

Mark A. Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943* (Westport, Conn., and London: Greenwood Press, 1977, \$16.95). Pp. xiii, 244.

Joseph M. Siracusa (ed.), *The American Diplomatic Revolution: A Documentary History of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (Port Washington, New York, and London: Kennikat Press, 1977, cloth \$12.95 paper, \$7.95). Pp. vi, 266.

Joseph M. Siracusa and Glen St. John Barclay (eds.), *The Impact of the Cold War: Reconsiderations* (Port Washington, New York and London: Kennikat Press, 1977, cloth \$12.50, paper \$6.95). Pp. viii, 208.

The Second Front in World War II was probably as important as a diplomatic issue as it was as a military event, and the thesis of Stoler's careful and useful work is that America's military planning, particularly regarding the Second Front, was never as non-political as some have maintained. He begins with British-American contingency planning in 1940 and continues his detailed study through the Teheran Conference in December 1943, when the Allies set the approximate date on which the invasion took place.

The main value of the book, originally a Ph.D. dissertation, is its presentation in bold relief of the political issues involved and of the way Allied leaders thought – and fought – about them. (Indeed, this is another jab at overly romanticized views of the Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff.) He defends convincingly the fascinating proposition that all three allies agreed for various political reasons, domestic and international, to launch the invasion of France in 1942, although each knew that the plan was impossible and would eventually have to be cancelled. Stoler also documents the continual Soviet threat to quit the war if not relieved by an invasion from the west and the equally constant American threat to quit the European war unless Britain committed itself to the invasion and gave up Mediterranean “periphery pecking.”

I am not sure that Churchill has received his fair innings in this book, perhaps because of its reliance on American archives. One gets the impression that he was principally concerned during much of the war with keeping communism out of the Mediterranean area, that vital corridor of empire, while leaving to the Soviets the task of defeating the Germans. There is reason to believe this could have been Churchill's attitude, or close to it, but I would like to hear more of the rationale for the Mediterranean policy as expressed by him and his aides before deciding.

Stoler touches upon US armed forces infighting, showing that the Army won an important round and major influence in the White House when American leaders adopted the Second Front as a strategy. This is fascinating material but deserves more, or perhaps separate, treatment to keep it in perspective. For he shows that US leaders had compelling reasons to support an early cross-channel invasion, in any event, for example to prevent the Soviets from signing a truce thereby making it more difficult if not impossible for the Allies to defeat Germany. Furthermore, if Russia continued to fight and the Allies triumphed without an invasion or with only a very tardy one, it would likely be at the cost of a Sovietized Europe. To put the Army's bureaucratic gamesmanship on a par with motives like these is rather like telling a drowning man if he grabs a line he

can (a) save his life, and (b) preserve the crease in his trousers. Nonetheless, this is a solid contribution to the understanding of Anglo-American-Soviet relations in the war and postwar periods.

The collection of documents relating to the Cold War which Joseph Siracusa has brought together are all available in other published sources, but it is useful to have them in one book. The selection is a good one, although it has one shortcoming: the documents are overwhelmingly American, forty-seven out of fifty-nine. I hold to this judgment despite the title. In fact, I find that it and the subtitle epitomize the problem. Can one call a history of the Cold War an "American" anything? Is this not a bit like calling a documentary history of World War II "The American Army in Action"? Perhaps the subtitle is the villain, but even if it read something like "A Documentary History of *America's Role in the Cold War*," I would still find the selection and commentary in this book somewhat misleading. They reinforce an impression, fostered by other American historians in recent years, that America was the only live actor on the Cold War stage and was surrounded by a group of bottom-weighted plastic dummies entitled Soviet Union, China, Czechoslovakia, Great Britain, and so on. As America punched and thrashed, they reeled, toppled and came rocking back up at crazy angles, but were always reactors, never instigators.

For example, Siracusa includes a document from Roosevelt to Churchill stating concern at conditions in Romania in March 1945 but suggesting that Romania was not a "test case." This at face value might seem to be an example of Roosevelt worrying about Soviet policy and spreading the alarm to HMG, while at the same time, however, urging caution. Indeed Siracusa's commentary suggests it indicates Roosevelt, if cautious, "seemed to be maneuvering into a showdown strategy." Yet, in fact, it purports close to the opposite of that. It is Roosevelt's somewhat calming reply to an irritated Churchill who had urged him to voice a complaint to Stalin about political conditions in Romania. (Churchill felt constrained in the matter because of his "percentages" agreement with Stalin, which among other things, gave the Soviets predominance in Romania and the British in Greece. Furthermore, Stalin was living up to his Greek obligations.) Again, regarding a telegram from Roosevelt to Stalin on Poland in April 1945, there is no hint that it was largely instigated by Churchill and the result of extended correspondence between Washington and London, with Churchill at one point hoping he was not becoming a "bore" with his constant prodding. Similarly, the hard exchanges between Truman and Soviet leaders in April 1945 followed not simply meetings with Harriman and other American advisers as this collection might imply. They occurred after sessions with a high-powered British diplomatic team as well, headed by Eden and priding itself in reports home that it was "stiffening" the American position vis-à-vis the Soviets. It is indeed remarkable the extent that recent historiography has edited Britain out of the Cold War. In spite of its American bias, however, the book is a helpful one.

Siracusa shows no such bias in *The Impact of the Cold War*, edited with a University of Queensland colleague, Glen St. John Barclay. It is an interesting collection of essays expressing the point of view of countries around the world,

some seldom thought of in regard to the Cold War, for example Australia, Nigeria, and Argentina. In addition there is an essay on the evolution of American postwar policy towards China by Geoffrey Warner, interesting despite what might seem to be a threadbare topic, and another by Siracusa stressing America's relations with Vietnam during World War II and the early postwar years. It includes a remarkable record of a conversation between Ho Chi Minh and a US Embassy official in Paris in September 1946. Ho wanted closer relations with the US and stated that Vietnam could benefit from US capital. Perhaps he was simply angling for aid against the French, but the day I read this essay, 31 years later, a news item said the US and Vietnam had resumed talks in Paris regarding diplomatic and economic relations and quoted diplomats as saying Vietnam wants to attract private US capital. Should one laugh or cry?

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Seymour V. Connor and Jimmy M. Skaggs, *Broadcloth and Britches: The Santa Fe Trade* (College Station, and London: Texas A. & M. Univ. Press, 1977, £8.20). Pp. xii, 228.

This is, strictly, not a work on the Santa Fe trade. The authors note that "any reliable quantitative analysis of the trade, even after it was well under way" is difficult as there are so few sources. Consequently the reader will not find discussion of the amount or type or article traded, the distributive structure of the trade, sources of capital, change qualitatively and quantitatively over time, the relation of the trade to the Mexican, American or Mexican-American economies or even a table repeating Josiah Gregg's famous estimates of the amounts carried down the Santa Fe trail before 1843. He will find enough material of a different kind to wonder whether the work should rather have been sub-titled *The Santa Fe Trail*, at the same time picking up detail on the geography of the Southwest, the use of Federal money on trail improvement, the Civil War campaign in New Mexico and Arizona, the history of Indian Wars along the trail and the building of railroads in Colorado and Kansas, little of which would probably be new to him or her. There are some odd judgments in this work. It seems strange to describe James K. Polk as one who has been "grossly maligned" by historians; to quote F.D.R. as a source in arguing for official British interest in California before 1846, when there was none; to say that opposition to the Mexican War flowed simply from "abolitionists"; and to protest of the acquisitions from Mexico in 1848 that "there was no question here of greedy Yankee imperialism or of an American theft of Mexican territory."

The work has no footnotes and no bibliography beyond a short list of printed primary sources. It is illustrated and has helpful maps but its basic shortcoming for scholars will be that it does not advance knowledge of its topic.

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