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This Kind of War: The Classic Korean War History

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from an unwinnable situation, whatever tactical success might be claimed. On the day the incursion ended, the United States Senate passed the Cooper-Church Amendment prohibiting the expenditure of funds for any future use of U.S. ground forces in Cambodia.

Like the first volume, this is a major work covering an important aspect of the Vietnam War. It is a permanent historical resource of value to those who wish to study this war, which was the major failure of American foreign and strategic policy in the twentieth century.

Why did the U.S. Army sponsor these volumes, which, after all, cover much broader issues than those for which that service has primary responsibility? I suggest the answer is, who else would have? Put another way, had the Center of Military History not taken the initiative, this important and well documented study would not have been done.

Hammond, a writer-historian, avoids predictions or recommendations, leaving for future readers to decide the applicability of this case to their own times and circumstances. This is a wise decision in a period of escalating technological developments that fuel mass communications, already changed by the speed and nature of news dissemination and interpretation. The Vietnam era ended a quarter of a century ago, and in the military that is a long time.

In sum, this book is thoroughly researched, nicely organized, and well written. It is a must for those interested in the pivotal role of the media in a war in which the American home front, not the battlefield, was the strategic target of the adversary. In combination with the

first volume, this is an outstanding contribution, deserving of recognition at the Pulitzer level.

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Fehrenbach, T.R. *This Kind of War: The Classic Korean War History*. McLean, Va.: Brassey's, 1994. 483pp. \$28

When T.R. Fehrenbach published *This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness* in 1963, his indictment of initial U.S. failures in the Korean War struck a chord, and the book became a much-quoted classic. Long available in paperback, it has now been reprinted with a new subtitle, in hard cover, under the auspices of the Association of the U.S. Army. While this book purports to be a history of the Korean War, it is in fact a long essay on limited war, the role of the military in a democratic society, and the consequences of military unpreparedness. As history, it has limitations; but as an essay, it is of enduring value. (I am indebted to David A. Keough, Assistant Archivist at the U.S. Army Military History Institute, for the characterization of *This Kind of War* as an essay.)

Fehrenbach is very good at illuminating the rhythms and patterns of the war. He makes use of his own combat experience in World War II and Korea to etch gripping, realistic vignettes of small-unit actions. He describes with economy and precision such complex concepts as containment and limited war, making clear that Korea was but a campaign in a larger confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. His focus is on American ground combat forces, but

he notes briefly the participation of other services and nations, stressing the contribution and sacrifices of the Republic of Korea Army.

In the decades since Fehrenbach wrote, however, historians have brought to light much new material bearing on the war, and a number of more accurate and better-documented histories are now available. Furthermore, while this work is accurate in its broad outline, it is often inaccurate in detail, and a lack of maps reduces its usefulness. Also, some of Fehrenbach's judgments are clearly outdated, particularly his characterization of Korea as "a poor country, exporting only a little rice" that, left to itself, "might possibly build a viable economy by the year 2000, certainly not sooner."

And yet, in spite of these weaknesses, *This Kind of War* is still very much worth reading. Fehrenbach read widely and thought deeply about the profession of arms, the phenomenon of war, and the nature of America's military involvement in Korea. His central argument is that while "total wars" are rare, a powerful democracy like the United States must still be prepared to use military power to protect its interests, preserve peace, and defend its friends and allies (to hold the "far frontier") during long confrontations like the Cold War. If the United States is to use the military element of power to achieve its national objectives, then it must be prepared to fight limited wars. But, he argues, Americans are, by history, culture, and temperament, uneasy with the concept of limited war. They are reluctant to invest in military forces in the absence of immediate threats. They are impatient, tend to view any military action as a

contest between good and evil, want to achieve decisive victory over evil once they engage their forces militarily, and are unwilling to suffer casualties in a stalemate.

Fehrenbach condemns U.S. military leaders' post-World War II efforts to make America's regular forces congenial to and consistent with prevailing American civilian values. He argues that this civilianization of the Army left U.S. soldiers unprepared, physically and in spirit, for the brutal realities of close combat. Once American soldiers understood and adapted to the nature of war in Korea, they fought well, but their education in battle came at a high price. The initial failures not only cost needless losses but also called into question the nation's need and ability to fight limited wars, and so they undermined the strategy of containment.

Fehrenbach's argument that America needs a brutally trained legion to fight its limited wars is questionable. The development of the post-Vietnam, post-conscription American military has overtaken some of Fehrenbach's assumptions. Nonetheless, the problems associated with maintaining military preparedness—including tough, trained, professional, readily deployable military forces—in a democracy and in the absence of an immediate threat to the nation's survival are as perplexing today as they were when Fehrenbach wrote his "study in unpreparedness."

The reader need not accept all of Fehrenbach's conclusions, but his arguments are worthy of serious consideration. The issues that he raised are of enduring significance, as is the verity of his most memorable and widely quoted passage: "You may fly over a land

forever; you may bomb it, atomize it, pulverize it and wipe it clean of life—but if you desire to defend it, protect it, and keep it for civilization, you must do it on the ground, the way the Roman legions did, by putting your young men into the mud.”

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Schiller, Herbert M. *Sumter Is Avenged!: The Siege and Reduction of Fort Pulaski*. Shippensburg, Pa.: White Mane, 1995. 200pp. \$29.95

Twenty-five million bricks were used in the construction of Fort Pulaski, built between 1829 and 1847 on Cockspur Island in the Savannah River. In January 1861, Confederate forces seized the fort, which controlled the entrance to the river. Union blockading ships arrived off the mouth of the river in May 1861, and six months later Federal units began to occupy nearby islands. Union army and navy commanders contemplated joint operations to capture Savannah but failed to carry them out before the Confederates strengthened the city's defenses.

Early in 1862, the Union army decided to close Savannah to blockade runners by capturing Fort Pulaski. Working largely at night, soldiers under the direction of Brigadier General Quincy A. Gillmore constructed eleven batteries on Tybee Island. The batteries mounted sixteen mortars and twenty guns, including ten rifled cannon, which Gillmore considered experimental. The artillery opened fire on 10 April 1862. After a thirty-hour bombardment, a breach in

the wall enabled projectiles to strike near the entrance of the north magazine, and the Confederate forces surrendered. Colonel Charles H. Olmstead, the Confederate commander, struck his flag because he feared that a direct hit would blow up the entire fort and everyone in it. Although Gillmore had not expected this outcome, he later claimed to have planned it. Union forces occupied Fort Pulaski but made no serious effort to move inland. Savannah remained in Confederate hands until Major General William Tecumseh Sherman's "bummers" reached the sea in December 1864.

Herbert Schiller, a physician with a master's degree in history who has written or edited three other books on the Civil War, based this work on published and unpublished primary documents. It is generously endowed with footnotes, maps, and illustrations.

Unfortunately, the good news ends there. The narrative suffers from lapses in clarity, context, plot, and organization. For example, Schiller states that the first Union blockading ship arrived off the mouth of the Savannah River on 27 May 1861, but he does not discuss the establishment of the blockade or its purpose until several pages later. At one point he says that the Union army and navy commanders abandoned the idea of capturing Savannah, yet he fails to explain their reasons for doing so. In another instance, Schiller describes Yankee ships lying in ambush for Rebel steamers bent on resupplying Fort Pulaski, leading the reader to expect that a detailed account of a battle will follow—but then he simply mentions that the Rebel steamers safely returned to Savannah, without explaining how they escaped the trap. The author declares the