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### Combat Operations: Taking the Offensive, October 1966 to October 1967

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Ocean, surface nearly at will, and potentially launch a retaliatory missile.

Unfortunately, Williams's book stops in 1962. It is regrettable that he did not bring his work up to the present day, for the submarine force has continued to operate in the Arctic and surface from time to time in interesting places. Also, though Williams gives a lively account of the actions of each submarine in his period working under the Arctic ice cover, he does not go into depth as to why the Navy was so interested in under-ice operational capability. To pursue that path, we must await a history and analysis of the Navy's doctrine and concept of operations for the fleet ballistic missile submarines. Finally, the book lacks a good map to assist readers not familiar with Arctic geography. This reviewer had to follow the action on the *National Geographic* map of the Arctic and recommends that to other readers.

Notwithstanding, this is an admirable book. Well researched and engagingly written, it covers a heretofore ignored but important portion of modern naval history and exploration.

FRANK C. MAHNCKE  
Washington, D. C.

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MacGarrigle, George L. *Combat Operations: Taking the Offensive,*

*October 1966 to October 1967.*  
Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army  
Center for Military History,  
1998. 485pp. \$44

This book is an informative, well written narrative of the ground war in Vietnam from October 1966 to October 1967. MacGarrigle untangles the many military activities being carried out and provides an understanding of the perspective of soldiers as well as that of generals. The author dissipates and pushes aside much of the fog of war, with his discussion of the planning, logistical, and manpower constraints and the motivations of leadership on both sides of the conflict.

MacGarrigle served as an Air Force pilot from May 1967 to May 1968, flying AC-47s from Pleiku in the central highlands. His description of the war rings true and brought back memories to this reviewer. He provides a look into the early careers of many national leaders, for example General (then Lieutenant Colonel) Alexander Haig and the later chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General (then Lieutenant Colonel) John Vessey. One of the strengths of MacGarrigle's style is his ability to make combat real to the reader—it is your shoulder behind the M-16, and your feet wearing the water-soaked combat boots in the Mekong Delta. At the same time, one can feel the pain and anguish of the unit commanders on both sides as they plan operations based

on their perceptions of the situation.

MacGarrigle also addresses the strategic aspects of the conflict. His presentation touches on the political motivations for the war and how those motivations changed with time. While strategy is not MacGarrigle's main thrust, he effectively describes how the conflict looked to General William Westmoreland and his senior military leadership team. MacGarrigle shows how Westmoreland struggled to balance the operational demands of taking the offensive with the political realities of the Vietnamese and the often non-congruent interests of his allies. The relatively short time frame considered here precludes an adequate discussion of the political forces within the United States that influenced and later shaped Westmoreland's ability to carry out his strategy. Anyone wanting a more detailed analysis of the U.S. leadership struggle should read H. R. McMaster's *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Lies That Led to Vietnam* (HarperCollins 1997—reviewed in the *Naval War College Review*, Spring 1999).

This book describes one long year of a military conflict. Its purpose is to document the U.S. Army's participation, and MacGarrigle does that very well. If there is a criticism, it is the lack of a page or two on the strategic and operational activities of air and naval forces during this time. MacGarrigle recognizes the

contributions that airpower (both fixed-wing and helicopter) made to specific operations. Yet a sailor reading this book may wonder in which port the Navy was while the Vietnam War was being fought by the Army.

Notwithstanding, this book is excellent reading for those of us who want to recall what was happening in Vietnam for those twelve months. For those who were not there but wish to understand the political and military forces that were at work, I can highly recommend this volume. Thanks to George L. MacGarrigle for making such an outstanding contribution to the Vietnam literature.

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Blair, Clay. *Hitler's U-boat War: The Hunters, 1939–1942*. New York: Random House, 1996. 809pp. \$40

Blair, Clay. *Hitler's U-boat War: The Hunted, 1942–1945*. New York: Random House, 1998. 909pp. \$45

The late Clay Blair, author of more than a dozen books, including *Silent Victory: The U.S. Submarine Campaign against Japan* (1975), has produced an encyclopedic, two-volume history of the German submarine campaign during World War II. The first volume covers the "happy time" from August 1939 to August 1942; the second covers the