, this Soviet effort achieved its greatest success at the outset. Will-

mott is also skillful in linking campaigns, showing, for example, how the Western Ukraine offensive undermined the German position on nearby fronts. He notes an improvement in Soviet operational art, notably an ability to operate through the thaw, to operate armor *en masse* and in depth, and to conduct offensive operations, especially encirclement operations, on the basis of a coherent doctrine. At the same time, Willmott points out the key legacy of later politics when he notes that Stalinist orthodoxy damned this offensive because of the involvement of commanders who were subsequently disgraced.

If Willmott is to expand this book in a third edition, it would be very useful to see more on the relationship between the world war and general work both on military capability and on success in conflict.

Willmott's next major work, *The Last Century of Sea Power* (Indiana University Press, 3 vols.), is a study of naval warfare in the twentieth century. The first two volumes are scheduled to be published in 2009.

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Memories of War: Micronesians in the Pacific War. By *Suzanne Falgout, Lin Poyer, and Laurence M. Carucci*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007. Illustrations. Maps. Appendix. Notes. Bibliographical references. Index. Paper. Pp. x + 275.

It goes without saying that the volumes that have been written about World War II in the Pacific have generally focused on the two major combatants, Japan and the United States. In most of these books, little or nothing is said about those who were caught in the middle – the peoples of Melanesia and Micronesia.

Memories of War can best be described as an addendum to an earlier work by the same authors, *The Typhoon of War: Micronesian Experiences of the Pacific War* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001). In both volumes, the Pacific War is viewed from the perspective of those caught in the middle, with few alternatives other than to stay put and try to survive the typhoon of war that swept over them.

The authors make use of archival research, but the content of the book weighs heavily on the oral histories of islanders who lived before, during, and after the war, to give the reader a different perspective on a war that involved most of the world's population to one degree or another. This work is about how Micronesians understood the war; what it meant to them; how they suffered through it, not knowing who would win; and

how they might suffer even more if their one-time colonial masters lost. It is about their pre-war lives as subjects of the Japanese Empire, and how that empire brought about economic changes not experienced under earlier colonial rulers, first the Spanish, and then the Germans. It is also about their relations with the Japanese, Okinawans, and Koreans who came to the islands of Micronesia to live, work, and hopefully make new lives for themselves. The pre-war years were a time of prosperity for Micronesians, even though they were viewed as third-class citizens in the Japanese hierarchy of things.

Their relationships with their mostly civilian colonizers were for the most part positive. It was only after Pearl Harbor, and especially after the war turned against Japan, that life took an uncertain and ugly turn for Micronesians. As more and more Japanese military personnel descended on their peaceful lives, Micronesians suddenly became a burden, an inconvenience, individuals of questionable loyalty; and in some cases, suspected spies.

Destruction of not only lives, but a way of life as well, resulted as the war came to their individual island homes, even if those islands were among the ones bypassed by the Americans and their allies. Violent death, starvation, and disease followed; and at the end of the war, these island people who "simply got in the way" found themselves confronted with a new way of life and a new colonial ruler, the United States.

Memories of War also covers the early post-war years, when the islands of Micronesia were administered by the United States Navy, and then as Trust Territories under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of the Interior. And although these strange new conquerors brought needed food, clothing, and medical care to their destroyed islands and island lives, the people of Micronesia were essentially ignored during the post-war years. It was at least a generation after the war's end before some prosperity began to return to some of the islands as a result of their being opened up to foreign investment, mostly from Japan. And more recently, with China now stretching with new economic and military vigor from its Maoist slumber, the United States can no longer dismiss this island universe as a Pacific backwater as it did for so many decades following the defeat of Japan. Military facilities in the Mariana Islands and elsewhere in the Pacific are being expanded and modernized, bringing new prosperity to parts of Micronesia, but also fear of a possible new confrontation not seen since World War II.

Memories of War is a seamless piece of historiography, and worth reading, especially now that the Pacific appears once again to be the focus of powerful interests in the area.

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The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy. By *Adam Tooze*. London: Allen Lane, 2006. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Cloth. Pp. xxvi + 799.

Books on financial and economic history are normally pretty heavy going at the best of times, and this reviewer read *The Wages of Destruction* twice, just to make sure he had actually "broken" it. The work stands out among the large number of histories on the subject for two reasons. First of all, it is fluently written and most of the text can actually be understood by a reader without a degree in Economics, which is no mean feat on the part of the author. Secondly, the core chapters (pp. 326-512) constitute a radical, even revolutionary, reinterpretation of how the German war economy was managed between late 1939 and the collapse of the *Blitzkrieg* in October-November 1941.

Received wisdom would have it that mismanagement of epic proportions, particularly during the twelve months that elapsed between the German victory in the West and the invasion of the USSR, essentially prevented Nazi Germany from making the most of the window of opportunity during which the superior tactics and training of her land and air forces gave her a substantial qualitative edge over her adversaries. This in turn might have put Germany in a position where she could have inflicted crippling damage on either the United Kingdom, the USSR, or even both, effectively shutting out the United States from a German-dominated Europe before it had a chance to mobilize and deploy its superior material assets after 1942. Even the mounting criticism since the 1980's of Albert Speer's self-serving account of how he engineered the armaments miracle of 1942-44, and the concurrent rehabilitation of his predecessor Fritz Todt, have not altered this picture in a major way.

Marshalling new data and using new yardsticks for that already available, Tooze now comes to the conclusion that the management system in place, while admittedly "rough and ready," worked actually quite effectively within the given constraints and even compares favorably with that of the United Kingdom (normally seen as the Gold Standard for effective total war mobilization). Even though he never spells it out in so many words, Tooze essentially makes a powerful case for an Albert Speer (or equivalent) taking over the reins of the war effort in mid-1940 producing much the same results as his predecessors did: the progress made by the German war economy was essentially of an evolutionary, not revolutionary, nature.

In addition, unlike some recent historians, Tooze refuses to be taken in by the fallacy that the sheer size of Germany's conquest had by 1941-42 given her anything even approximating rough parity with her enemies in economic potential. Exploiting occupied Europe was never going to make up for the advantage which Britain gained from her un-

limited access to U.S. economic and financial aid, especially in view of the liabilities created by having to keep alive the economies of at least some of the countries under the German boot with deliveries of scarce German coal. A particular strength of this work is the author's highlighting of the links between economic mobilization, strategic direction of the war, and racial ideology which are all too easily dismissed as products of the lunacy inherent in the system of the Third Reich. To Tooze, the German war machine was fundamentally limited in what it could have achieved by the country's "partial modernization," "technological deficit," and the "atavistic barbarism" of the regime's war aims. While it is difficult to argue with these points, to contrast Germany's failure with the success story of Stalinist Russia ("the first and most dramatic example of a successful developmental dictatorship," p. 511) seems problematic at best. While it is certainly true that the USSR's crash industralization in the 1930's would have involved human suffering on a large scale in the best of cases, it is difficult to believe that the purges, mass deportations, and starvation campaigns of this period were all intricately linked to the success of the latest Five-Year-Plan and not just the reflection of a totalitarian ideology every bit as "atavistic" as Nazi Germany's.

In addition, while this Herculean effort did produce a war economy capable of obliterating the *Ostheer* with its output of tanks and howitzers, it suffered from "technological deficits" every bit as bad – and arguably worse – than Germany's. The navy and (to a slightly lesser extent) the air force remained technologically inferior to their German counterparts until the end of the war; the army had General Motors to thank for its mobility and never managed to give its soldiers assault rifles or equip its tanks with high-quality optics.

The question of the relative "modernity" of both regimes – one hotly debated for nearly twenty years now – will probably not be resolved for some time yet. Yet, another step in the right direction would certainly be a scholarly history of the Soviet war economy every bit as thorough as the job just done by Dr. Tooze for that of Germany.

One final note: the publishing house decided to place the very substantial source notes at the back of the volume; this sort of practice is only admissible with notes that provide nothing but file references. In this case, most of the scholarly debate is thus placed virtually out of the reader's reach and Allen Lane deserve a big black mark for doing so.

Highly recommended.

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Visions of Victory: The Hopes of Eight World War II Leaders. By *Gerhard L. Weinberg*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Illustrations. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Paper. Pp. 316.

Gerhard Weinberg is best known to students of World War II as the author of *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), a massive work of synthesis that has taken its place as a very important reference source for serious students of the war. *Visions of Victory* (originally published in 2005 by Cambridge University Press and now reissued, with no revisions, in paper) is a very different sort of book, clearly aimed at a more general readership. As one reads it, one hears the voice of a very senior historian delivering smooth and accessible lectures that rest on the massive learning of a lifetime's scholarship.

The peg on which Weinberg hangs his book is the visions of the future – after they had won – held by the leaders of the main belligerents. This gives the book unity, but it works unevenly. Weinberg is at his best with the European leaders and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. His account falters a bit when dealing with the war in Asia, where he profiles the views of Chiang Kai Shek and Tojo Hideki. The problems in dealing with them are, in part, that except in translation Chinese and Japanese materials remain closed to most Western scholars, who are forced to work from the outside in. For that reason, the collective anonymity that seemed to characterize the Japanese generals during the war has only slowly yielded to a more nuanced understanding. Moreover, it is clear that it is very hard to understand the officer corps of the Imperial Japanese Army without explaining its social and professional roots and its corporate ethos more thoroughly than is possible in a brief essay. After all, this was an officer corps that was quite willing to face the incineration of their country rather than surrender – something even the *Wehrmacht's* officers had qualms about. Weinberg's essay on Tojo is very interesting, but less satisfactory than his portraits of European or American leaders.

Then there is Chiang, considered an annoying distraction by Winston Churchill, who – although constrained to accept FDR's view of China's potential contribution to the war against Japan – never agreed with it. It is hard not to sympathize with Churchill's wartime assessment, however correct Roosevelt was about the deeper trends of history. The Generalissimo wanted to remain in power, which to him meant focusing on the inevitable postwar clash with Mao Tse-tung's Communists. As for the war at hand, he believed the Americans would defeat the Japanese for him. Like many Chinese rulers before and since, Chiang was a remarkably insular, if undeniably shrewd, individual. Again, it is extremely difficult to make much of Chiang without having access to the untranslated Chinese

historiography, although Weinberg does his best.

But when he turns to Europe and the United States, Weinberg's touch is sure, and while not all readers will agree with his assessments, it is hard to fault some of his key judgments: that FDR's America was the real victor of the war, a triumph that opened the way to a half-century of *Pax Americana*, only now coming to its end. Then there is this lapidary judgment of Churchill: "he accomplished an extraordinary feat and provided the Britain he loved with what may well have been its last defining contribution to modern history." (p. 226)

Perhaps the best chapter in the book is Weinberg's assessment of Hitler – unsurprising perhaps because so much of his scholarship has focused on the Third Reich. The dystopia that would have been the consequence of a German victory still retains the power to shock, and Weinberg lays it out with precision. (Mark Mazower's new study, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe*, spells out in gruesome detail what Weinberg outlines.) In an age of revisionism and historical amenesia, it is good to be reminded just why total victory over Hitler's state was necessary, and why Winston Churchill and the Britain he led should be remembered for that "last defining contribution" – the stubborn refusal to accept defeat that made ultimate victory possible.

Visions of Victory is worth reading both for the author's valuable insights – and for its reminder that, while no war is "good," some wars are necessary.

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Franco and the Axis Stigma. By *David Wingeate Pike*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2008. Appendices. Notes. Index. Cloth. Pp. xv + 220.

David Pike, a distinguished historian of modern Spain, argues in *Franco and the Axis Stigma* that most accounts of the Franco Regime during World War II ask the wrong questions. Rather than debating when dictator Francisco Franco shifted his policies between neutrality and support of the Axis, and back again, Pike concludes that the real question should be about what the Spanish ruler wanted to do. On this question, Pike argues, there is no doubt: Franco preferred a Nazi victory, and worked to this end before, during, and even after the period of Hitler's ascendancy during World War II. While the author makes an innovative case, his selective use of archives brings his thesis unnecessarily into question.

Pike makes use of archives which have not been frequently employed

to examine the history of the Franco Regime, including German naval records and those of the French Republic and the Vichy collaborationist state, the latter created in the wake of France's defeat in 1940. What these documents show, according to the author, is a record of actions, both public and private, that favored the Axis. By Pike's account, Spain's Nationalist government provided every measure of assistance, short of open belligerency, to ensure German and Italian victory, as early as the final years of the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939. While historians have long been aware of Franco's toleration of submarine refueling and intelligence collaboration between Spain and the Axis in 1939 and 1940, Pike also uncovers additional aid by Franco. Not only did Spain harm French military production through banning pyrite exports in 1937, it also threatened France's colonies in North Africa, through often public declarations that Morocco should be entirely controlled by Spain, rather than divided between the two nations.

Other historians have pointed to 1940-1943 as the height of Spain's collaboration with the Axis. Not only was the Spanish press full of praise for Hitler's New Order, but Spain sent the volunteer Blue Division to fight on the Eastern Front, as well as 25,000 workers to Germany. Pike discusses additional forms of support to Germany, including frequent refueling of U-Boats in Spanish ports, intense intelligence collaboration, security cooperation on the issue of Spanish Republican exiles, and export of raw materials to Germany, especially tungsten ore. With the fading of German fortunes after 1942, Pike reports on the continued pro-Nazi tilt in Spanish newspapers, as have other authors. Even as he downplays the increasing number of pro-Allied stories and editorials, however, he points to pro-German accounts, decreasing significantly in 1944 and 1945, as reflecting the real beliefs of Franco and his government.

This is an admirable book, with an intriguing thesis that could change the terms of the historiographical debate. However, the author curiously does not engage Spanish archives on key topics, leaving an incomplete picture that depends too heavily on Nazi and French sources, each with their own problematics. For example, he uses almost exclusively German records to present the history of the Blue Division, despite the richness of Spain's military archives, and the hundreds of primary and secondary sources on this subject. His acceptance of the German Army's view of the Blue Division, that it was militarily ineffective and accumulated a record of atrocities against the local population, ignores decades of research to the contrary in Spain, the United States, and even Russia. Pike's reliance on French and German diplomatic papers is also surprising, given that the Spanish Foreign Ministry archive is accessible to historians. While there are some gaps in the Spanish archival record, leaving out these sources from this work almost entirely undermines some of

its strengths. The author does make extensive use of Spanish newspapers, and did conduct research in Madrid at the *Biblioteca Nacional* as well, so these omissions are even less understandable.

There are other obstacles to this being a stronger book. Pike leans far too much on extended quotations, some running several pages, which take the reader away from his analysis and narrative. The author also does not seem to be entirely even-handed in his interpretation, presenting statements by Spanish officials in the worst possible light, arguing that pro-Axis comments reflect true beliefs, while pro-Allied ones are misleading or dishonest.

Despite these flaws, *Franco and the Axis Stigma* is a useful contribution to the debate over the nature and history of the Franco dictatorship. Spain has experienced a vibrant discussion in recent years over the origins of the Spanish Civil War, and one can hope that Pike's work will contribute to the ongoing efforts by historians on both sides of the Atlantic to understand the Second World War in a similarly broad context. This book should find a place in academic and university libraries, as well as in the collections of those interested in modern Spain and the years of the Franco Regime.

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Your Children Will Be Next: Bombing and Propaganda in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939. By *Robert Stradling*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Cloth. Pp. xix +315.

Robert Stradling's most recent book concerns bombing during the Spanish Civil War less so than the propagandistic discourse of bombing, particularly from the perspective of the political left. His focus is the Nationalist bombing of Getafe, a suburb of Madrid, on 30 October 1936. General Francisco Franco's forces aimed at the Republican air base in Getafe in order to forestall aerial attacks on his own positions and thus hasten the fall of Madrid. In the process, civilians, including children, were killed, though it remains impossible based on contemporary accounts to say how many.

This is Stradling's point. With Madrid seemingly about to fall in the autumn of 1936 and with Soviet help arriving for the beleaguered republic, "Getafe" suddenly referred not to the town or its strategic importance, but rather to the to the deliberate "fascist" aerial slaughter of women and children. The propaganda campaign manufactured by Com-

intern agents in Madrid included photographs of dead children, who likely were killed by bombs in Madrid rather than Getafe, and most specifically a poster of one dead child wearing the identification tag "4-21-35" with a bomber-filled sky as a backdrop. The warning, "If You Tolerate This Your Children Will Be Next," completed the poster. Interestingly, Getafe was never a headline in Spain. Rather, it became a humanitarian *cause célèbre* elsewhere, particularly in Britain, where it could be seen in interventionist marches.

At first, "Getafe" was an atrocity story aimed in the autumn of 1936 at saving Madrid from Franco. But Stradling shows how, as the war became stalemated, the left manipulated the air war to seize the international moral high ground in what was seen as a fight for more than Spain itself. The international left wing press depicted skies above Republican cities "blackened with fascist bombers" (p. 103), which in turn targeted women and children at schools, playgrounds, markets, and so on. This narrative spilled over to the more mainstream press until Pablo Picasso's painting *Guernica*, which depicted the German bombing of that Basque city in April 1937, provided a superior and indelible image of civilian casualties.

Stradling shows the selective nature of wartime journalism. That Spain's air force remained loyal to the Republic and that it repeatedly bombed Nationalist cities early in the war (including Oviedo 208 times in ten months) was left out of the international narrative. Even actual fascists, such as Italian ambassador Dino Grandi, noted the irony that only the Soviets and their clients seemed to care for the safety of women and children while the forces of the right seemed to target nothing else. The author melds left-wing propaganda with the literature of the time such as the poetry of Pablo Neruda, which spoke of airplanes snatching children from their mothers' arms, and films such as *Blockade* (1938), in which Henry Fonda asked what happened to the conscience of the world amidst murder from the skies. As a study of leftist propaganda in the 1930s that deliberately manipulated facts and morality, Stradling's book is worth the read.

Yet, as a larger consideration of the discourse of bombing and atrocity in general, Stradling might have thought more about the broader twentieth century context. Nazi propaganda, after all, manipulated the effects of Allied bombing after 1943, claiming – even as Jews were being slaughtered in the East – that it was the Allies who were guilty of wanton mass murder. The argument moved few outside Germany at the time, but the use of "Dresden" by German communists after the war and the most recent discourse on Allied bombing by W.G. Sebald, Jörg Friedrich, A.C. Grayling, and others shows that the narrative of urban bombing is more complex than a simple left-right argument. A more nuanced view might also have avoided irritating comments such as, "Child

4-21-35 was the forerunner of Ann [*sic*] Frank [and] of the naked Vietnamese girl [Phan Thi Kim Phúc] fleeing toward the camera from a village [Trang Bang] incinerated by napalm." (p. 93) The comparison of a ham-handed communist propaganda poster with the Holocaust's most famous victim – on whom we have much more than a single anonymous picture – is wrong-headed in too many ways to count here. As for Kim Phúc: she was indeed used in later years by the Vietnamese government for propaganda purposes. But only Richard Nixon questioned the authenticity of the Pulitzer Prize winning photograph.

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The Stalin and Molotov Lines: Soviet Western Defences 1928-41. By *Neil Short*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008. Illustrations. Maps. Appendix. Index. Paper. Pp. 64.

Osprey Publishing's *Fortress* series continues to cover many Second World War-related topics and some of these titles have covered lesser-known subjects. This trend has continued with the publication of a book dedicated to Stalin's attempts to fortify the Soviet Union's Western border. The latest *Fortress* book on the Stalin and Molotov Lines is the first book on the subject in English, thus making it a valuable source to any Eastern Front scholar.

In reality, the Stalin and Molotov Lines were not lines, but a series of fortified areas. The names themselves were Western inventions. To the Soviets, they were described as fortified regions (*ukreplinnyje rajony*). The so-called Stalin Line was the original string of fortifications along the pre-1939 border of the Soviet Union. The Molotov Line was the new series of fortifications built to protect the newly-acquired territories in the Baltics, eastern Poland, and parts of Rumania.

The role of these defenses was to provide protection of the Soviet Union's open western frontier. While the Soviet Army was convinced that the offensive was paramount, fixed defenses were still seen as valuable. They would act as a shield, absorbing the first enemy blow, and provide the basis for a Soviet counterattack. They would also screen Soviet mobilization.

Construction of the Soviet's western defenses began as early as 1928, but was initially limited to four fortified regions. These were completed in 1932 and were designed to protect Leningrad, Kiev, and key rail and road junctions. The second phase of construction added nine more re-

gions, focusing mainly on the Ukraine. In 1938, eight additional regions were added to give depth to the Western frontier's defenses, but again focused on the Ukraine.

The partition of Poland in 1939 moved the Soviet Union's border 200-400 kilometers to the west. This development presented the Soviets with the problem of how to defend their newly-gained territories. It was decided to create a new series of defenses. These would be built right along the new border and would be comprised of permanent defenses, not field works. The main effort was placed in the Western Special Military District, but also included work in the Kiev Special Military District and the Odessa Military District. To equip and finish the new Molotov Line, work was stopped on all but one of the last eight fortified regions of the Stalin Line. Additionally, weapons were stripped from the old defenses and sent west. As the prospects for war appeared more likely, the Molotov Line was hurriedly finished. By June 1941, 2,500 strongpoints were completed. This was an impressive total, but it did not constitute an integrated defense, but rather a series of individual positions.

After providing a very clear overview of the history behind the Stalin and Molotov Lines, the author shines in his attempt to fully describe the actual composition of the lines. The Osprey standard of providing ample maps, diagrams, and photographs makes this easily the most impressive part of the book. The fortified regions themselves were 50-150 kilometers in length and 30-50 kilometers deep. Each was assigned its own permanent garrison. Some gaps existed, but these were designed to be covered by rifle divisions. Where possible, the defenses were anchored on rivers. The defense in depth was designed to exhaust the attacker and open him up to a counterattack. Typically, the fully completed defenses included a forward defense zone of between 12-18 kilometers in depth and a main defense zone 5-10 kilometers deep. The main defensive belt was arranged into defensive areas manned by a battalion.

Much of the book is devoted to describing the types of bunkers and weapons used in the fortifications. The vast majority of the positions in both lines were equipped with machine guns. Tank turrets were also used and increasing numbers of bunkers were capable of handling anti-tank guns. Many problems were encountered in completing the border defenses. While manpower was adequate for construction, steel, concrete, armaments, and other equipment were inadequate. By the time of the German invasion, only 1,000 of 2,500 positions were fully equipped. Despite the fact that by June 1941 forty-two fortified regions manned the Western defenses with 192,240 men together with 1,700 guns and 9,800 machine guns, the defenses were not combat ready.

Given the shortages of officers and NCOs to man the defenses and shortages of key equipment, the operational history of the Stalin and Molotov Lines is not surprising. It is generally true that the defenses

were ineffective and forced no delay to the German advance. There were instances of fierce fighting, but these were the exceptions. The defenses of the Molotov Line, located as they were directly on the border, were swamped by the German advance. In the central and northern parts of the line, the Germans achieved tactical surprise and quickly destroyed the defenses. In the southern part of the front, the defenses were fully manned, but were penetrated within days.

The fate of the Stalin Line was similar. It was not fully manned and many of its weapons had been moved west to equip the Molotov Line. The northern part of the line failed to stop or delay the advance of German Army Group North. In the central sector, the defenses around Minsk were quickly penetrated by the Germans. The southern part of the Stalin Line performed better in spite of the defenses again not being completely manned. The presence of the fortified regions around Kiev helped defend the city for seventy days, although this was probably due more to the better performance of the Soviet Southwest Front than anything else.

This short work does an admirable job of describing the strategy behind the fortifications, their construction and composition, and their eventual fate. The extensive graphics greatly enhance the book's clarity and value. Considerable confusion exists on the Stalin and Molotov Lines among Western readers, which this book does much to clarify. This volume is now the best account on its subject available in English.

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Escape from the Deep: The Epic Story of a Legendary Submarine and Her Courageous Crew. By *Alex Kershaw*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2008. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Cloth. Pp. xi + 270.

Perhaps one of the reasons that United States Navy submariners refer to their calling as "the silent service," is that no sane human being would volunteer for such duty if he was made aware of its dangers. That would certainly be the case for readers of Alex Kershaw's narrative of the USS *Tang's* (SS-306) operations in the western Pacific in 1944. A journalist and screenwriter, Kershaw's publication record reflects an emphasis on small unit operations in war. His purpose is to recast operational history within the context of the soldiers and sailors who did the fighting and dying. *Escape From the Deep* brings to life the dangerous game played by U.S. Navy submarine crews in the Pacific, and is a reminder of the personal dimension of war.

Over the course of four patrols, the *Tang* had garnered a reputation as one of the submarine community's most effective ship killers. Her captain, Richard "Dick" O'Kane, was an intellectually gifted and classically-educated officer. He embodied the new breed of submarine commanders fighting in the later stages of the Pacific War: officers willing to break from the orthodoxy of navy tactical doctrine to accomplish their mission of sinking Japanese warships and merchants. Kershaw depicts the *Tang's* crew as an equally professional group of sailors, whose determination to annihilate the Imperial Japanese Navy was no less enthusiastic than their captain.

Both captain and crew would be tested in the crucibles of both combat and survival. Assigned to the dangerous Formosa Strait for its fifth war patrol, the *Tang* had exhausted all but one of its torpedoes in an attack on a Japanese merchant convoy. Determined to expend his last round, O'Kane redirected the submarine back to the convoy for one last shot. While being attacked by destroyers, O'Kane released his torpedo, only to suffer the ignominy of the weapon turning around and hitting the *Tang*. With half of the crew killed in the initial explosion, the submarine sank in 180 feet of water. O'Kane, caught outside the boat with several other crewmen, could only watch as his command slipped beneath the sea.

Kershaw's narrative quickly moves to an amazing survival story. The forty surviving members of the *Tang's* crew made their way forward to the torpedo room, the only space that could keep them alive. With oxygen running out, despair began setting in for many of the crew. Kershaw describes in vivid detail sailors who, from either the stultifying air or mental and physical exhaustion, simply gave in to death by crawling into racks. But others opted for life. They donned Momsen Lungs, a rebreathing device that had yet to be used in actual operations, and attempted to escape death through the submarine's escape trunk. Six attempts were made, with nine sailors making it to the surface. Of those, only six survived the ascent.

The sailors who escaped the submarine joined those already on the surface, only to fall into the hands of the enemy. For the remainder of the war, the *Tang's* survivors would endure the brutality of Japanese prisoner of war camps, while families would endure the emotional trauma of separation, unaware that the navy knew of their fate. Kershaw points out that naval intelligence intercepts early on revealed the status of the survivors. But fearing that the nature of the intercepts might be compromised, the navy withheld notification of the families.

Scholars looking for answers to deep, historical questions might be disappointed in *Escape From the Deep*. Kershaw does not examine the origins and development of U.S. Navy submarine doctrine. Historians interested in the technological dimension of submarine history will need to refer to more academic histories. The book at times edges towards ha-

giography. But that is not the point of the narrative. Seven of the nine survivors were gone when the book was published. Kershaw's purpose was to burn the actions of the *Tang's* crew into the public memory. He draws from an extensive collection of oral interviews and memoirs to ensure that the reader experiences the dangerous nature of submarine duty. Kershaw offers keen insights into the qualities shared by both officers and enlisted sailors who volunteered for these missions. He tells a gripping story of the nature of combat in the great Pacific War. Perhaps more importantly, the book is a reminder to contemporary submariners that technology has made their calling no less dangerous or deadly.

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The Irregulars: Roald Dahl and the British Spy Ring in Wartime Washington. By *Jennet Conant*. New York and London: Simon & Schuster, 2008. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliographical references. Index. Cloth. Pp. xx + 393.

In 1998, the academic Thomas E. Mahl revealed in *Desperate Deception: British Covert Operations in the United States, 1939-44* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1998) that during World War II British Security Coordination (BSC) had engaged in a series of what might now be termed "dirty tricks" to influence American public opinion and undermine the isolationists. As an analysis of covert operations conducted in Washington and New York by perfidious Albion, Mahl's account appeared to be the last word, apart of course from the publication of Sir William S. Stephenson's own *British Security Coordination: The Secret History of British Intelligence in the Americas, 1940-1945* (London: St. Ermin's Press, 1998), his sponsored history of the organization he ran for five years in the Rockefeller Center. However, *The Irregulars* by the journalist Jennet Conant offers a very different perspective, purporting to describe "the British spy ring in wartime Washington," and the role played in it by the great master of the short story, Roald Dahl, the author who famously gave us Gremlins.

That Dahl worked for BSC for the last two years of the war is not in dispute, nor is the existence of BSC, an umbrella organization about much nonsense has been written over the years. Because so much misleading information had been propagated about BSC, principally by the Canadian newspaperman William Stevenson, great care should be taken to back up any potentially controversial assertions, and to source quota-

tions on any related topic. Accordingly, a reviewer approaches *The Irregulars* with some trepidation, especially when on the first page one is told that BSC's director, William Stephenson, had been despatched to New York by Winston Churchill. This bald statement is, of course, precisely the kind of assertion that is likely to be challenged by historians who have been emphatic that there is no evidence that Churchill ever met Stephenson, nor even knew of his existence. The point is important because this is not some mere trifling slip by Conant, but the very personal relationship between the two men is a recurring theme throughout her book. She insists that "Stephenson was dispatched to America by Churchill" and "Stephenson would, in turn, pass on any valuable information to London, and to Churchill;" that "President Roosevelt relied on Stephenson" to act as a "back channel for his secret dealings with Churchill;" and again that BSC was a "black propaganda operation that Churchill had charged him with developing in the United States." Furthermore, she claims that before the war Stephenson had begun "working for Churchill's so-called Z-network" and suggests that Churchill had given instructions direct to BSC: "Churchill…instructed the BSC to do everything possible 'to drag' their reluctant ally into the war against Germany." To make quite certain of the bond between the two men, she insists Churchill "asked Stephenson to undertake a secret mission to Washington D.C." and apparently they chatted together for "Churchill agreed with Stephenson that the only truly effective form of intelligence was counterintelligence."

None of this is true, and Churchill's long-serving private secretary, Sir Jock Colville, denounced the fabrication of the supposed links between Stephenson and the prime minister when it was first circulated in the notorious work *A Man Called Intrepid* by William Stevenson (London: Macmillan, 1976). So if Conant has been misled regarding Stephenson, what about BSC itself? It is clear that Stephenson was appointed the Passport Control Officer in New York in July 1940 to replace a retired naval officer, Sir James Paget, who had held the post since 1935. However, Conant presents BSC, the cover title for the MI6 station, as being "conceived of as a black book, or unofficial operation" so Stephenson "could be disowned by everyone." Furthermore, she says "no official title had been given to this cloak-and-dagger outfit, and for that matter no prior War Cabinet approval. It was called BSC by default, after the original Baker Street address of the Special Operations Executive in London." Indeed, she even asserts that BSC was "a title created arbitrarily by the American FBI director J. Edgar Hoover" who "did not share the English enthusiasm for codenames."

It would be tedious to dismantle each part of these entirely erroneous statements, but they are wholly incorrect in every detail. So is Conant's grasp of exactly when Stephenson was appointed to New York. She says

he was "dispatched to America by Churchill after the nightmarish winter of 1940 during which Mussolini joined forces with Hitler," and this implies some unspecified date early in 1941, whereas he actually took up his post on 1 July 1940. Far from being disavowed, Stephenson and BSC were registered with the U.S. State Department as a branch of the British government.

Having undermined her own credibility, at least in regard to BSC, Conant turns her attention to Dahl, a dashing RAF pilot posted to the British embassy in Washington after he had crashed the plane he was delivering in North Africa, having lost his bearings and run out of fuel. Badly injured, Dahl was given light diplomatic duties as an assistant air attaché and he promptly embroidered a version of his flying accident into a combat incident in which he had been shot down by the enemy. He was soon a hit on the social scene and made plenty of local contacts, including the President's wife who occasionally invited him to the White House. He also proved a success in Hollywood, and began his literary career by submitting some not entirely accurate autobiographical short stories to American magazines.

Whether Dahl actually engaged in any espionage is hard to tell as the evidence presented is slim to non-existent. Certainly he was active on the cocktail party circuit, but the proposition that Churchill was dependent on BSC for political advice about the atmosphere in Washington, when the embassy accommodated trained, career professionals to carry out precisely that function, seems improbable. So what did Dahl contribute to any "British spy ring?"

Interestingly, Conant appears to have gained access to SIS documents, for she occasionally makes what appears to be a direct quotation from Stewart Menzies, the MI6 Chief who is described as having been "head of counterespionage in France in his early twenties." For instance, she quotes him as referring to Vice President Henry Wallace as "that menace," and says "C decided he did not want to risk a major showdown with the BSC chief." According to Conant, Menzies had resisted Stephenson's appointment and had "objected to Stephenson." But where did the author acquire the evidence for these very dubious assertions? If Menzies had objected to Stephenson's appointment in 1940, it simply would not have been made, unless Conant has some astonishing hitherto undisclosed documentation to back her doubtful claims.

Some of Conant's claims are plainly ludicrous. She says Kim Philby "joined the SIS in 1940" and then defected to Moscow "in 1951" with Donald Maclean. Churchill "had no choice" but to succumb to pressure from Stalin and Roosevelt and agree to open a second front in Normandy, set for May 1944. "The British were increasingly nervous about the close relationship developing between America and Russia." In 1941, just before the raid on Pearl Harbor, Stephenson had "sent a coded

telegram to the London office that a Japanese attack was imminent."

For good measure, Conant claims that Stephenson and Ian Fleming were close, and says Fleming participated in a burglary of the Japanese consulate in New York. Stephenson supposedly also sent Fleming on a training course to Oshawa in 1942, and the author says both Fleming brothers, Peter and Ian, were "too old for frontline commands," which, insultingly, rather ignores Peter's very distinguished record as a commando in Norway in 1940. She says they were good "agent material" and claims Ian "reported to the Ministry of Defense" when no such ministry existed! She says Noel Coward "had undertaken a mission for the SIS" in Paris, having been recruited by Stephenson, who had also engaged Leslie Howard as a courier. Neither, of course, had the slightest connection with SIS or BSC.

To list every absurdity in *The Irregulars* would try the patience of the reader, but a general picture emerges of a rather inaccurate, superficial book that depends far too heavily on long-discredited sources and laughable myths, such as the preposterous assertion that Stephenson flew over the invasion beaches in June 1944 in a bomber as a rear gunner. Conant has no excuse for peddling this tripe because she lists in her bibliography some of the books that have debunked William Stevenson's inventions, so she should know better. However, it is clear that she has fallen for the fiction amassed in the University of Regina archives, but we should resist any temptation to do the same.

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Fleeing Hitler: France 1940. By *Hanna Diamond*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Illustrations. Maps. Notes. Bibliographical references. Index. Cloth. Pp. xv + 255.

With German panzer and infantry columns grinding in from Belgium, the British Expeditionary Force pulling back to the English Channel coast, and the Paris government in disarray, many French took to the roads as summer arrived in 1940.

As cabinet officials hastily left their offices and fled southward, the sun-baked roads of north-central France became choked with endless streams of frantic men, women, and children. They were refugees in their own country, joined by thousands of others who had left their homes in Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg.

An estimated four million people headed for refuge in such cities and towns as Rennes, Nantes, Limoges, Dijon, Clermont-Ferrand, Lyon, and

Bordeaux. The single aim was to get as far away as possible from Paris and the Nazi hordes. The lucky ones jammed the last trains, buses, and taxis available. But the majority – hot, thirsty, weary, and carrying as much food and personal belongings as they could manage – straggled along the roads on foot or with the only forms of transport left: farm carts, bicycles, overloaded cars, dilapidated trucks and buses, and even wheelbarrows. Infants and grandparents rode in baby carriages.

When German fighter planes swooped down to strafe and bomb, the defenseless refugees scattered for cover in roadside ditches and under trees. It was a pitiful, desperate exodus, as Hanna Diamond describes in her poignant account of the fall of France and the plight of its citizens. With the benefit of considerable archival and personal material, she paints a harrowing picture of that bright yet tragic summer. She explains that French civil and military authorities tried initially to direct the fleeing multitudes and keep them out of the path of army convoys. But, as mistakes were made (many people were directed back toward Paris rather than to the open countryside of Champagne and Burgundy) and control of the situation was lost, the people on foot were particularly vulnerable. Escape often became just a matter of chance.

Diamond has written a factual and readable book, yet an incomplete one. While she details the establishment of the notorious Vichy regime and the misfortunes of French Jews, she overlooks a central aspect of the great refugee exodus – the roles of Spain and Portugal, and the heroic efforts of a number of individuals – priests, diplomats, and others – in helping thousands to escape from the Nazi clutches. Men like Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese consul in Bordeaux, who handed out transit visas to 30,000 refugees, including 10,000 Jews; Austria's Hapsburg family; French and Belgian government officials; General Jacques Leclerc, later commander of the French 2nd Armored Division, which was to liberate Paris in August 1944; and Hollywood actor Robert Montgomery.

This is a dramatic work of no mean scholarship, as far as it goes.

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Conferences / Lectures / Events

From North Africa to the Eagle's Nest: The 7th Infantry Regiment's Bloody Road to Victory in WWII
A Lecture by Dr. John C. McManus
8 July 2009 • The National WWII Museum, USA
www.nationalww2museum.org
contact: Jeremy Collins
jeremy.collins@nationalww2museum.org

Flying Legends Air Show
11-12 July 2009 • Imperial War Museum Duxford, England
duxford.iwm.org.uk
contact: Events Director
duxford@iwm.org.uk

New Thinking on the Second World War
24-26 July 2009 • University of Birmingham, England
contact: Dr. Steffen Prauser
s.prauser@bham.ac.uk

26th International Churchill Conference
10-12 September 2009 • San Francisco, USA
www.winstonchurchill.org
contact: Mary Paxson
mdwyer@winstonchurchill.org

Bombing, States and Peoples in Western Europe, 1940-1945
10-13 September 2009 • University of Exeter, England
www.centres.ex.ac.uk/wss/bombing
contact: Dr. Stephan Glienke
s.a.glienke@exeter.ac.uk

From Africa to Berchtesgaden: Across the Desert to Defeat Hitler
10-11 December 2009 • University of Birmingham, England
contact: Dr. Steffen Prauser
s.prauser@bham.ac.uk

France in the Second World War: Vichy in concepts
30 April - 1 May 2010 • Maison Française d'Oxford, England
contact: Events Director
maison@herald.ox.ac.uk