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Last Mission to Tokyo: The Extraordinary Story of the Doolittle Raiders and Their Final Fight for Justice

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Versailles's imposition of war guilt, a loss of territory, heavy indemnities, and disarmament. When France and Belgium invaded the Ruhr Valley in 1923, they turned enmity into rage. They caused such disorder and suffering that they opened the way for radical movements and ensured that the German public would support enthusiastically Hitler's reoccupation of the Rhineland in 1936. In other words, the French invasion intensified German grievances and helped to produce World War II.

Meanwhile, Britain in 1923 refused to join what Silverstone calls the Ruhr War, and the United States withdrew its token occupation force. In 1936, Britain resisted French pleas to join a proposed invasion, because this, at best, merely would have delayed German rearmament. Instead, the United Kingdom doubled its defense budget in three years. The real failure was in alliances, specifically (1) the alienation of Italy over its invasion of Ethiopia, (2) Belgian neutrality and the country's failure to build its sector of the Maginot Line, and (3) the Soviet Union's breaking of its defense pact with France by concluding the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Moreover, Silverstone argues persuasively that an invasion was unlikely to have overthrown, weakened, or deterred Hitler.

Finally, *From Hitler's Germany to Saddam's Iraq* is useful for its clarifications of this period for an American audience. One such clarification concerns the severe consequences of the Ruhr War. The Germans tried passive resistance but escalated to sabotage as the French occupation became more draconian. Strikes, unemployment, riots, starvation, and hyperinflation spread throughout Germany. Another clarification is that British politicians who became

celebrities in the United States for their opposition to appeasement (e.g., Winston Churchill) were not, in fact, such proponents of forceful action as they portrayed themselves to be in their memoirs. Silverstone demonstrates this through newspaper accounts, public speeches, and formerly confidential governmental memorandums. *From Hitler's Germany to Saddam's Iraq* is a useful warning against succumbing to the lure of preventive war.

KEVIN MCMULLEN



Last Mission to Tokyo: The Extraordinary Story of the Doolittle Raiders and Their Final Fight for Justice, by Michel Paradis. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2020. 480 pages. \$28.

The April 1942 air raid on Tokyo—led by then-Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle, U.S. Army Air Corps—marked a turning point in World War II. The “Doolittle Raiders” successfully attacked the Japanese homeland for the first time, and thereby shifted strategic calculations in both the United States and Japan. Although their daring mission pushed the technological limits of the day, most of the eighty Doolittle Raiders survived the raid, eventually returning home as heroes; however, eight airmen were captured by the Japanese. *Last Mission to Tokyo* picks up the story with their capture and shows how their legacy remains relevant—even with regard to modern-day military commissions at Guantánamo.

Using a nonfiction but narrative style of writing, Paradis provides a well-researched and easy-to-read account of the captured Doolittle Raiders' grim fate, culminating in the U.S. Army's

effort to seek “justice” for them after the Japanese surrendered. In doing so, Paradis sheds new light on these men, the military “commissions” to which they were subject, and the origins of common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949—a bedrock principle in international law that ensures that captured enemies receive “all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples” (p. 342).

As a professor at Columbia Law School specializing in war crimes law, Paradis grounds the book within his professional expertise. He first recounts Japan’s prosecution of the captured Doolittle Raiders in 1942, which resulted in convictions for all eight and death sentences for three. He then details the investigation, charging, and prosecution of *United States v. Sawada, et al.*—the U.S. Army’s postwar case against the Japanese convening authority, judges, and prison warden involved in the 1942 commission.

The *Sawada* prosecutors’ driving concern was the illegitimacy of the Japanese trial of the captured Raiders. Paradis provides a harrowing and meticulously documented account of how the Japanese tortured the men into “confessing” and then used those “confessions” in an illegal “show trial” to obtain convictions and death sentences. As Paradis writes, the prosecution viewed these actions as a war crime akin to “murder,” but the “murder weapon was paperwork” (p. 217).

While recounting the details of *Sawada*, Paradis also comments on the World War II legal landscape. Using two notable military commissions of the era as reference points—*Ex parte Quirin*, 317 U.S. 1 (1942), and *In re Yamashita*, 327 U.S. 1 (1946)—Paradis

fits *Sawada* into a historical context familiar to national-security-law practitioners. While this comes at the expense of some discussion of the larger political issues in postwar Japan, Paradis nevertheless presents an authoritative account of the *Sawada* trial in a way that makes it relevant to the national-security community today.

Although Paradis does not connect *Sawada* expressly to modern-day military commissions at Guantánamo, the parallels are obvious. U.S. prosecutors alleged that Japanese officials illegally denied the Doolittle Raiders prisoner-of-war status. They further alleged that the Japanese extracted “confessions” using torture. Notably, the Japanese used “the water cure”—known today as waterboarding—stress positions, isolation, and starvation, among other torture techniques (pp. 19–20, 22–23, 56, 122, 243–44). The Japanese passed a law after the 1942 attack on Tokyo that declared the air raid to be a “violation of wartime international law” (pp. 113, 282); U.S. prosecutors viewed this as an illegal *ex post facto* law, “written after the fact for the purpose of trumping up charges against the Doolittle Raiders” (p. 113). American prosecutors even charged the Japanese military judges with denying the Doolittle Raiders a fair trial.

Today, many of the same issues haunt the military commissions at Guantánamo. For example, U.S. officials have denied Guantánamo detainees formal prisoner-of-war status. U.S. officials tortured detainees using waterboarding, stress positions, isolation, and dietary manipulation, among other techniques—facts that Dr. James E. Mitchell made clear in a military commission report in January 2020. Defense attorneys, with Paradis at the forefront,

continue to challenge the statute the United States is using to prosecute Guantánamo detainees, arguing that it is an illegal *ex post facto* law. And just last year, Paradis obtained legal relief for a Guantánamo detainee after arguing that the military judge was biased.

To be sure, the legal landscape for military justice has changed since *Sawada*. On the heels of World War II, the international community expanded the judicial protections in the Geneva Conventions and Congress passed the Uniform Code of Military Justice. These changes tethered military tribunals to widely accepted legal standards, which steadily enhanced their judicial character over the next several decades. Do the military commissions at Guantánamo honor that tradition or resurrect the same types of injustices the Doolittle Raiders faced at the hands of their Japanese captors? *Last Mission to Tokyo* is a must-read book within the national-security community, especially for people trying to place the current military commissions at Guantánamo in historical and legal context.

JACOB MEUSCH



The Allure of Battle: A History of How Wars Have Been Won and Lost, by Cathal J. Nolan. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 2017. 670 pages. \$25.

From first page to last, *The Allure of Battle* is a remarkable, exceptional work. Already gathering awards—notably, the Gilder Lehrman Prize, recognizing “the best book on military history in the English-speaking world”—Nolan’s book should be read by every serious student of military history, as well as every military officer and national-security

professional. It is a literary rarity, boasting exceptional scholarship, clear arguments, and a writing style so sure and compelling that the reader is both disappointed and surprised to finish the last of its 670 pages.

Nolan examines what might be termed the *cult of the decisive battle* that leads to sharp, quick victory, as well as the near-mythical reverence that military scholars afford to commanders who emerge victorious from such conflicts. While acknowledging that decisive battles can happen, Nolan then convincingly demonstrates that such battles are rare, and many (if not most) battles thought to have been decisive were not. He argues that wars very rarely are won in such fashion; rather, they are grinding contests of strength, attrition, and force that, as warfare has evolved, increasingly exhaust the victors and destroy the losers.

The fact that some wars *have* been won quickly—by great leaders who either created or benefited from the rare decisive battle or quick campaign—has had a pernicious effect on the evolution of military thought and culture. The so-called cult of the offensive may have reached its high-water mark in 1914, but it had been building for centuries and still survives to the present day. In contrast, as Nolan points out, the benefits of defensive strategies, of the careful husbanding of troops and resources, rarely are extolled.

Nolan’s position puts him in direct contradiction with canonical theorists of war, including Carl von Clausewitz and Alfred Thayer Mahan. Both argued for the need to create the conditions for victory through a decisive major engagement. Criticizing these masters guarantees that intellectual battle lines will be drawn. *The Allure of Battle* then