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# Claws of the Bear: The History of the Red Army from the Revolution to the Present

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vain for John L.H. Keep's conclusion (found in *Soldiers of the Tsar*, 1985) that Russians have endured an inordinate military burden for most of the past five hundred years. Given that perspective, this book's already narrow treatment of impoverishment appears even less compelling.

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Moynahan, Brian. *Claws of the Bear: The History of the Red Army from the Revolution to the Present*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1989. 468pp. \$24.95

Mr. Moynahan, the author of *Airport International* and *The Tourist Trap*, knows no Russian. Thus, one marvels at his courage in undertaking the difficult task of summarizing some of the most complex events in the twentieth century. He shows all the faults of an amateur historian. He presents no original research or ideas, and he is not aware of which secondary sources to avoid. For example, in his discussion of the Russian Civil War, he has relied on other amateur historians, such as Massie and Lockett, and lacks any understanding of the genuine issues, problems, and complexities of Soviet history. He has committed so many errors that it would be too tedious to enumerate them. His history is a mish-mash: the author is interested in personalities rather than historical issues; and the book lacks continuity, thus blurring the vast differences between eras. For Moynahan, as for the

pre-Gorbachev Soviet historians, Soviet history from the time of the Revolution to the present is all cut from the same cloth.

The first section not only adds nothing to our appreciation of the second but undermines our confidence in Mr. Moynahan's competence.

The second section describes the Soviet military during the waning years of the cold war, and it is somewhat better, because the author does not pretend to be a historian but is content to be a journalist, which in fact he is. He describes more or less reliably the various branches of the Soviet military, weapon systems, military doctrine and strategy, and the evolution of Soviet disarmament policies, and evaluates the fighting capacity of the soldiers. However, these chapters are not very much better than the first section. But the fault is not entirely the author's. It would be unfair to blame him for not foreseeing the vast changes which have occurred in the Soviet Union. After all, people far more knowledgeable than he did not predict the collapse of world communism. Nevertheless, in a book published in 1989 one would at least expect to find references to the devastatingly serious problems that the Soviet Union already faced, such as draft resistance and interethnic fighting.

But since the author wanted to convey a sense of the danger that the West faced from Soviet aggression, he dwelt upon Soviet capabilities rather than upon weaknesses and intentions.

As a result, this book, is utterly outdated, and nowhere does the reader have any sense of the momentous changes that were coming.

Today, it is strange to read about the vast Soviet menace, and the military plans that called for the Polish army to move on to the Netherlands and to Denmark. The ideas that the East German army is the best in Eastern Europe and that the East German soldiers would not hesitate to fight against their West German brothers strike one as absurd. Reading such curiosities reminds us that not only Mr. Moynahan misread Soviet strength. Most of us had an unrealistic world view.

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Kessler, Ronald. *The Spy in the Russian Club*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1990. 275pp.

Glen Michael Souther was a Russian-language major and a member of the Russian Club at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. He was also a Soviet spy.

This book, so named because of Souther's club membership, is the first attempt to explain this navy-associated case of espionage.

Souther was a navy photographer's mate from 1976 to 1982, and appears to have become an agent for the Soviets while he was stationed in Italy in 1980. Two years later, after his discharge from the navy, he returned to the United States, deserting his

Italian-born wife and infant son. His wife made contact with an agent of the Naval Investigative Service at a New Year's Eve party in Gaeta that same year, with suspicions that her husband was a Russian spy. After a discussion with Souther's brother-in-law—a U.S. Navy lieutenant, who indicated that Souther's wife was embittered and trying to "get back" at her husband—the agent dismissed the incident. Only after the John Walker case made headlines in 1985 did Souther's brother-in-law begin to seriously suspect Souther and report to NIS.

Souther joined the Naval Reserve and drilled on weekends at the Fleet Intelligence Center in Norfolk, Virginia. It was here that Souther gained access to sensitive classified material such as satellite imagery and nuclear targeting plans. Such access required a special background check by the Defense Investigating Service, which cleared him.

In 1986, Souther was about to graduate from Old Dominion University and had applied to Naval Officer Candidate School. Again the NIS was approached regarding Souther. The FBI had jurisdiction over Souther, the civilian. However, assuming that the NIS did not believe Souther a threat, in 1986 the FBI merely interviewed him and warned him that he was under suspicion. He was never given a background check. Souther agreed to meet with the FBI again at a later date for a polygraph test; instead, he fled the country and eventually surfaced in Moscow.