

held leadership rank. During the nightlong riot, the military command structure unraveled. Robert Kennedy complained, “The army botched it up.” But the author says that “it was the Kennedys who had botched things up, and royally,” by dealing with Barnett and then activating an invasion of Oxford in the middle of the night.

Despite claims by federal authorities that only tear gas—and no live ammunition—was used to repel the rioters, Doyle uncovered FBI papers indicating that marshals used revolvers at one point. He speculates that an errant bullet could have killed one of the victims. Using the Freedom of Information Act, Doyle also discovered that the army raided a fraternity house where Ole Miss senior Trent Lott was president and confiscated a cache of 24 weapons. Lott, now the Republican leader in the U.S. Senate, didn’t respond to Doyle’s repeated requests to discuss the case.

At the center of the storm was Meredith, a courageous but enigmatic man. Doyle

describes the black student as “an obscure loner” dwelling “inside a myth of his own design, a realm often remote and impenetrable to other people.” As one of the book’s few heroes, Meredith convinces Doyle that he cunningly engineered the conflict between the governor and the president. In reality, Meredith was merely the *deus ex machina* used to break segregation in Mississippi.

In his epilogue, Doyle notes that Meredith went on to embrace conservative causes. He even endorsed Barnett in a 1967 campaign in which the old governor finished fifth. There were many other ironies. Hundreds of white Mississippi National Guardsmen, put under federal command, joined thousands of regular troops in risking their lives to put down the rebellion. “Despite recommendations by various commanders,” Doyle writes, “the Defense Department issued not a single commendation medal for the bravery of U.S. troops during the Battle of Oxford.”

—CURTIS WILKIE

## CONTEMPORARY AFFAIRS

### **HUBBERT’S PEAK: *The Impending World Oil Shortage.***

By Kenneth S. Deffeyes. Princeton Univ. Press. 224 pp. \$24.95

In *The Coal Question* (1865), economist W. S. Jevons predicted that Britain’s prosperity would decline in about a century, when the nation ran short of coal. The British coal industry did go into sharp decline in the 1980s, not because of supply constraints but because Britain developed its own oil industry (and because Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher wanted to undermine trade union power). In 1956, petroleum geologist M. King Hubbert predicted that American oil production would peak around 1975. He was close: It peaked in 1970. In this venerable vein, Deffeyes argues that world oil production will peak between 2004 and 2008 and decline thereafter, with potentially calamitous consequences.

Geologist Deffeyes began his career in the Oklahoma oil patches, proceeded to Shell Oil’s research lab, and ended up on the faculty of Princeton University. The first half of his



*A gusher: Beaumont, Texas, in 1901*

book is an accessible and absorbing primer explaining where oil comes from, how it was formed, and where and how it is found and extracted. Deffeyes's long experience in the oil business allows him to explain these subjects with authority and verve, mixing passages on the structure of hydrocarbon molecules with tales of old-time oilmen.

In the second half, he advances his controversial argument with a blend of geology and mathematics. He thinks it most unlikely that additional major oilfields remain undiscovered. On its own terms, his argument convinces. Against it is the fact (which he acknowledges) that big oil companies, which presumably have access to the best information, aren't behaving as they should if he's right: They aren't buying up every last oil well. Nor, as yet, has the stock market behaved as if it agreed with Deffeyes. It may be that he has extrapolated too blithely from the United States, where oil prospecting has been very thorough, to countries where it has been less methodical. At the moment, no one can know for sure.

If Deffeyes is right, the implications are enormous. Though he does not spell them out in detail—that would offer too many hostages to fortune—he anticipates that sharply higher oil prices will bring difficult economic, social, and political passages for those societies most dependent on oil, especially on imported oil. Exporters will charge top dollar: a gigantic windfall for the Saudis, Kuwaitis, and a handful of others. He implies that the tumult will be greater than that occasioned by the oil price hikes of 1973 and 1979.

To avoid this scenario, Deffeyes recommends that we begin preparing now. We must develop renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and tidal power. We must improve energy efficiency. Such steps will not be enough, however, so we also must shed our fear of nuclear energy. In short, Deffeyes envisions an energy future very different from the status quo. One implication is that current American policy, in promoting still heavier investment in fossil fuels, is misguided. If we don't shift away from oil, we may as well gift-wrap the entire budget surplus and send it to the Saudi royal family.

There are few things as important nowadays as the energy system, and few books on the subject as thought provoking as this one.

—J. R. McNEILL

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### WAGING MODERN WAR.

By Wesley K. Clark. PublicAffairs.

479 pp. \$30

As Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General Clark was the chief architect of the 1999 war for Kosovo, an odd conflict that produced victory of a sort but no heroes. Least of all Clark: When the war ended, he was effectively cashiered. Now the general aims to salvage something of his lost reputation by providing a detailed revisionist account of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's first real war. Operation Allied Force, he insists, was an unqualified triumph. Though Clark capably settles scores with those Pentagon officials who either let him down or actively conspired against him, his attempt to recast his own efforts in a more positive light fails. Yet his very failure raises important questions about the role of senior military leaders in an era of U.S. global primacy.

Clark depicts himself as a "strategic commander," situated at the nexus between politics and operations. His experience in Bosnia had convinced him that the United States could no longer base its security policy on the mere existence of military power; the nation needed to put its armed might to work. In formulating the strategy for doing so, though, Clark proved to be a naïf—as his own narrative makes abundantly clear. Like Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, he believed at the outset that a bit of muscle flexing would spook Slobodan Milosevic. "I know him as well as anyone," Clark quotes himself instructing a White House official. "He doesn't want to get bombed." Wrong on that count, Clark found himself in a shooting war.

But to what end? As hostilities began, Clark identified three priorities for his commanders: to avoid losing aircraft, "impact the Yugoslavian military and police activities on the ground," and "protect our ground forces." He did not tell his subordinates how this cautious approach would bring victory. Although he publicly vowed to "attack, disrupt, degrade, devastate, and ultimately destroy" the Yugoslavian army, the limited bombing at the outset only led to accelerated ethnic cleansing and the exodus of refugees from Kosovo. These