



*Recently at a gathering of senior military leaders in the Pacific meant to discuss pertinent issues in the region – as well as strategic leadership writ large – [General \(Retired\) Carter Ham](#) spoke at length about his career and the lessons garnered from them. As a consummate developer of leaders, at the end of his talk General Ham gave everyone a “homework assignment”. He was kind enough to provide this assignment to From The Green Notebook for use by the community, listing three contemporary books he thinks all military professionals should consider reading:*

**[Just War Reconsidered](#)** by Lieutenant General (Retired) Jim Dubik: For many military professionals, Michael Walzer’s classic [Just and Unjust Wars](#) became a mandatory read to gain understanding of the ethics of warfare. Lieutenant General Dubik updates this idea and addresses the important roles and responsibilities that civilian policy-makers perform in the ethical decisions about whether to employ military force. Important for today’s military leaders to understand this aspect of the role militaries play in national policy.

**[Tribe](#)** by Sebastian Junger: Many are familiar with Junger’s insightful book, [War](#) which describes the character of war at the very tactical level, offering insights that only those who have experienced prolonged close combat have witnessed. *Tribe* takes on the difficult story of how combat veterans re-assimilate (or not) into life outside of combat. Not a pleasant book to read, in my view, but an important one.

**[How Everything Became War and How the Military Became Everything](#)** by Rosa Brooks: This book contains keen insights from a sharp lawyer who served in important policy positions at the Pentagon. She pulls no punches in addressing “endless war” and how, while “There is no military solution to this problem” has become cliché, often the military is the only meaningful “solution” that is acted upon. Brooks’ work is also important, in my view, to better understand how a serious-minded civilian thinks about the U.S. military.

*[General \(Retired\) Carter Ham](#) is the president and chief executive officer of the Association of the United States Army. He is an experienced leader who has led at every level from platoon to geographic combatant command. He is also a member of a very small group of Army senior leaders who have risen from private to four-star general.*

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