

criminals or terrorists to steal weapons grade nuclear material, one would think alarm bells would go off in Washington. In fact, *One Point Safe* describes how bureaucratic politics in Washington blocked attempts to focus the White House's attention on the threat of nuclear terrorism. The Cockburns, for example, describe how Dan Poneman, a skilled political infighter at the Pentagon's Nonproliferation Directorate, defended his authority. He was in charge of all questions relating to nonproliferation, including leakage of nuclear weapons and material out of Russia. He often worked late at night carefully editing and rewriting urgent memos sent him before he would forward them up the chain of

command. Many of these memos described the loose control and easy availability of Russian nuclear material and weapons. All too often such memos never got beyond Poneman's desk. Office politics became more important than what was really at stake—an understanding of the clear and present danger that Russia's ruined state would allow opportunistic villains access to nuclear weapons or weapons grade materials.

The Cockburns painted a brutal portrait of conditions in the former Soviet Union, and if one quarter of what they say is true, we face a greater chance today of a nuclear doomsday than at any time during the Cold War. While they do not address chemical and biological

weapons, the inference is clear. If criminals or terrorists can steal nuclear material, they can also steal and make chemical and biological agents.

Weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists or criminals are also a clear and present danger to the Pentagon's budget. With real threats like these, why should we continue to spend \$260 billion dollars a year to buy Cold War weapons like the F-22 jet fighter to defend us against threats that no longer exist?

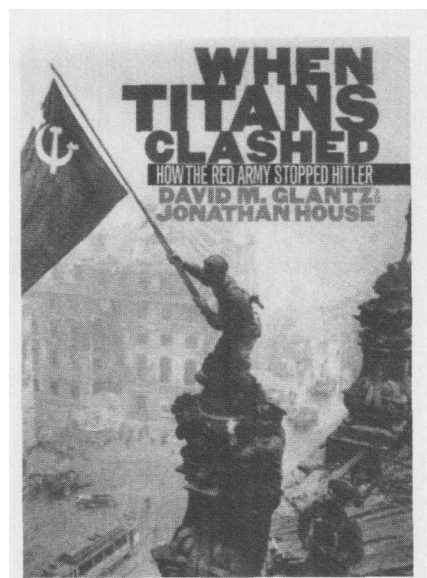
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Setting the Record Straight

reviewed by Williamson Murray

WHEN TITANS CLASHED: How The Red Army Stopped Hitler. By David M. Glantz and Jonathan House. University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, KS, 1995, 296 pp., \$29.95. (Member \$26.95)



For obvious reasons, accounts of the "Great Patriotic War" by German military leaders dominated the Western historical view for most of the Cold War. Only since the early 1980s have the Germans themselves started to disassemble the extraordinary myths of the terrible struggle on the Eastern Front during World War II. Led by the work of the *Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt*—Germany's military history institute—they have destroyed the myth asserting that the Wehrmacht's leaders waged the war in the east far removed from the crimes of the Nazi regime. In fact, as the Germans pointed out in their semi-official history of the war and a number of other devastating works, the German military leadership was actively and enthusiastically involved in the criminal activities of the Einsatz-

gruppen throughout 1941 and, by themselves with little help from the SS, managed to kill by early spring 1942 through starvation, disease, and direct means nearly 2 1/2 million prisoners of war.

If we learned a great deal about the unseemly side of German military efforts in the east, we also had a good deal to learn about the efforts of the Red Army. Col David M. Glantz, USA(Ret), in a series of brilliantly researched and reconstructed studies, reveals the extraordinary role Soviet deception efforts played in blinding German intelligence for most of the war. As Col Glantz's works emphasize, those deception efforts had an enormous impact on the conduct and success of all major Soviet offensives after the battle of Stalingrad. Also, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western historians have had unprecedented access to the archives of the Red Army. Col Glantz has led the exploration of this archival gold mine, to better understand how the Red Army fought and functioned on the operational level of war.

Col Glantz and Jonathan House, of Gordon College in Georgia, have now added a coherent, well-argued, and above all concise history of the fighting on the Eastern Front from June 1941 to the end of the war. In every way this study represents a

model of military history. It will remain the definitive one volume history of this crucial war for a long time into the future—in a fashion similar to James McPherson's single volume study of the American Civil War or Gerhard Weinberg's of World War II. Glantz and House have made recent scholarship of the fighting on the Eastern Front accessible to those who are interested. In so doing, they have overturned many of the myths that have so overgrown our understanding of that conflict.

Glantz and House divide the war into its three obvious parts—the period of German dominance from June 1941 to November 1942, the period of flux from November 1942 to December 1943, and the period of Soviet dominance from December 1943 to May 1945. Caught by surprise, the Red Army suffered catastrophic defeats in the opening battles on the frontier. But the deeper the Germans drove into the Soviet Union, the more difficult became their logistical situation and the tougher became the Red Army's resistance. Indeed, through the fall of 1941 the Germans won great operational victories, but to no purpose. They possessed neither the strategic nor political conceptions that would have allowed them to topple Stalin's Russia. Furthermore, the murderousness of Germany's occupation policies aroused a ferocious response from the Soviet people.

One of the great stories of human history is how the Soviets, in the face of catastrophe, rebuilt their forces and their very conception of war. While they suffered heavy defeats in the spring and summer of 1942, they learned how to put the pieces of modern war together. They also learned how to wage a truly effective deception campaign. The result was the stunning Soviet recovery at Stalingrad. The price of this recovery was heavy. Out of the Red Army's initial mobilized strength, over 3 million soldiers died in battle or fell into German hands. An additional 1.3 million soldiers were wounded. By the end of 1941 these figures reached a total casualty bill of over

11 million men.

Victory at Stalingrad and the destruction of the German Sixth Army was marred by a severe setback at the hands of Field Marshal Eric von Manstein. Yet, in the summer of 1943 the Red Army showed that it had finally absorbed the lessons the Germans had administered. As the authors point out:

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Perhaps the principal cause of the reversal in the east was the revolution in Soviet command, staff, and operational and tactical techniques. By mid-1943, Stalin had come to trust his commanders and staff officers as professional leaders, and they had justified this trust by learning the painful lessons of mechanized warfare. Indeed, an entire section of the General Staff was devoted to the study and dissemination of “war experience,” based on exhaustive post-mortem analysis of each battle, operation, and campaign.

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Helped considerably by their own improved mastery of the operational art, great skill in deception, and considerable help in the logistic sphere from American trucks, the Soviets administered a devastat-

ing series of defeats to the Germans in the last 18 months of the war. And they did it without the degree of superiority the beaten *Wehrmacht's* leaders ascribed to the Red Army after the war. What is particularly useful is that Glantz and House have effectively buried the legend of German skill going down to defeat before the overwhelming power of numbers—with an assist, of course, from the *Fuhrer*.

In every respect, this is a wonderful book. The prose is clear, the synthesis brilliant, and the description of military events on both sides firmly based on the documents that the opposing armies produced. It is the story of the great battle of ideologies that Hitler had foreordained from the moment of his rise to power. With less discipline, the authors might well have produced a massive multivolumed series about combat on the eastern front. Instead, they have produced a single, carefully crafted volume that presents the war in the East as clearly as anyone is ever going to produce. While some pundits may argue that we will never see a military contest waged on such a vast scale again, the true value of this work is its presentation of Soperational issues, the development of combined-arms forces, and the conduct of complex military operations in a clear, accessible fashion. It represents a deep and thoughtful understanding about the conduct of war on the operational level. Glantz and House have fashioned a work of scholarship and synthesis that stands as a model for those who will follow in their footsteps.

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