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From Defeat to Victory: The Eastern Front, Summer 1944 Decisive and Indecisive Military Operations, Volume 2 (Modern War Studies (Hardcover))

Charles J. Dick

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By the summer of 1944, the war in Europe had reached a critical point. Both the western Allies and the Soviets possessed the initiative and forces capable of mounting strategic offensives against the German enemy. Writing a study of operations on first the Western then the Eastern Front, respected military analyst C. J. Dick provides a uniquely informative comparison of the different war-fighting doctrines brought to bear by the Allies and the Red Army in contemporaneous campaigns. His book offers rare insights into the strengths and weaknesses of generalship on both fronts.

In volume 2, *From Defeat to Victory*, Dick turns to the Eastern Front, where battle lines stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea—nearly 1,500 miles to the Allies' 600—and the Soviet armies and engagements dwarfed in scale those in the West. More importantly, they reflected a war-fighting philosophy significantly different than the Allies', which in turn produced different military operations. The Soviets were masters of deception-and-surprise, a concept called *maskirovka* that was an essential part of every military operation. The Soviets were committed to highly mobile and high-tempo offensives. They massed troops in heavy concentrations to achieve a breakthrough that would quickly set conditions for decisive operational maneuvers; they were relentless in their will to destroy the enemy's forces and, unlike their counterparts in the West, were willing to contend with an enormous amount of casualties. Dick's analysis shows us how the Red Army, largely free of the political problems that constrained the Allies, was able to develop more radical operational ideas and implement them with a daring and ruthlessness impossible for the armies of democratic states.

From Defeat to Victory also offers a critical lesson in the enduring importance of finding, inculcating, and implementing operational and tactical doctrine that fits the conditions of contemporary war, as well as in the technology, politics, and psychology of the times.

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