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A Whisper of Espionage: Wolfgang Kohler and the Apes of Tenerife

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exhibition in that city have served to stimulate interest in the Iron Chancellor specifically and in the historical problem of Prussia generally.

Pflanze has mastered not only the well known published documents and literature but gained access to the archives at Merseburg and Potsdam in the former German Democratic Republic, as well as to the Bismarck Family Archive at Friedrichsruh.

The author has chosen to concentrate on Bismarck as the river pilot on "the stream of time." Perhaps the most important segment of the work is the fourth chapter of Volume I, "The Strategy of *Realpolitik*." Therein Pflanze has analyzed Bismarck's political strategy as "the art of the possible." Subtitles such as "the fulcrum of power" and "the chessboard of politics" adumbrate the author's thesis that Bismarck's true genius lay in his ability to make the best of a myriad of bad choices and in his insistence upon a strategy that allowed for alternatives at every juncture (the Clausewitzian notion of reassessment under escalation). It has been suggested that this chapter be required reading "for all contemporary practitioners of foreign policy." It certainly will be welcome reading for students of strategy and policy at the Naval War College.

If the trilogy has a weakness, it is that the last two volumes concentrate almost entirely on domestic affairs. Of the thirty-two chapters of these two volumes not one is dedicated to Bismarck's celebrated conflicts with what he termed the "demi-gods" of

the general staff. Surely, the "war-in-sight" crisis of 1875, the Bad Kissingen *Diktat* of 1877, the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and the great crisis with the military in 1887 deserve at least as much space as the Iron Chancellor's occasional mental depressions and confirmed gourmandism. Current leaders should "suffer" such disabilities!

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Ley, Ronald. *A Whisper of Espionage: Wolfgang Kohler and the Apes of Tenerife*. New York: Avery, 1990. 255pp. (No price given)

"A famous scientist, a tropical isle, and a ring of spies. . . ." This would appear to have all the ingredients of a spy thriller. However, rather than entertaining, this book is merely boring. Ronald Ley, author and psychologist, has attempted to apply "scientific method" to history on the assumption that he could "categorically prove" from data gained by personal interviews and visits to and research in Germany and England that Dr. Wolfgang Kohler had been a German spy.

Ley asserts that the founder of gestalt psychology had during World War I probably operated a clandestine radio that provided intelligence to German naval units operating near the Canary Islands. At that time Kohler was on the Island of Tenerife conducting research on apes that later led to his psychological theories.

Ley's account is written in the first person; he has included psychological profiles of the subjects of his research and of those he interviewed.

Unfortunately, Ley succeeds neither in proving that Kohler was a German spy (although it is likely that he was) nor in sustaining the reader's interest. This is a strange hybrid of history and psychology that simply does not meet the expectations that the subject matter suggests.

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Morrison, Wilbur H. *The Elephant and the Tiger: The Full Story of the Vietnam War*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1990. 703pp. \$24.95

This work may be the most comprehensive history of the Vietnam War yet published. It includes the military, political, social, and economic impacts of that war upon all the combatants from 1947 to the aftermath of war and into the 1980s.

While popular films, television, and novels about the Vietnam War have enjoyed great license and prosperity in recent years, very few authors have seriously attempted to provide a complete picture of the war. Wilbur Morrison is one. He has produced a vivid account of how the United States became involved in Vietnam and how it conducted and ended the war there. Divided into four parts, its seven-hundred-page length is not intimidating, thanks to the author's skill in blending facts and

analysis with eyewitness accounts and poignant anecdotes. It is a thorough and well-organized study containing such remarkable detail and clarity that it makes a suitable companion to Harry Summer's excellent book *On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context*, published in 1981.

The author begins with the first low-level American contact with the French and Indochina in 1947, when the communists first began to challenge the French reestablishment of control after World War II. Morrison moves in detail through the French defeat and the partition of North and South Vietnam, on to the gradual, creeping increase of American political and military involvement in support of the U.S.-favored government of South Vietnam. It appears that over the next ten years, before anyone realized it, the United States had committed over 500,000 troops to a war it could not win. The author has provided a description of the unique nature of South Vietnam's government and the numerous coups that occurred regularly throughout the war years from 1954 to 1975. The deeply ingrained political instability of that country contributed significantly to the ultimate defeat—but no one made the connection.

Throughout the book, however, the author contends that the United States could have—and should have—easily won the war had it not been for the politicians. While wars should have political purposes and goals, the actual conduct of military operations in pursuit of those goals