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Our Man is Inside

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depended for his material upon what individuals he could personally interview and then emphasizing the recollections that were best from a human-interest standpoint. The result is certainly an entertaining book, but hardly the definitive history of the event.

David Pollock, a consultant on international affairs to government and industry and formerly Assistant Professor of Political Science at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., has written a very different type volume. His book *The Politics of Pressure* is detailed and well-researched, constituting an excellent contribution to the available scholarly literature on the subject of Washington's use of military assistance to influence Israeli national policy. Like Moskin, Pollock interviewed personally many of the leading US and Israeli officials involved in the provision of American arms to Israel. But he did not stop there, his work reflects a thorough knowledge of official records and diplomatic archives open to the public.

Pollock's treatment of the evolution of US arms aid to the Jewish state is chronological in nature, a technique which seems well-suited to the material related. He carefully points out the factors that have had a major impact in shaping American policy, including the important consideration of how successive administrations expected the provision or denial of US weapons to Israel would impact upon Soviet Middle East policy. Of partic-

ular interest is his description of how the Nixon administration in its early years postponed weapons deliveries to Israel and then, concluding that this only accelerated Moscow's own arms shipments to the region, began an almost uninterrupted flow of military aid to the Jewish state.

The author concludes that despite disavowals by the American and Israeli governments and the tendency of both to avoid a major confrontation, US arms supplies have periodically given Washington a limited but significant leverage to influence Israeli policy. It is difficult to argue with this judgment. In sum, Pollock has written a first-rate book which is highly recommended for the specialist in the field.

BENSON L. GRAYSON
McLean, Virginia

Asencio, Diego and Asencio, Nancy. *Our Man is Inside*. Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, 1983. 244pp. \$17.50

For a diplomat, Diego Asencio reminds us in this highly readable account of his 61 days as a hostage in the hands of Marxist terrorists in the Dominican Embassy in Bogota, Colombia, in 1980, dialogue is everything. Or, as he puts it more bluntly in the specific context of his crisis, "bullshit is always cheaper than bullets."

Asencio reminds his readers of another aspect of modern-day terrorism; that is every terrorist incident is different—different in locale, in demands, in the impact on our interests,

and different in human terms. And the Bogota crisis was assuredly different—not simply one country's diplomats taken hostage, but diplomats of numerous countries, including fifteen ambassadors, all rounded up in the residence of the Dominican Ambassador on his country's Independence Day reception. Different as well in what was inevitable, with that many practitioners of dialogue held in close quarters with their loquacious captors, the hostages themselves perforce became actively involved in the negotiations. And in Asencio's view, outmaneuvering them in the end.

Asencio's account of that dialogue is what makes this book about yet another hostage affair so readable. His espousal of US policy of refusing what he terms "up front" concessions to terrorists to gain their freedom won him the animosity at the outset of several of his ambassadorial colleagues though assuredly not the Israeli, who appears to have been a very feisty fellow indeed. At the same time, Asencio's active dialogue with his captors, as an indirect participant in the desultory negotiations they conducted with Colombian representatives in a van parked in front of the Embassy, resulted in what he at least sensed to be a certain lack of trust in him on the part of US government authorities. At times he felt abandoned by those who he thought should have supported him, but certainly not by his wife, Nancy, who comes through as both a determined and yet compassionate human being. At times he found himself

seemingly in defiance of Washington's instructions "after a lifetime of enforcing them." That triggered a frustration and a degree of personal anguish that surfaces frequently in the book. He remains, he tells us, unhappy to this day with Washington's "second guessers"—though obviously proud to feel proven right by the outcome, symbolized in his welcome home by the Vice President, the latter telling him and the country that "the career of diplomacy has been well served by the example set in the captive Embassy."

Both sides, he concludes, were proven wrong—both those among those held who favored immediate concessions and those rigidly opposed negotiations and inclined to a reliance on force. "In the ultimate analysis," he concludes, "intelligent conversation is always preferable to that atavistic impulse of all males to settle disputes by violence."

That, it seems to me, is the singular contribution of this book. There is much more; the roller coaster of emotions of uncertainty and hope, fear and courage, confidence and despair; the emphasis of those qualities of patience, of family, of a sense of humor, and of faith ("... being under fire does wonders for restoring one's faith in God") that are proving to be true of all hostage situations. But although much may be predictable, we need to be reminded—as this book does for us—that we are not yet so experienced in the business of thwarting terrorism as to conclude we have all the answers. As

Asencio puts it, there is not a little difference between the intellectual concept of fighting terrorism and the visceral reality of being its victim as a hostage.

L. BRUCE LAINGEN
National Defense University

Hooper, Alan. *The Military and the Media*. Brookfield, Vt.: Gower Publishing Company, 1982. 247pp. \$34

The military and the media: if ever there were enemies, these two professions are it! How many reporters do you know who are happy with the information provided by the Defense Department? How many military officers do you know who are satisfied with the media coverage? Yet in certain respects, as Alan Hooper demonstrates in this splendid book, there are many similarities in the two professions, and often there are, or can be, similar objectives.

For all the similarities, the practitioners of these two professions know remarkably little about one another. Certainly there is often a deep suspicion about, and little sustained knowledge of, the media in military circles, even though we know from experience the considerable effect of the press and television on the soldiering and sailing business. So perhaps we ought to take Winston Churchill's advice about the media: "Learn to get used to it. Eels get used to skinning."

This is a book, written by a military officer (Royal Marines), that will help military officers—or any-

one else—understand the media. It is a superb book, and explores what most serving officers never have time to explore for themselves—the inner workings of the press and the professional motivations of reporters and others in the press "chain of command," and their effect on military operations. In the process of exploring media-military relations, the author examines the particular circumstances of media coverage of Vietnam, Northern Ireland, the Iranian hostage case, and the Falklands episode. These case studies, although briefer than one would like (each is worthy of book-length treatment in itself), contain especially valuable insights for the military officer who, for good or ill, will be living with the media throughout his or her career. There are very few books on this subject. Here is a book, written by a military officer, that ought to be required reading for all officers in all armed forces—or at least all officers in democratic societies.

ROBERT J. MURRAY
Center for Naval Warfare Studies

Dixon, Joe C., ed. *The American Military and the Far East*. Washington, D.C.: Office of US Air Force History, 1980. 318pp. \$7

The focus of this volume, the proceedings of the Ninth Military History Symposium held at the United States Air Force Academy in October 1980, is on American military involvement in the East and Southeast Asia. Within the space of