Closing with the Enemy: How the GIs Fought the War in Europe, 1944-1945. By Michael D. Doubler. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994. Maps. Photographs. Tables. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 354. $40.00.

Lieutenant Colonel Doubler has made a solid contribution to the literature of World War II with this study of the U.S. Army and the challenges it faced in the fighting from the Normandy landings to V-E Day. Doubler argues that the Army of June, 1944 was basically a sound and well-designed machine which required some fine tuning to meet the challenges of those final eleven months of fighting in Europe. If a single term could sum up the burden of the book, it would be "adapt"; the word and its derivatives appear countless times, while the reader is offered examples of the Army's capacity for constructive change on virtually every page.

The author supports his basic argument with a series of well-crafted chapters on various problems encountered and mastered: the struggle in the hedgerow country, the evolution of the American air-ground battle team, problems of combat in urban areas, the attack of fortified positions, opposed river crossings, the Huertgen Forest fighting, and the defensive battles in the Ardennes. A study of the combat performance of the American soldier is followed by a recapitulation and some commentary on other recent studies.

The work is the fruit of a particularly thorough combing of the Army's vast archival holdings, plus a probing of monographic literature, diaries, memoirs, and oral interviews. It is not a book for casual browsing and skimming; the pace is brisk and the pages packed with data. Unfortunately one has the impression of an "insider's" work: a soldier's book addressed primarily to other soldiers. The text is strewn with acronyms, and while many would be familiar to readers of military history, the book's glossary comes in handy; then there are Pentagonese phrases such as "attriting the enemy" (p. 85). As impressive as the research base is, it is more deep than broad. The heavy reliance upon official reports and findings again creates the impression of an "insider's" approach, a kind of self-study, with the American military themselves putting the finger on their past failures and achievements. It would have been interesting to know whether British liaison officers attached to the U.S. Army also remarked its superior powers of adaptiveness; and we might get a better grasp of the GI's combat effectiveness if we knew more about how his German counterpart rated him. Yet these criticisms detract but little from the author's solid achievement.

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Controlling the Waves: Dean Acheson and U.S. Foreign Policy in Asia. By Ronald McGlothlen. New York: Norton, 1993. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 320. $27.50.

Like him or not, historians of varied interpretations recognize that Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State from 1949 to 1953, was a key figure during an important time in American history. In *Controlling the Waves,* a published version of his doctoral dissertation at Northern Illinois University, Ronald McGlothlen shows why.

According to McGlothlen, Acheson, despite his European orientation, was the individual responsible for making America's foreign policy for Asia. That policy centered around Japan. As the only industrial nation in the region, Japan was the only country that mattered. "From start to finish," McGlothlen writes, "Dean Acheson's primary concern in the Far East was the reconstruction of Japan" (p. 202). Acheson planned to do this by rebuilding Japan's prewar trade system. As a result, all areas and nations in Asia had their importance judged on the basis of their relationship with Japan. Korea and Southeast Asia were important, because they were major markets for Japanese goods. Americans originally valued Taiwan for its trade, but the rationale soon changed to the island's strategic location alongside the major sea lanes leading to Japan. This Japan-centered strategy helped foster the stunning Japanese economic resurgence, but had a number of negative side-effects. These included the Korean and Vietnamese Wars, and a twenty-year rivalry with the People's Republic of China. This book is important because it argues that Acheson had a coherent plan for Asia, of which he never lost sight. Scholars on both sides of the intense debate on the Cold War will probably accept this work. McGlothlen stresses economic factors, but finds that they are used in the service of American national security goals.

The research behind the book is impressive. The notes and bibliography are equal to half the text's length. McGlothlen consulted all the relevant manuscript collections in the Truman Presidential Library, looked at a long list of published government documents, contacted a number of administration officials first-hand, and incorporated most of the important scholarship on American relations with Asia during this administration.

Although the research is impressive and deserves admiration, the use of foreign sources could have added to this endeavor, particularly in Mc Glothlen's discussion of Acheson's futile efforts to replace Chiang Kai-shek. The most significant criticism of this study is the totality of control McGlothlen assigns to one individual, and the rational nature he finds in American policy. This is great-man history taken to an extreme. No individual or force, except for Chiang, makes Acheson moderate or alter his policies. Acheson's enemies in the cabinet and Congress are irritants that he overcomes sooner or later with the aid of his subordinates. Implementation of Acheson's policy is the driving force behind the American presence in Asia, and the U.S. is never in a defensive, or responsive, mode.

With these considerations in mind, this book should be "must reading" for any scholar or student of U.S. foreign policy.

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