



Spencer C. Tucker, ed. *US Leadership in Wartime: Clashes, Controversy, and Compromise* (2 volumes). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009.

Bruce E. Stanley

Spencer C. Tucker is currently a senior fellow in military history at ABC-CLIO Publishing in Santa Barbara, California. Dr. Tucker has written or edited over 30 books and encyclopedias focusing on military and naval history and is the senior editor for the two-volume encyclopedia *US Leadership in Wartime: Clashes, Controversy, and Compromise*. Tucker, along with ten assistant editors and a vast array of scholars,

presents a comprehensive account of United States leadership in war from the American Revolution to the latest conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The editor asserts that “effective leadership is essential if a nation is to realize success in war” (xix). Tucker speculates that the recent war in Iraq was “plagued by poor leadership at the national level” (xxiii). Thus, it is important to examine what traits make up effective leadership at the national level, both civilian and military. Tucker concludes that this has to be one of the most pressing challenges now facing our nation. Indeed, this is a fairly strong assertion.

Tucker points out that “leadership, in its simplest form, is the art of influencing others, of getting subordinates to do what the leader wants done, when he wants it done, and performed in a manner that accomplishes the mission” (xxi). The individuals that appear in the encyclopedia are important based on their roles as strategic or operational leaders. Tucker points out that leadership must be seen contextually and this two-volume encyclopedia addresses civilian and military leadership in 10 US wars, covered in chronological order from the American Revolutionary War to the current wars in the Middle East. The focus of the work is on the US leaders that contributed to the key decisions of the conflict at hand. For each conflict, 4 to 8 crucial battles are examined, while 25 to 40 biographical sketches highlight the contributions of individuals central to the decision-making. The biographical narratives focus on the development of the leadership traits of each key figure, while demonstrating the various leadership styles in war. Several themes are examined in this work, including “strategic-mindedness” (of civilian leaders primarily), moral courage, and the presence of knowledgeable advisors.

Tucker suggests it is difficult to determine exactly what traits constitute effective military leadership for civilian and military leaders. However, he provides a list of variables as a lens through which to consider that leadership. These include chance, fortune, context, and timing. Furthermore, he observes that experience in war, the ability to be innovative, and leadership by example are key traits of effective leaders. In addition, Tucker points out that the effective leader embraces new techniques and technologies while being able to examine circumstances and make sound, dispassionate decisions. Furthermore, the effective leader must be able to learn from their mistakes.

Tucker concludes that collaborative decision-making is the only way to develop rational, reasonable decisions that promise a good chance of success.

The first volume of this encyclopedia covers the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War. The second volume covers World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Middle East Wars. Each war has several subsections. The first sub-section is an overview of leadership during the particular war. The second sub-section is an overview of several key battles during the war. For example, there are six Civil War battles presented: the Forts Henry and Donelson Campaigns, Shiloh, Antietam, the Vicksburg Campaign, Gettysburg, and the Atlanta campaign. In the third sub-section, there are biographical sketches that introduce the reader to key civilian and military leaders of the war. For example, there are 36 individuals presented for the Vietnam war, such as Creighton Abrams, Henry Kissinger, Henry Cabot Lodge, Earle Wheeler, Maxwell Taylor, and William Westmoreland to name a few. The fourth sub-section provides the reader with suggested readings on the war covered. In all, Tucker, the assistant editors, and authors provide a wide breadth of material for the student of military history and strategy.

The encyclopedia is filled with a wide variety of facts that will certainly amaze those unfamiliar with the range of key leaders during many of the US wars. For example, Gerry Elbridge is introduced early in the American Revolution section. Elbridge was a Massachusetts merchant and a graduate of Harvard. Recruited by Samuel Adams, Elbridge became a key figure in the Revolution on the Committee of Supply and on the Executive Committee of Safety. In early 1775, he proposed to the "Providential Congress a law authorizing privateering and setting up admiralty courts to adjudicate prize money" (47). In essence, Elbridge was the father of deliberate private contracting, or the use of mercenaries, by the budding United States government. Other key leaders of interest are: Claire Lee Chennault (1893-1958), who became a colonel in the Chinese Air Force and commanded the American All-Volunteer Group (better known as the Flying Tigers), an early version of private military contractors (589-590); Walter Spencer Robertson (1893-1970), assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern Affairs, who was instrumental in convincing Korean President Syngman Rhee to accept the proposed armistice terms with the North Koreans (729-730); and Franklin (Buster) L.

Hagenbeck (b. 1949), commander of Coalition Joint Task Force Mountain during the early months of Operation Enduring Freedom. Hagenbeck led the first conventional campaign of the war in Afghanistan, Operation Anaconda (920-921). The encyclopedia is filled with known, and not so well known, military and civilian leaders that will entice the reader.

This encyclopedia is unique in that it provides a one-stop source for the student of military history to begin their research. The encyclopedia not only provides a rich resource of information, it also provides an extensive bibliography at the end of each war discussed for further suggested reading. The authors of the sub-sections are clearly experts. Those focusing on key leaders are able to highlight some of the vital leadership traits that Tucker is seeking to illustrate. Furthermore, the authors that explain the battles and campaigns do so accurately and concisely, allowing the reader to gain a better understanding of how the events were pivotal to the conflict. Finally, the authors that provide the context of the war clearly demonstrate how the challenges of leadership are faced by the civilian and military leaders under examination.

A work as daunting as *US Leadership in Wartime* is not without its problems. The sub-title of the book, *Clashes, Controversy, and Compromise*, suggests that the book would consistently highlight those instances. Once the reader gets beyond the sub-section of the leadership aspects of the war under discussion, the remainder of the sub-sections does not emphasize many of the clashes, controversy, or compromise. The sub-sections that discuss the battles do so in a factual and chronological manner, typically not discussing the leadership traits promised by Tucker. Likewise, there is very little analysis or comparison among leaders and their interaction or influence in decision-making. Some readers may be disappointed that many of Tucker's leadership variables are never explicitly mentioned again by the contributing authors to this encyclopedia, although that does not take away from the monumental accomplishment of putting this work together.

This is clearly a book that must be added to the amateur and professional military historians' collection. As a quick reference, it is invaluable for its breadth of topics. The casual reader will also find this encyclopedia well worth the investment. From the well-known to the more obscure facts brought together in this work, *US Leadership in Wartime* will prove to be a prized part of any military history library.

Military officers, particularly those attending professional military schools, can turn to this well-researched work to enhance their understanding of military history and the key leaders that influenced the actions on the battlefield.

Bruce E. Stanley is an associate professor at the School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he teaches military theory, operational design, military planning and strategic leadership. Dr. Stanley earned his PhD in Security Studies from Kansas State University. He is a retired Lieutenant Colonel from the US Army with over 24 years of active duty service in the Infantry. While on active duty, he served in a variety of command and staff positions.