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Practise to Deceive: Learning Curves of Military Deception Planners

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each of those cases, logistical convenience and a specific political interest were the determining factors for intervention. If a merchant vessel possesses strategic interest, its flag has never prevented the U.S. Navy from taking action.

Currently, almost 75 percent of the world's global trading merchant fleet is registered with ten flag states. Of these ten, only those of Greece and the People's Republic of China are considered "national flags." The remaining 64 percent of these commercial ships are registered in Panama, Liberia, the Marshall Islands, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malta, the Bahamas, or Cyprus. *Rough Waters* fails to consider or identify the impacts of shifts in global trade and trade economics, technology, and ship ownership, construction, financing, and crewing, which are the realities that underlie the choice of a flag state. Very few ships are owned by "pure" U.S. companies, and the global use of global flags did not cause the collapse of the U.S. merchant marine.

SCOTT BERGERON



Practise to Deceive: Learning Curves of Military Deception Planners, by Barton Whaley. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2016. 256 pages. \$39.95.

This is a quirky yet ultimately enjoyable book. The association of the author, Barton Whaley, with the U.S. intelligence services dates back to the Korean War. He earned his undergraduate degree from Berkeley and his PhD from MIT. Over the course of his career Whaley worked with or for the U.S. Army, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the director of national intelligence.

A. Denis Clift, president of the National Intelligence University, referred to Whaley as "the undisputed dean of U.S. denial and deception experts." Whaley died in 2013, leaving behind several completed volumes and a legacy as a man with a passion for and an encyclopedic knowledge of military deception.

A central assumption of *Practise to Deceive* is that the only tool that has a hope of "dispelling the fog of war" is intelligence—but it is the task of the deception planner to keep that fog thick. When deception planners do their job right, the enemy must deal with uncertainty, and surprise can be achieved. This is not exactly new ground. Many students of history, as well as most current members of the national security enterprise, are aware, at least to some degree, of famous deception operations. These range from the Trojan horse of Odysseus to the deployment of the imaginary First U.S. Army Group to southeast England in the months before D-day 1944. Whaley reminds us that deception plans do not just appear; they are the brainchildren of talented individuals—the deception planners. *Practise to Deceive* neglects neither deception plans nor deception operations, but its primary intent is to shed light on those planners and how they *think*. As it turns out, that is a pretty tall order. In addition, Whaley tells readers they should walk away with an awareness of the threats that enemy deception efforts pose and how we can improve our own efforts.

Unfortunately, the book's structure does not lead the reader to a rapid understanding of the mind of the deception planner. Indeed, most readers, particularly those unfamiliar with the subject, will be well served to

read the executive summary first to get some understanding of the nature of deception in all its many aspects.

The book also contains a discussion of the personality type of the successful deception planner. Readers will not be surprised to learn that such persons differ greatly from successful military commanders. Those commanders are vital, however, as they possess the power to approve the deception plan, must play an active role in deception planning to increase the odds of success and victory, and often serve as a bridge between the freewheeling planner and the more rigid military hierarchy. A short introduction and part 1, written in Whaley's own voice, lay out his ideas about the commander, the deception planner, and the deception plan.

Part 2, the heart of the book, consists of eighty-eight individual case studies of deception operations. Arranged thematically, the cases range chronologically from the biblical period to the modern day, and in scope from brief tactical encounters to drawn-out strategic operations on a massive scale.

The cases themselves are something of a hodgepodge. Some, such as the decision by Sir Garnet Wolseley to approach Egyptian defenses at Tel el Kebir at night, are only a few paragraphs in length. Others are painfully sparse on information, such as the case study that consists merely of an acknowledgment that Admiral William F. "Bull" Halsey had a "dirty tricks department." In contrast, other case studies are very detailed with regard to personalities and actions. Among these is an excellent look at Operation BOLO, designed by the legendary Colonel Robin Olds, USAF, who used electronic deception to lure in North Vietnamese MiGs with Air Force

Phantoms. The action is described in detail, as is the personality of Colonel Olds.

As with Olds, Whaley is not shy about discussing the personal character and attributes of many of the officers featured in the case studies. Douglas MacArthur is acknowledged for mastering the Machiavellian art of "divide and conquer" among his subordinates. General Orde Wingate and T. E. Lawrence both are identified as "duplicitous." Several individuals are examined at different points in their careers, allowing the reader to appreciate their approach to deception operations over time. These include the actor Douglas Fairbanks Jr. when serving as a USN lieutenant commander during 1944 in Italy. Also covered are Fidel Castro, First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, and Ian Fleming's older brother, Peter.

Part 3 of *Practise to Deceive* lays out a rather detailed approach to planning a deception operation and a discussion of the major factors to be considered. These include such topics as policy constraints, the relationship of commanders to their staffs, and various cultural factors. Two actual examples of deception plans are provided: the first is the deception plan the Germans created to support Operation BARBAROSSA; the second is a British tactical-level plan that Peter Fleming authored to support operations against the Japanese in Burma.

It is easy to see how, in the hands of a lesser author and editor, *Practise to Deceive* could lose an audience rapidly. But Whaley's passion for deception shines throughout the book, and over time the author's dry and ready wit becomes more and more pronounced, to good effect. Readers who, on the basis of prior experience, expect compilations of many case studies to be dull and plodding

examples of the writer's art will be pleasantly surprised, for thought-provoking and fascinating assertions abound. For example, Whaley believes that some societies are more deceptive than others, "but only during any given slice of time." Deception is also, according to Whaley, a mind game that can be learned, although certain types of people, including magicians and practical jokers, may find the game easier to master.

Despite taking the reader on a rather fast-paced ride over centuries of deception efforts, Whaley makes several points with care. The first is that deception operations are not guaranteed success. Two failures cited are the Bay of Pigs invasion, for which Whaley holds CIA veteran Richard Bissell responsible, and the 1980 Iranian hostage rescue mission, with Jody Powell coming in for censure. The second point is that deception operations are not important in and of themselves; they are only as important as the degree to which they support the commander's operational plan and allow the attainment of desired objectives. As we face a future in which deception operations can be expected to flourish, Whaley's cautionary note is well worth remembering.

RICHARD J. NORTON



Meeting China Halfway: How to Defuse the Emerging US-China Rivalry, by Lyle J. Goldstein. Washington, DC: Georgetown Univ. Press, 2015. 400 pages. \$29.95.

Numerous Western observers—expert and otherwise—have opined about the implications of the rise of China. A small number address the implications for hundreds of millions of people

who have moved from subsistence living into the middle classes. A few more address the consequences for the world's economy, environment, or rule of law. But most focus on an emerging rivalry with the United States and the possibility it will lead to superpower conflict. Of these, Naval War College professor Lyle Goldstein is virtually alone in mapping out specific plans to avoid friction, de-escalate tensions, and cultivate peaceful coexistence; the others offer "realist" solutions designed to isolate, deter, or defeat China.

Dr. Goldstein—the founding director of the College's China Maritime Studies Institute, and fluent in Mandarin—brings the right tools to the task of analyzing the United States–China rivalry and setting a course toward peaceful coexistence. A political scientist with strong appreciation for the influence of history on strategy, he has read widely in Chinese and English to understand how academics and leaders in each country view their nation's experience, interests, and destiny. By sorting out these perspectives, Goldstein works like a mediator to chart the narrow and winding pathways to trust and cooperation. He dedicates nine chapters to distinct issues that divide the United States and China, categorized by region (for instance, Japan or the South China Sea) or by sector (the economy or the environment). After describing the overall picture, each chapter examines interpretations in the West and then in China, offering particularly valuable insights into the perspectives of Chinese military and strategic thought leaders.

Having toured the strategic horizon and explained the relevant attitudes and interests, the author then lays out "cooperation spirals"—plans whereby