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International Conflict for Beginners

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ever-growing defense industry based on the overkill theory, i.e., the best defense lies in more and more nuclear weapons and a proliferation of complex, expensive weapons systems. There is much in the book which would cause the military reader to see a direct challenge to principles and ideas which are traditional or current in military strategic thinking and defense planning. Certainly this publication will do little to close the alleged gap between the military and the so-called "alienated society." The author is guilty also of building a case against post-World War II defense policy and programs, using only the views of the better known critics augmented by some unfortunate utterances of the members of the "Establishment" from which the uninformed reader could well derive an out-of-context impression.

Despite these criticisms, Barnet's book must be viewed as a primer for use in understanding the current public hostility toward things military and, in particular, the military-industrial complex. There is enough of the essence of the views of the leading critics in this book, in condensed form, to provide the major elements of the case against the military, defense spending, and the M-I complex. The introduction and those portions of chapter II which address the uninformed military, militarized civilians, the national interest, and the politics of defense are well worth reading. Because of the brevity of the book and the inclusion of an unusually high number of "facts and figures," it seems certain that this work may well become the "red handbook" of the critics of the Defense Establishment. One can expect to hear more of the philosophy of "the economy of death." For the military reader this book should serve two purposes: (1) it should prepare him for the

nature of the arguments he can expect to face from critics of the military and their association with defense industries as these relationships affect the national budget and foreign policy, and (2) it should point to the areas of further military effort or individual effort if one expects to be able to cope with or counter the criticism. Barnet has done his homework well and knitted his arguments into a tidy hundle. Unlike many critics, however, the author *does* offer some constructive counter-proposals to current defense programs and planning for national security. Few of the proposals are of the "motherhood" variety, and Barnet is to be commended for setting forth some clear options for hard choice by our society.

In summary, Barnet opens his book with the question "How much defense spending is enough?" The next 200 pages attempt to answer that question.

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Fisher, Roger. *International Conflict for Beginners*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, 231p.

Mr. Fisher set out to write a book which would set forward a simpler method of thinking about international affairs not only for the "beginner" addressed by his title, but also for the professional diplomat. He has succeeded. However, one problem always associated with formulation of simpler ways of considering complex problems is the need to avoid complexity in presentation of the new method. Simple schemes demand simplicity of expression, while publishers apparently demand some minimum physical weight for all books, regardless of their philosophical substance. Mr. Fisher's book bears the unmistakable scars of conflict

between these opposing demands. Initially, the reader is swept up with enthusiasm for the clear, concise, and logical views of the author. For example, in his opening pages, he compares the U.S. State Department to

a doctor who, instead of dealing with actual patients and diseases, saw his function as that of announcing a proper attitude toward them. . . . When faced with cases of measles or mumps, our policy-oriented doctor would adopt a balanced attitude, pointing out that while he was not opposed to such diseases in preadolescent children, we should not underestimate their risks for adults.

This is clearly an analogy bound to arouse in the reader admiration for the author's perceptivity and wide experience in international affairs. In the following few dozen pages, the heart of Mr. Fisher's proposals are outlined with clarity and brilliance. But the book seems to bog down in tedious restatement of the few core concepts already absorbed. It is not until the final three chapters that the author again begins to display the clarity of logical expression which marks his opening pages. The reader must suspect that the initial draft manuscript failed the publisher's weight test and needed to be stuffed, like a Christmas turkey, with form-filling and tasty, but extraneous, material. Despite this flaw, the book is valuable reading for all serious students of international affairs, for it does succeed in focusing attention on the need for redirection of the usual thought processes in the analysis of international problems, and it provides a competent and valuable method for doing so. A foreword by

Senator Edward M. Kennedy sheds some interesting light for the perceptive reader regarding possible future employment of both the book and the author.

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Odiorne, George S. *Management Decisions by Objectives*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969. 252p.

The first appeal of this book is its title, because virtually every profession and proponent of modern management systems is currently advocating the development and refinement of objectives in order to make appropriate decisions—whether they be strictly business decisions or carry additional professional implications as well. *Management Decisions by Objectives* is designed for those individuals who have to solve problems and make decisions. Avoiding (or translating into more understandable terms) the jargons of mathematics and the behavioral sciences, the chapters provide encouragement, practical theory, methods for organizing the facts and the facets of problems, methods for analyzing what has been organized, and methods for using the many tools of management such as the measurement of probabilities, techniques for building models, and calculation of expected values. There is much that is useful in terms of "military planning" as well as in office, project, agency, or business management. The book is readable and practical. The author recommends reading it straight through, ignoring any stumbling blocks the first time, then returning to sections for study in depth when the reader wants to use the systems and techniques applicable to his problems. The engineer, mathematician, and operations research analyst would