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Jeffrey M. Moore, *Spies for Nimitz: Joint Military Intelligence in the Pacific War*.

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Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index.

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In this ambitious book, Jeffrey Moore attempts to provide a concise yet detailed study of the history, procedures, and exploits of the Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Areas (designated JICPOA) during World War II. Unfortunately for the reader, he is only partially successful in this effort.

JICPOA was created in September 1943 by combining a variety of intelligence organizations already existing at Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's Pearl Harbor, Hawaii headquarters into a single unified agency tasked with collecting, collating, evaluating, and disseminating strategic and tactical intelligence for the Pacific Ocean Areas commander (p. 15). At its wartime peak, JICPOA's 1,767 personnel were distributed among twenty-one sections organized into four groups that focused respectively on enemy bases and occupied terrain, enemy order of battle information, psychological warfare and escape and evasion, and intelligence production and administration (pp. 31–57).

Moore's first chapter, entitled "Genesis," provides a brief discussion of the precursor organizations to JICPOA before launching into a thorough examination of the Joint Intelligence Center's organizational scheme. It is clearly the best portion of the book. Relying on two official histories written at the close of the war—the Naval

Security Group Command's *Narrative: Combat Intelligence Center, Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Area* [sic], and *Report of Intelligence Activities in the Pacific Ocean Areas* by JICPOA's commander, Army Brigadier General Joseph J. Twitty—Moore effectively lays out how JICPOA functioned during the final two years of the war in the Pacific. His step-by-step examination of each of the organization's constituent groups and their subordinate sections allows the reader to see how the efforts of each were intertwined with the others to produce finished intelligence products for JICPOA's consumers—Admiral Nimitz (Commander in Chief, US Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas) and his subordinate commanders.

It is once Jeffrey Moore moves beyond the first chapter and into his examination of how JICPOA's intelligence reporting was utilized in particular Central Pacific amphibious campaigns that he begins to lose his way. The bulk of the book is taken up with chapter-length studies of JICPOA's role as intelligence provider in the Marshalls, Marianas, Peleliu, and the Iwo Jima and Okinawa operations. Because the author is neither a naval historian nor an expert on the Pacific War, his historical analysis in these chapters is much weaker than it should be. Much of this weakness could have been ameliorated if Moore had chosen to rely on first-rate secondary sources for the naval aspects of the amphibious campaigns in question. This he did not do. Rather than rely on the solid accounts provided by Samuel Eliot Morison in his semi-official series *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, Moore chose to use Dan Van Der Vat's 1991 pop history *The Pacific Campaign* as his principal source on the U.S. Navy's Central Pacific fighting. In his chapter on the Marshalls operation, for example, Moore cites Van Der Vat's book sixteen times, while citing Morison's volume eight (*New Guinea and the Marianas*) only twice. Interestingly, in this examination of the U.S. assaults on the Kwajalein atoll, he does not even cite the Morison volume that deals specifically with that campaign (volume seven – *Aleutians, Gilberts, and Marshalls*). Similarly, in his chapter on the Marianas operation, Moore cites Van Der Vat's book thirteen times, but he fails to cite Morison even once. Ironically, given his lack of judgment regarding naval history sources, Moore relies correctly on solid secondary sources for his accounts of the ground combat in the Central Pacific campaigns, citing

heavily not only the appropriate volumes of *History of U.S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II* but also Jeter Isely and Philip Crowl's path-breaking 1951 book *The U.S. Marines and Amphibious War*.

Moore's ignorance of U.S. Navy amphibious procedures is made evident in these campaign chapters. In his chapter on the assaults on the Marshalls, for example, he asserts that Vice Admiral Raymond Spruance used JICPOA's intelligence "to plan the naval and islet-based preliminary bombardment" (p. 73). He is unaware that gunfire support planning was the direct responsibility of the amphibious group commander in charge of the assault—for the Marshall objectives of Roi and Namur it was Rear Admiral Richard L. Conolly, Commander Amphibious Group Three—not Fifth Fleet commander Raymond Spruance. Similarly, in his chapter on the amphibious assault on Guam, part of the Marianas campaign, Moore asserts that JICPOA's analysts "accurately described the tidal conditions, surf conditions, and the location of reefs off potential and actual landing beaches in text and on a landings map" (p. 122). In point of fact, because Admiral Conolly, the amphibious group commander for that assault, found it hard to obtain reliable information on the reefs around Guam, he sought out the services of an American geologist who had conducted a prewar survey of the island. And it was Conolly's detailed questioning of the geologist at Pearl Harbor, prior to his sailing for the operational area, that provided him with the confidence that the assault plan for landing the Fifth Amphibious Corps over the western beaches at Guam was viable.

Those readers who have an interest in the workings of the World War II intelligence organizations will find the first quarter of Jeffrey Moore's book *Spies for Nimitz* useful for its discussion of JICPOA's formation and internal structure. They should be somewhat wary, however, of the final three-quarters of the book, wherein the author examines JICPOA's intelligence contribution to Nimitz's Central Pacific amphibious operations. While Moore presents some interesting material in these chapters, his lack of historical expertise and his strained attempts to link casualties in particular amphibious campaigns directly to the presence or absence of accurate intelligence by JICPOA make them problematic at best.



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