

was not the usual NVA/Viet Cong style of fighting. Some have suggested that the NVA high command purposely fed the three regiments into the American war machine just to see how well the Americans could fight. That is, they were willing to let their troops be butchered if they could learn and teach others how Americans fought. In short, the American division may well have inflicted casualties because the enemy allowed it to, and not as a necessary function of the division being airmobile.

If this is so then one can conclude that the enemy's actions in the Pleiku campaign produced unanticipated longterm dividends for him. According to this view the American high command took an anomalous series of battles in the highlands, i.e. the Pleiku campaign, to be the enemy's regular way of war. In turn, this confirmed the Americans in their belief that the United States Army, doing what conventionally trained armies do, could win the day. In consequence, the American "victory" in the Pleiku campaign made future American victories, and ultimate victory over the NVA and Viet Cong, more and more problematic.

Coleman's analysis is often perfunctory and his interpretations stick pretty close to what has come to be the orthodox view of the Pleiku campaign. Little critical distance separates him from his material. (However, given his closeness to the 1st Cavalry, perhaps not much distance should be expected. As a staff officer in the 1st Cavalry Division in 1966, he drafted the original after-action report). Another shortcoming is the lack of documentation. There are no notes and the bibliography is most inadequate. This poses a problem to, and raises a question for, the reader unfamiliar with the sources. Is the book reliable as a narrative? Is it based on the appropriate sources? Although I do not agree with Coleman on all points, my own judgement—given as one who mines the same material for a living that Coleman did for this book—is that the work, in terms of its narrative and documentation, is largely reliable. Nonetheless those who do not have this special knowledge may have difficulty reaching this conclusion. If the book goes into a second edition the author should seriously consider preparing a bibliographic essay to discuss sources. Even given these reservations, this writer strongly recommends *Pleiku: The Dawn of Helicopter Warfare in Vietnam* to readers of *Conflict Quarterly*.

John M. Carland
Operational History Branch
Center of Military History
United States Army

Jones, Bruce E. *War Without Windows. A true account by a young Army Officer trapped in an Intelligence cover-up in Vietnam.* New York: The Vanguard Press, 1987.

Undeniably, many questionable decisions emanated from MACV J-2 (Intelligence), during the Vietnam war. Perhaps the greatest and

certainly most controversial of these was the failure to develop an objective estimation of the full range of forces arrayed against U.S. forces by the political-military insurgent organization. As a former member of MACV J-2, Lt. Bruce E. Jones was on the "inside" witnessing and contributing to America's faulty intelligence estimates.

Jones paints a believable picture of bureaucratic infighting, hasty analysis, and dubious reasoning. Numerous tidbits make Jones' account of interest to those particularly concerned with intelligence matters in the Vietnam war. Among these is the decision *not* to acknowledge that before the Tet Offensive, North Vietnamese regulars comprised over 25% of nominal Viet Cong units, rather than 10% as MACV publicly claimed (p. 126). Also, Jones alleges, tank sightings reported by his branch were ignored by operational planners much to the detriment of the defenders of Lang Vei Special Forces camp (p. 68). Of even greater significance, however, is his allegation that he conferred with those within MACV who conspired to cover-up the massacre at My Lai village (p. 222). That being said, the book's memoir-narrative of a young man's experiences at war is a needless distraction for those wishing to get to the meat of MACV's major intelligence failure; the order-of-battle debate.

Jones tells of his contribution to the questionable intelligence assessments that eventually sparked the Westmoreland vs. CBS lawsuit. Indeed, the only physical evidence to support CBS's "conspiracy" theory from inside Westmoreland's headquarters to emerge during the trial was brought to light by Jones. One could reasonably expect that evidence to be a point of departure for a more through critique of the affair.

Unfortunately, *War Without Windows* does not make a significant contribution to the record. Jones awkwardly re-introduces what he presented at the trial, and reinforces it with far more equivocal and hearsay evidence. It is an argument from the heart rather than the head. Scholarly analysis of a complex issue is replaced by snatches of physical evidence and a too trusting use of memory. Consequently, despite the hype of the dust jacket, Jones' account furnishes virtually no new evidence on the CBS-Westmoreland controversy. Frankly, Jones was too junior an officer to have had much knowledge beyond his tiny realm of responsibility. Rumour and the grumblings of his direct superiors, most notably Lt. Col. Gains Hawkins, undoubtedly contributed to Jones' acceptance of the "conspiracy" thesis. The casual reader could be easily misled by Jones' predominantly hearsay account regarding the order-of-battle controversy, and would be better served by consulting the accounts of Edwin Moise, and T.L. Cabbage, among others.¹ A definitive account of the intelligence failures in Vietnam remains to be produced, to which Jones' account may add several footnotes.

Michael A. Hennessy
University of New Brunswick

Endnotes

1. Edwin Moise, "Why Westmoreland Gave Up," *Pacific Affairs* 58, no. 4 (Winter 1985-86), pp. 663-673; and T.L. Cabbage II, "Westmoreland vs. CBS: Was Intelligence Corrupted by Policy Demands?," *Intelligence and National Security* 3, no. 3 (July 1988), pp. 118-180.