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Mobilizing America

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lacking the key Japanese perspective, it fails to provide the proper context that would allow those men's true accomplishments to be fairly evaluated. The book's value lies in the good look it affords at how the American military, even placed in difficulty and given less than adequate tools (or leadership), can rise to the occasion, and how, even if defeated, it can make the enemy's victory costly. It also serves to remind us that it is flesh-and-blood human beings who carry out national policy, not mere pawns on a chessboard—a point always to ponder before people are sent in harm's way.

ROBERT J. CRESSMAN
Washington, D.C.

Eiler, Keith E. *Mobilizing America*.
Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press,
1997. 588pp. \$39.95

Keith has performed a labor of love in this biographical treatment of Robert P. Patterson, Under Secretary of War during World War II. Eiler's efforts spanned almost a quarter of a century, beginning with his doctoral dissertation in 1974 at Harvard and concluding with this publication. Eiler has researched extensively in a dozen specialized libraries, interviewed sixty-seven family members and individuals who worked with Secretary Patterson, and meticulously researched U.S. mobilization efforts for both world wars. With this work he has succeeded in shedding light on the heroic attributes and accomplishments of an unsung hero, who, while preferring to work behind the scenes, remained

involved in practically all aspects of War Department affairs.

Robert Patterson was a veteran of World War I and a successful lawyer, serving for a decade as a judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. His background, plus a practical and tough-minded approach, served him well as he worked to create order out of chaos in the all-important area of wartime logistics and mobilization. Until Pearl Harbor, the American people were deeply divided on the issue of U.S. involvement in World War II. This was only one of the obstacles Judge Patterson faced in his early endeavors. National unpreparedness was another. Patterson stated in 1940 that "the dictators have a head start. Germany has been preparing for war for seven years." The United States during this period had "almost legislated its army out of existence," as one of General George C. Marshall's biographers observe.

In an academic yet highly readable style, the author details many of the prewar shortages, their causes, and the difficulties of resolving them. The primary responsibility for this fell to Patterson, and Eiler gives the reader a front-row seat as Patterson faces these challenges. Eiler deftly covers racial policies in effect at the time and the demands made for equal opportunity.

The author discusses wartime logistics, including, but not limited to, shortages and bottlenecks in basic materials, problems caused by inadequate data concerning raw materials and production, and labor issues. Eiler provides gripping examples of the unrest and absenteeism in the war industry. Those who did not experience the war years personally may find the discussion of

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labor issues surprising. There is one anecdote concerning two hundred tire-cord workers in New Bedford, Massachusetts, that provides a vivid example of labor's periodic unwillingness to cooperate in the war effort. The failure of national resolve was a source of great frustration for Patterson, and he was critical of Americans at home who were not willing to sacrifice for the war effort. He believed the reason for their behavior was a failure of leadership in the government to "stand up to pressure groups."

The economic ramifications of massive defense spending included domestic shortages, especially for small businesses, who were the first to suffer. This segment could have benefited from additional coverage, consistent with other areas discussed.

As Allied forces gained victories and the ultimate outcome of the war became more certain, different problems arose. Manufacturers jockeyed to be first to convert from wartime to peacetime production. Patterson's management skills met the new challenges of reducing the military from eight to two million, and the accompanying shift to a peacetime economy. However, quoting George Washington, he cautioned against "false hopes and temporary expedients."

Robert Patterson emerges as an unpretentious man of high standards, a real hero and role model for government service. His contributions to victory were equated with those of the Army chief of staff and the president. Eiler does him justice.

The book's appendices include explanations of abbreviations and a selected chronology of World War II, plus

sixty-three pages of explanatory notes for the serious scholar. The book will thus appeal to all, but especially serious World War II historians.

WILLIAM J. MCGURK

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Drea, Edward J. *In the Service of the Emperor: Essays on the Imperial Japanese Army*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1998. 299pp. \$45

This volume gathers together twelve of Edward J. Drea's essays that deal with various aspects of the imperial Japanese military. Nine appear in print for the first time. Their primary focus is on the war years from 1937 to 1945, but the author locates institutions and ideas of the World War II era in a larger historical context stretching back to the Meiji period of 1868 to 1912. The essays can be divided into three groups, on the basis of their subject matter and perspective. Chapters 1 through 7 offer an inside view of the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA), based largely on Japanese sources, while chapters 8 through 11 provide an outsider's view of Japanese capabilities and intentions from the perspective of Allied signals intelligence. The final chapter, by far the longest, is a penetrating examination of the Shōwa emperor Hirohito as a war leader, exploring his relationships with military subordinates, his strategic preferences, and the extent of his influence on military decision making.

The author is one of a handful of American historians of World War II with the language skills to make effective use of Japanese sources. For this