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The Israeli: Army

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PROFESSIONAL READING 101

problems to manageable proportions even if they could not be resolved. Rather than an analytical study, *Mr. Roosevelt's Navy* is a chronicle of individual efforts successfully melded by an outstanding fleet commander, Adm. Ernest J. King, in execution of plans and policies approved by an astute Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Harold R. Stark.

A measure of the immediate success of the Atlantic Fleet was the box score in early 1942: 2,500 ships and "thousands of ground troops" had been safely conveyed to their destinations, with losses of only 8 vessels plus 4 Navy ships and 375 men. This is indeed an admirable record. The first submarine was not sunk until March 1942 and then it was a PBV and not an escort that got the first kill.

As with most books, there are some shortcomings to this one which ought to be pointed out in all fairness. While the prose is generally effective and at times actually moving, sometimes it comes too close to the purple prose category for a serious historical work. More stylistic restraint would certainly have been in order. It would have been helpful, at least in an appendix, to have hull numbers following the names of the various ships. Strangely enough, the acknowledgments are listed helter-skelter throughout the bibliography, which does not aid a reader in determining who gave assistance to the author. Nevertheless, the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses of this major contribution to naval literature.

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Luttwak, Edward and Horowitz, Dan.
The Israeli: Army. New York, Harper and Row, 1975. 461pp.

Brecher, Michael. *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1975. 639pp.

The United States appears to be firmly committed to Israel's security and survival. Although no formal ties bind the two nations, the American response to

the October war and Washington's continued willingness to act as Jerusalem's chief arms supplier indicate a continuing concern for Israel's safety. Whether the present administration maintains or modifies this policy, America will nevertheless remain deeply involved in Middle Eastern affairs. It is, therefore, important to gain a deeper understanding of the institutions and policies of our current client-ally. Two recent books provide perceptive insights into two important aspects of Israeli society—the army and the foreign policy decisionmaking process.

Edward Luttwak and Dan Horowitz have described the evolution of the Israeli Army from the ill-equipped, improvised force of 1948 into one of the world's most efficient fighting machines. In addition to clear, concise descriptions of Israel's wars, the authors also discuss the development of Israel's tactical and strategic doctrine. They note that the Israeli Defense Force did not derive its structure and doctrine from a colonial tradition or from foreign instructors. Rather, the Israelis, through trial and error, experimentation, and debate, devised force structures and doctrines of their own. As the authors note, some of these Israeli creations were ineffective but most were well suited to the small nation's capabilities and circumstances.

Although completed prior to the October war, the authors were able to add a final chapter dealing with the latest Arab-Israeli conflict. Though lacking important information, the chapter does provide a good overview of the war. Moreover, the chapter demonstrates that the process of discussion and debate, so characteristic of the IDF in the past, enabled them to adapt quickly and efficiently to rapidly changing circumstances and achieve a striking military victory.

Professor Michael Brecher, a political scientist from McGill University, has written a fascinating book on decisions in Israel's foreign policy. Brecher explores

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in depth seven cases involving 21 strategic and tactical decisions. The cases range from the decision to make Jerusalem Israel's capital to the decision to mobilize and strike in June 1967. Unfortunately, the book was completed prior to the outbreak of the October war and the development of Secretary Kissinger's new diplomatic initiatives. Brecher's methodology, however, provides a useful framework and a cluster of analytic tools that can be used to study more recent developments.

The author deals with each problem not only from the approach of the traditional rational actor but also from the standpoint of internal factors, including the psychological and operational environment, attitudinal stances of various elites, and the methods and outlooks of different bureaucracies. Brecher concludes with 50 hypotheses about how states behave. Individually, they are interesting and worthy of further development, but whether or not the Israeli experience can be applied to other states of vastly different size and structure seems at best problematical. Nonetheless, the author has produced a thoughtful study of one nation's decisionmaking process and offers useful hints concerning the wider application of his conclusions.

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McGrath, John M. *Prisoner of War: Six Years in Hanoi*. Annapolis, Md.: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1975. 128pp.

Dramesi, John. *Code of Honor*. New York: Norton, 1975. 271pp.

Lt. Comdr. Mike McGrath's book represents one more effort "to set down our own record of what really went on inside the walls of the Hanoi prisons." This former POW's unique contribution to this effort is his artistic talent. His book consists of a series of original pen and ink sketches with annotations which, for the most part, trace the

author's experiences from his capture in 1967 until his repatriation almost 6 years later.

McGrath's sketches have real meaning for those who were confined in the prisons of North Vietnam. "Talking through the wall," the "Hanoi Honey Bucket," the "rope trick" and "shackles" are but a few examples of scenes and objects with which any former POW is intimately familiar. He easily identifies Little Vegas, the Annex, the portraits of the interrogators, and the instruments of persuasion, the ropes and irons. These scenes can never be forgotten. Their memory is printed on the mind of a former prisoner as indelibly as the physical scars on his wrists and ankles.

McGrath complains, however, that his drawings are "too soft," that there are impacts and emotions associated with his subject matter that he could not convey on paper. How does one draw boredom, pain, squalor, and hate? How does one depict the suffering of human beings confined in unventilated rooms during the long subtropic summers, when human bodies become roseate with heat rash and men, exhausted because of their inability to sleep, lie motionless on their concrete slab bunks, staring endlessly at some distant spot, their minds in the future or in the past, but rarely in the present? How does one draw the jingle of keys at night or the screams from the prison courtyard or the grunts of prison guards, whose obscenities with animals and among themselves are so foreign to Western men?

The scenes which Mike McGrath selected are typical and accurately reflect the experiences of an American POW in North Vietnam from 1965 to 1969. Unfortunately, the author has provided only two sketches of Camp Unity, that section of the Hanoi Hilton which was used as a collection point for all POW's following the 1970 Son Tay raid. From the time of this assembly at