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Intelligence failure is a subject which takes up a significant share of the intelligence studies leadership since being pioneered by Roberta Wohlstetter in the 1960s. Scholars and practitioners of no little pedigree have put their hand to the question of "why does intelligence fail?" and the closely allied but not identical question of "why are we sometimes surprised", with names such as James Wirtz, Richard Betts, Eric J. Dahl, Jennifer Sims and Michael Warning providing meaningful entries. It is a rich literature but a big topic, with room for additions and advancement. Bar-Joseph & McDermott's entry advances the discussion only partially. The explicit point of the book is to refute Wohlstetter's view that surprise happened despite the work of "honest, dedicated and intelligent men" (p. 235), a goal that is accomplished in a way that ignores much of the literature in the field since.

A key question with each new addition in any field is: *does this bring anything new to the game*? By applying interesting insights from the realm of psychology, *Intelligence Success & Failure: The Human Factor* gives us a better understanding of why policymakers sometimes do not to "hear" clearly articulated warnings of surprise military attack. Yet at the same time, the book does not really address its title matter of intelligence and the role of that state function in forecasting those attacks; we aren't enlightened on why sometimes intelligence analysts miss warnings of surprise. Rather, this volume focuses more on why narcissistic leaders don't listen to their subordinates, and on that count presents some interesting insights.

The book has two sections which are flanked by a short introduction and a short concluding section. The first provides the theoretical framework (pp. 9-52) and the second the "Empirical Evidence" (pp 53-234). Of the first section, the chapter that will be of the most value to readers is likely to be chapter 2, "Examining the Learning Process" in which the authors describe the social-psychological and individual psychological phenomena that allow or prevent openness to contradictory ideas, or contribute towards the 'deaf captain syndrome' that has been behind many failures to avoid surprise. Much of this material is useful in updating to the current state of research the material first raised by Richards Heuer in what would eventually become *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (1999) but with a focus on leadership decision-making. Alas, this is but a short section of the book.

It is also chapter 2 that hides what I think is a (buried) key argument of the work, that success or failure in avoiding surprise attack resides "primarily at the level of the central leadership, not at the level of the individual analyst." (p. 30) This argument sits nicely alongside arguments made by John A. Gentry ("Intelligence Failure Reframed", 2008) that we must consider intelligence failure within a whole-of-government framework rather than just at the level of intelligence assessment.

The other critical aspect of Part 1 of the book is the cursory review of the existing literature on the topic. Only two pages of text are given over to what is a very well-developed literature. Thus, it is not surprising to see cited in this volume so little of the existing literature subsequent to Wohlstetter, much of which has gone beyond her pathfinding but now dated conclusions. In this sense Bar-Joseph and McDermott are setting their objective too low. Rather than establishing the book as a tonic to Wohlstetter (a frequently repeated touchpoint of the book), it might usefully have been established as a complement to much of the work since which has significantly advanced our understanding of intelligence failure and surprise. Reading this alongside Dahl's *Intelligence and Surprise Attack* (which this book references two or three times) does give one a better understanding of why warning often fails to convince leaders. It would have been interesting to see Dahl and other more recent works as the more common points of complement and comparison in this book.

The larger part of the book is dedicated to discussing “dyads” where, the book argues, initial surprise caused leaders (in two of the three cases) to learn and later avoid a second surprise. We have chapters for each of these dyads: Operation Barbarossa and the later Battle for Moscow; The outbreak of the Korean War and the subsequent Chinese intervention, and; The outbreak of the Yom Kippur war and the subsequent successful warning on 12 October of a renewed Egyptian offensive. In effect, it argues in academic form the aphorism “once bitten, twice shy” which is most instructive where it was not the case (Korea). As with all case studies the rationale behind picking certain cases is significant. The authors note Dahl’s use of counter-terror warning as a “somewhat different category of events” without further explanation—but perhaps adding some cases like this might tell us more about how leaders and state organs learn from less clear-cut cases of surprise, or perhaps over-learn from them (the decisions to invade and occupy both Afghanistan and Iraq after the surprise of 9/11). In liberal democracies, can bureaucracies learn in the same way the individual leaders in this book do? Can the British Government (an ever-changing composite of individuals both narcissistic and well-adjusted) be said to have “learned” the lessons of Argentine surprise in the Falklands?

The conclusion of the book could be more expansive and detailed. The “policy implications” are unfortunately focused only on the US government, curious when the authors themselves complain about the predominance of the Anglosphere in intelligence studies (p. 243) and the need for broader cross-cultural thinking. The focus on the ability of leaders to learn is reemphasised, but it comes without discussion of other supporting factors: for instance, in how we construct and arrange the processes and relationships between intelligence agencies, their chiefs, and national leaders. Yes, leaders are important, but most developed states have constructed significant intelligence architectures (a learning process based on success, failure, and the space in between) precisely to avoid this single point of failure. Have we moved on from the 1970s?