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## MacArthur's War: Korea and the Undoing of an American Hero,

Donald Chisholm

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joined the Chinese South Sea Fleet in January 1999, and a *Sovremenny* DDG entered the Chinese order of battle in early 2000). Second, Kim does not treat the Republic of Korea Navy as a major regional actor, leaving it conspicuously absent from his chapters on strategy and concerns about cooperative maritime security. This is a significant omission. Korea is a growing naval power with extensive regional concerns, and it is possibly the nation most likely to find itself in armed conflict across its borders.

These gaps aside, this is a book worth having in a library on modern Asia. The extensive selected bibliography adds value to this work as a resource on Northeast Asian politico-military matters. It obviously should be required reading for those involved in Northeast Asian regional maritime issues, and it would also be of interest to anyone seeking to understand the unique problems of Northeast Asia and possible solutions to them.

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Weintraub, Stanley. *MacArthur's War: Korea and the Undoing of an American Hero*. New York: Free Press, 2000. 385pp. \$27.50

No figure of the Korean War looms quite so large as General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, simultaneously brilliant, arrogant, inscrutable, successful, and fallen—all the elements of a Greek tragedy. His military career, spanning the major portion of the twentieth century, also renders him appealing as a symbol of broader themes of that war and of American society. So we come to Stanley Weintraub's *MacArthur's War*, advertised on its dust

jacket as a “fascinating, well rendered history of the general who refuses to fade away,” a book based on “extensive research in primary and secondary sources and laced with colorful anecdotes.”

Unfortunately, the book is none of those things but rather a facile, cobbled-together mishmash of principally secondary sources, laced with myriad errors of chronology, fact, and interpretation—all poorly documented. When reading this book, one feels not unlike Vice Admiral James H. Doyle after reading a draft of a Korean War history sent to him in the late 1950s: “Your versions of the Inchon assault and Hungnam redeployment contain so many errors and distortions of fact and of emphasis that I am unable to assist you with my comment.” However, I would like to make note of a baker's dozen of errors to provide specific evidence for my general assertions.

The author states on page 107 that the amphibious commander, Rear Admiral Doyle, “had been Richmond Kelly Turner's operations officer in the final months of World War II.” In fact, Doyle served on Turner's staff from August 1942 to March 1943; in the final months of the war, Doyle was commanding the cruiser *Pasadena*. These are not obscure facts but can readily be found both in George Dyer's biography of Turner, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, and in Doyle's official biography at the Naval Historical Center.

Weintraub writes that Rear Admiral Arleigh Burke explained to MacArthur the need to sail early for Inchon because of the typhoon season. “Although nearly a month remained before departure, the ship movement orders were issued immediately,” which would suggest that the conversation took place around 15 August. Burke was good, but probably

not that good. He did not arrive in Japan until 3 September 1950, twelve days before the operation. He *did* have such a conversation with MacArthur, but only several days before the scheduled sailing, and with respect specifically to Typhoon Kezia. This is all described in Burke's oral history, which is available at the U.S. Naval Institute, and which apparently Weintraub consulted.

We also learn that during World War II the 1st Marine Division "had stormed the beaches of Guadalcanal, New Guinea, New Britain, Peleliu, and Okinawa." The 1st Marine Division did not assault any beach or conduct any operation in New Guinea, although several other smaller Marine units did. That was an Army show.

Weintraub contends that Inchon was largely possible only because a World War II study conducted for the Joint Chiefs of Staff assessed Inchon as a possible landing site: "Without such detailed earlier data, MacArthur could not have carried out Chromite on such a short fuse." None of the principals involved have, to my knowledge, made reference to such a study. Poor institutional memory is not unusual. Little was known about Inchon in 1950, but someone recalled that Vice Admiral Thomas Kinkaid, commander of the Seventh Fleet, had accepted the Japanese surrender there in 1945. The U.S. Army had run the port for a time. At Doyle's insistence, a "frantic search turned up an Army warrant officer, W. R. Miller, who had lived on Wolmi Do and operated Transportation Corps boats over Inchon Harbor. . . . [He] forthwith joined Admiral Doyle's staff." (The reader can refer to Robert Debs Heinl, Jr.'s *Victory at High Tide* [Lippincott, 1968].)

In chapter 8, the author quotes from James Alexander's *Inchon to Wonsan*:

"On the destroyer *Borland*, accompanying the escort carrier *Badoeng Strait* as the Inchon flotilla moved north[,] . . . Marine and FEAF [Far East Air Force] pilots could be picked up on ship's radio." There has never been a U.S. Navy destroyer *Borland*, which one can confirm in the *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, volume 1. Better yet, simply read the publisher's description of Alexander's book: "Alexander has created a fictional destroyer, the USS *John J. Borland*, and he records through this single ship the actual experiences of a number of real destroyers through their logs and diaries."

At one point, Weintraub has Lewis B. Puller commanding the 1st Marines, which he did. Later in the book, however, the author has Puller commanding the 5th Marines; this would have undoubtedly surprised Ray Murray, who actually did command the 5th Marines. Also, Homer Litzenberg is given the 11th Marines—he commanded the 7th Marines—and Ray David, who won the Congressional Medal of Honor at Chosin, will be pleased to learn that, according to Weintraub, he became a Marine Corps commandant.

During the delay in landing X Corps because of land mines, Weintraub writes, MacArthur "insist[ed] that the amphibious operations proceed but with the 7th Division now to make an alternative assault at Iwon." That decision was mutually made by the X Corps Commanding General (CG), Major General Edward Almond, with Doyle and Struble, aboard the USS *Mount McKinley* on 24 October 1950. The reader can refer to the Naval Historical Center's Operational Archives.

Weintraub also tells us on page 169 that "for Wonsan, Admiral Struble hastily assembled a twenty-one minesweeper

flotilla, including nine ships from the impounded Imperial Japanese Navy." This short sentence contains three errors of fact. Struble, as Commander, Joint Task Force, did not assemble the minesweeping force. Captain Richard Spofford, commander of Mine Squadron 3, in fact reported to Vice Admiral Turner Joy as Commander of Naval Forces Far East. Joy intentionally kept control of the "sweeps." Burke requested the Japanese minesweepers on 2 October. These were not impounded Imperial Japanese Navy ships but Japanese Maritime Safety Agency (JMSA) vessels that had been actively sweeping the Inland Sea since the end of World War II. On 6 October, the JMSA quietly authorized twenty minesweepers, four patrol boats (to act as mother ships), and one other vessel, to deal with magnetic mines. Some went to Korea's west coast, and ten or twelve went to Wonsan, as stated in Burke's oral history.

It is in its discussion of Hungnam, however, that the book really shines. On page 287, Weintraub blithely writes that "stowage diagrams for troops and equipment were ignored daily as troops filled whatever ships were available." This statement implies a willy-nilly process of outloading at Hungnam. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Burke began to hold shipping in Japan in mid-November; Doyle issued Operation Order 19-50 on 29 November, for planning purposes; his control and loading plan was issued on 11 December; and he issued Operation Order 20-50 on 13 December. Doyle's action report describes an expeditious but well organized movement of shipping in and out of Hungnam Harbor. Loading officers quickly developed an ability to estimate loading capacities without diagrams. The author's casual assertion not only is inaccurate but does a disservice to those who did the job. One need

only read Doyle's article "December 1950 at Hungnam," in the April 1979 U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, to understand this.

The author then puzzles over why Chinese forces did not put more pressure on the Hungnam perimeter. He concludes it was "as if a gentlemen's agreement were in force." Major General O. P. Smith, CG 1st Marine Division, had a different notion. In a 12 December letter to his wife Esther (which can be found in his personal papers at the Marine Corps University Research Archives, Quantico), the general observed that "six Chinese divisions will not bother anyone for a while"; the Marines, assisted by "old man winter," had already taken a terrible toll on their attackers. Organic X Corps artillery was used for close support. Doyle had used two heavy cruisers, four to seven destroyers, and three LSMRs (medium landing ships equipped with rockets) throughout (augmented on "Dog Day" by the battleship *Missouri*) for naval gunfire support, area harassment fire, illumination, and deep support. Doyle also had the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Yongpo and Task Force 77 aircraft on call. From 9 to 24 December, 2,932 eight-inch high-capacity, 14,491 five-inch proximity-fuzed, and 3,741 five-inch illuminating rounds were fired at Hungnam.

Weintraub also errs in his summary of the outloading statistics for Hungnam, which are among the most widely published figures from the Korean War, asserting that "550,000 estimated tons of bulk cargo" were lifted. The actual figure was "350,000 measurement tons" (refer to the Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center).

The caption for a photograph of MacArthur and other officers on *Mount McKinley's* flag bridge on the morning of the Inchon landing mislabels one of the

officers as Vice Admiral Struble; it was actually Rear Admiral Doyle. Struble was aboard his own flagship, the cruiser *Rochester*. According to protocol, MacArthur should have been aboard Struble's ship; however, he elected to go with Doyle instead. The irony is that Doyle and Struble enjoyed a strong mutual antipathy.

It would have been useful to be able to refer to Weintraub's sources to trace the origins of his errors, but unfortunately, he condescends that "endnote numbers are eschewed as intrusive, as are most footnotes." He believes that "extensive back matter notes" on each chapter's sources would suffice. (It is worth mentioning that the Marine Corps Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-0, *Leading Marines*—primarily intended for young enlisted Marines—shows there as FMFM 101.) It is impossible to ascertain from his back-matter notes where specific material originated, unless one compares the text line by line with each source mentioned. I tried to do that for the dialog the author offers for the famous 23 August 1950 "showdown" meeting regarding the Inchon landing. Parts comport with published accounts and participants' recollections, but some of it I have never seen before. Perhaps it came from sources unnamed, but without notes one cannot be certain.

Notes are not a luxury or, to use Weintraub's word, an "intrusion." The author must know that. Notes are at the heart of rigorous scholarly research. Research is a social process, and its linchpin is the ability of other scholars to check the validity of reported findings. Ultimately, *MacArthur's War* contributes little to our understanding of the Korean War. It is so fraught with errors that it cannot be taken seriously.

It is a regrettable book.

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Cable, James. *The Political Influence of Naval Force in History*. New York: St. Martin's, 1998. 213pp. \$59.95

Sir James Cable is a noted writer on naval affairs. His *Gunboat Diplomacy, 1919–1991* is a well regarded classic on the role of naval force.

His latest work is a historical survey of the political purposes for which governments have made use of naval force. Cable defines "naval force" as that "exercised by fighting ships manned by disciplined sailors at the direction of a central command responsible to the political leadership." His definition is necessary to distinguish naval force as we understand it today from the force exercised by pirates, privateers, adventurers, and users of "landing craft" (such as those that brought Roman soldiers to Britain in 55 A.D.) or galleys, which served merely as conveyances to bring soldiers together for seaborne hand-to-hand combat.

Cable examines the extent to which naval force furthered the political purposes of the governments that used it—the scale and nature of the force employed are not otherwise considered relevant. He focuses on examples of the use of force "for political purposes in which the naval element is significant, the facts are reasonably well established, and the degree of success or failure and the durability of the result are clear enough for useful conclusions to be drawn."

This definition thus largely excludes consideration of fighting at sea before the 1500s, because standing navies were rare, thus precluding the presence of disciplined officers and sailors. Portugal in the sixteenth and the Netherlands in the