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Four Stars: The Inside Story of the Forty-Year Battle

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bureaucratic device of a separate planning staff is not adopted. This is a book full of ideas and will be of interest to anyone interested in the realities of the national security decision-making process.

RODNEY B. MC DANIEL
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Holland, Harrison M. *Managing Defense: Japan's Dilemma*. Lanham, Md.: Univ. Press of America, 1988. 154pp. \$26

This is a valuable but highly specialized book. Unlike most books or articles on Japanese security, it is much less concerned with grand strategy and broad policy options than it is with the bureaucratic nuts and bolts. Its chapter headings reflect this focus: defense organization, defense operations, the defense program outline (*taiko*) and planning estimate (*chugyo*), the budget process, and a case study of the FY 1985 defense budget. These, plus equally useful appendices that provide a small cross-section of basic documents, make the book worth reading.

The problem is that its audience is probably quite limited. Those scholars and officials who specialize in Japanese defense affairs should be familiar with its fundamental information and positions. Those who are anxious for a primer on Japanese security will almost certainly find this book too advanced and specialized. That audience might wish the

book had a subtitle warning them: "More than you ever wanted to know about the inner workings, procedures, and regulations of the Japanese defense community." Perhaps the most appropriate readers are non-Japan specialist defense-oriented scholars, officials and military officers who want to broaden their horizons and develop a "Japan expert's" expertise. It is recommended for that audience as background reading.

It could be recommended less equivocally, were it more timely. Based on research, interviews, and a conference conducted in 1984-85, it was not published until 1988. Although there is a two-page "epilogue" bringing it up-to-date through mid-1987, the book is somewhat dated.

This type of study should be done on a regular basis so that experts on U.S., Soviet, and European security can familiarize themselves with how the Japanese bureaucracy responds to the changing security situation in and around Japan. Perhaps the most valuable contribution this book makes is to break new ground which others can follow.

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Perry, Mark. *Four Stars: The Inside Story of the Forty-Year Battle*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989. 402pp. \$24.95

Four Stars has much to commend it. It is an interesting and exciting book. Once you pick it up, it is hard to put it down. I never thought that a book on the history of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) would fit that description. Perry has written about the JCS in the same way that David Halberstam wrote about Vietnam in the *Best and Brightest*.

Four Stars breathes life into the members of the JCS, particularly the eleven officers who have served as Chairman. Perry's analyses of the characters and the roles played by Earl Wheeler, Thomas Moorer, John Vessey, and William Crowe in shaping the JCS are illuminating. The reader actually feels that he or she knows what makes these chairmen "tick."

Perry forcefully and cogently argues his thesis, namely, that over the past 40 years the JCS have battled to gain a larger role in the making of American foreign policy. More importantly, Perry shows how and why the JCS have succeeded in that struggle, moving from a committee of military advisers to the most powerful group of military officers in America.

Described in rich detail are meetings among the chiefs and between the chiefs and the secretary of defense, providing us with rare glimpses of the inner workings of the JCS. The most dramatic meeting described in *Four Stars* occurred on 25 August 1967, when the JCS decided to resign *en masse* over President Lyndon Johnson's conduct of the Vietnam War. Fortunately, they

changed their minds the next day and decided to work for change within the system.

The book offers an excellent analysis of the dynamics of the relationship between the JCS and the first fifteen secretaries of defense. It shows how the chiefs primarily valued respect, even deference, for their experience from their civilian leaders. Secretaries like Robert McNamara and Caspar Weinberger were despised by the JCS for the way in which those former businessmen treated them, even though McNamara and Weinberger showered the military with money. The JCS "loved" secretaries like Melvin Laird and Clark Clifford—even though they cut their budgets—because they gave the JCS that deference and respect.

However, for all its virtues, *Four Stars* has three major flaws. First, it has too many editorial errors: Admiral John Poindexter becomes William Poindexter; Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard becomes an assistant secretary of defense; the July 1965 decision to fight a large-scale war in Vietnam without calling up the reserves takes place in July 1964; and the fiscal year 1978 defense budget, which was reduced in real terms by President Jimmy Carter, is portrayed as having been increased by President Gerald Ford.

Second, Perry leaves out some episodes that are of critical importance to his thesis and to understanding the JCS. He omits an analysis of the role of Thomas Gates,

secretary of defense from 1959-61, in laying the foundation for the McNamara revolution as well as getting the JCS to come to an agreement on such critical issues as Joint Strategic Target Planning. Nor does he discuss the legendary blowup between CNO George Anderson and Secretary McNamara over the conduct of the naval blockade during the Cuban missile crisis—an incident which had more impact on Anderson's tenure on the JCS than his opposition to the TFX. Finally, the author ignores the outcry that followed the firing of Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger by President Gerald Ford in 1975—an outcry that forced Ford to attempt to increase defense spending and to reverse his position on SALT II.

Third, on several critical occasions, the author's hybrid methodology, which he calls investigative history (a combination of investigative journalism and historiography), lets him down. Some of these occasions are particularly disturbing to me because I am cited as the source. For example, Perry describes the initial meeting between Weinberger and the JCS on 15 January 1981. According to him, there were more than 40 people at the meeting, including several new civilian appointees. (I was not one of them.) Perry alleges that in the course of this meeting Weinberger attempted to resolve the MX deployment mode controversy by proposing to deploy the missiles on surface ships. Perry then has me describing the reaction of the partic-

ipants in the meeting in language that I never use. When the author interviewed me, I discussed a meeting that occurred in Weinberger's office toward the end of January 1981. This session was held to prepare Weinberger for his first congressional appearance. The MX basing mode did indeed come up, and I did discuss the reaction of the participants to Weinberger's MX proposal. Perry could have avoided this problem by allowing his interviewees to check what he attributed to them—a practice followed by Hedrick Smith in *Power Game*.

Despite these flaws, Perry does succeed in capturing the essence and evolution of the JCS. It is unfortunate that his mistakes will be cited by those who disagree with his thesis, which is essentially correct.

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Stoler, Mark A. *George C. Marshall: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989. 252pp. \$10.95

Professor Stoler has taken on a formidable task—summarizing the life and times of George Marshall in less than 200 pages. There is, to be sure, the monumental four-volume work of Forrest Pogue for those interested in pursuing the subject in depth; but for most students and general readers, a briefer treatment is in order.