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The Future of Conflict in the 1980s

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attack, Secretary of State Dean Rusk felt that he could tell a group of Nato representatives in Luxemburg that the Israelis knew that the *Liberty* was a US Navy ship and that the attack was deliberate (the document is reproduced by Green), but in 1984 American citizens are still supposed to accept the tale of "mistake." Unfortunately, the author does not attempt to make clear why authorities have been at pains for so long to cover up the slaughter of 34 Americans and the virtual destruction of a very expensive ship.

Green's 256 pages of text are served by 16 pages of documentation and 83 pages of appendixes which reproduce in full 17 key documents. From the naive extreme of Woodrow Wilson's "open covenants openly arrived at," it would seem that since 1965 US policy in the Mideast has been based on "secret covenants clandestinely executed," with dissembling forever after.

American memories are short and it already tends to be forgotten that the Marines would not have been in Lebanon if it had not been for an Israeli excursion in the summer of 1982. After the Marines' experience of two years in that unhappy land, it would be well to ponder these pages and ask how much we don't know about the processes which led to this misadventure of 1982-84.

RICHARD K. SMITH
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Taylor, William J., Jr., and Maaranen, Steven A. *The Future of Conflict in*

the 1980s. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1983. 504pp. \$39.95

It is obvious to even the most casual observer of the news that the world is becoming a more dangerous place on almost a daily basis. The proliferation of nuclear weapons, massive sales of conventional arms to the developing world, increasing scarcities of vital resources, new arenas of conflict (such as the oceans, space, and the polar regions) emerging due to advancing technologies, and a myriad of other factors have all contributed to a world that seems at times unlikely to hold together for another day. This book offers little in the way of hope, but it does successfully survey the terrain of hostility in a series of short, specific essays and articles by a wide range of authors.

After a pair of well written introductory essays by James Schlesinger and Robert Komer, the remaining three sections of the volume focus on causes and conditions of future low intensity conflict, the military operations for low intensity conflict, and the future of regional conflict. The editors have done well in consistently focusing on *new* sources of conflict, proceeding broadly on the assumption that a nuclear exchange between the superpowers is relatively unlikely. The threat is much more likely to come from conflict in the periphery rather than war between the major actors in the global arena. Their catch phrase for such confrontations are "Low Intensity Conflict

Situations," and they offer a few recommendations to help prepare the United States for effective responses. These include fully integrating the concept of the Rapid Deployment Force into overall US strategy and policy, increasing intelligence and evaluation efforts and skills, attempting to determine the effect and level of Soviet involvement in various low intensity situations prior to formulating responses, bringing the public "on board" in situations requiring intervention, and fully exploring all options in confronting crisis and low level violence in the world. The thinking of the editors and several of the writers could serve as interesting food for thought for policy planners attempting to grapple with an ambiguous situation and a skittish public in the current Central American situation.

One interesting aspect of the editor's technique in collecting the pieces for the volume is the inclusion of several "scenarios," which serve to give a sort of reality to some of the more theoretical segments of the book. One of the most intriguing is Jack Child's section on "potential conflict in Central America," which predicts the eventual formation of a Marxist-Leninist coalition in Central America, composed of the revolutionary governments of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Belize. According to the scenario, they are opposed by the United States and its allies in the region, Guatemala and Honduras, with Costa Rica and Panama maintaining an anti-US neutrality. One can hear

the dominoes falling, an unsettling prospect so very close to home. Another noteworthy selection is "Invasion and Instability in Southeast Asia," by former Fletcher School security studies Professor W. Scott Thompson, a high-ranking figure in the current administration. The continuing threat to Thailand posed by the Soviet client states in the region is clearly established, as are the implications for US planners.

While the volume is generally well-written and fairly cohesive, it can be criticized for the uneven level of expertise. On the plus side, essays by Schlesinger, Komer, Thompson, and John Norton Moore have the balance and depth that comes naturally with their long experience in government at high levels. Some of the articles and scenarios fail to achieve a commensurate level of insight, generally due to the author's level of experience, but they are still well-written and serviceable. On the whole, the volume holds together well, and does an excellent job of surveying the possibilities for future conflicts that face the United States and the world. The book is an excellent companion piece to readings on the strategic-nuclear balance between the superpowers that tend to attract greater public attention—despite the repeated instances of "low level violence" that surface every day. In a decade that has already seen its share of conflict, one can only expect that future violence in the Third World/Periphery will continue to be the norm. *The Future of Conflict in the 1980s* provides at least

an overview of the potential problems facing the United States and the world in such situations.

JAMES STAVRIDIS

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Bissell, Richard E. *South Africa and the United States: The Erosion of an Influence Relationship*. New York: Praeger, 1982. 147pp. \$20.95 paper \$8.95

Those who have ever visited or lived in South Africa know the significance that South African whites attach to their history and to the parallels they often draw with the American experience. Such parallels should, especially in the view of the Afrikaans-speaking whites, lead to empathy from the American whites and thence to their support. The author of this clearly written book notes, however, that citizens of both nations "... had *common* experiences, but not necessarily *shared* experiences," and he observes that the "... historical well of goodwill ... [is beginning] to go dry." Such a parting of the ways can be traced in large measure to the changed political complexion of each nation-state and altered perceptions of the elites of the other nation.

In the military and strategic area, Richard Bissell has taken pains to differentiate "... between influence exercised on military issues for political ends, and influence exercised with primarily military ends." After briefly reviewing the nature of Anglo-South African military cooperation, which until 1961 was facilitated by South African membership

in the Commonwealth, Dr. Bissell analyzes the transformation of the South African defense establishment into one which cannot extricate itself from a constabulary role (given the hegemony of the white group) and one which, given its international isolation, is heading toward ever greater self-sufficiency in weapons procurement. He describes the United States-South African military relationship as one lacking in "symmetry," because in terms of "... information, arms transfers at a fairly unsophisticated level, or the creation of domestic debate, the United States is far more permeable to the South Africans than the reverse." Indeed, more attention than ever is being devoted to the political implications of the military-security complex in South Africa, now that the current prime minister (Botha) has, as a former minister of defense, selected General Magnus Malan as his own minister of defense. Such an appointment underscores the fact that the minister of defense is, in Orwellian terms, more equal than the other cabinet members.

This book is especially attractive to those who need to learn about the links between the United States and this powerful nation at the southern tip of Africa. The organizing theme of influence—its rise, decline, and expiration—is conceptually solid, and the book is written in a lucid, parsimonious manner (rather than in the jargon and buzzwords one all too often associates with opaque political science) which is bound to stimulate debate and further inquiry. The