



## *Surrogate Warfare—The Transformation of War in the Twenty-First Century* by Andreas Krieg and Jean-Marc Rickli.

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Review by Arthur I. Cyr, Carthage College (acyr@carthage.edu).

In *Surrogate Warfare*, Andreas Krieg and Jean-Marc Rickli (both of King's College London)<sup>1</sup> offer a welcome discussion of the phenomenon of nation states farming out military and security responsibilities to “surrogates.” These include specialists in new technologies, commercial military contractors, and insurgent local forces, among others. There is no doubt that ongoing technological revolutions have changed key aspects of the deployment and use of military force. Dramatic improvements in communications and transport have brought us novel weapons systems and ways to manage and disseminate information, but also dangerous issues of “cyber security” and “cyber warfare.”

In praising *Surrogate Warfare*, strategist Lawrence Freedman<sup>2</sup> has written that “States look to others—surrogates—to carry the risks of warfare rather than put their own forces in harm’s way. These can be private companies, rebel militias, other governments, or autonomous vehicles” and asks whether they “can ... do this and keep control of the conduct of a conflict and ensure ... other agendas don’t take priority?”<sup>3</sup>

Scholars and other analysts in the United Kingdom have the advantage of living in a country that has long played an influential role in defense and related international security matters. Great Britain has been quite successful in integrating military force with other tools of diplomacy. In the current public agony over Brexit, we must not ignore its vital, steadfast commitment to the NATO alliance or its unique influence with the United States and Canada in their transatlantic involvements and other security matters.

Great Britain’s long record of involvement in limited and low-intensity conflicts has been impressive, if uneven. The nation’s military has been far less inclined to emulate the United States in resorting to massive firepower. In this regard, we may contrast the evolution of Britain’s restrained (and successful) counterinsurgency strategy in Malaya with that of the United States in Vietnam at about the same time.

The authors commendably touch on earlier developments in warfare in their historical context, but their central focus is on the present. At times, this leads them to be unduly dismissive of the effects of past revolutions, as in their sweeping claim that “the changes that came with the Industrial Revolution were far from being as dramatic as those from the digital and information revolutions a century later” (40). In fact, the Industrial Revolution profoundly transformed mod-

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1. Where Krieg is on the faculty of the School of Security Studies; he is also cofounder there of both the Near East Centre for Security and Strategy and the Private Military and Security Research Group. Rickli is head of global risk and resilience at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.

2. An expert in international relations, national defense, and security matters, Freedman played a leading role in the Iraq Inquiry, which resulted in the Chilcot Report, a devastating evaluation of the performance of the government of Prime Minister Tony Blair during the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

3. See Georgetown Univ. Press website – [www.miwsr.com/rd/2001.htm](http://www.miwsr.com/rd/2001.htm).

ern societies, beginning with Britain's, which changed from rural and agrarian to increasingly urban, dominated by the tumult and change of the modern city and prey to economic conflicts, nationalism, and total war. More recent innovations in communications and transportation have carried the Industrial Revolution further, but without any fundamental break with long-term trends of economic modernization.

The book describes the rapidly growing international market for commercial military contractors, hired by governments but separate from national militaries. Unlike earlier mercenary forces, and occasionally more formal companies, these corporations often possess considerable investment capital. The authors cite Military Professionals Resources Inc., which contracted with the US government to train and support Croat forces in Bosnia during the ethnic armed conflicts of the 1990s. They maintain that the "consequences of this short surrogate war were severe human rights abuses" (154), citing documents submitted in a US District Court litigation of the matter. The truth is more complicated. The authors are on firmer ground in asserting that the use of military contractors by governments on behalf of other, client governments, obscures ultimate responsibilities and greatly complicates the legal prosecution of crimes that are in fact committed (159).

The authors have chosen a subject impossible to analyze fully in a single 244-page volume. After all, their broad definition of surrogates includes specialists in advanced surveillance and weapons technologies, various insurgent and rebel groups, and large for-profit corporations. Nonetheless, by spotlighting critical developments in surrogate use and its thorny moral aspects, they helpfully introduce readers to growing national and international security concerns.

In his farewell address (17 Jan. 1961), President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned of the long-term threat to the American democracy presented by what he dubbed the "military-industrial complex." He described briefly but brilliantly the inevitable passing of the long-standing American aversion to maintaining a large standing military in peacetime and the political challenges such a powerful and potentially dangerous new entity would pose. Ike's speech, generally ignored at the time, resonates more and more in our own day. *Surrogate Warfare* is a salutary contribution to a serious discussion of one element of a larger problem.