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The German Navy in World War II

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Edward P. Von der Porten

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is the Preface written by the author. His opening sentences read:

> In this book I have attempted a review, in broad outline, of the war fought in Korea from June 1950 until July 1953. By now, the clouds of propaganda and emotional thinking that obscured it, not only while it was being fought but for a few years afterwards, have largely dispersed. Most if not all of the myths which surrounded it have been exposed for what they are.

The incidents which led up to the war, the war itself, and the events which brought about the truce are covered in a comprehensive, but concise, manner. It is the best and most honest evaluation of the Korean war which this reviewer has read to date. Further, there is an excellent discussion of the psychological battle which took place between the two opponents, a battle from which the free world has unfortunately learned very little, if present-day actions are any indication. The author also presents an exceptionally good treatment of the much talked about problem of the possibility of the Korean war's having almost caused world war III. O'Ballance concludes that the Communists agreed to a truce only when they feared that the United Nations forces were about to expand the war.

The sole criticism offered regarding the book, other than the inclusion of some very minor errors, is that the method in which specific dates and the sequence of events are presented is sometimes quite difficult to follow. This does not detract materially from the fact that this is an unusually good and readable book, which is recommended for all military personnel, whether they are students of history or not.

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W.S. HATHAWAY
Colonel, U.S. Army

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Von der Porten, Edward P. *The German Navy in World War II.* New York: Crowell, 1969. 274p.

In *The German Navy in World War II,* Edward P. Von der Porten presents a broad, accurate view of German naval strategy employed during World War II. The author states that the period from the scuttling of the Imperial High Seas Fleet in Scapa Flow on 21 June 1919 until construction started on the battle cruiser *Deutschland* in 1928, was one devoted to reorganizing the Navy and inquiring into the strategy for the future. Operational problems which did not require extensive funds, such as minesweeping, coding, codebreaking, and long-range communications, were solved for the future German Navy. At the same time, a searching evaluation was made of German naval strategy. Vice Admiral Wolfgang Wegener tore apart the strategy employed in World War I, stating that the concentration on the idea of battle which dominated late Imperial Navy thinking was a faulty reading of the international naval "bible," Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power on History.* Mahan stressed the battle to contest sealanes, but Grand Admiral von Tirpitz had stressed battle in his strategic world, the North Sea. The die was cast for a high seas strategy for the Navy in 1928 when the decision was made to construct a seagoing battle cruiser instead of a coastal monitor built to support the army. The book points up the problems, failures, and successes which were experienced in the commerce raiding campaign of the auxiliary cruisers and capital ships; in Admiral Karl Doenitz's organization and execution of the U-boat campaign against the Allies; in the worldwide operations of a navy with limited access to the high seas; in operations with limited external support facilities; and in fighting an acknowledged more powerful British Navy. There are many lessons for the student of naval strategy to learn from the German experience of World War II.

The author warns that the threat posed to the Western sea power by the German Navy of 1939-1945 may well serve as a grim warning to the Atlantic community now.

W. ABROMITIS
Captain, U.S. Navy

Wilson, Andrew. *The Bomb and the Computer.* New York: Delacorte Press, 1968. 216p.

Andrew Wilson is the defense and aviation correspondent of Britain's *The Observer.* In preparing this book, he was given access to European and U.S. gaming activities, including those of the Pentagon and the Naval War College, and interviewed many authorities on gaming and on policymaking. Wilson traces the development of war gaming from ancient China and India to the present. He discusses the advent and use of more recent analysis and planning techniques, such as operations research and computer simulations. A number of current games, military and nonmilitary, are examined. With few exceptions, they are examples of the extensive U.S. gaming effort, which Wilson estimates as occupying the attention of between 15,000 and 30,000 officers and scientists. The author is highly critical of much of the current use (misuse?) of gaming, particularly computer gaming, as a planning and analysis tool. It is his contention that "The computer has . . . already led to the disregard of too many factors in American policy making simply because they cannot be quantified . . . ." He cites as examples the 1962 decision to cancel Skybolt which ". . . was the direct result of computer gaming," and the interchangeability of the "neat concepts" of computer gamers with those taught at U.S. Army and Special Forces schools. However, Wilson does admit, if somewhat grudgingly, that gaming is a useful tool when and if (as the Naval War College has always pointed out) its limitations are recognized. The book is suggested for those who use the results of war games, simulations, and analytical studies as factors in decisionmaking. Chapters VIII, IX, and XII are recommended for war gamers, especially those who think that war gaming can be all things to all men.

F.J. McHUGH
Operations Research Analyst

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Every kind of service, necessary to the public good, becomes honorable by being necessary.

Nathan Hale: Letter to Captain William Hull, 10 September 1775
(Hull had objected to Hale's entering
the British lines as an American spy.)