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The Soviet and Other Communist Navies: The View from the Mid-1980s

Thomas Hone

James L. George

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force strength not requiring mobilization to report to the front.

Amme's advertised doctrine of nuclear constraints is compatible with the concept of maintaining a "firebreak" against the accidental spreading of battlefield nuclear conflagration. His doctrine translates into a NATO strategy of increased flexible nuclear deterrence capability, while presenting a less provocative and more credible strategic posture to the Soviets.

The author sketches the quarter-century of events since the period when NATO defense strategy was based simply upon the West's tactical nuclear weapons superiority, provides an incisive explanation of de Gaulle's action and its lasting effect, and examines the strategic and tactical posture of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact allies. However, his analysis stops short of the warming of détente and the signing of the INF treaty because when the manuscript went to press the treaty was not yet a reality, in spite of a seven-year gestation.

Carl H. Amme avoids falling into the trap of arguing that the principal problem to be solved is military, although the book reflects military solutions and implies that peacetime deployment of forces can carry with it a message of peaceful intent.

NATO Strategy and Nuclear Defense is an important book not for the bookshelf, but as a reference for our own "restructuring."

CAROL FORD BENSON
Naval Facilities Engineering Command
San Bruno, California

George, James L., ed. *The Soviet and Other Communist Navies: The View from the Mid-1980s*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1986. 436pp. \$24.95

This collection of interesting and important papers, "the second of a proposed continuing series looking at the vital sea-power issues that face the United States and the Western alliance" (from the preface), should be examined by everyone interested in the military competition between the United States and the U.S.S.R. For the specialist, this volume surveys the different perspectives now used in the analysis of Russian naval and military developments. For those who need to focus more on what the Russian Navy might do than on why, this collection of papers and comments provides some thought-provoking ideas.

Composed of papers originally given at the 1985 Sea Power Forum sponsored by the Center for Naval Analyses, *The Soviet and Other Communist Navies* includes papers by established analysts of Soviet naval developments such as Robert Herick, James McConnell, Michael McGwire, and Alvin Bernstein. There are also papers on the other communist navies, including those of Poland, the German Democratic Republic, Yugoslavia, Cuba, and the People's Republic of China. The breadth of topics covered and the quality of the papers makes the volume a useful reference to the issues which U.S. policymakers must address when considering U.S. strategy toward the U.S.S.R. and

toward countries in parts of the world where the United States believes it has vital interests.

This book makes clear that the conflict between the United States and the U.S.S.R. is now in its third stage. The first stage, which developed after World War II, found the United States trying to deter possible Soviet attacks in Europe with a military alliance (NATO). In the second stage, reached in the 1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union gained the weaponry to strike directly at each other's homelands, so the confrontation in Europe between conventional forces was supplemented (some would say supplanted) by a confrontation between national nuclear forces. In the late 1960s, the Soviet Union began fielding very modern conventional forces, especially naval forces, and, for the first time, the scope of military confrontation between the United States and the U.S.S.R. began to reach global proportions. Now, both the United States and the Soviet Union are finding it uncomfortably expensive to maintain worldwide, highly sophisticated conventional and nuclear maritime forces. As James McConnell notes in his paper on Soviet naval missions, "In the USSR there is no such thing as naval policy or naval doctrine; there are only naval aspects of a single military policy or a single military doctrine." True. And the leaders of the Soviet Union have recognized that a single military policy of confronting the United States globally has its costs.

Several of the papers make those costs clear from the Russian perspective. In his study of Russian contingency plans for a world war, for example, Michael McGwire observes that the Russians have one dilemma which the United States does not: they cannot hide behind an ocean barrier. If the U.S.S.R. does indeed decide to attack NATO, and if Warsaw Pact forces can in fact defeat the NATO armies, then the Soviet Union is still left with a problem such as that confronted by Hitler in June 1940—defeating an enemy who cannot be occupied. McGwire argues that Russian planners have seriously considered holding a defense line stretching from northern Europe across Africa. They have plans, he argues, to keep the U.S. Navy and ground forces from establishing any forward base from which the latter can eventually return to Europe. The Russians, according to McGwire, have learned that to conquer Europe they must do what Hitler could not—defeat and occupy England, control the Mediterranean, and keep the United States at bay in the Middle East. At the same time, they must modernize their strategic missile forces and work to increase the support they offer other "socialist" nations in the so-called "Third World." A tall order, indeed.

An excellent paper by Richard Haver puts some numbers on the cost of such an effort for the Soviet Union. As Haver shows, the Soviet Union has put its best minds and officers to work building an impres-

sive submarine force. At the same time, however, that force is "dominated by nuclear weapon delivery platforms that possess diminished combat capability in a conventional conflict." As Haver puts it, the Soviet Navy is actually "encumbered by a submarine fleet of growing age, diminishing combat utility, and single-purpose designs." This means that the Soviet Navy is going through a period of change similar to that which the U.S. Navy went through in the 1970s. Ships produced in quantity (like the U.S. ships left over from the building programs of World War II) are being retired. Their replacements are far more sophisticated, but they are also commensurately more expensive. At the same time, missions for the Soviet Navy (like those for the U.S. Navy) have actually increased, so there is a demonstrated need for more sophisticated ships. Where will the Russians turn for a solution to this conflict between cost and numbers?

There are two kinds of answers. One focuses on how to solve such problems in the first place. As Commander James Tritten of the Naval Postgraduate School argues in his study of Russian mine, amphibious, and coastal defense forces, force planners should consider output, or mission, measures of effectiveness in deciding what to develop and procure. Put another way, force planners should first decide what missions they have to achieve, then look for optimal combinations of forces that will achieve those missions. Floyd

Kennedy's paper on Russian naval air forces reveals that it was this sort of thinking that led to the very potent Soviet maritime aviation units which today confront the U.S. Navy in almost every important theater. However, in a paper on Soviet naval operations in the North Atlantic and the Arctic, Anthony Wells suggests that the Russians have found a second kind of answer to the cost/numbers dilemma: the use of a special theater (under-ice operations), where the environment acts as a force multiplier. In the Mediterranean, however, the setting has the reverse effect. A paper by Wayne Wright argues persuasively that the Soviet Navy's Fifth Eskadra is not nearly so potent a force as Soviet land-based naval aviation. The waters of the Mediterranean remain essentially a NATO lake.

Indeed, as other papers show, the U.S.S.R. faces serious problems in trying to use its navy as a geopolitical lever because so much of the Soviet Navy is so easily confined to home waters. That does not mean the Soviet Navy is essentially useless as a tool of Russian international policy. It does mean that Soviet leaders must ask hard questions about the value of distant forces when those forces cost more and more. The U.S. Navy (and the U.S. Government) faced the same kind of questions in the 1920s and 30s. The United States wanted to exert influence in China, for example, and a strong fleet, forward deployed (at Guam, for example), might have given the country that influence. But the funds to support such a fleet were simply not forthcoming, and also there

were legitimate doubts that such a fleet could really do what it was supposed to do (intimidate Japan). The same kinds of problems beset both the Soviet Union and the United States today. The solutions are not clear. What is impressive about *The Soviet and Other Communist Navies*, however, is that these problems and possible approaches to them are laid out in one place and in a nonclassified form.

Finally, a word for readers who cannot take the time to read all the papers: some of the commentaries and introductions are in themselves worth reading. Bradford Dismukes provides a good summary of the major analytical approaches to Soviet naval policy in Part One of the volume, and the commentaries by Rear Admiral Thomas Brooks, Dr. Roger Barnett, and retired Admiral Harry Train do what the whole volume aims to do—stimulate serious thinking about military prospects and problems. *The Soviet and Other Communist Navies* is a wonderful summary of current perspectives on, and knowledge of, its topic. Though lengthy, it lends itself both to careful study and to thoughtful browsing.

THOMAS HONE
Defense Systems Management College

Polmar, Norman. *The Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1987. 591pp. \$29.95

Since its initial publication by James C. Fahey 49 years and 13 editions ago, *The Ships and Aircraft of*

the U.S. Fleet has been a well-known reference book. However, under Norman Polmar, it has evolved into a truly outstanding work. Today it stands as the definitive source of information on the U.S. Navy, presenting a wealth of concise, well-organized data. Ships, aircraft, weapons, and electronic systems are described in detail with accompanying tables of characteristics, ample photographic coverage, and a glossary. The book's large format contributes to easy utility, allowing the photographs to appear in a size sufficient to be useful.

Particularly impressive is the magnitude of the "update" between the 13th and 14th editions. Unlike many so-called "revised" editions, in which a few sentences are added at the end of each section or chapter, this edition truly is a "complete revision." Literally every photograph is new. I reached page 217 before finding a photo (of an LCVP) duplicated from the 13th edition. Even ships in reserve have new photographs. Additionally, line illustrations from the previous edition have been redrawn. The descriptive text and characteristics were updated and rewritten as appropriate. As a consequence, the information is current and useful.

The chapters on ships and aircraft comprise the "core" of the book. Organized into chapters by ship types, each class is covered by a minimum of one full page (9 1/2" x 9 1/2") with an accompanying photograph, text, and characteristics table. Ship classes containing numer-