

his living, or non-living, space in his own country. And the poet takes precedence over the historian. But why say so? Because of Mandelstam's absence from the book under review. And, precisely because he is not well enough known, certainly not well enough known as a diagnostician of political decay. I cite from a copy of Monas's book acquired by the University of Illinois Library on publication in 1977 but never checked out until this reviewer did so in the Summer of 1978: Why does a book like this lie on the shelves unnoticed? Because faculty and students, many of them practitioners of the slob- *Zeitgeist*, have been occupied with "relevant," but scarcely real, subjects (as unreal as the entire field of Black Studies, say: a *huis clos* for Whites, a *cul-de-sac* for Blacks).

Both Solzhenitsyn's *Lenin* and Salisbury's *Black Night* make clear that the workers had very little to do with any "Workers' Revolution" at all. They had—have—little to do with the dictatorship bearing their name; and they have neither the time nor the funds to work at bringing about such a state. Funds for these adventures came—come—from the apparently ubiquitous speculators, perhaps the same breed who wipe out the past in cities all over the world. Salisbury points out that, when Lenin speaks of a "comrade" in a certain letter, he is referring to a money-man in Sweden, who was, incidentally, working for the Bolsheviks.

Salisbury does not choose to give those human dimensions to the financier that a novelist would have done. In the Russian's book, Parvus is given a narrow speculator's drive—acting on a world scale. The American historian has Parvus act in connection with the famous (unsealed) "sealed train": "The delicate arrangements were generally handled by the infamous Parvus (Helphand). . . ." And: Trotsky ran a newspaper with the help of Helphand. What a name! Perhaps in Russian it is meaningful. He was a "revolutionary adventurer." Item: during the 1905 Revolution Trotsky was living in "the rented rooms of a stock exchange speculator."

Solzhenitsyn's *Lenin* is more imaginative (even if perhaps imaginary?) than Salisbury's. Lenin, in Solzhenitsyn's book, is a character in the novel of himself, the fiction of himself. A

fascinating theme, that of the Russians in exile before the Revolution(s); the professional revolutionaries abroad planning the downfall of their country's government; "internationalists" setting up programs for the entire world of nationalities.

Both Solzhenitsyn and Salisbury have contributed in their own way to the study of social disruption. Salisbury has offered a new reading of the basic texts in conjunction with the latest reports and memoirs and studies in the field. His unique contribution in this book will serve the amateurs as well as the professionals. For the general reader, it should be of immediate importance as well as a reference work on Russia in this century.

Reviewed by ANTHONY KERRIGAN

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## *The Berlin Problem*

**On to Berlin: Battles of an Airborne Commander, 1943-1946**, by James M. Gavin, *New York: The Viking Press, 1978.*  
*xiv + 336 pp. \$14.95.*

SOLDIER, AMBASSADOR, corporate leader, author, James M. Gavin is one of the men whose conspicuous success in several professions has created an heroic aura about the generation that fought and won the world's greatest war since those of Napoleon. In World War II, Gavin commanded the renowned 82nd Airborne Division. After the war he served in Army staff and command positions, retiring as a Lieutenant General in 1958. As Kennedy's ambassador, he went to France in 1961 and 1962. Thereafter, and recently, he chaired the board of Arthur D. Little, Inc., and in the last decade or so he has published five books.

*On to Berlin* addresses three main topics. First is the evolution of the airborne as one of World War II's tactical innovations. The second topic is the politics of grand strategy, in

particular British-American controversies over generals, campaigns, and resource allocations. Third is the topic of Berlin's importance as a military and political objective for the armies of the Western allies.

The first topic, the evolution and operations of the airborne forces, looms largest in *On to Berlin*. For the book is principally a memoir of Gavin's three years as a combat leader, first of the 505th Parachute Regimental Combat Team, then of the entire 82nd Airborne Division. From 1943 through the end of the war, the airborne troopers took part in six major campaigns: Sicily, Italy, Normandy, Holland, the Winter War, and the Battle of the Bulge. Gavin uses his discussions of military operations to make two further points. He endeavors to show how, from campaign to campaign, the airborne forces learned tactical and strategic lessons, and thus improved their capability. And he argues that, especially in the Battle of the Bulge (in the counterattack toward Arnhem), airborne forces contributed significantly to overall allied success.

Gavin's second topic, the politics of grand strategy, is treated at various points throughout the volume. His thoughts on the campaign and resource decisions of Eisenhower, the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Roosevelt, Patton, Montgomery, Sir Alan Brooke, and Bradley revolve around familiar, long-argued issues. Gavin consistently criticizes Eisenhower's decisions concerning the final campaigns against Germany; he favors Patton over Montgomery as a commander; and he believes that the allied armies should have done their best to take Berlin ahead of the Russians. There is no new information on these issues in Gavin's book, and the questions raised, though still interesting, are not taken up systematically or fully enough to dispose of them satisfactorily.

Gavin's third topic, the importance of Berlin as a military objective late in World War II, also receives scattered attention throughout the book; in addition it is the subject of a chapter-length epilogue. Gavin believes that Eisenhower, the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Roosevelt, and the State Department all consistently underestimated the political importance of taking Berlin with the armies of the

Western allies. He has a parochial interest in at least one aspect of that problem: late in the war, there was a plan code-named "Operation Eclipse" that called for the airborne forces to take Berlin. Gavin believes the plan should have been executed and that it would have been successful.

It was politically important to take Berlin, Gavin argues, so as to deprive the Russians of the opportunity to exaggerate their contribution to the final victory over Germany. Failure to take Berlin resulted, of course, in the difficulties of access that later troubled the United States at intervals: 1948, 1953, 1958, 1961. Ultimately, in Gavin's opinion, the failure of political planners in the Department of State to recognize the importance of Berlin caused the American people to doubt the Department's ability to "develop a diplomatic strategy that would provide security for the free world, and peace and prosperity at home." Thus he believes that the Berlin decisions of the latter war years were integral to the long-term decline of the State Department's ability to make political considerations weigh adequately in postwar national security affairs.

It is easier to agree with Gavin that Berlin became a problem than to concur with his statements about the nature and consequences of that problem. In his reconstruction of the decisions pertaining to Berlin late in the war, Gavin focuses more on operational considerations than on the political framework within which even the senior military officers were working. He concludes by offering a tactical solution to the problem, which virtually misses the point that the highest leaders of the United States expected first of all to be dealing with a satisfied, and therefore reasonable, postwar Soviet regime, and second to reunify Germany soon, so that there would be no problems of access and occupation. It is moreover a gross oversimplification to attribute the declining postwar influence of the State Department to the Berlin problem.

In all, this memoir was probably written too late. It will not change the conclusions of military historians regarding the overall rôle or contribution of airborne forces to the course and outcome of World War II in Europe, even

though it may add luster to their reputation in one or two campaigns. It will not be remembered for new information or insight into the politics of high command, despite several individually interesting retellings of British-American strategic arguments. It will not add appreciably to reconsideration of the Berlin problem either in wartime strategy or in subsequent cold war.

*On to Berlin* nevertheless is a fine memoir of a front-line commander, with all the strengths and limitations of outlook that implies. His recollections of the actual operations of his forces have an immediacy that marks them out in the memoir literature of senior officers. Gavin's philosophy of command and leadership required him to fight with his troops, on the very front, and not to command from remote or safe distances. His accounts of operations convey a sense of the chaotic, the accidental, the difficult—all those things that Carl von Clausewitz described as the friction of war. The book also contains excellent maps, an absolute necessity for intelligible discussion of military operations. As a commander's memories, then, *On to Berlin* makes good reading.

Reviewed by THOMAS H. ETZOLD

### "*Vous Suffrirez*"

**A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962**, by Alistair Horne, *New York: The Viking Press, 1977. 604 pp. \$19.95.*

THROUGHOUT HISTORY the most durable form of political organization has been the empire. Nation-states have been aberrations, thrown up by the peculiarities of Western Europe in the modern era and dubiously implanted among non-European peoples. Yet, ironically, the civilization that produced nation-states also fostered one of the most successful and durable empires in history. Beginning in the late fifteenth century, the European states in-

dividually expanded their contacts with and control of non-European areas. This expansion lasted for four-hundred years, reached its apogee in the late nineteenth century, and came to an end in the twentieth, which has seen not merely the withdrawal but the complete liquidation of the European imperial system. While there is immense satisfaction in the West at the end of its empire, there is no reason to be satisfied or even complacent. The end of Western control of most of the world will have repercussions on the Western way of life at least as far reaching as the coming of democracy or technology had.

Alistair Horne's *A Savage War of Peace* chronicles the collapse of one of these national empires. There is throughout the book a refreshing abstention from all windy generalizations of social science and ideology. There is the careful attention to variations of time, place, and personality that marks the professional historian, and there is the synthesis of narrative and analytical skills that marks a craftsman of writing. It is evident that Mr. Horne sympathizes with the Algerians over the French, with de Gaulle over the rebellious generals and *pieds noirs*, and that he has no sympathy for the O.A.S. Yet there are no polemics in his book, and the author has very nearly achieved a masterpiece of historical writing: a dispassionate yet insightful study of one of the most savage and controversial conflicts of the century.

It is impossible for an American in the 1970's to read this book without drawing parallels: with Vietnam in the 1960's, with southern Africa today. Horne is aware of these parallels and occasionally makes suggestive insights, but it was not his purpose to expand on them. At the center, however, are the questions of why France lost Algeria and the broader one of why the West is losing the world.

The Algerian rebellion in 1954 was not the result of colonial exploitation and repression. The revolutionary nationalist cadre was minute in its beginnings; its early attacks were very limited in success; and its resources and unity were virtually nonexistent. It succeeded in creating a mass movement because the French showed not the slightest capacity to