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World War II Policy and Strategy

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disappointed with this year's editions. The quality and objectivity of both works meet the high standards that readers have come to expect of the Institute. The familiar style and form of previous years remain in both publications, although the number of subtopics has been reduced, apparently in order to treat those remaining in more depth while maintaining the same overall length of the publications. For example, *Military Balance* has the same 119 pages as its predecessor but contains four fewer multipage tables. Special treatment is given this year to Helicopter Characteristics, perhaps underscoring their heavy use by the Soviets in Afghanistan. Whereas last year's analysis section looked both at the East-West theater balance in Europe and the balance at sea, this year supplements the European theater balance with a more detailed look at the Theater Nuclear Balance—a subject of major discussion and decision within the North Atlantic Alliance during the past year.

Strategic Survey, too, reflects the major issues of 1978 as is indeed its purpose. Whereas its companion piece focuses on hardware and manpower, *Strategic Review* looks at the international political and economic fabric that lead to defense policies. It finds four new factors of international security worthy of detailed comment; Interventionary Forces (including a revealing section on French activism), U.N. Peace-Keeping, Military Competition in Space and New Trends in Air Power, and gives special status to the treatment of the Iranian revolution in its discussion of the Middle East. To a degree, it seems unreal to read of events in that helter-skelter country without reference to the hostages, yet in retrospect it only serves to emphasize the volatility of the region and, by export, the world.

Taken together these two works provide a comprehensive and authori-

tative look at contemporary international security issues as one could find in some 250-odd combined pages. Indeed *Military Balance* probably has as much, if not more, useful information than many intelligence publications several times its size. And what are their findings? As ever, issues of international security are sufficiently complex to defy succinct statements, but the current issue is clearly trends. The Western qualitative edge is being eroded by both qualitative and quantitative improvements at the conventional and nuclear level, primarily through Soviet initiatives. Further a volatile Third World is viewed by the Soviets as offering new opportunities for influence and by the West as the most serious security challenge of the 1980s as it attempts to assure the supplies of raw materials on which its economic well-being, domestic stability and political cohesion depend. The vision of a Soviet Union, confident in its military advantage, meddling in areas of vital concern to the West is not a happy one. Yet it is not a hopeless one either. For if "...the overall balance is still such as to make military aggression appear unattractive," then small and slow changes in the trends can have a marked effect in the long term: if we get started now.

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Jacobsen, Hans-Adolf and Smith, Arthur L. *World War II Policy and Strategy*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Clio Books, 1979. 491pp.

Most collections of documents are intended solely to give the reader the building blocks with which to interpret history. Jacobsen and Smith, however, have decided to use this format to expound a new "alternate solution" to World War II studies. After arbitrarily classifying and dismissing previous works as too limited, the authors have come to the conclusion that the war

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should be studied as a "global phenomenon." They argue that only by understanding what the aims, motives, and plans of the belligerents were can the reader understand the war itself.

Whatever the merits of this interpretation, it may have been dealt a mortal blow by the authors. Most readers will resent their cavalier treatment of previous histories, especially because without a thorough grasp of conventional history this book would be indecipherable. Moreover, the classifications and groupings advocated by Jacobsen and Smith seem to offer a restricted view of policy and strategy. For all their talk of a "global perspective," the writers concentrate almost totally on the "Big Three," Germany, and Japan. Colonial and Dominion politics, partisan resistance, and the plans of Italy, China, or neutral nations are ignored. Jacobsen and Smith seem to believe that history is written by fiat and that policy equals implementation.

This is unfortunate because in many respects this could have been a useful and informative book. Stripped of its introduction and given a more thorough and detailed commentary, it would be a valuable source of original documents. There is a great deal of raw material here that is fascinating reading. The authors keep their commentary below the necessary minimum, seemingly content to have amassed a collection of documents in one book. A document, as a disgruntled ex-corporal once observed, may be merely a scrap of paper. It proves nothing in and of itself. Its significance lies more in how people interpret it, whether they follow its dictates, the circumstances involved in writing it, and the role it played in shaping events. These issues Jacobsen and Smith do not deal with.

Given the esoteric nature of this book, it is limited both in usefulness and appeal. Its price may discourage teachers and students from using it in a

university-level course on World War II. Its main function may be as a convenient reference for those who like to check their sources. If you have ever wondered what the "Arsenal of Democracy" speech actually said, or what were the provisions of Japan's *Sho* Plan, then this book may be worth it. Both these uses presuppose that the reader has a detailed and intimate knowledge of the military, political, and even global aspects of World War II. Without this background, the book remains a jumble of writings.

Given the peckish sniping of the introduction, one can't help wondering what Jacobsen and Smith really intended. It is hard to believe that two respected scholars would assert that there is only one way to understand and comprehend something as large as World War II. The fact that the war cannot be understood totally as a military or national phenomenon does not mean, as the authors' logic seems to argue, that it can be understood only as a global phenomenon. It may best be studied with an open mind as a combination of events and theories, from the individual (as in James Jones' *WWII*) to the global. To assert one and one only is to fail to see the forest for the tree.

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Krause, Lawrence B. and Sekiguchi, Sueo, eds. *Economic Interaction in the Pacific Basin*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1980. 269pp.

Economic Interaction uses the Pacific Basin as a microcosm of the global economy to explore the implications of the strikingly higher levels of economic interdependence experienced in recent years. Although written for and by Pacific Basin specialists, the concreteness of the discussion and the fact that the Pacific Basin is well suited to illustrate the issues involved recommend the work to a wider audience.