

like opdragte aan ondergeskiktes, bied hy die vyfparagraaformaat van operasie-orders, wat ook die bevelvoerder se plan kan insluit, aan. Hy verskaf 'n uiteensetting van die oorsprong daarvan in die Amerikaanse Leër en hoe dit tans gebruik word.

The Framework for Operational Warfare is 'n aktuele werk wat handige riglyne aan politici en krygspraktisyns op verskillende verantwoordelikeidsvlakke verskaf. Dit is hoofsaaklik geskryf vir die behoeftes van die Amerikaanse Weermag, maar dit kan met vrug in ander lande gebruik word. Die grootste bate is dat dit 'n voortbouing is op Brodie se argumente, wat riglyne vir optrede tydens die Koue Oolog verskaf het. Sy ontledings berus dan ook op konflikte waarby die VSA gedurende die tagtigerjare betrokke was. Ongelukkig is die boek voor die Golfoorlog van 1992 geskryf en 'n opgedateerde tweede uitgawe kan hierdie leemte aanspreek.

Wat afbreek doen aan die werk is dat die skrywer 'n gewoonte het om argumente voortdurend te herhaal. Sy styl is ook nie altyd vloeiend nie. Gevolglik is die boek effens moeilik om te lees. Hy was ook geneig om hoofsaaklik klem te lê op konflikte waarin die Amerikaanse Weermag suksus behaal het, soos die operasies in Grenada en Panama. Alhoewel hy die Amerikaanse debakel in Beiroet bespreek, kon die ruimte wat afgestaan was aan onnodige herhaling van argumente, benut gewees het om die gebeure in Nicaragua te bespreek. Sy fokus was te veel op kleiner konvensionele konflikte, terwyl 'n mens graag ook die Amerikaanse probleme tydens teeninsurgensie-operasies gedurende die tagtigerjare in die bespreking sou wou gesien het.

Alles in ag genome is *A Framework for Operationale Warfare* 'n belangrike toevoeging tot die literatuur oor hedendaagse oorlogvoering en die gebruik van oorlog as 'n magsinstrument deur state in die internasionale politiek. Dit is veral noodsaaklik vir voorgraadse studente, wat nog nie die aard van militêre mag as 'n middel om staatsgesag te handhaaf, bestudeer het nie. Maar ook die gesoute student van oorlogvoering kan Newell se boek met vrug bestudeer.

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The Last Great Frenchman; A Life of General De Gaulle

Charles Williams
Little, Brown and Co. : 1993
ISBN 0316905070

Over forty biographies and partial biographies have been written on the life and times of Charles De Gaulle. *"The Last Great Frenchman"* by Charles Williams is the latest in this long line of studies devoted to one of France's greatest sons.

People often view biographies with hesitancy as they tend to become rather turgid and weighed down by the mass of detail and facts which follow one through life. From this point of view *The Last Great Frenchman* is refreshingly compelling. The tempo of the text is very upbeat making it an easy book to "get into", this is aided by Williams's writing style which, aside from being very articulate in its expression, can also be enormously funny when the situation warrants it. As the story unfolds, however, the sheer weight of detail forces one to slow down in order that one might be able to absorb the wealth of historical facts contained therein. However, it should be reiterated that this does not result in stretches of colourless narrative. In fact Williams' approach is always analytical and never just a simple presentation of the facts. It is furthermore a refreshingly balanced study, there are times when criticism is levelled at De Gaulle while on other occasions his actions and decisions are defended. Naturally

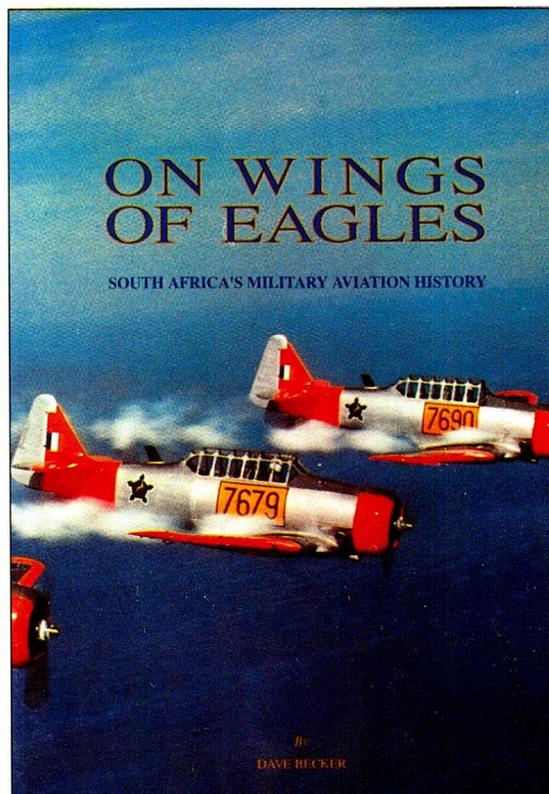
one does not always agree with the arguments presented in the book, however, they are always sound and well motivated which is more important than whether they may be appealing or not.

As far as the contents of Williams' book are concerned, the focus of the work would seem to fall largely on De Gaulle's rise to fame and power during the Second World War as the leader of the Free French. Illuminating aspects of his life during this period are brought to the fore, most notably his uneasy relationships with Winston Churchill and the other Allied leaders as well as within the upper echelons of his own Free French. Useful insight is also provided into the general's private life and reveals a side to the man which differs quite vastly from his authoritarian public image. This is not intended to imply that Williams does not cover De Gaulle's life in full as *The Last Great Frenchman* begins with his childhood in Brittany and ends with his death 1970.

The book itself is a hardback, ensconced in a very eye-catching and attractive dustcover. Complete with illustrations, index and extensive source notes this is not only a good read but a valuable and accurate reference work as well. A very wide range of sources were consulted including primary records from both official archives and private collections. What is unfortunately lacking are translations to the numerous and important bits of french which appear at frequent intervals throughout the work. This can be rather frustrating for someone whose French is as appalling as mine is, particularly if the reader is trying to follow the text as closely as possible.

In the final analysis what sets the book aside from other De Gaulle biographies is probably its emphasis on De Gaulle's military life and the rise of the Free French. It should be pointed out that while this might be considered a serious and detailed biography it is nevertheless, highly readable and provides an enriching and educational experience.

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ON WINGS OF EAGLES; SOUTH AFRICA'S MILITARY AVIATION HISTORY

Dave Becker
Walker-Ramus Trading Co
South Africa (Pty) Ltd, Durban : 1993
288 pages
illustrated

With this book, Major Dave Becker has addressed an important hiatus in the military aviation history of South Africa. *On Wings of Eagles* is the first all-inclusive history of the South African Air Force to be published since 1970, when the SAAF (mistakenly!) celebrated their golden jubilee.

The 1970 publication, *Per Aspera ad Astra*, was nonetheless a useful brochure and embodied the first attempt to present the entire history of the SAAF within one cover. It was, however, too superficial and far too 'commemorative', and, by 1994, had become hopelessly outdated.

Major Becker wrote the publication now under review to bridge that gap and has in part succeeded in doing so. It is, however, unfortunate that *On Wings of Eagles* has many shortcomings of its own and that while it will be welcomed by those devoted to the in and outs of aircraft, it will not be received with equal applause by historians.