

his description of bureaucratic intransigence at the CIA and the National Security Agency prove particularly frustrating.

In the end, Lawrence Wright's thoughtful and compelling examination of Islamic extremism provides a convincing answer to questions about the causes of 9/11. More important, he explains why so many desperate young men continue to answer the call to jihad, and why the "long war" we are fighting is so aptly named.

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DETERRING AMERICA: Rogue States and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Derek D. Smith, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2006, 197 pages, \$24.99.

Given current events involving North Korea, *Deterring America: Rogue States and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction* is especially timely. The author, Derek Smith, argues that the United States needs to reevaluate its foreign policy and strategies concerning the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Smith offers a theoretical and historical analysis of WMD proliferation and prescribes alternative methods for response that will not be viewed as overly aggressive or arrogant and therefore will not perpetuate the problem. Although Smith is comparatively new to the field of international relations, he has excellent academic credentials (Harvard, Yale, Oxford) and has published several articles on nonproliferation topics.

The first part of *Deterring America* introduces the dilemmas involved in deterrence theory, discusses the rationality behind brinkmanship diplomacy, and explains why the United States feels it cannot adopt a reactive position on proliferation. The second part applies the principles discussed in part one to U.S. experiences with Iran and North Korea. This portion covers the risks of applying existing policy without properly understanding adversarial perceptions. The last part assesses the various counter-

proliferation strategies available to the United States; the political, legal, and moral implications of preemptive or preventive war; and ways of working within the existing international system to create a "global quarantine" against WMD proliferation.

Smith's ideas are not entirely original, but he does an excellent job of combining the thoughts of multiple prominent theorists into a concise and coherent argument. His discussion of brinkmanship is illuminating, as is his explanation of how "rogue" nations and non-state actors apply deterrence. Smith points out that Iran and North Korea have different goals and that dealing with each country therefore entails different risks. Without going into great detail, he implies that Iranian aspirations are rooted in radical ideology and North Korea's are based on power. Unfortunately, Smith limits his discussion of Iran by referring the reader to other works on the subject. In addition, although he touches on complications associated with the emerging threat of small dirty bombs, Smith regrettably remains focused on larger scale WMD proliferation.

Deterring America is both opportune and pertinent. By arguing for the establishment of an unambiguous global norm against WMD proliferation, Smith adds to the debate about the UN's role and relevance in dealing with such an important subject. Military professionals will find this book to be a valuable complement to the National Security Strategy.

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THE BLOG OF WAR: Frontline Dispatches from Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, Matthew Currier Burden, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2006, 282 pages, \$21.00.

Back in the day, Soldiers used to communicate from the frontline by mail, or what we today call snail mail. Now, technology enables service-members to communicate by e-mail or by posting accounts of their exploits on blogs. They are increasingly doing the latter; in fact, there is a veritable tidal wave of blogs detail-

ing the unvarnished feelings Soldiers have about their experiences in the combat zone. Matthew Burden's new book, *The Blog of War*, saves the reader the time and trouble of surfing through these endless sites in search of the most interesting details and anecdotes about service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For anyone who has served in the military, many of the experiences the book reprises will be familiar: the awkward goodbyes, the intense camaraderie, the looking out for fellow Soldiers. What may not be familiar are the innermost feelings of those who have been exposed to continuous violence in a harsh environment or seen the horror of sudden, violent death. In an effort, perhaps, to show our common humanity, Burden balances the harsher blog entries with those about the social (nonviolent) interactions between U.S. Soldiers and Iraqi citizens. But it's the Soldiers' reactions to violence that really stand out. A great part of our fascination with war memoirs stems from our need to know how otherwise ordinary men and women cope with extraordinary pressure and the prospect of instant death. On this count, Burden's sampling of blogs is particularly insightful.

This book came to me for review shortly before the Army released its new recruiting slogan, "Army Strong." My initial response to the slogan (and the blogs) was tepid until I saw a video previewing "Army Strong" and then read Burden's book. Now, I get it. The book describes the strength of character instilled in the men and women who are put in harm's way; its blog entries depict their toughness and courage as they carry out the tough missions assigned to them. Their sense of duty is admirable—they may not like what they are experiencing, but they are professionals and know it is their duty, no matter how unpleasant their tasks may be. Some bloggers are on their second and third tours, which says even more about the strength of their character.

The Blog of War is organized by subject (e.g., "Life in the War Zone," "The Healers," "The Warriors"). This serves to orient the