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Japan Prepares for Total War

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gives other historians, especially the Canadian official historian C.P. Stacey, their due. I have to say, nevertheless, that he has not always done justice to Stacey.

In demonstrating that Canadian authorities had previously refused to send their forces to the Middle East, and thus had a morale problem on their hands, Villa has not apparently recognised the centrality of Stacey's argument that McNaughton, above all else, resisted piecemeal commitments of Canadian troops and that this was a clear political requirement established by the experience of the First World War. Villa wonders if Stacey's affection for General McNaughton has led him to underplay the part played by that officer in involving the Canadian army in Dieppe. This is a charge that Stacey, who read the manuscript shortly before his death in November 1989, would not have allowed to go unanswered. Stacey played no favourites, and he was scrupulous in his use of evidence.

In one instance Villa takes Stacey out of context, suggesting that he thought the Russian situation had no bearing on the Dieppe decision. Stacey actually says that at Combined Operations Headquarters, which worked mainly at the tactical level, he could find no evidence that the Russian situation was a large direct factor. He then points out that Churchill welcomed the prospect of a large raid in view of his forthcoming talks with Stalin. When Churchill decided not to include in his letter to Mountbatten

the passage quoted in the second paragraph of this review, it was evidence that, like Mountbatten, he did not want to acknowledge such influence on his war policies. Villa has verified that aspect of Stacey's argument. He has thereby made a contribution of the first importance to the historiography of the Second World War.

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Barnhart, Michael. *Japan Prepares for Total War*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1987. 290pp. Paperback \$9.95

According to conventional wisdom, the prewar breaking of Japanese diplomatic ciphers ("Magic") by the U.S. government was an unqualified blessing. It is said to have made President Roosevelt and his aides aware of at least the broad intentions and purposes of the Japanese leaders in the years and months preceding the outbreak of war. Using both Japanese and U.S. sources, Michael Barnhart has written a detailed account of the events leading up to Pearl Harbor, discussing the successes and failures of the crypto effort. Misreading of Japanese intentions because of incomplete information must be acknowledged as one of the failures.

The author argues that there were other intelligence lapses, particularly the failure to see and exploit the

deep divisions between the Japanese army and navy leadership. The U.S. ambassador to Japan, Joseph Grew, consistently failed to pick up the tell-tale traces of such tensions because his antennae appeared not to have been tuned to that possibility. Nor was the State Department hierarchy always very perceptive, although they did acquit themselves better than Grew.

Following the seizure of Manchuria in 1931, Japanese activity against China was one of slow but steady encroachment in the north. Not until 1937 did full-scale fighting erupt. Then, in the words of Barnhart, "For the next four years the Japanese Empire labored to win the war in China and become self-reliant. The task was impossible. . . ." Dependence on outside powers, particularly on petroleum products and steel scrap from the United States, constantly plagued the Japanese in their efforts to build their economy while satisfying the rapacious appetites of the two armed services. Truly a case of "imperial overstretch," in the words of contemporary historian Paul Kennedy. It was the conflicting claims on resources that led to interservice acrimony. The navy especially, required vast increases in steel allocations if it was to achieve supremacy over the U.S. Fleet. The U.S. sources had become very unreliable. Long association of the American public with a "romantic China," established in the public mind by missionaries and traders, had led to a strong animosity in this country toward everything Japanese.

Even the U.S. President indulged in it. These emotional elements eventually resulted in the embargo of materials crucial to Japan's war effort.

The desirability of expansion beyond the bounds of China had been expressed within Japanese ruling circles from the early 1930s onward. Certainly that was the wish of the army. The navy, according to Barnhart, was less enthusiastic about such an advance. Acquisition of part of Siberia would not justify the maintenance of a powerful fleet. It would not even be of much use in the fighting because of the Soviets' naval weakness. One crucial resource was needed by the navy, however, and it lay to the south: the oil in the Dutch East Indies. Moreover, the army was beginning to feel the petroleum pinch as well. Its campaign in China had bogged down and was becoming a serious strain on the logistics system. The army therefore acquiesced in the "Southward Advance," but insisted that only British and Dutch possessions be attacked. The navy, however, strongly believed that an intact U.S. Fleet constituted an unacceptable threat on the flank of the operation. Hence, its leaders countered with the proposal to attack U.S. forces as well. So events stood in mid-1941 when a decision had to be made. This decision culminated in the attack on Pearl Harbor.

It is worth remarking here that had the United States continued to be a reliable supplier of petroleum products and scrap iron, the Japa-

nese would probably not have undertaken the Southward Advance. Instead, they would have attacked the Soviets. In the words of Colonel William V. Kennedy (*Naval War College Review*, Winter 1989), "More than any other single strategic decision, Japan's attack on the United States rather than the Soviet Union, determined the outcome of World War II. The Soviets could not have survived such an attack. Consider what it would have taken to defeat a Nazi Germany and an Imperial Japan that had established a combined hegemony over Eurasia."

On the basis of the numerous Japanese sources to which he gained access, the author clearly establishes the desire of the leaders of that country to avoid war with the United States. Similarly, the United States had no real wish to go to war with Japan. However, inadequate knowledge of not just the intentions and thinking of one side by the other, but also of the opponent's culture, led to inevitable clashes. Barnhart chronicles those clashes exhaustively, analyzing each from the standpoint of the objectives each party and the misunderstandings which arose. His book is an excellent primer on the ways in which two nations can drift into war without any desire on either side. For that reason, it is a very important contribution to the literature of serious "peace studies." My only criticism of the work is that following its enormous detail becomes tedious. If the reader is willing to

accept that limitation, he will be well rewarded.

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Reckner, James R. *Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1988. 221pp. \$26.95

The Great White Fleet made its spectacular cruise around the world between 1907 and 1909. James Reckner believes that the voyage by the sixteen battleships of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet has too often been portrayed as an episode in diplomatic history (more especially in troubled American Japanese relations), without adequate appreciation of its real significance to the U.S. Navy. This perception led Reckner to reexamine the cruise within the context of American naval development during Theodore Roosevelt's second term in the White House. Reckner by no means ignores the international aspects of the cruise. Indeed, in surprisingly short space, he narrates in compelling detail the fleet's reception in every port of call and establishes the naval scene in which the cruise took place.

By 1907, Reckner argues, the fleet had finally reached a size that made it natural, if not inevitable, that a long cruise ensue to test and perfect its capabilities. The State Department, he points out, was not involved in the initial decision by Roosevelt to send the fleet to the Pacific. Prepa-