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Norstad: Cold War NATO Supreme Commander—Airman, Strategist, Diplomat,

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documents, interviewed hundreds of witnesses, visited scores of bombed sites, and then concluded that strategic bombing had indeed been a decisive factor in the Allied victory, as they reported.

Alas, such a conclusion is unacceptable to Gentile. He must find nefarious schemes and schemers, and so he repeatedly questions the motives and veracity of the participants. For example, when General Curtis LeMay testified before Congress that he did not believe airpower could “win the war” and that a balanced mix of land, sea, and air forces was necessary for victory, Gentile dismisses his statement as a “shrewd and bureaucratically astute” tactic to manipulate his civilian superiors.

The USSBS has been controversial ever since it was written. Small wonder—attempting to measure the effects of strategic bombing in World War II was a massive undertaking, conducted at a time when the techniques of systems analysis were in their infancy. Gentile finds it troubling that survey members were not in total agreement. This should hardly come as a surprise. If the unfolding of historical events were simple and uncontested, our libraries would be far smaller.

His concluding chapter, dealing with the survey that analyzed the air campaign of the Persian Gulf War, is less tendentious. Here again, however, the author presents little that is new, and, more importantly, he does not attempt to address the book’s ostensible focus—the efficacy of strategic bombing.

Measuring the effectiveness of strategic air attack is one of the greatest challenges facing military planners today. It is an enormously complex and difficult problem that defies easy solution. Yet as airpower becomes increasingly dominant

as a foreign-policy tool, such measurement is essential. This poorly reasoned and highly parochial book will not help us find answers to that pressing need, nor will it foster understanding among the services.

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Jordan, Robert S. *Norstad: Cold War NATO Supreme Commander—Airman, Strategist, Diplomat*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000. 329pp. \$49

Lauris Norstad was a major Air Force leader during the defining years of the Cold War, and except for Dwight Eisenhower, he was the most prominent of all the Supreme Allied Commanders Europe (SACEUR) since that position was established in early 1951. Surprisingly, up to now, nothing definitive had been written on his role as SACEUR. Robert Jordan, a professor at the University of New Orleans and an authority on Nato, has filled that gap.

Norstad grew up in a small town in Minnesota and graduated from West Point in the class of 1930. Transferring to the Air Corps in 1931, he was one of that relatively small group of regular-officer aviators who provided air force leadership during World War II. When the war began, Major Norstad was serving on an air staff in Washington, D.C. He came to the attention of General Henry “Hap” Arnold, who headed what had become in June 1941 the Army Air Forces. In 1942 Arnold established a select group of young officers, the brightest he could find, to work in his immediate office. Norstad was one of them—he was on the way up.

That summer Arnold sent Norstad to England to serve as operations chief of the Twelfth Air Force—Eisenhower’s air arm for Operation TORCH, the November 1942 invasion of North Africa. In his war memoir, Eisenhower had this to say about Norstad: “[Norstad was] a young air officer who so impressed me by his alertness, grasp of problems, and personality that I never thereafter lost sight of him.” Before long, Brigadier General Norstad was operations chief for the Allied Air Forces Mediterranean. In the fall of 1944, Arnold returned Norstad to Washington, D.C., as chief of staff of the Twentieth Air Force, charged with planning the strategic bombing campaign against Japan. By war’s end, Major General Lauris Norstad, though not one of the top combat heroes of the Army Air Forces, was definitely one of its top comers.

From the end of World War II until the Korean War, the leadership of the reduced American armed forces struggled with new questions. Two of the most important were the role of nuclear weapons and how the U.S. military should be organized. With Eisenhower serving as chief of staff of the U.S. Army, and Norstad his deputy for operations (G-3), Norstad was involved in both issues, particularly in developing the compromises that led to the 1947 legislation resulting in the National Military Establishment, and ultimately to a separate Department of the Air Force. Subsequently, Lieutenant General Norstad, operations chief for the Air Force, played a major role in organizing the Berlin Airlift during the crisis of 1948–49. In the fall of 1950 he became commander of U.S. Air Forces Europe. The main focus of Jordan’s book concerns Norstad’s subsequent twelve years

of service in Europe, in particular the last six, when he served as SACEUR.

The author analyzes in detail three major issues confronted by Norstad that were most significant: the role and employment of nuclear weapons in alliance defense, the Berlin crises of 1958–59 and 1961–62, and the problem of balancing SACEUR’s roles as both an international and an American forces commander.

The nuclear weapons issue was complicated by the fact that the British had their own weapons, the French wanted theirs, and the West Germans, having none, were not quite certain they would be fully defended if the alliance had no recourse other than nuclear war. As Jordan demonstrates, Norstad was an able diplomat who succeeded in developing an alliance consensus on the role of nuclear weapons in deterring the Soviet Union.

Since Berlin was inside the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany, it became an ideal location for the Soviets to apply pressure on the alliance—by denying, or threatening to deny, access to the city. Though the issues were extremely complex, in a clear and interesting fashion Jordan explains Norstad’s role as diplomat and strategist in meeting Nikita Khrushchev’s challenge.

It is in his examination of SACEUR’s conflicting roles as an American and simultaneously an international commander that Jordan makes his major contribution. This issue came to a head for Norstad with the arrival of the Kennedy administration in 1961, with its secretary of defense, Robert Strange McNamara. The substantive issue was the nature, role, and control of nuclear weapons as an element of Nato strategy. The process issue was that the administration found it hard to accept SACEUR’s dual role, tending to

view Norstad as an American commander only. The details cannot be developed within the confines of a review, but in the end Norstad was forced to walk the plank—though the final jump was delayed for a period of two months by the administration's need for his assistance during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

Robert Jordan has produced an important work that is thoroughly researched, nicely written, and most insightful. No doubt it will be the definitive biography of Lauris Norstad—Cold War airman, strategist, and diplomat. The book will also be of interest to those involved in the study of civil-military relations, especially in these years of increased commitment of U.S. military forces in multinational or international interventions.

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Crane, Conrad C. *American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950–1953*. Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 2000. 252pp. \$35

Conrad Crane is a research professor for military strategy at the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, and formerly a professor of military history at the U.S. Military Academy. Crane previously wrote *Bombs, Cities, and Civilians: American Airpower Strategy in World War II* (1993), which is widely respected for its rich and adroit analysis. *American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950–1953* is a comprehensive, thoroughly researched treatment of the many issues that the newly constituted U.S. Air Force faced as a result of having to fight its first war as an independent service—a war that it

was not doctrinally or materially prepared for, and that the service had neither anticipated nor especially wanted to fight. Crane logically takes the reader through the war from the prehostilities period, which generally set the stage for the limited character of the war and specifically established the character of the Air Force's contribution; the opening moves and initial setbacks; the miraculous end-around at Inchon and subsequent march to the Yalu; the bitter winter of 1950–51; and finally to the stalemate along the thirty-eighth parallel.

Crane analyzes the performance of the Air Force in conducting air warfare in a regional, limited conflict at a time when the service was focused on strategic nuclear war and restricted by government policy as to the resources that could be allocated to Korea. It was a condition that the Air Force would again confront in Vietnam. The Korean War presented the Air Force with a myriad of challenges, not the least of which was the attempt to meet high expectations for operational effectiveness based on results obtained during World War II.

However, the very nature of the new conflict constrained that effectiveness. A classic example of the limited nature of the Korean War was the prohibition against crossing the Yalu River to engage enemy forces or interdict lines of communication. Crane also takes great pains to highlight how austere were the resources made available to the Korean area of operations, because the Air Force was required to maintain the bulk of the active component in a ready status to respond to other worldwide threats. This requirement was the catalyst for many issues that arose during the conduct of the war, among them the decision to recall to active duty large numbers of aircrewmembers who had served in World War II and