

Futures of War: Toward a Consensus View of the Future Security Environment, 2010-2035

by Sam J. Tangredi
Newport, RI: Alidade Press, 2008
274 pp. \$19.98
ISBN: 978-1-4363-1024-6

Reviewed by
CLARK CAPSHAW

Futures of War is a follow-on work to Sam Tangredi's *All Possible Wars? Toward a Consensus View of the Future Security Environment, 2001-2025* (NDU Press, 2000). Like its predecessor, *Futures of War* aims to provide a comparative analysis of multiple studies of the future security environment of 2010-2035, focusing on points of consensus and divergence in these studies. The components of the future security environment under consideration include "oncoming threats to national security; future elements that will or will not contribute to our political, economic, or military strength; trends in relations between national governments and between national governments and non-state actors; and all other factors that impact the physical security and continued existence of the United States" (p. 11).

Tangredi uses the same methodology as in his earlier work: that of a meta-study. He surveys future security environment literature published in the last decade by both government and nongovernment sources. He then classifies the position in each study on a number of propositions related to threats, military technology, and opposing strategies.

The author concludes that there is consensus throughout the community on a number of propositions. Concerning *threats*, for example, "There will be ideological rivals to democracy, but . . . there will not be a rival military coalition" to threaten the United States in this timeframe (p. 61). Under *military technology*, "advanced military technology will continue to become more diffuse, [but] . . . if there is a 'technological surprise' innovation, it is likely it will be developed by the U.S. or [an] ally" (p. 61). The consensus about *opposing strategies* is that "the homeland of the United States will become increasingly vulnerable to 'asymmetric attacks' . . . and [that] 'information warfare' . . . will become increasingly important" (p. 61). Each of these consensus points is examined in detail, with contrary views also identified and explained.

It is both encouraging and illuminating that most of the sources agreed on so much. However, there were some areas where the sources present divergent views. On the *nature of future conflict*, Tangredi notes the contrast between the propositions that "globalization, transformation, and fourth generation warfare have fundamentally changed the nature of war" and that "the nature of war is immutable" (p. 123). Concerning *threats*, the view that "a near-peer competitor is inevitable over the long term; we need to prepare now" is at odds with the belief that "preparing for a near-peer will create a military competition (thus creating a near-peer)" (p. 123). In the area of *opposing strategies*, the proposition "conventional military force will not deter terrorism or non-state threats" conflicts with the proposition that "U.S. military capabilities will retain considerable deterrence or coercive effects against terrorism and non-state threats" (p. 124).

A chapter on "wild cards" introduces the notion that certain world events could have an outsized effect on many of the predictions included in the study; one of these wild cards is the

advent of "a worldwide economic collapse" (p. 150). Although the state of the economy at the end of 2008 did not meet the definition of a worldwide collapse, the tremors were of sufficient magnitude to prompt one to ask if any of the report's conclusions should be revised on the basis of the new situation. Since this study was completed before those events, the true effect is not included in the analysis.

However, in his prediction of the possible effect of an economic collapse, Tangredi notes that there are three potential implications for U.S. defense policy. The first is either greater engagement by U.S. forces in conflict caused by economic problems around the world or the reverse: a movement in the United States toward neo-isolationism. The second is strained relations with traditional allies if the United States or its allies (or both) are in the throes of economic collapse. The third implication is pressure for a substantial reduction of the defense budget. It will be interesting to see if any or all of these predictions are realized in the current economic crisis.

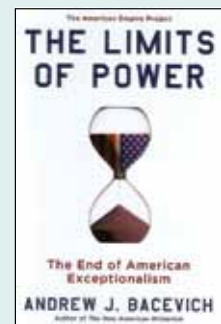
The penultimate chapter—and the focus of the book's efforts—is dedicated to developing a "consensus scenario," one that is true to the points of agreement and points of divergence addressed above. Tangredi does a creditable job with this, noting that there is agreement among almost all sources that U.S. military forces need to prepare for contingencies such as "high level[s] of information warfare," "attempts by a regional competitor or non-state actor to attack the U.S. homeland using 'asymmetrical' means," "continual diffusion of military technology to potential competitors and non-state actors," and "involvement in failed states, SSTR [stability, security, transition, and reconstruction], and humanitarian actions" (p. 165). On this last point, Tangredi argues that such "involvement in failing states will become less discretionary as long as there is the potential for terrorist sanctu-

aries within such states" (p. 166). A brief final chapter is devoted to the challenges of defense planning in general.

As Yogi Berra once put it, "Prediction is very hard, especially about the future." This aphorism applies to this book. But considering the dire predictions made during the Cold War, the reader should be buoyed by the consensus that neither strategic nuclear war, nor global war against a military near-peer, nor even any significant alliance against the United States is considered likely during this period.

Overall, Tangredi's book is illuminating, but one wonders what will come of it. Will the consensus of opinion on many of these issues be taken as basis for policy, or will it disappear through the cracks like so many of the studies that Tangredi references? **JFQ**

Dr. Clark Capshaw is an engineer and evaluator of aerial intelligence systems for the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command in Alexandria, Virginia, and an online instructor for the University of Phoenix.



The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism

by Andrew J. Bacevich
New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008
206 pp. \$24.00
ISBN-13: 978-0-8050-8815-1

Reviewed by
BRYON GREENWALD

Having authored, co-authored, or edited 10 previous books and published nearly 40 major articles, Andrew Bacevich is one of the most prolific and thought-

provoking commentators on contemporary American defense and security issues. A West Point graduate, Vietnam veteran, cavalry regiment commander during the Persian Gulf War, and currently a professor of international relations at Boston University, Bacevich has long been a straight shooter when targeting the folly of military and political leadership. His first book, *The Pentomic Era* (NDU Press, 1986, 1995), took aim at the Army of the 1950s for its ill-conceived pursuit of relevance as part of President Dwight Eisenhower's nuclear-tipped, fiscally austere "New Look" strategy. As aggressive as he is eloquent, Bacevich continued his critique of American foreign and military policy in *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy* (Harvard, 2002) and *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War* (Oxford, 2005).

In *The Limits of Power*, Bacevich examines the American cultural, economic, political, and military performance of the last 50 years and finds the Nation's citizens, political leaders, and soldiers wanting. He contends that the American reinterpretation of freedom, especially since the 1960s, "has had a transformative impact on our society and culture." The reader is asked to consider a series of seemingly simple, yet deceptively complex, questions: "What is freedom today? What is its content? What costs does the exercise of freedom impose? And who pays?" (p. 8). In his analysis, Bacevich believes American appetites for and expectations of "freedom" have grown exponentially and today far outstrip the ability of our domestic political economy to satisfy them. This situation has led a generation of self-selected "power elite" to pursue a foreign policy of exceptionalism and expansionism that in its execution looks, feels, and behaves a lot like the creation of an American empire—an empire whose maintenance, Bacevich offers, is antithetical to our tra-

ditional concept of freedom and now imperils the Nation.

Bacevich details with devastating effect the decline of American power since the end of the Cold War and the simultaneous rise of hubris governing the exercise of that power. He holds that quite paradoxically, in the early 1990s, during its self-coronation as the world's sole remaining superpower, America ended what some historians called the "Long Peace" and embarked on an incoherent series of military interventions that presaged the "Long War" to protect and preserve our self-indulgent concept of freedom. Along the way, he suggests, the Nation drank its own Kool-aid, became punch-drunk on its apparent success, and accelerated its descent toward domestic and international calamity.

Central to Bacevich's thesis are three self-induced, interlocking crises confronting America: an economic and cultural crisis (what he terms the "crisis of profligacy"), a political one, and a military one. In discussing these crises, Bacevich relies heavily on the works of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, whom he describes as "the most clear-eyed of American prophets." As a potential model against which future historians might analyze current U.S. security policy, Bacevich offers Niebuhr's judgment that every civilization is most pretentious, cocksure, and convinced of its own immortality at the moment it begins to decline.

For Bacevich, the crisis of American profligacy is all too obvious. Be it land, wealth, or material goods, he contends that the accumulation of *more* has characterized our national identity more than most Americans understand or are willing to admit. From the Louisiana Purchase to the current war in Iraq, Bacevich argues that Presidents have adhered almost universally to the American desire for *more* while failing to demand of the people a commensurate level of sacrifice. Citing America's transition over the last 40 years from being the world's leading

producer and creditor to being its leading consumer and debtor, he indicts the American people for their undisciplined pursuit of material "happiness." For Bacevich, the current "great recession" is proof of the "instant gratification" attitude that has paupered the Nation and taught a generation of obese schoolchildren (and adults) that hard work, self-sacrifice, and even the national defense is someone else's responsibility.

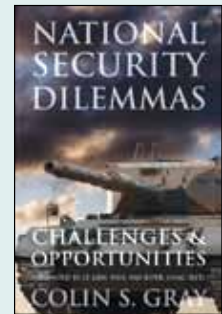
Bacevich is equally critical of America's political performance since the Great Depression. He argues that the Federal republic, as established by the Constitution with limited and specific powers, no longer exists. It has been replaced by a vast centralization of power at the Federal level and specifically within the executive branch. Members of Congress, more focused on getting reelected than balancing power, abetted this centralization. Equally guilty are the unseen courtiers who derive their livelihood from this centralization—the press, pundits, and "power elite" who cover, pontificate about, and populate the Federal Government. To Bacevich, none of this would matter if the Federal Government were not grossly incompetent.

The military crisis involves injurious attempts to "reinvent" war, enlarge the size of the Armed Forces, and continue the doctrine of "preventive war." Bacevich defends the troops, attacks their civilian and military leadership, and argues effectively that the failure to articulate and implement a coherent post-Cold War grand strategy further exacerbates our problems. He offers that a generation of leaders has replaced the need for a better appreciation for war's limited effectiveness with derivative strategies based either on specious ideology or military operations completely removed from their larger geostrategic context. Bacevich correctly concludes that the proponents of "shock and awe" or "net-centricity" confuse the enduring *nature* of war with temporary, often technologically determined, changes in the *conduct* of war. Bacevich,

however, saves particular scorn for General Tommy Franks, offering withering analysis of Franks' campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq and asking rhetorically, "Does knowing Doug Feith is stupid make Tommy Franks smart?"—a reference to Franks' now-famous characterization of the former Undersecretary of Defense as the "stupidest . . . guy on the planet."

Bacevich has written an aggressive and provocative yet eloquent book. Blogs, newspapers, and professional journals are full of opinions and judgments, but none approach *The Limits of Power* in their confident conceptualization and organization of knowledge. Military and civilian defense professionals will find much to consider in this small volume. The crises that Bacevich cites are not intractable, but they will be extremely difficult both to confront and to solve. **JFQ**

Dr. Bryon Greenwald is a retired U.S. Army Colonel and an Assistant Professor of Military Theory and History in the Joint Advanced Warfighting School at the Joint Forces Staff College.



National Security Dilemmas: Challenges and Opportunities

by Colin S. Gray

Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2009

333 pp. \$29.95

ISBN: 978-1-59797-263-5

Reviewed by
DOUGLAS PEIFER

Colin Gray has analyzed a wide array of strategic challenges in the course of his distinguished career,

publishing over 20 books and dozens of articles, and serving on myriad committees, commissions, and panels addressing British and American national security issues. One constant pervades his voluminous scholarly output: Clausewitz's enduring relevance. True to form, in *National Security Dilemmas: Challenges and Opportunities*, Gray hammers home several Clausewitzian themes that he has been emphasizing for years. War is a means to a political end, and one cannot analyze warfare in isolation from policy and politics. Uncertainty, chance, and friction are inherent characteristics of war, and while technology may solve certain problems and challenges, new difficulties surely will arise. War is a duel of wills, and strategists must analyze it in its wider context, to include its social, cultural, and, above all, political dimensions.

These themes will strike Gray's admirers as familiar—indeed, even a bit stale. And as a good Clausewitzian, Gray would be the first to admit that these persistent themes offer no radically new interpretations of the fundamental relationship between warfare, politics, and strategy. Yet where Gray earns his reputation for keen, perceptive thinking is in his elaboration of how these verities continue to assist in understanding the current security environment. In eight chapters, Gray analyzes topics such as defining decisive victory, maintaining effective deterrence, understanding revolutionary change in warfare, and understanding the implications of preemptive and preventive strategies. In each essay, Gray combines general, enduring insights and analysis with specific, contemporary recommendations.

Gray's opening chapter, written in the fall of 2008, seeks to avoid assigning blame for the “arguable train wreck that is American national security” while conveying realist disappointment over the serious,

occasionally “truly gratuitous” mistakes made since 9/11. Rather than dwelling on the past, Gray provides six lessons that may be useful in the future. First, personality, individual judgment, and personal relations are vital ingredients to policy and strategy. Gray cautions that the George W. Bush administration was filled with hugely experienced individuals who nonetheless “suspended their critical intelligence” and based strategy on hopes and dreams. Second, Gray cautions that U.S. leaders must subordinate their proclivity to crusade for democracy, freedom, and open markets, and instead devise strategies that “fit” foreign cultures. Third and fourth, Gray advances the rather unremarkable insights that the U.S. military was not prepared for counterinsurgency operations and that stabilization proved more difficult than anticipated. In the future, the U.S. military must show more flexibility and adaptability, be prepared to combat irregular opponents, and train and equip for stability operations. Fifth, Gray sounds a warning that interstate conflict will not disappear so long as power and influence shape the international environment. Writing from a realist perspective, Gray believes that balance of power concerns will not fade within our lifetimes. Gray's final point is perhaps the most provocative: the shift to capabilities-led defense planning, while laudatory in the absence of a dominant threat, was profoundly astrategic, resulting in the waste of billions of dollars.

Chapters 2 through 7 are revisions of U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute essays originally published from 2002 to 2007, and while the pressing debates of the day flavor a number of these essays, most have withstood the test of time, and all contain nuggets of wisdom. Among the best are Gray's chapters on “the implications of preemptive versus preventive war doctrines,”

“recognizing and understanding revolutionary changes in warfare,” and “irregular warfare and the American way of war.” Less tightly reasoned and fully developed are his essays on “defining and achieving decisive victory” and “transformation and strategic surprise.”

Gray's essay on preemptive versus preventive war doctrines should be required reading for those who persist in using these terms interchangeably. As Gray points out, preemption is controversial, sanctioned by just war theory and generally conceded under international law. Preemption is based on the knowledge that an enemy is about to strike or, as formulated by Daniel Webster in 1837, is restricted to those cases where “the necessity of self-defense is instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment of deliberation.” Prevention, on the other hand, pertains to military action against gathering threats or potential enemy actions. These definitions are well known, but Gray's genius is that he moves beyond the liberal-realist-neorealist debates of 2002–2003 and instead assesses preventive war on its own merits as a grand strategy. He notes that those advocating preventive war too often simply assume it is more reliable than deterrence without recognizing that it is nonetheless war, with all the uncertainty, unpredictability, and friction Clausewitz ascribed to it. As a realist, Gray refuses to rule out preventive war in all cases, but as a strategist and Clausewitzian, he asserts that “military prevention is not, and cannot be, a doctrine, let alone the dominant national security doctrine.”

A good many military officers, defense analysts, and planners may be tempted to skip Gray's chapter on revolutionary changes in warfare, content to let the concepts of revolutions in military affairs (RMA) and its offspring, transformation, retire into oblivion. Yet this would be ill advised. Gray provides

a superb overview of how the concept of RMA emerged, and more importantly, situates it within its political, strategic, economic, technological, and geographical contexts. Thoughtful, engaging, and supporting his points with ample historical and contemporary examples, Gray is at his best in showing how and why context is important in assessing military revolution, transformation, and other concepts.

Even the best writers fall short at times, and the chapter on “defining and achieving decisive victory” leaves one with a nagging sense that Gray has set up a scarecrow only to soundly demolish it. He attacks the pacifist refrain that wars never accomplish anything. Wars decided whether Wilhelmine and Nazi Germany would control the European continent, whether South Vietnam would survive as an independent, noncommunist country, and whether the Taliban would continue to rule Afghanistan. Yet the more interesting question of defining decisive victory against insurgents, terrorists, and others is barely touched. Indeed, from the perspective of 2009, the decisive defeat of the Taliban in 2001 seems less definitive. Eager to refute misguided mantras that war is always useless, Gray momentarily overemphasizes war's political utility and neglects Clausewitz' insight that subordination to policy jostles with violence, hatred, and enmity on one hand, and the element of chance on the other, thereby making war both political and unpredictable.

National Security Dilemmas brings together eight thought-provoking essays by one of today's leading scholar-strategists. This eclectic collection offers a Clausewitzian, realist examination of security dilemmas from deterrence to irregular warfare, combining broad macro-analysis with specific recommendations and critiques. This collection should prove

most useful for those unfamiliar with Gray's work or in search of a convenient, single-volume collection of his contributions to the Strategic Studies Institute over the past 7 years. **JFQ**

Dr. Douglas Feifer teaches strategy at the U.S. Air War College. He is a historian by background, with his research focusing on the intersection between military strategy, politics, and culture.



The Great Gamble: The Soviet War in Afghanistan

by Gregory Feifer

New York: Harper, 2009

336 pp. \$27.99

ISBN-13: 978-0061143182

Reviewed by

JAMES THOMAS SNYDER

Gregory Feifer, a National Public Radio correspondent in Moscow, returns to the Soviet trauma in Afghanistan, just as that country replaces Iraq in the public debate. Once thought won and relegated to the status of a secondary front in the war on terror, Afghanistan—"the crossroad of empires," Feifer reminds us—has again attracted the attention of the United States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the broader international community.

The problems now confronted in Afghanistan exist in large part due to events set in motion by the sudden rise of a communist government in Kabul in 1978. Moscow was unprepared for the putsch that brought Hafizullah Amin to power, and his cabal appeared to the Soviets even less prepared to exercise control.

The motives behind the Soviet invasion have long been a matter

of mystery and speculation. At the time, it was seen as a naked land grab, the first step through India, Iran, or Pakistan toward the open sea. But the Soviets probably never sought so far-fetched a notion as a year-round port on the Indian Ocean. Steve Coll in *Ghost Wars* wrote that the invasion intended to shore up a friendly but weak communist regime in a country whose ethnic and religious politics the Politburo did not understand, a viewpoint that Feifer shares. Feifer also notes that mutinies by the Afghan army, plus a nascent revolt in Herat, alarmed Soviet authorities enough to warrant an increased stream of weapons, materiel, and advisors.

But at least as important in Afghanistan for the Soviet mind was American regional influence. The Islamic Revolution in Iran, if anything, increased Politburo concern. After the fall of the shah, they reasoned, the Americans would certainly search for other geopolitical points of entry in Central Asia to hem in the Soviet Union.

Intriguingly, Feifer argues that the Soviets did not intend to invade and occupy Afghanistan at all. The historical record, such as exists in the occasionally murky Soviet archives, reveals nothing resembling a direct invasion order. There is simply one page of handwritten notes from a Politburo meeting of December 12, 1979, where the critical decision took place.

The document, written by Konstantin Chernenko—who was not yet General Secretary—notes only that certain "measures" be taken. Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov, a consummate apparatchik without military experience who was abetted by a diffuse Soviet bureaucracy, in effect executed an invasion without an invasion order.

This may be difficult to believe, given the scale of the "limited contingent" that followed: elements of the 40th Army, including the 108th Motorized Rifle Division (MRD), 5th MRD,

345th Separate Paratroop Regiment, 860th Separate Motorized Rifle Regiment, 56th Separate Air Assault Brigade, 2^d Air Defense Brigade, and 34th Composite Aviation Corps. On December 27, 1979, Soviet forces assaulted Herat, Bagram, Kabul, and Kandahar.

Special forces and KGB units had set up in the capital with orders to decapitate the Amin regime and install a replacement, Mohammad Taraki. The operation was badly coordinated. The KGB's botched attempt to poison Amin was discovered when a Soviet embassy doctor in Kabul intervened. No sooner had Amin recovered than Soviet *spetsnaz* units stormed the Taj-Bek Palace outside Kabul, killing Amin in front of the doctor who had aided him and his family.

Given daily experience during the following decade, the unintended nature of the Soviet adventure becomes more comprehensible. Soldiers lived in appalling conditions, fought with substandard gear, and hunted an enemy they did not understand. Local markets were well stocked with fresh fruits and vegetables, modern electronics, and warm clothes they could not find at home. This imbalance—a bizarre inequity for young soldiers of a superpower to experience in so poor a country—quickly corrupted the occupation forces. What began as an exchange of World War II-era rations for fresh produce escalated to the sale of weapons and equipment, theft, looting, and murder. The systemic inadequacies of the Soviet political and economic system compounded the immense violence wreaked by Soviet forces as they seeded the country with land mines, carpet bombed, and destroyed whole villages. With such benefactors, it becomes clear Kabul could never survive.

If the mystery surrounding the invasion remains impenetrable, Feifer unfortunately casts little light on the fateful decision to withdraw. Mikhail Gorbachev advocated a pullout long before

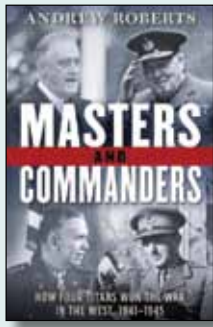
he ascended as General Secretary. His agenda seems clear in retrospect, of course, but Feifer only infers that Afghanistan was a distraction from his larger vision. He does not explore how Gorbachev linked Afghanistan to the larger problems he faced.

Given such treatment, it may be easy to forget the scale of the commitment: 620,000 Soviets served in Afghanistan from 1979–1989, even though no more than 150,000 were deployed at a time. The official death count was 12,833, but Feifer reports that number may be closer to 75,000. A staggering 469,685 became ill or wounded, in large measure due to entirely preventable dysentery, hepatitis, and typhus. The Soviets lost 118 jets, 333 helicopters, 147 tanks, 1,314 armored vehicles, and 11,369 trucks.

It would be interesting to explore the historical context of the commitment. The Soviet military consumed 25 percent of the gross domestic product. Soviet military personnel numbered in the millions, armed with thousands of combat aircraft, helicopters, and tanks. Given the experience of the Great Patriotic War, during which 6.3 million Soviet soldiers perished, the Soviet Union could have fought indefinitely in Afghanistan.

But Feifer only hints at such context here. Afghanistan was the Soviet Vietnam, we remember from the time, and Feifer insinuates that Iraq is America's Afghanistan. Then what is the American Afghanistan? Feifer most intriguingly evokes, on the very last page, the wreckage of European imperialism on the shoals of the 1956 Suez Canal adventure. But as with this and other historical analogies, Feifer does not provide enough depth for a proper comparison. **JFQ**

James Thomas Snyder is the U.S. Information Officer on the International Staff at North Atlantic Treaty Organization Headquarters in Brussels.



**Masters and Commanders:
How Four Titans Won the War
in the West, 1941–1945**

by Andrew Roberts

New York: HarperCollins, 2009

674 pp. \$35.00

ISBN: 978-0-0612-2857-5

Reviewed by

FRANK G. HOFFMAN

This is *not* that Patrick O’Brian novel about British seapower. Rather, it is a superlative account of the management of World War II by the West’s two major allies. The “Masters” are President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his determined counterpart in London, Prime Minister Winston Churchill. The “Commanders” are the respective uninformed subordinates of these elected civilian leaders, General George Marshall and General Alan Brooke. Crafted by gifted British historian Andrew Roberts, the book is part biography, part strategic history, and part study of the “clash of cultures” that is civil-military relations.

In *The Making of Strategy*, Williamson Murray, Alvin Bernstein, and Macgregor Knox noted the important factors that influence the development of strategy: geography, history, the nature of the regime, ideology, economics, and the organization of government and military institutions. However, they neglected to consider one other contingent element: human personality and the interplay of strong-willed allies.

Masters and Commanders is a remedy with particular relevance today. It dissects the roles of

personality and character in the interplay of the relationships between these four fiercely strong-willed leaders. The interaction of their biases, animosities, egos, and personalities had a huge influence on the conduct of the war and the strategy that steered the efforts of American and British forces. This, then, is a history of the relationship between “the four chief strategists of the Western Allies, the quartet of power that ultimately crafted the victories that were to come.” As the principals were not timid and labored under significant stress, the story is not without emotion.

Roberts is the author of a dozen books, mostly biographies. In all his work, he has been careful with details, and *Masters and Commanders* reflects the same mastery of archival sources, including recently discovered contemporaneous notes from British officials. Robert’s brief biographical sketches are delightful. Marshall was self-effacing; Brooke was cold logic on the outside and an emotional wreck on the inside. Marshall was quietly determined to influence Allied strategy, and his remote and seemingly heartless coalition partner was equally bent on preserving his nation’s interests.

Churchill is covered in detail, warts and all. Roberts concludes that “he was a genius, and the madcap schemes he occasionally came up with were merely the tiny portion of inevitable detritus that floated in the wash of his greatness.” The author fails to capture the elusiveness of Roosevelt as well as James McGregor Burns did in *The Lion and the Fox*, which is absent from the bibliography. However, Roberts offsets this deficiency when recognizing that of the four, “the man who most influenced the course of the war was the one who openly acknowledged that he knew the least about grand strategy: Franklin Delano Roosevelt.”

No one should be surprised that Roosevelt and Churchill

were continually at odds with their leading military men, and Roberts captures that inherent civil-military cultural clash. Marshall and Brooke were fearless with their masters, whose explosive tempers and extraordinary sense of duty they matched. The situation is exacerbated by what Professor Colin Gray calls the “reciprocal ignorance” of the two spheres that lacked the perspective, background, and knowledge base to appreciate the other side.

Masters and Commanders brings out the benefits of candid, even hotly debated, dialogue. The emphasis is on the “dialogue” and its product. Roosevelt and Churchill dominated the aims but did not dictate policy, and Marshall and Brooke frequently challenged them on the aims and the restraints placed upon means. The Commanders served as a crucial bridge not only to ensure that strategy was both suitable and appropriate but also to maintain the linkages between policy and military plans.

History suggests that civil-military relations are not mechanistic or about the subordination of strategy to policy. The process is a reciprocal one in which masters and commanders interact in a disciplined and comprehensive search for viable solutions. As Eliot Cohen has properly stressed in *Supreme Command*, political and military matters are not separate and distinct spheres of responsibility. The roles overlap, as suggested by Churchill’s famous dictum, “At the summit strategy and policy are one.” Answers to questions generated by the process should be part of a continuous dialogue, “a running conversation” at the strategic level. Other scholars such as Hew Strachan have joined with Cohen, concluding that the normative model of Samuel Huntington’s *The Soldier and the State* “is proving profoundly dysfunctional to the waging of war in the twenty-first century.” This is borne out during the many confer-

ences and summits detailed by Roberts. These running conversations certainly did involve ends, ways, and means in an iterative and interactive process that impacted policy as much as strategy.

Masters and Commanders details this harmonization of ends, ways, and means. Roosevelt did not merely set policy and await his commander’s proposals for implementation, nor did Marshall and his acid-tongued colleague simply accept goals that were beyond realistic attainment with the means available. The process can be one of cooperative engagement if possible, but if necessary, *collaborative confrontation* must occur. Roberts tells the history of a series of confrontations where the synergy of the collaboration was superior to the sum of the individuals.

In his book *Modern Strategy*, Colin Gray noted that “the human dimension of strategy is so basic and obvious that it often escapes notice by scholars with a theoretical bent.” Kudos to Andrew Roberts for reminding us of this enduring but too often overlooked dimension of strategy, and for writing an intricate story of the interplay of politics, policy, and personality. When the stakes were high and tempers were flying, compromise and concerted action were the outcome at the end of the day. At times, the process was tedious, and it was almost always messy. But the result was victory. **JFQ**

Frank G. Hoffman is a retired Marine infantry officer and Deputy Director in the Office of Program Appraisal at the Department of the Navy.