
Contemporary Affairs

ETHIOPIA: Empire in Revolution

by David and Marina Ottaway
Holmes & Meier, 1978
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The military overthrow of Ethiopia's 82-year-old Emperor Haile Selassie (the "Lion of Judah") in 1974 led to a "socialist" upheaval. It also brought intermittent, often mysterious, massacres and the arrival of Cubans and Russians to help the Army deal with conflicts in Ogaden and Eritrea. On hand were the Ottaways—he a *Washington Post* correspondent, she a political scientist. Theirs is the first comprehensive report on the new Ethiopia. They soberly analyze the evolution of the shadowy ruling Military Council, or *Derg*, its savage feuds with civilian radicals, its effective land reform, its arming of the peasants. By late 1977, despite all the chaos, the authors contend, Selassie's former empire still had the potential for becoming the birthplace of Africa's "first real revolution."

CHANCE AND CIRCUMSTANCE: The Draft, the War, and the Vietnam Generation

by Lawrence M. Baskir and William A. Strauss
Knopf, 1978
312 pp. \$10
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The authors worked on the staff of President Ford's short-lived Clemency Board, set up in 1974 to grant conditional pardons to convicted draft resisters and discharged deserters. They use Board statistics and anecdotal material to show the inequities of the Vietnam draft, the erratic punishments meted out to GI deserters and military offenders, and Washington's recent fumbling efforts to remedy past injustices. They note that only one-third of the 27 million draft-eligible Americans ever served, and less than 10 percent ever went to Vietnam—with college graduates the most adept at avoiding military service, and low-income high school graduates most likely to be drafted and to serve in combat. Only 3,000 men went to jail for violating the draft laws, although 200,000 were officially charged. Some 250,000 servicemen received less-than-honorable discharges, although only 13 percent were court-martialed. Baskir and Strauss favor a much broader amnesty effort to bring about a "true national reconciliation."