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Making War, Thinking History: Munich, Vietnam, and  
Presidential Uses of Force from Korea to Kosovo (review)

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clearly, and provided strong argument, even if some, I suspect, might disagree with his conclusions.

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*Making War, Thinking History: Munich, Vietnam, and Presidential Uses of Force from Korea to Kosovo.* By Jeffrey Record. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2002. ISBN 1-55750-009-6. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 201. \$28.95.

The “Weinberger-Powell doctrine” continues to exasperate American military thinkers. This is the notion that U.S. armed forces should not be sent into wars without popular support, implying few casualties and confidence in victory. It therefore argues for overwhelming force leading to a decisive conclusion after which the forces can come home leaving any lesser military tasks of a peacekeeping/nation-building nature to lesser allies.

This doctrine is seen to break the essential link between military campaigns and foreign policy by insisting on a restricted set of circumstances in which the use of force can be contemplated, and the equally essential link with strategy, by prescribing forms of warfare that are most likely to allow the forces to survive unscathed even at the risk of putting civilians more at risk and of not accomplishing the set objectives. Record memorably calls this “force protection fetishism.” In addition, the doctrine does not even meet the test of gearing the forces to contemporary conditions, as the sorts of war that meet the criteria, especially with regard to an early exit, bear only a scant relationship to those that contemporary international affairs tend to throw up.

The origins of the doctrine are to be found in Vietnam although its elaboration by Casper Weinberger when he was Secretary of Defense (and Colin Powell was his military aide) came after the débâcle in Beirut in 1983–84. Powell, whose military career concluded as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, thought, as did many officers who had been through the Vietnam trauma, that the U.S. armed forces were too precious to be squandered in ill-judged adventures. This made his advice notoriously cautious.

To attack this way of thinking it is necessary to demonstrate the inappropriateness of the Vietnam analogy, both in terms of its bad history and poor fit to most contemporary situations. Record does not take on just the Vietnam analogy. He widens his analysis to take in Munich, perhaps declining now as a synonym for appeasement and acting too late, but enormously influential for those who lived through the Second World War, as evident in Bush senior’s response to Iraqi aggression against Kuwait.

I am not sure that it was wholly wise to take on this wider objective, as it is hard to avoid completely reasoning by analogy and there is nothing wrong, as Record accepts, in thinking hard about the origins of the Second

World War and why the U.S. got caught out so badly in Vietnam, although as he notes the analogies can take on mythic qualities. As a result some of the early chapters, while valid, are rather laboured. Record really gets going when he moves away from demonstrating the influence of Munich and on to the impact of Vietnam on the interventions of the past two decades, with some particularly effective passages on the Clinton administration. Casualty phobia, which he sees as the enduring legacy of Vietnam, results in a “pennant for military half measures, encouragement of enemies, irritation of allies, and degradation of the warrior ethic” (p. 145).

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***Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1990–1995. Vol. 1.*** By the Office of Russian and European Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency. Washington: GPO, 2002. Map Case. Photographs. Glossary. Notes. Appendixes. Index. Pp. xxx, 501. Available from the Superintendent of Documents. Tel: 202-512-1800. [http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/).

This is the heart of a two-volume study (richly supported with maps) of the wars that resulted from the collapse of Yugoslavia. To use Croce's distinction, it is more chronicle than history; which is to say its fullness of detail often gets in the way of a broad understanding of the flow of events. Reading properly, with open maps, is time consuming and not always proportionally rewarding. In spite of the sound analysis that appears periodically, the wealth of detail will relegate this particular volume to the category of *reference book*. It is essential to anyone trying to come to terms with the conduct of the war but it is not recommended for the general reader.

This first volume (and maps) offers a comprehensive operational account. The second, apparently included in the purchase price but not available to the reviewer, consists of more than 60 annexes expanding on individual matters. The unnamed authors are identified as Agency analysts, responsible for tracking events during the war. Their object is to present a *military analysis* based on that work and more recent historical and memoir material. They have done a fine job of providing a meticulous, if narrowly focused, account, with many detailed notes, of what the armies did in a complex multi-form conflict that began with a weak attempt to maintain the authority of a deteriorating central government and ended in related but separable conventional military struggles in Croatia and Bosnia.

The account is particularly interesting because while documenting the operations of the various forces the authors pay attention to the parallel struggles of Tudjman's Croatian army and the Muslim Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina, to regularize their scratch forces while staving off defeat. This leads to the argument that because the Serbs could not find an early war-ending strategy, it was these organizational efforts that proved decisive, especially