

1976

The Wartime Alliance and the Zonal Division of Germany

David Herschler

Tony Sharp

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Herschler, David and Sharp, Tony (1976) "The Wartime Alliance and the Zonal Division of Germany," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 29 : No. 4 , Article 24.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol29/iss4/24>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

126 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

The first chapter is an argument for a larger and better navy, which is premised on the growing Soviet naval and maritime capability. The second chapter purports to refute the first on grounds that naval forces in the foreseeable future will be largely symbolic. However, both articles answer different questions and thus their arguments never really mesh. For example, in the event of a war or shooting conflict with the Soviet Union, the needs of the Navy will be very different than they would be in noncombat situations. That we must be prepared for the first while hoping for and engaging in a highly politicized environment which does not involve combat is largely ignored.

The three essays on the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and Far East are good, overall surveys of the respective areas, their problems, and the prospects and possibilities for conflict. Of equal value is the concluding chapter on political, economic, and legal problems which have already changed the maritime environment and which portend even greater changes in the future. Interested readers will find these four chapters the most valuable.

There is an excellent chapter on the relative merits of land-based and sea-based deterrent systems. This chapter concludes that the sea-based systems are the most stable, but it does not address the deeper question as to whether a sea-based deterrent system is really an attribute of seapower or whether it is essentially a deterrent system which happens to be at sea as a matter of convenience. This issue could—and should—stir debate. Unfortunately, it is not addressed.

While issues are raised and problems are identified in these nine essays, the book lacks an introduction showing their relationship and how one affects the other. This modest volume's chief merit is that it is a beginning of what should be serious study of an ex-

traordinarily complex subject. Hopefully, others will continue the work.

B.M. SIMPSON III
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy

Sharp, Tony. *The Wartime Alliance and the Zonal Division of Germany*. New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1975. 220pp.

Tony Sharp has transformed his doctoral dissertation into a detailed, dispassionate account of wartime Allied negotiations over the zonal arrangement for a defeated Germany in 1945, and his work should prove useful to scholars. Going beyond earlier diplomatic works, the study correctly emphasizes the connection between the establishment of the zones and contemporary military developments.

In setting out the establishment of occupation zones, the author has presented new and interesting material. Particularly effective is his well-documented account of the administrative processes within the British Government which resulted in a zonal plan. Committees inside the Foreign Office and the military coordinated their work, even in the face of American and Soviet reluctance to proceed, so that the British were able to place their draft before the European Advisory Commission and, with minor revision, eventually push it through. The author is equally convincing in his presentation of the negotiations surrounding French participation in the occupation of Germany. Perhaps of greater importance is his treatment of British policy after the Yalta Conference, as he argues that British conceptions of their declining role in Allied affairs, along with a more realistic view of the political situation in the liberated countries, led them in April and May 1945 to attempt to undo their own zonal plan, agreed to by the Allies, in order to prevent Soviet hegemony in Central Europe. They hoped first to advance Western military forces

PROFESSIONAL READING 127

as far to the east as possible, then they advocated a steadfast order for Anglo-American troops in the Soviet zone in Germany.

In his analysis Sharp runs into difficulty on several issues. For one thing, there is little discussion of the changing political situation after Yalta in Eastern and Central Europe and its accompanying effect on Allied relations that contributed to the sudden shift in British attitude. Second, there is slight explanation neither of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's refusal to provide direction for his planners in the establishment of zones nor of the delays caused by Sumner Welles' scheme in 1943 for the dismemberment of Germany, which forced Hull at the Moscow Conference to opt for a vaguely conceived European Advisory Commission. Third, in explaining why the President finally relented to British pressure over allocation of the two Western Zones, the author overlooks the views of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson who as early as June 1944 advocated accepting the southwestern zone. Fourth, Sharp argues that Eisenhower in his final strategy followed political rather than military considerations, that he hoped to race the Russians to areas not settled by zonal protocol. This view, based on an article by Eisenhower in 1961, after 16 cold war years, is not convincing. The author does have a point, however, as illustrated by Eisenhower's desire to capture Lubeck and cut off Denmark from Soviet encroachment. Finally, the study fails to explain fully why the United States decided to withdraw from the Soviet zone.

The research, with a few striking exceptions, is excellent. Sharp has combed recently declassified British records and has seen some of the unpublished American materials. He has also corresponded with some of the participants. A more thorough study of State Department records or use of the Stimson Diary might have eliminated

many of the difficulties in the text. And he has omitted two important published sources: *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conference at Quebec, 1944*, released in 1972, and an excellent essay by Paul Y. Hammond, "Directives for Germany," in Harold Stein, ed., *American Civil-Military Decisions* (1963).

The most serious weakness of the book is its style. The author is dealing with a complex issue and his presentation is often so complicated as to confuse the reader, even specialists in the field. He has a penchant for abbreviations, often of obscure committees, such as MSC (British Military Subcommittee), or CAC (Combined Administrative Committee). It is necessary to refer constantly to the long list of abbreviations at the front of the book. Adding to the confusion is the placing of material concerning military strategy in the first chapter, out of context, forcing repeated use of the term "see above" in the notes for this chapter.

DAVID HERSCHLER
Indiana University

Sherwin, Martin J. *A World Destroyed, The Atomic Bomb and the Grand Alliance*. New York: Knopf, 1975. 315pp.

The many questions surrounding the development of the atomic bomb by the United States during World War II and the reasons for its use against Hiroshima and Nagasaki continue to generate a public and historiographical debate. The controversy over whether the weapon was used out of perceived wartime necessity or as an attempt to warn the Soviet Union of America's great postwar power has gone on for over a decade. It began with Gar Alperovitz's *Atomic Diplomacy—Hiroshima and Potsdam* in 1965 and continued through the flurry of books and articles published last year on the 30th anniversary of the