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and Toronto airports on 22 June 1985 (pp. 66-69), the physical security in place to prevent bombs from being placed on aircraft is of much greater significance than information gathering, however sophisticated.

Finally, to conclude that either police or security intelligence working methods are necessarily superior would be wrong. For however well these authors argue the superiority of CSIS's more sophisticated hypothesis, they note also that CSIS became "bogged down in a sea of overwhelming contradictions" (p. 108) and got lost "deeper and deeper in its maze of information." (p. 109) The simplest solution to a problem is often correct. Therefore, the significance of this book is in its effective presentation of an alternative hypothesis to that which was dominant in the immediate aftermath of the Air India bombings — the only way to resolve the debate will be the kind of inquiry which is, fortunately, much more likely to occur in Canada than in the UK!

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Beaumont, Roger. *Special Operations and Elite Units, 1939-1988: A Research Guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1988.

Dear, Ian. *Ten Commando: 1942-1945*. New York: St. Martin's, 1987.

Not since World War II have special operations and elite units been accorded the status or resources they enjoy today in the US defense establishment. On 1 October 1990 the unified 35,000-man (active and reserve) US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), established by Congress in 1987, assumed direct control of the \$3 billion special operations budget currently divided among the army, air force, and navy. Thereafter, USSOCOM will be in a position to set budgetary priorities affecting all special operations forces and programs (including procurement) for fiscal years 1992 to 1998 under a Congressionally-mandated annual growth rate of approximately six to eight percent.

This revitalization of American special operations capabilities — at a time of defense cutback and retrenchment — was not easily achieved. USSOCOM was first conceived after the debacle at "Desert One" (the failed mission to rescue the 53 Americans held hostage in Teheran) in 1980; but the unified command was not created for another seven years. In between, a series of deadly terrorist attacks on American targets overseas between 1983 and 1985 provided needed additional impetus, while underscoring that, despite its supremacy as a global nuclear and conventional military power, the US was incapable of effectively responding to international terrorist attacks and provocation.

Recent world events have further vitiated the value of America's nuclear and conventional forces. For more than forty years US defense planning was oriented toward fighting a conventional war against the Warsaw Pact along the Central Front in Europe. But the collapse of the Berlin Wall as both an ideological as well as physical barrier between East and West makes that the least likely conflict the US will have to fight in the future.

Instead, the drug war has now replaced the cold war as the principal perceived threat to US national security. American Special Forces "Green Berets" are presently training indigenous forces in counter-narcotics operations in such endemically violent Latin American countries as Peru and Colombia as well as in peaceful ones like Costa Rica. Operation JUST CAUSE, the US invasion of Panama, again demonstrated — as had "Desert One" and the 1983 invasion of Grenada — the need for combined operations by highly mobile, rapidly deployable forces — supported by various ground, air, and sea special operations units. Finally, the publication of the *Report of the President's Commission on Aviation Security and Terrorism* in May 1990 specifically called on the US government to "pursue a more vigorous counterterrorism policy" including, pre-emptive attacks and retaliatory strikes against nations sponsoring terrorists.

US security concerns and overseas interests in the coming decades are therefore likely to be increasingly affected by a multiplicity of small-scale, low-intensity, conflicts occurring through the globe that will require a variety of resources and an array of innovative, flexible policy responses — in which special operations will figure prominently. Accordingly, the publication of Roger Beaumont's *Special Operations and Elite Units* is timely. Scholars, students, soldiers, and government officials alike will certainly find this impressive research guide of interest.

The book is neither inaccurately nor immodestly described in the foreword as "the single most comprehensive survey in any language of modern Special Operations literature." It is divided into ten chapters containing annotated bibliographic references for such diverse subjects as: Background and Analysis; Elite Units; Special Operations in Major Wars; Special Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict/Counter-insurgency; Counterterror Operations; Biography/Autobiography; Bibliographies; Official Sources; Critiques; and, Popular Images (including commercial films).

Several useful appendices and indices are also included. The four appendices list the current size and order of battle for 109 countries' elite forces, describe some of the major elite forces established since 1939 and present chronological listings of twenty-two significant counterterrorist special operations that took place between 1957 and 1985, as well as major airborne combat operations since 1933. The three indices cover the authors, titles, and subjects of previously detailed entries.

Special Operations and Elite Units is invaluable not least for Beaumont's masterfully succinct, yet richly informative, historical overview of special operations and elite forces that appears in the book's introductory

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chapter. His accounts of the organizational pathologies that either throttled the development, or later worked to ensure the demise, of elite special operations units is especially pertinent to the fledgling USSOCOM.

Of more historical interest is Ian Dear's *Ten Commando, 1942-1945*. This book tells the fascinating story of the special Inter-Allied Commando unit raised from men who had fled their own countries in Nazi-occupied Europe and had volunteered for service in the British Army. Among its members were Poles, Belgians, Norwegians, German Jews, Dutchmen, and Frenchmen who served in separate "troops" within the unit representative of their respective nationalities. The book is based largely on interviews of Ten Commando's veterans and surviving family members. The author's dependence on oral sources possibly accounts for the book's sometimes turgid style and overly detailed descriptions of Ten Commando's exploits and personalities. Although a crisper, faster paced narrative would have made for better reading, Dear has nonetheless pieced together a remarkable tale about one of the Second World War's most interesting military units.

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Belich, James. *The Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict: The Maori, the British, and the New Zealand Wars*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989.

It has become almost an axiom that the history of British military conflict with non-European peoples, from the eighteenth century victories of Clive in India to the crushing of the Dervishes at Omdurman, is an account of small British forces eventually triumphing over enormous odds. The reasons for such victories, or the emphasis put upon the various reasons, has changed with time. Moral and racial superiority was a more popular explanation of success in the nineteenth century, and technological superiority is favored in the later twentieth. Nevertheless, the general picture of continuing British victory, at least in the final battle, remains.

This view is based on the substantial evidence of the successful expansion of British power in Africa, India, the Far East and Australasia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The British did after all manage to conquer or occupy a very significant fraction of the earth's surface, and ended up ruling an even larger proportion of the world's population by the end of the nineteenth century. Mr. Belich's book, however, suggests to us that the legend of the invincible Briton may have less substance in reality than even many modern "revisionist" historians had thought.

This study is confined to an examination of the wars between the British — both imperial troops and settlers — and the Maori which took place