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The Bitter Years: MacArthur and Sutherland

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If the book's primary materials are to be taken whole, the collection as a whole requires a more broadly-based assessment. It does not get one here. There are at least two areas Mr. Hall might usefully have addressed. First, it would have done everyone good simply to admit that the "Y-Mission" was an assassination, or at least acknowledge that in such a deliberate and calculated case as this the distinctions between wartime and peacetime usages now being claimed may be over-fine. The disclaimer (all involved were in uniform, in standard military aircraft) is familiar but unsatisfying, and comparison to a "special operation" seems coy.

Second, the work as a whole and at least most of its sources do not seem to take the vital "operational security" issue—the protection of an extremely sensitive intelligence source—any more seriously than had the young men on Guadalcanal, where "the whole bloody island knew" what was going on. Mr. Hall notes the damning indictment of Stewart Graham Menzies, the famous "C"; he does so only in passing, and does not take it up. This challenge by someone with an undisputed right to an opinion should have been squarely faced in a book calling itself "The Yamamoto Mission Reconsidered." There is much interesting information about wartime code-breaking, but no Ultra or Magic scholars or active intelligence practitioners were invited, and the only such authority quoted (in an appendix) skirts the point. No one—least of all the self-described "bunch of

grandpas" still in their Lightnings over Bougainville, forty-five years later—seems quite to have understood, in 1943 or ever, why the British were so furious at this "act of self-indulgence."

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Rogers, Paul P. *The Bitter Years: MacArthur and Sutherland*. New York: Praeger, 1990. 348pp. \$49.95

This is the second volume of a study of the relationship between General of the Army Douglas MacArthur and his chief of staff, Lieutenant General Richard K. Sutherland, during World War II. It was written by Paul P. Rogers, who was a young noncommissioned officer serving as secretary, stenographer, and office manager for the two generals in the Southwest Pacific theater. The first volume, *The Good Years: MacArthur and Sutherland*, was published early in 1990 and covered the period September 1941 to January 1943, and was reviewed herein (Winter 1992). This second volume, which appeared late in 1990, spans the era from January 1943 to September 1945.

The "good" phase refers to Sutherland's rise to power, the author's expanding role in the general headquarters, and the professional and personal harmony that characterized the MacArthur-Sutherland relationship. The "bitter" phase marks the dilemma of being caught in the middle during the collision between the two generals in military and personal affairs, and the transfer of both Sutherland

and Rogers to the United States shortly after MacArthur took command of the occupation of Japan.

Both volumes, which are actually memoirs rather than history, have similar assets and liabilities. However, *The Bitter Years* is a more poignantly moving and vivid narrative because of the tragic breakup of the two generals' friendship and Rogers' admiration for both men. Although the book is dedicated to Sutherland, Rogers is brutally frank about the chief of staff's arrogance and the extramarital affair that caused him to fall out of favor with MacArthur.

Rogers' account of Sutherland's love affair with an Australian socialite (whom he had commissioned as a WAC captain and who accompanied him from Australia to the Philippines) is most interesting, but takes up more space than it actually warrants. Rogers does discuss operations such as Operation Cartwheel, Netherlands-New Guinea, the Philippines, and Borneo, but the student of the Southwest Pacific war will wish that more attention was allotted to these.

Nevertheless, what Rogers has produced is an intimate insider's view of "GHQ" that rivals General Robert L. Eichelberger's *Dear Miss Em* as a most revealing, entertaining glimpse of the glories and follies of the senior American commanders of the conflict in the Southwest Pacific.

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Murfett, Malcolm H. *Hostage on the Yangtze: Britain, China, and the Amethyst Crisis of 1949*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1991. 313pp. \$34.95

Rare indeed is history that is at once colorful, instructive, and relevant to the present. This work, by a leading modern British naval historian, is just such a history.

It focuses on a hundred days of crisis on the Yangtze River. On 20 April 1949, just when communist forces were about to cross the river and complete their conquest of China, British officials sent HMS *Amethyst* upriver from Shanghai to relieve HMS *Consort*, an embassy guardship at Nanking. Communist shore batteries shelled both ships, and British gunners returned fire, killing more men than they themselves lost. *Amethyst* ran aground and *Consort* fled downriver. An attempt to rescue *Amethyst* the next day ended in failure and brought death to still more Britons. Weeks of resupply efforts and negotiations for the release of *Amethyst* and its crew ensued, but when the *Amethyst's* captain sensed that only abject capitulation to communist demands might free his ship, he plotted escape. Under cover of darkness on 30 July *Amethyst* blasted its way downriver to safety at Shanghai. Returning home, the ship and its crew were welcomed as heroes who had defended their nation's honor in the best tradition of the Royal Navy.

Malcolm Murfett has taken these facts and fashioned an adventure story that has everything (save sex) that