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Book Reviews

How Wars End: Why We Always Fight the Last Battle by Gideon Rose.
New York, Simon & Schuster, 2010. 432 pp. \$27.00.

“Tell me, how does this end?” General David Petraeus famously asked in 2003 as the rapid toppling of the Saddam Hussein regime by U.S. forces was giving rise to a deadly insurgency in Iraq. In his sweeping study of American wars from World War I to Iraq—an amalgam of history, “neoclassical” realist theory, and policy prescription—Gideon Rose elucidates how the country’s leaders have not adequately met “the Clausewitzian challenge” of planning for the post-war period even as they are conducting military operations against an adversary.

Rose’s analysis highlights how the distinction that U.S. Commanding General Tommy Franks made to Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz on the eve of the Iraq invasion—“You pay attention to the day *after*, I’ll pay attention to the day *of*”—was both illusory and sadly emblematic of the American experience in ending wars (p. 3). “World War I and the Iraq War ... testify to how even decisive military victory can lead to problems if not harnessed to plans for a sustainable postwar political settlement” (p. 282). An engaging history accessibly written for a general audience, this comparative study will be welcomed by scholars for its important contribution to the scant literature on war termination.

World War II was America’s “most successful war,” in that its ending did usher in the creation of a wealthy and peaceful community of advanced industrial democracies in the West, but which came at the price of a “Faustian bargain” (p. 7) that conferred Soviet control to half of Europe. While the “limited war” in Korea is judged a “modest success,” Rose lays out a fascinating account of how the dispute over the forced repatriation of North Korean and Chinese prisoners of war delayed an armistice agreement for some 18 months. In the Vietnam War, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger “inherit[ed] an impossible situation from grossly irresponsible predecessors” (p. 194). The most-consequential dimension of that inheritance was the collapse of American domestic political support for the war to maintain the Saigon government in power, while the Nixon administration’s greatest diplomatic success—the opening of China—transformed the stakes of the conflict.

As the administration of Barack Obama seeks to extricate U.S. forces from Afghanistan and to responsibly wind down the U.S. presence in Iraq, Rose’s incisive assessments of America’s recent wars, for which he conducted

extensive interviews with former U.S. officials, are particularly policy-relevant. President George W. Bush's redefinition of threat and expansive view of the "war on terrorism" after September 11 led to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, which completed what some administration officials viewed as the unfinished work of the first Gulf War. American primacy after the Cold War, coupled with the removal of domestic restraints after September 11, created the unique conditions for Bush to take the nation to war in Iraq—"a classic realist cautionary tale of unchecked power leading to hubris, then folly, then nemesis" (p. 276).

In meeting "the Clausewitzian challenge," Rose advises policymakers to reverse current policy planning practices by taking the desired end state as the starting point, to eschew vague concepts such as "democracy" that provide an inadequate basis for military planning, and to devise a backup plan in advance should planning assumptions prove invalid or unexpected developments arise (pp. 284–286). Rose concludes that the prospects for American grand strategy, which he characterizes as "progressive global pacification," will "invariably be tied to the fortunes of the country's underlying material capabilities" (p. 284). But the costly outcomes of the wars on which Rose writes so authoritatively have led to calls for a radical shift from that grand strategy to a more-sustainable alternative based on strategic "restraint."

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Witness to Transformation: Refugee Insights into North Korea by
*Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland. Washington, DC, Peterson
Institute for International Economics, 2011. 256 pp. \$23.95.*

North Korean citizens and refugees suffer tremendously today. Yet, what are the sources of this misery, and how have they changed since famine claimed nearly 5 percent of the population in the 1990s? How much do North Korea's atomized citizens know about the extent of state repression and deprivation in their society? What drives North Koreans to flee their homeland, and how does escaping affect refugees? How can the outside world best help refugees and promote positive changes in North Korea? Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland's new book, *Witness to Transformation*, uses surveys of over 1,600 refugees to provide the most comprehensive answers to these questions to date.

The authors share humanitarian concern for the refugees and an interest in what refugees can reveal about economic, political, and social conditions inside North Korea. They conducted two unprecedented surveys in 2004–2005 among an astonishing 1,346 North Korean refugees living in China and in 2008 among 300 refugees in South Korea. Considering the relative ease of interviewing refugees in South Korea, one wonders why the second sample was smaller. Cognizant of the potential biases entailed in these samples of