

Naval War College Review

Volume 65
Number 2 *Spring*

Article 17

2012

Brothers, Rivals, Victors: Eisenhower, Patton, Bradley, and the Partnership That Drove the Allied Conquest in Europe

Richard Norton

Jonathan W. Jordan

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Recommended Citation

Norton, Richard and Jordan, Jonathan W. (2012) "Brothers, Rivals, Victors: Eisenhower, Patton, Bradley, and the Partnership That Drove the Allied Conquest in Europe," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 65 : No. 2 , Article 17.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol65/iss2/17>

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Germany, with mixed results. Despite a relentless and costly air campaign, the German Wehrmacht could only be defeated on the ground. A basic concept of strategic-bombing theory held that heavy civilian casualties would force enemy leaders to sue for peace, but the theorists and practitioners did not factor in the callous nature of despotic leaders who cared little for the welfare of their citizenry. (For more information on this subject see *Among the Dead Cities: The History and Moral Legacy of the WWII Bombing of Civilians in Germany and Japan*, by A. C. Grayling.)

Japan was a different story. Arnold envisioned unleashing the as-yet-unfielded B-29 Superfortresses on Japan en masse. The USAAF first tried conducting operations from China, but that proved untenable for a variety of reasons. Eventually airfields on Guam, Saipan, and Tinian, islands that were taken at great cost, came into existence for sustained B-29 operations.

The air war against Japan was much more than the story of B-29 raids on Tokyo and other targets. One little-known operation went under the dark moniker of Operation STARVATION, the deployment of aerial mines by B-29s. These sorties proved quite effective in whittling down Japan's merchant marine, thus devastating Japan's morale and eroding its capability for war production. USAAF crews delivered twelve thousand mines, sinking 293 ships between March and April 1945. Yet for all the successes that the United States had in the skies over Japan, the USAAF and U.S. Navy cooperated little in the planning and implementation of the overall campaign. Each service pursued its own air operations, the Army going

after Japan's cities and the Navy after Japan's fleet and coastal shipping.

Tillman's excellent book is well researched and well written. He reintroduces the reader to the pivotal leaders who played a role in the execution of the air war on Japan. He rounds out his narrative with accounts from B-29 aircrews and naval aviators who flew at the tip of the spear aimed at Japan; their observations and recollections add an excellent sense of humanity to the story. His account also serves to validate joint operations, a lesson borne out by the experience of this war and one that our military continues to observe today.

This book will not end the debate on the value and moral justification of the U.S. air war on Japan. Tillman clearly makes the point that while the air war against Japan did not end the conflict on its own, it did affect Japan's ability to continue to wage war. In the end it is clear that Japan was willing to fight despite the destruction of its cities and that it was preparing mightily for the expected invasion of the home islands. However, it was the atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki that finally forced Japan to seek peace and end the slaughter.

CDR. DAVID L. TESKA, U.S. COAST GUARD RESERVE
San Diego, California



Jordan, Jonathan W. *Brothers, Rivals, Victors: Eisenhower, Patton, Bradley, and the Partnership That Drove the Allied Conquest in Europe*. New York: NAL Caliber, 2011. 672pp. \$28.95

This is an exceptional book. Although it has its share of strategy, logistics, and technology, it is primarily a book about relationships and leadership.

In what is ostensibly a triple biography, George S. Patton, Jr., and Omar Bradley get their fair share of attention, but in the end it is Dwight David Eisenhower who dominates the pages. Jordan has produced what is in many ways a paragon of modern biographies. The darker sides of his subjects are not overlooked or glossed over, as in E. B. Potter's *Bull Halsey*, nor does the book descend into the merely salacious and prurient, as sometimes occurs in Evan Thomas's *Sea of Thunder*. Jordan paints pictures of whole men, and with remarkable fidelity. Meticulously researched, this work neither shies away from nor lingers on the flaws each man possessed. For example Patton's philandering and alcohol abuse in the 1930s are reasonably depicted as characteristic of an ambitious warrior trapped in a peacetime army, bored, restless, and desperately worried that his moment had come and gone. Likewise, Eisenhower's relationship with Kay Summersby is addressed directly. The relationship was inappropriate and, from a security point of view, reckless. Bradley worried about this, as did Marshall and members of Eisenhower's personal staff. However, Jordan concludes that Eisenhower needed Kay to maintain some sense of stability in his life and that whatever degree of infidelity it entailed was compensated by Ike's resulting performance. Jordan also discusses in detail the episode in which Eisenhower reached a point where he was willing to force his superiors to fire either Montgomery or him. This was an example of superb political acumen and the use of power. Jordan documents Patton's remarkable churlishness and childishness, as well as his extraordinary drive and sense of the

operational moment. Jordan displays both a keen understanding of and sympathy for the flamboyant Patton, just as he does with Eisenhower. With Bradley, however, Jordan is just a touch less sure-footed, perhaps because Bradley was by nature a more private man. Yet for all that, there are few passages more moving and superbly depicted than those describing Bradley's reaction when, during the Battle of the Bulge, Eisenhower took the First and Ninth Armies and assigned them to Montgomery. Bradley's rage and hurt were only magnified when his threat of resignation was ignored. However, his rage was nothing compared to the mean-spiritedness of Patton, who, removed from command, savaged in his diary his boss and former friend, alleging that Eisenhower suffered from moral turpitude and cowardice.

Because Jordan understands the nature of these men's relationships, he is able to convey the tragedy that accompanied them. Above all, he documents with marked sympathy the forging and the gradual undoing of the Eisenhower-Patton friendship, as much a casualty of Patton's selfishness and lack of empathy as the inevitable consequence of friends occupying different levels of command responsibility. The friendship between Eisenhower and General Bradley was equally damaged but much more rapidly, stemming from what Bradley felt was a betrayal.

These friendships would in time be, if not fully repaired, reconciled. Eisenhower, following the death of Patton, focused more and more on his late friend's sterling qualities. Perhaps this was easier in Patton's absence. Paradoxically, when Patton's reputation had threatened to eclipse those

of other generals, Eisenhower went out of his way to laud Bradley as the “best combat general of the war.”

Although the troika holds center stage, Jordan looks at other relationships these men had. The central role of George Marshall is explored, along with that which Bedell Smith played in supporting Eisenhower. Junior combat commanders such as Lucian Truscott and Mark Clark are given their due.

If all this book delivered were a deeper understanding of these three

iconic military figures, it would be well worth the read, but it provides much more. For, in addition to revealing the human side of three generals, it also compares and contrasts their very different leadership styles and methods. Although understated, this comparison elevates the book even further and makes it a must-have for any shelf of serious leadership texts.

RICHARD NORTON
Naval War College