and the volumes recounting the war’s great strategic decisions or detailing its tactical maneuvering far outnumber studies of organizational, technological, or operational innovation in the middle. Moreover, few such studies delve as extensively into this critical middle world filled with a multitude of organizations, weapons and technology, Service and joint doctrines, and theater planning efforts that connect the lofty endstates and big ideas of statesmen to the vital combat action on the ground, in the air, and on and under the sea.

Paul Kennedy examines that middle ground in an easy yet erudite manner and explains in five information-filled and engaging chapters how the Allies solved the five operational tasks essential to victory: crossing the Atlantic, winning command of the air, stopping the Blitzkrieg, seizing an enemy-held shore, and defeating the “tyranny of distance.” Building on the excellent work of other historians, particularly the Military Effectiveness series by Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray, Kennedy highlights who, what, where, when, why, and how the United States, United Kingdom, and Soviet Union achieved these tasks and defeated the Germans, Italians, and Japanese in a war fought on six of seven continents and most of the world’s oceans.

The majority of the book focuses on the middle years of the war, approximately the 18 months from the Casablanca Conference in January 1943 to the launching of the first B-29 bombing mission from Tinian on the day after Thanksgiving (November 24) 1944. As such, Kennedy analyzes the Allied transition from losing to winning in every domain of warfare (land, sea, and air) and every major theater of war—the Atlantic, North Africa, Russia, Northwest Europe, and the Pacific. His emphasis on the operational level of war as well as the organizational and technological innovations required to tip the balance is refreshing and long overdue.

Kennedy is a master of deconstructing problems into their discrete elements and discussing in detail the decisions and actions that solved them. For such an easy read, the book is intellectually dense. (Indeed, his footnotes, commentary, and bibliography are equally valuable.) One example should suffice to prove the norm.

Getting adequate quantities of fuel, weapons, munitions, troops, and foodstuffs to England was the first essential step toward the defeat of Germany. Appropriately, the book opens with a thorough discussion of how synergistic innovations in doctrine, technology, materiel, training, and leadership significantly reduced U-boat attacks on merchant shipping and won the Battle of the Atlantic. To put this struggle in perspective, U-boats sank 6.3 million of the 7.8 million tons of Allied merchant shipping lost in 1942, a total that virtually nullified the 7 million tons of shipping mass-produced in America that year. Left uncorrected, this strangulation meant that the Allies would never marshal sufficient supplies, weapons, and men in England to attack Germany and that the British people would most likely starve or freeze to death. Kennedy dissects this dilemma and deftly describes each problematic strand of this knotty challenge. He then adroitly details how the use of drop tanks, additional escort craft, and the development of miniaturized microwave radar and the deployment of Hedgehog antisubmarine munitions allowed the Allies to “find, fix, and finish” U-boats before most launched their deadly torpedoes. The rest of the book is equally compelling and illuminating.

Engineers of Victory is an important book that should encourage further study of World War II by all readers. Seventy-seven years after the war began (if one includes the 1937 Japanese attack into Manchuria), the middle remains a vast untapped area of historical inquiry. By necessity, Paul Kennedy only scratches the surface in explaining the key Allied operational-level questions of the war. In a fluid, well-researched, and insightful volume, he inspires us to ask and answer more questions about the problem-solvers, the “tweakers,” and the “culture of innovation” that enabled the Allied victory. JFQ

Reviewed by Katie Kuhn

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Regional, private-sector organizations on national security are not new; since the early 1990s, multicity and multistate associations have collaborated in large-scale disaster relief efforts. Such regional collaborations, though, must form the basis of the U.S. homeland security system rather than supplementing a national government–dominated system. Intergovernmental relationships should not be only vertical (Federal, state, and local) but also horizontal (interstate, interlocality). This setup means that top-down command models are not appropriate; the Incident Command System (ICS) is far more suitable for the management of incidents involving multiple jurisdictions and levels of government. The ICS blends hierarchical and network organizational models by serving as a temporary hierarchical authority that establishes a clear chain of command in a disaster to coordinate responses at each level of government. The ICS assigns section chiefs to five major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration, with intelligence/investigation as the sixth functional area in the case of a terrorist event. Incidents are managed by a single Incident Commander (IC) if only one jurisdiction is involved, or by a Unified Command (UC) if multiple jurisdictions are affected. The IC or UC assumes the top position in a temporary hierarchy and determines strategies and resource allocations to respond to the incident, and the authority of the ICS recedes after the incident’s resolution.

Morton recommends that a regionally based national preparedness system form through a “maturing-by-doing” process whereby homeland security professionals at each level work to resolve three problem areas: risk assessment; operational planning and exercise validation; and use of homeland security preparedness grants to target, develop, and sustain state and local capabilities. Though these three goals must be met at the local, state, and Federal levels, it is Federal regions that should play a central role in coordinating collaboration among states and localities. The Federal Government also has a central role in financing the national preparedness system; that is, it holds the financial burden for providing states and localities adequate resources for national catastrophic planning and assessments.

Morton’s plan is ambitious but sound. He does not claim that he or his book are the final authority on the design of a regionally based national preparedness system, but Next-Generation Homeland Security launches a debate that is long overdue: how to reform outdated Cold War–era structures into a security system that can meet the strategic challenges of today’s world. The security of the American people and the political and economic stability of the international system are at stake, so this book is a must-read for anyone interested in homeland security.

Katie Kuhn recently completed her Ph.D. in Political Science from The George Washington University. She specializes in International Politics with a focus on Latin American Politics.