

Day, supervised clandestine combat operations against China during the Korean War, participated in the Cold War debate over “massive retaliation” versus “flexible response,” played a key role in establishing Special Forces in Vietnam, and served as one of General Westmoreland’s chosen generals—Gole’s own military roots come through in the text as he points out where an experience would help shape DePuy’s tactical and doctrinal beliefs. This adds value as the book becomes (much like DePuy’s own personality) a teaching tool for the military professional. DePuy would form much of his doctrinal view from his combat experience against the Germans, whom he respected as soldiers.

The last four chapters provide a great deal of valuable information. They cover the period when DePuy and his peers fought to fix a broken army, his tenure at the helm of TRADOC, retirement (a period when he wrote), and a final chapter that examines his legacy. Vietnam had a profound effect on DePuy. In 1987, he published an article entitled: “Our Experience in Vietnam: Will We Be Beneficiaries or Victims?” In it, he dubbed television news coverage of military operations as the “final sanction” and warned that our system of government changes in administrations will bring about changes in policy that make long and inconclusive operations like that common to counterinsurgency war ineffective and in fact “doomed.” Because of this and the fact that they could not obtain the intelligence needed to defeat them, regular forces could not effectively battle “embedded forces.” Further, “The heart of prudence and cold realism suggest that U.S. combat forces stay away from embedded forces. Any violation of this advice is almost certain to be militarily futile and politically ruinous.”

Unfortunately, Gole fails to examine the obvious affect these types of views had on America’s poor response to the growing insurgency in Iraq. This is a major failing of the book. Otherwise, the book—which is well illustrated with photographs and maps—is both entertaining and informative.

David F. Crosby, former USAF history writer and doctrine developer for the Army Air Defense Artillery School



✓ **Flying From the Black Hole.** By Robert O. Harder. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2008. Maps. Photographs. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 293 [draft manuscript]. \$34.95 ISBN: 978-1-59114-359-8

From 1965 to 1973, B-52s dropped nearly three million tons of bombs on Southeast Asia and dwarfed any single-aircraft campaign statistic. This manuscript attempts to “set the record straight” about the crucial roles played by non-pilot aircrew members—specifically, B-52 navigators and bombardiers. Harder tells his story through an examination of navigator and bombardier training and a discussion of the critical roles played by these non-pilot crew members. B-52 crews consisted of a pilot, co-pilot, tail gunner, electronic warfare officer, navigator, and bombardier. The navigator-bombardiers nestled in the aircraft’s forbidding void, the “Black Hole of Calcutta,” behind and below the flight deck.

Harder is a former hole occupant with 145 Vietnam combat missions. He rivets the reader’s attention by describing the beginning of “a slow-motion train wreck.” Strategic Air Command (SAC) leadership decided that only headquarters was capable of planning the B-52 campaign. Their rigid rules of engagement and tactics were designed to keep bombers from colliding with each other. But attacking in single file from the same initial point, at the same airspeeds and altitudes, in three waves precisely spaced four hours apart, taking no evasive action, and breaking right after bomb release provided a high level of predictability for North Vietnamese SA-2 surface-to-air missile (SAM) operators and resulted in unacceptable B-52 losses on the opening days of the air campaign.

The book’s first section addresses the historic background of the navigator/bombardier career field, B-52 development, formation of SAC under Curtis LeMay, and modern navigator and bombardier training. The rigid thinking necessary to conduct nuclear war was inappropriate in a traditional conventional conflict like Vietnam. As an aviation history, these early pages solidly recount strategic bombing and the preparation necessary to prepare crews for nuclear war.

The second section describes B-52 combat operations in Southeast Asia, the widespread unrest as large numbers of crewmen racked up five, six, and seven combat tours because of the policy which limited rotations to 179 days, and the intense bitterness over tactics selected half a world away.

The final chapters detail Linebacker II operations December 18-30, 1972. This intense bombing campaign forced North Vietnamese negotiators back to the “peace table” for a war settlement and a return of American POWs. But, missions during the first few days were met with strong concentrations of antiaircraft fire, SAMs (164

on the first night), and MiG interceptors. Out of 129 B-52s launched the first night, three Stratoforts were shot down and two more were seriously damaged. On the third day, using the same tactics, ninety-nine bombers were launched, six were shot down, and one was seriously damaged—a 7 percent attrition rate. The only positive to come out of the catastrophe was to bring everybody into complete agreement: the attack tactics had to be modified. Throughout the remainder of Linebacker II, with modified tactics, B-52s dropped 15,000 tons of bombs with minimal losses.

Harder did not participate in Linebacker II, but he did a remarkable job of recounting it. The book is well written but lacks references. However, he included a bibliography. His passion for this subject is obvious and provides a lively narrative and enjoyable read.

Dr. Gary R. Lester, Deputy Historian, Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, and a retired lieutenant colonel who flew the F-4E in Linebacker II.



✓ **Flying From the Black Hole.** By Robert O. Harder. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2008. Maps. Photographs. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 293 [draft manuscript]. \$34.95 ISBN: 978-1-59114-359-8

The often overlooked contribution of Strategic Air Command’s (SAC) rated navigators is well documented by Robert Harder, who writes much of this account from the personal experience of four years in the Air Force. Graduating from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, as an AFROTC Distinguished Military Graduate, he went through navigator and “bomb-nav” training before reporting into SAC and joining a B-52 crew. While in this position he flew 145 combat missions over Vietnam in the “Black Hole,” the windowless lower deck of the B-52D. After his service he became a commercial pilot and certified flight instructor. He is now a retired retail executive and—with this book—an author who lives in Chicago.

Harder focuses on the Vietnam experience but weaves into it a history of Air Force navigation and bombing since the 1930s. He notes the recent replacement of the rating by combat systems operators—equipment operators with no training in the basic, if obsolete, skills of navigation. As he notes:

[I]n the space of one human lifetime, the

rated military professions of navigator, bombardier, and electronic warfare officer were born, grew up during a world war, came into their majority and middle age during several regional wars and a global Cold War, and then died quietly and nearly unnoticed.

But the book is most valuable for recording the experiences and routine of a B-52 navigator (on both sides of the Black Hole) during the Vietnam War, in both the conventional and nuclear modes. Harder vividly captures the stress, excitement, and boredom of the duty, bringing back memories to those of us who lived it and illuminating it for those who would know what it was like. His recall of the particulars of crew training, daily alert routine, and in-flight duties is amazingly detailed and accurate, making it a valuable resource for future seekers of the personal history of the Vietnam Conflict and the mid-Cold War.

While concentrating on the denizens of the Black Hole, he does not ignore the other aviators sharing the crew compartments of the BUFF, the electronic warfare officers (EWOs), gunners, and, of course, the drivers up front—the pilots. From the narrative, the closeness of the combat crew, their integrated skills and expertise, clearly emerges. He recognizes, too, the imperative contribution of the tanker crews to both the Vietnam and Cold War employment of long-range bombardment.

Finally, this is more than a story of plotting fixes, making times over target, and tracking aiming points. It is the story of Arc Light and Linebacker, the bombing campaigns that ultimately overcame organizational difficulties to bring America's involvement in the War in Southeast Asia to an acceptable, if not victorious, end.

Col. Wayne Pittman, USAF (Ret.), Docent, National Museum of the United States Air Force



Alaska's Hidden Wars: Secret Campaigns of the Northern Pacific Rim.

By Otis Hays, Jr. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2004. Maps. Illustrations. Photographs. Notes. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvii, 182. \$19.95 Paperback ISBN: 1-889963-64-X

An intelligence staff officer in Alaska during World War II, the author is well qualified to examine the 1941-1945 North Pacific campaigns. Though not a detailed history of operations in Alaska, his book examines several interesting aspects of this often overlooked Japanese and

American battleground.

The Japanese attacked Alaska in June 1942, to divert American attention from the pending naval battle near Midway Island. Following their defeat at Midway, the Japanese occupied Kiska and Attu Islands, at the extreme western end of the Aleutians. By mid-1943 the Americans had recaptured the islands and commenced a long-range bombing campaign against Japanese bases in the Kurile Islands which extended north of Hokkaido to the Soviet Union's Kamchatka Peninsula. Alaska also served as a transit point for Lend-Lease supplies transported to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Hays describes how Nisei (second generation Japanese-Americans born in the United States) supported the American war effort in Alaska by translating captured documents and interrogating Japanese prisoners. One poignant story is the translation of the diary of a Japanese doctor killed on Attu. Educated in the United States, the doctor returned to Japan with the Seventh-Day Adventist church before being drafted into the Japanese Army. Mr. Hays also looks at the horrendous weather conditions experienced in the North Pacific and describes the experiences of American airmen captured by the Japanese or interned by the Soviet Union (which did not declare war against Japan until August 1945). More American aircraft were lost to ice, fog, and wind than to the Japanese. As recently as 1999, the Russians discovered the wreckage of a U.S. Navy PV-1 bomber that crashed on Kamchatka and returned the crew remains to the United States for identification.

Alaska's Hidden Wars is a good companion volume to Brian Garfield's popular history of World War II in Alaska, *The Thousand Mile War*. Well researched, with notes and a detailed bibliography, Hays' book is recommended for anyone interested in this "forgotten campaign" of World War II.

Maj. Jeffrey P. Joyce, USAF (Ret.)



Air Power against Terror: America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom.

By Benjamin S. Lambeth. Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2005. Maps. Photographs. Diagrams. Glossary. Bibliography. Pp. xliii, 411. \$35.00 www.rand.org Paperback ISBN: 0-8330-374-2

Air Power against Terror provides a superb moment-by-moment analysis of

the events from the terrorist attacks of 9/11 to the ousting of the Taliban from power in Afghanistan. The book focuses on Air Force participation in Afghanistan from October 2001 to March 2002. Lambeth weaves articles from the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *L.A. Times*, *London Times*, *USA Today*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, et al. to present a timeline of events from the Bush-administration drawing board to the execution of the air war over the mountains of Afghanistan. The articles set the scene from which Lambeth injects insider information obtained from personal conversations with key decision makers. The result is a fascinating, systematic analysis of the intricate personalities, conflicts, processes, and beliefs that have become the functioning doctrine in Afghanistan and will most assuredly guide Air Force actions in future conflicts.

Lambeth begins with the hijacking of the planes on 9/11 and quickly leads the reader through the process and accomplishment of building an international coalition and the monumental task of providing a logistics base from which to perform sustained operations. Narrowing his focus, he devotes the majority of his analysis to Air Force development of a new method for conducting war against terrorist groups and the major obstacles to the effectual prosecution of that war.

He depicts an Air Force that used the existing strategies of Operation Southern Watch in Iraq as a template for fighting a war against insurgents in Afghanistan. It didn't take long for many to realize it was the wrong template. The process of learning the right tactics against a rapidly changing insurgency was not accomplished without some bumping of heads and trial and error. Most of the ego clashing occurred within the Air Force itself but was also magnified by overly restrictive Rules of Engagement (ROE) dictated by the White House and strictly controlled by the Secretary of Defense. Washington's insistence on no civilian casualties and control of all target approval was, as Lambeth explains, a new development in how we conduct war. The ROE from Southern Watch and the early hours of Enduring Freedom had to change as situations on the ground changed. The process was often slow and extremely frustrating to both warriors on the ground and aircrews who watched targets of opportunity escape unharmed.

Perhaps the greatest lesson to be learned is discussed in chapter five, where Lambeth analyzes problems that arose during planning and execution of Operation Anaconda. Lack of interagency communication, cooperation, and plan-