Book Reviews

Beyond al-Qaeda: Part 1, The Global Jihadist Movement by Angel Rabasa, Peter Chalk, Kim Cragin, Sara A. Daly, Heather S. Gregg, Theodore W. Karasik, Kevin A. O'Brien, and William Rosenau. RAND Corporation, 2006, 226 pp., $30.00. ***Beyond al-Qaeda: Part 2, The Outer Rings of the Terrorist Universe***, 2006, 214 pp., $25.00.

"Know your enemy" is as foundational a military maxim as there is, yet it can be surprisingly difficult to get military and policy communities to focus on the nature of the adversary with meaningful depth or breadth. This is particularly concerning when the conflict at hand is something of the nature of the war on terror (WOT), where there is a fundamental shift not just in the context of the war but also in the nature of the adversary. Part, although certainly not all, of that problem is that military and government professionals face significant time constraints, which make the research and reading that academics take for granted difficult to do, no matter how much awareness there is of the need. With this in mind, one can only praise RAND: Project Air Force for the publication of the two-book set *Beyond al-Qaeda*. For while *Beyond al-Qaeda* provides a limited discussion of future WOT strategy, operations, or implications, what it does very well is provide a comprehensive, virtually encyclopedic assessment of the current and potential adversaries associated with the WOT in the wake of US operations in Afghanistan.

Part 1, The Global Jihadist Movement covers al-Qaeda in four chapters, with a particular emphasis on its evolution since the loss of its safe haven in Afghanistan. The strength of this discussion is not in its novelty or insight. There is little here that the well informed will not recognize, and at least one chapter, the discussion of al-Qaeda's operational planning cycle, is likely to disappoint. But in four very accessible chapters a comprehensive, timely, and informative discussion of what al-Qaeda is, how it thinks, and how it seeks to achieve its goals is provided. The primary task of the rest of part one is to provide a region-by-region assessment of what the authors term the "al-Qaeda nebula," those regional and national groups that have specific linkages to al-Qaeda proper. The transition chapter between these two sections lays out the authors' assessments of the linkages between al-Qaeda proper and its "associated movements." While brief, this section does a valuable service of mapping the "Jihadist universe" in an easily digestible presentation. Taken as a whole, even the well-informed reader is likely to find significant parts of the al-Qaeda nebula assessment to be helpful either due to depth of the information or simply its organization in one accessible location. Part one concludes with a discussion of implications for US strategy and the US Air Force in the future. These are sound, and for some the cry for more Air Force support for unmanned aerial vehicles will be provocative—but

these are not the book's primary contribution. In fact, one gets the impression that the authors themselves do not see generating policy arguments as the primary role of *Beyond al-Qaeda*, providing them only to bookend the far stronger group-by-group analysis.

Part 2, The Outer Rings of the Terrorist Universe takes the regional assessment format of part one and extends it to regional and national terrorist groups that are not presently known to be associated with al-Qaeda. Beyond laying out the groups' histories, profiles, goals, and primary methods, the authors also assess the likelihood of the group in question associating with or cooperating operationally with al-Qaeda or simply becoming more actively anti-American in the future. Given the fluid nature of the data in many of these cases, the authors deserve praise for maintaining a very measured and pragmatic approach to these questions, an approach that results in credible, if obviously not definitive, conclusions regarding the future of a diverse array of groups—ranging from the well-established Hezbollah and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Tamil Tigers) to the most recently identifiable insurgent groups in Iraq. Before an even less significant set of conclusions than in part one, part two also provides a cogent discussion of "The Convergence of Terrorism, Insurgency, and Crime" (chap. 7) that may have particular value for those teaching courses on terrorism, insurgency, and/or the WOT.

While *Beyond al-Qaeda* has little to say about the USAF, Project Air Force still gets its money's worth in a two-book set that provides a current, thoroughly researched, and accessible analysis of the adversaries and potential adversaries in the WOT. These books are not necessarily the best resource for new thinking on defeating these adversaries, but together they are a very informative and useful resource. Those looking to get a sense of the landscape, to better understand the full range of the al-Qaeda or terrorist threat, or in need for professional reasons of an accessible, encyclopedic reference on modern terrorist groups are well served by *Beyond al-Qaeda.*

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The Future of Europe: Reform or Decline by Alberto Alesina and Francesco Giavazzi. MIT Press, 2006, 186 pp., $24.95.

Economists Alberto Alesina of Harvard University and Francesco Giavazzi of Italy's Bocconi University warn that continental Western Europeans must reform their overregulated and protected economies or face a grim future of spiraling decline. Their remedy—"that Europe should adopt very large-scale reforms that would make its markets and its institutions look much more like those of the United States than they are now"—is sure to provoke objections from French, German, and Italian readers proud of the European social market economic model. Yet, free-market advocates, liberal economists, and proponents of the Anglo-Saxon economic model will embrace this publication as another affirmation of the benefits of competition, creative destruction, and a culture that rewards the entrepreneurial spirit.

Alesina and Giavazzi argue that Europe, by which they mean continental Western Europe, is like a "frog in slowly warming waters," oblivious of the impending danger of being boiled alive and unwilling to take the necessary action to save itself. Western Europeans, according to the two economists, face three major problems, which they are loath to address. First, Western European governments created an elaborately generous welfare system during the boom years of the 1960s, which they can no longer afford. Alesina and Giavazzi point out that demographic trends accentuate the problem, as the proportion of the working-age population to retirees grows smaller and smaller. Second, they contend that massive government intervention and regulation have created pockets of privilege that block reforms that threaten their protected status. Lastly, the two liberal economists assert that high tax rates and a plethora of regulations have discouraged individual initiative and entrepreneurship and rendered Western European society relatively immobile and static.

Having laid out their general indictments of the continental European economic model, Alesina and Giavazzi develop these themes in greater depth in 12 issue-specific chapters ranging from "Americans at Work, Europeans on Holiday" to "Job Security, Job Regulations, and 14 Million Unemployed" to "Interest Groups against Liberalization." Each chapter presents statistics, graphs, charts, and tables that lay out their analysis of Western European patterns in that area, coupled with an engaging, provocative analysis of these trends presented in a manner accessible to nonspecialists. In discussing vacation time and the workweek, for example, the authors furnish data ranging from the distribution of holidays and vacation weeks in 19 European nations and the United States to the relationship between marginal tax rates and hours worked weekly to the correlation between unionization and vacation time. They caution that much as Europeans may enjoy working less, retiring earlier, and vacationing more, these choices will make them poorer and poorer relative to harder-worker societies.

One of the book's most interesting chapters tackles the topic of "Competition, Innovation, and the Myth of National Champions." Alesina and Giavazzi argue that continental Europe discourages the process of creative destruction that generates innovation and efficiency by protecting and subsidizing incumbent firms. Rather than letting the free-market process of competition winnow out inefficient firms and open opportunities for new ones, Western Europeans support existing firms and seek to stimulate innovation through subsidies, grants, and dirigisme. This policy is bound to fail, according to the authors, who cite a series of enormously expensive and questionable initiatives ranging from the Concorde to Plan Calcul that illustrate the misplaced nature of directed innovation.

Alesina and Giavazzi claim that *The Future of Europe* "is not an academic book, and we are not shy in taking sides on the issues we analyze." The two economists deliver a liberal, free market broadside on the Western European model, claiming that those who talk about a third way between the "American free-market" and the "European model" are fuzzy thinkers: "A market economy is a market economy: qualifications are misleading." Yet, in their enthusiasm for

an unfettered market economy, Alesina and Giavazzi overlook promising signs of the continued economic vitality in "Old Europe," ranging from its sustained positive trade balance to signs of renewed vigor in the German economy. More distressing is their tendency to conflate Europe with Italy, France, and Germany. The liberal economic spirit they advocate is alive and well in Eastern Europe and the United Kingdom, with recently elected French president Nicolas Sarkozy advocating more economic liberalism and less dirigisme. *The Future of Europe* provides both a thoughtful argument in support of this trend and ample statistics of the dangers of blocking meaningful reforms to the Western European economic model.

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America's Environmental Report Card: Are We Making the Grade? by Harvey Blatt. MIT Press, 2004, 272 pp., $27.95.

In light of Al Gore accepting an Oscar for the 2006 documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, environmental issues have again garnered media attention. While the media's focus on environmental issues waxes and wanes depending on marketability in today's fast-paced corporate world of competing 24/7 news channels, well-researched scientific monographs like Blatt's *America's Environmental Report Card* have been regularly produced ever since Rachel Carson's 1962 watershed book, *Silent Spring*, which focused on the hazards of DDT and set the stage for the modern environmental movement. Some environmental books, like Paul Roberts' *The End of Oil*, gain attention outside of environmental circles because of their timeliness in respect to current events. Others grab similar attention because they are sensational. An excellent example is Gore's 1992 book, *Earth in the Balance*, which, like his movie, received much of its attention because of name recognition. Blatt, who is a retired University of Oklahoma professor, author of six textbooks, and a current professor of geology at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, wrote a book that is neither of these. This book is written in a style reminiscent of the *State of the World* series by the Worldwatch Institute, where clear and concise language is used to document the status of key environmental issues, regardless of current geopolitical events or media attention.

Where the *State of the World* books are produced annually and usually focus on a different area of concern each year, Blatt's is a one-time publication concentrating on the United States and nine areas: water conservation, flood control, garbage disposal, soil protection, energy, global warming, air pollution, the ozone layer, and nuclear waste disposal. While the book does a good job of summarizing and explaining these relatively well-established environmental issues, it does not cover more problematic but equally critical environmental issues such as the looming biodiversity crisis (which is only briefly mentioned in the introduction). Blatt limits his in-depth discussion to those issues that he considers the most pressing, with the greatest impact on the nation's environmental health. Most of his choices are

logical in this respect, except for his omission of the looming, human-induced, mass-extinction event that is being generated by habitat destruction, pollution, and climate change. In his 1992 book, *The Diversity of Life*, eminent Harvard entomologist E. O. Wilson calls this man-made biodiversity crisis the sixth extinction and predicts that half of all the species on Earth will be gone in less than 100 years. Such an event would be larger than the extinction that killed off the dinosaurs 65 million years ago and will include the loss of all the wild ocean fisheries and most of the wild plants that form the root stock of the world's food crops and the raw products for many of its pharmaceuticals. This will have a very large impact on the nation's environmental health and should have been addressed in this otherwise comprehensive work.

Blatt's book has three chapters of particular note—those dealing with soil conservation, energy, and global warming. For the general public, soil conservation is an often overlooked subject but a very important environmental issue nonetheless. Poor cultivation standards can increase normal soil erosion rates by a staggering ten- to hundredfold, and poor irrigation practices can cause salt to accumulate in the soil at an alarming rate. Both issues, together or separately, can greatly reduce soil fertility. Blatt succinctly explains the critical connection of soil, crops, and food and the importance of conserving soil for food production by using techniques such as contour plowing, drip irrigation, and planting windbreaks. Enough food is now being grown to feed the six-plus billion people currently living on the planet. However, if a better job of protecting agricultural soil is not done, it could make it very difficult to feed the 9.5 billion people who are projected to populate the planet by the middle of this century.

His chapters on energy and global warming are the most important from a strategic aspect, and, since they are inherently linked to each other, he places them together in the book (chaps. 5 and 6). America imports 60 percent of the oil it uses, and half of this oil comes from politically unstable areas of the world, making this issue the delicate underbelly of the American economic juggernaut. This realization has caused many in the public arena, up to and including President Bush (albeit a relative latecomer to this view), to call for energy independence by greatly increasing the domestic production and use of ethanol, a fuel derived from corn and other agricultural products. Blatt does not fall into this seductive panacea that alternative fuels alone can cure US dependency on foreign oil by correctly surmising that the "use of petroleum as a source of energy is so ingrained in America's and the world's industrial economies that doing away with it completely is unthinkable for the foreseeable future, despite looming price increases as world supplies dwindle" (p. 105). However, in an attempt to inform (not alienate) the reader, Blatt only lightly discusses other possible solutions for America's energy gluttony and global warming woes. He specifically and deftly avoids any in-depth discussion of the most realistic but politically unpalatable solution—mandatory energy conservation—probably because such enforced energy savings can only be achieved in the American socioeconomic context by the introduction of some type of carbon tax.

Blatt wrote a very accessible book to help the general reader understand the environmental problems facing America. Overall, he presents a fair, balanced, and well-researched evaluation of America's environmental performance, which will stand the test of time better than more sensationalistic writings. His choice of topics is fairly logical, although based upon his own criteria (the environmental health of the nation), a chapter on the looming biodiversity crisis could have proven more worthwhile than one rehashing US garbage disposal policies. For those concerned about the strategic implications of environmental degradation and looking for an easy-to-read general primer, this book is an excellent choice.

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Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945 by Tony Judt. Penguin Group (USA), Inc., 2005, 896 pp., $37.95.

This first-class history spans over 50 years of European developments. It traces the economic hardships that ultimately formed the two blocs in Europe—Western-based capitalism and Eastern-run communism. But unlike other works, Professor Judt has been able to weave a far more comprehensive and readable text about this critical period in world history. By merging economic, cultural, and social histories into one, the reader can clearly grasp why the Marshall Plan was started, who benefited in an economic and political sense, and how developments and policies on one side of the Iron Curtain led to reactions on the other side. While historians can find this information in other texts, Professor Judt's narrative style makes this account far more valuable as a reference for European history surveys and for understanding how policy decisions can and will be influenced by nonlinear events.

The ability of this text to examine such diverse topics as the introduction of democracy in Spain, the Portuguese struggle to decolonize, and the social upheaval within Italy's economic miracle make this a most valuable contribution to history and policy formulation texts. The book opens with the end of the war in Europe and the struggles faced not only by the Germans but by all European states as they sought to rebuild a devastated continent. Countries like Belgium and Bulgaria are covered so that the reader can compare and contrast these beginnings. France and Great Britain, attempting to keep the United States engaged in the continent, had to try a variety of policies as the United States looked for ways to end the expensive postwar occupation and return to domestic American issues.

Also explored is the influence of American culture on the European film industry, for instance, and other concepts that 20 years later would spark a wave of anti-Americanism on the continent. Soviet influences and goals are explained, and it is amazing to see where the West may have deliberately or accidentally miscalculated policies. Professor Judt then lays out something that is rarely found in American texts of the period—the methods and motivations behind Western European adoption of left-wing socialist welfare state policies. By looking at 34 nations, this book provides more than just a sweeping overview; rather, it gives

the reader details to understand the underlying and less visible issues that influence how and when policies are made and implemented.

American and Soviet policies and actions are addressed only as they influence the continent, making the text easier to understand. The shortcoming of the book may be that there are as yet few histories of post-1989 events. However, Professor Judt, who has studied Europe for over 40 years and authored numerous publications, is no stranger to the history of these events and has laid out the problems, policies, and issues that occurred, starting with Poland. The economic shell that was the communist Eastern European bloc showed signs of melting in the late eighties, and as policies and practices mostly in the economic field could not be maintained, strike and dissatisfaction started. Soviet internal collapse only hastened the process. The author also examines earlier upheavals in East Germany, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, followed by Solidarity, the Velvet Revolution, and the complete collapse of East Germany. What the book does not answer is why the West understood the East's economy so poorly and therefore could not anticipate the dramatic events that led to the end of the Cold War in Europe.

The breakup of states is another segment. Belgium had to adopt a federal system when the country became almost ungovernable due to its two antagonistic linguistic groups, the Flemings and Walloons. The author recounts in depth the numerous European political missteps and the frustrations of an American president during the implosion of Yugoslavia that brought back World War II images of camps, starving people, and wanton killings. Nationalism, a concept post–World War II Europe tried to discard, was back in 1989, and Western European (French and German) hopes for a superstate (European Union) have yet to occur. The myth of European unification—as well as the realities of new state accession and absorption in an economic and cultural sense—forms cornerstones of the book's final chapters.

British decolonization and the Dutch loss of Indonesia, in a sociocultural as well as an economic sense, allow the reader to see why states' policies after decolonization moved in the directions they did. The influx of foreign labor into France, Germany, and Britain are clearly spelled out, and these short-term, limited-stay policies now influence an entire continent that is rapidly succumbing to non-Christian, non-European influences. This, in turn, is leading to problems that Europe is in the midst of grappling with, so there can be no closure here. However, to policy students this example allows the author to show how time, needs, and speed can ultimately undermine a policy that is well laid out and designed, a lesson not lost in the first half of the 21st century.

I recommend this book to students of postwar Europe as an overview text for graduate or service schools. It is compact and easy enough to read, and it can serve as the basis of many interesting courses. Professor Judt is to be congratulated for producing a readable text covering more than just general history and examining the underlying cultural, social, and economic events that Europeans have shared for the past 60 years.

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