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Strategic Defense in Soviet Strategy

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a lifetime moving through the ranks from private to "senior field-grade officer," it appears he has misunderstood the import of his chosen pseudonym.

Reading of the text, however, leaves one wondering whether the claimed military background of the author may not be overstated, even a hoax, for there are numerous blunders of terminology and the like that could lead experienced soldiers to question whether this author is really one of their company as claimed. The Army's Corps of Engineers, for example, is referred to as the "Corps of Engineering," while the Chaplain's Corps is called the "Chaplain Corps." The author reveals in a glossary entry that he does not understand the meaning of the term "cover," as used in the familiar phrase "cover and concealment," and he talks of camouflage suits of a "spotted-tiger" variety (a contradiction in terms to begin with). He advises his readers that a battalion S2 is responsible for advising "the commandant" on intelligence matters and, in a revelation that will surely come as a surprise to battalion executive officers everywhere, states that the battalion S3 "runs the battalion during the commander's absence." In a single sentence referring to the 173d Airborne [Brigade] the author first calls it a battalion, then cites one officer as its deputy brigade commander, and finally speaks of another officer as the unit's "division commander." The Americal Division he gets nearly right as the "American Division."

Perhaps most puzzling of all, the author quotes approvingly an assertion that appeared in an earlier work to the effect that in 1960 it took an average of thirty-three years and two months for an officer to be promoted through the ranks from second lieutenant to full colonel. Because, with the exception of general officers and a very few other special cases, Army officers are required to retire upon completion of 30 years'

service, the assertion appears ridiculous on the face of it; all those lieutenant colonels completing thirty years would retire, not be kept around for some 3 years and 2 months more to make colonel. The thought appears never to have crossed our author's mind.

None of this makes any particular substantive difference, but the cumulative effect is to cast doubt on the anonymous author's assertion of his credentials as an experienced professional officer. It is also not reassuring that, according to an account that appeared in *The New York Times*, the publisher claims never to have seen the author in person, but only to have "spoken to him many times," presumably by telephone.

Whatever its validity, *Self-Destruction* has been reviewed in a number of newspapers and general readership magazines, indicating that there is substantial interest in the topic of the Army as an institution and its present and prospective states of well-being. The field is still wide open for someone to provide an insightful and useful analysis that delves into the reasons for the many real problems, seeks to formulate some reforms that are genuinely responsive to these causal factors and feasible of implementation, and analyzes current Army initiatives in terms of their likely effect on the problem. The author of *Self-Destruction* credits himself with "a lively curiosity, mastery of certain research skills, twenty-two years of military service, many friends," and other attributes. On his own evidence he should have done a better job.

LEWIS SORLEY

Deane, Michael J. *Strategic Defense in Soviet Strategy*. Coral Gables, Fla.: AISI and Current Affairs Press, 1980. 119pp.

One of the Advanced International Studies Institute's "Monographs in International Affairs" series, this study by

Michael Deane examines the role of Soviet programs in strategic defense, and is intended to complement two earlier AISI monographs on Soviet military strategy, *The Role of Nuclear Forces in Current Soviet Strategy* by Leon Gouré, Foy Kohler and Mose Harvey (1974), and *War Survival in Soviet Strategy* by Leon Gouré (1976).

As do the two earlier AISI studies, Deane's monograph relies heavily on published Soviet sources in an attempt to present a Soviet perspective on nuclear strategy in general and on strategic defense in particular. These uniquely Soviet views, Deane asserts, differ markedly from traditional U.S. concepts that have moved away from "fighting" a nuclear war to "detering" nuclear war. The Soviets in fact, if one is to take at face value their many public pronouncements on the subject (as indeed the author clearly does), "appear to subscribe to the long time basic rule of war *fighting* which mandates superiority in terms of both offense and defense." (emphasis added) U.S. preoccupation with deterrence and concepts of unacceptable damage, mutual vulnerability, and in particular assured destruction, asserts Deane, result in a strategic posture void of civil defense and an antiballistic missile capability and is, in short, a military posture lacking in credibility. Citing Soviet military manuals, Deane attempts to show that Soviet doctrine, on the other hand, emphasizes the need to destroy the enemy's nuclear arsenal, smash important groupings of his troops, undermine his economy and to disorganize his state and military control. What's more, adds Deane, Soviet authorities clearly prefer that these attacks be carried out preemptively. Here he cites in particular Col. M.P. Skirdo in *The People, the Army, the Commander* (*Narod, armiya, polkovodets*). This reviewer drew no such conclusion from the cited remarks of Skirdo when read in context.

Deane's conclusion is that we are witnessing a growing U.S.-Soviet strategic asymmetry that if permitted to continue "virtually guarantees that in case of a nuclear war the U.S. will suffer defeat and probably annihilation as a functioning society while the USSR and its system will survive and with sufficient power intact to establish the world hegemony that its leadership has always considered its ultimate due." Surely one must look far and wide to find an equally bleak assessment of our future national security! To support his thesis, the author employs an analysis of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, contrasting Soviet and American views. In fact, more of the monograph is devoted to the ABM issue than to any other.

The solution to this problem of impending doom? According to the author, the United States should upgrade its offensive systems to ensure more effective penetration of Soviet defensive systems, and perhaps more germane to the book's basic thesis, should also "fully develop and deploy a comprehensive strategic defensive system, supplemented by a reasonably effective civil defense preparation," for as one regularly hears from AISI, the Russians are coming.

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d'Encausse, Helene Carrere. *Decline of an Empire: The Soviet Socialist Republics in Revolt*. New York: Newsweek Books, 1979. 304pp.

This very dispassionate and timely book provides a starting point for those who must think beyond the first battles and on to the final campaigns that will probably seek to overthrow the predatory Soviet State—the U.S.S.R. Far too many people continue to think of the Soviet Union as being one vast, monolithic, integrated state impervious to outside influence. It is not, and this book highlights important aspects of the