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For the past decade, Western naval leaders have spoken of "a Soviet naval buildup" and continue to use the same language to describe the very different situation today, a situation marked by a sharp increase in the allocation of resources to naval shipbuilding, a marked rise in the navy's political clout, and a new approach to the role of seapower in Soviet policy. This paper was especially written to focus attention on these three key developments, each important in its own right, but which, taken together, combine to produce a significant change in the long-term trend. In knowing now what lies ahead, we are given time to organize our response and reverse the unfavorable trend.

A NEW TREND IN SOVIET NAVAL DEVELOPMENT

by

Michael McCWire

The new classes of surface warships that will begin delivery to the Soviet Navy in the early 1980s provide evidence of a sharp increase in the allocation of resources to naval construction. A large part of the increase stems from the regular procurement-planning process approved at the 24th Party Congress in 1971, and reflects a reappraisal of the navy's wartime mission and the need to adopt new operational concepts. However, a sizable fraction of the increase appears to have been authorized "out-of-plan," in response to the navy's argument that its capabilities would still be inadequate to meet these new requirements. This increase in the allocation of resources has been accompanied but *not* caused by significant developments in the basis of Soviet naval policy, reflecting a marked rise in the importance of the navy's strategic role in war and a growing

peacetime instrument of policy. Meanwhile, the navy's political influence within the defense establishment has steadily increased, although the debate over the role of seapower in Soviet state policy still continues.

These developments do not suggest a change in underlying defense policy, nor do they indicate a greater willingness for war within the West. They do, however, provide further evidence of the seriousness with which the Soviets take the possibility of such a war and their readiness to fashion their forces accordingly. Meanwhile, the emergence during the next 10-15 years of a powerful Soviet fleet with a true worldwide capability will provide the leadership with an important new instrument of policy in peacetime. The implications of these developments are best understood if set in a wider context.

Contemporary Soviet defense policy stems in large part from a range of decisions taken during 1961. These

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involved a reversal of much of Khrushchev's new policy announced in January 1960 and were largely a response to the rapid buildup of both strategic and conventional forces announced by President Kennedy shortly after taking office in 1961. From the Soviet viewpoint, a significant aspect of these American initiatives was the apparent shift in U.S. emphasis from land-based to sea-based strategic nuclear strike systems, inasmuch as the latter could be withheld from the initial nuclear exchange and used to influence the subsequent stages of a war. Given the Soviet doctrine of deterrence through the possession of a combat capability, this had major implications in terms of the navy's roles and missions. First, the Soviet Union would need a matching sea-based nuclear strike capability to contribute to the national strategic reserve. And second, it would have to develop some means of countering these Western systems, in part because of the relationship between the reserves of two opponents, but also because these sea-based systems could be used to deny Russia the use of Europe as an alternative socioeconomic base in the postexchange phase of a war.

There were three possible ways of directly countering *Polaris* (as distinct from attacking its C³ system): area exclusion, trailing and ocean search/surveillance. The last two would require the development of new systems, but a start could be made on the incremental process of excluding *Polaris* from the more threatening sea areas, by trying to raise the probability of their detection to unacceptable levels. This would involve an extension and elaboration of the operational concepts that had been developed successfully for the defense of the offshore zone, but would require additional, purpose-designed ASW forces. This explains the Soviet Navy's shift to forward deployment in the early sixties, which

took place in two stages. The initial response (lasting 5 years) extended the outer defense zone to the 1,500 n.m. circle from Moscow, which covered the threat from carrier strike aircraft as well as the early *Polaris* systems and took in the Norwegian Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. The interim response, starting in 1967/68, began the slow process of consolidating the newly established defense zones, while extending the area of naval concern to take in the 2,500 n.m. circle of threat; this included the eastern half of the North Atlantic and the northern half of the Arabian Sea. There was a progressive buildup in the number of ships on forward deployment and in ship-days deployed until 1972/73, when both leveled off.

Meanwhile, the major emphasis in surface ship capabilities was switched from anticarrier to antisubmarine systems, in part by the major conversion of two existing classes (*SAM Kotlin* and *Kanin*) and in part by modifying the design of new construction programs, one currently building and the others projected. For example, the 12-ship *Moskva* program was canceled (because the ship was too small to be operationally effective in the new concept), and its weapon systems were used to switch the *Kresta* program from anticarrier (*Kresta I*) to antisubmarine (*Kresta II*). The *Moskva* was replaced by the *Kiev* ASW carrier, at twice the size.

As originally planned, it was probably hoped that 10 years would be sufficient to develop a range of measures which, beginning in 1972/73, would allow some kind of final response to *Polaris* along all three lines of attack. However, not only were these hopes unduly optimistic, but other developments had meanwhile prompted a shift in operational priorities.

The most significant were the press reports in 1967-68 that the U.S. Navy was intending to develop two new classes of submarines for operations

against Soviet SSBN, one very fast and one very silent, which would enter service in 1973-74. This was just about the time the *Delta* class would become operational, and had major implications for the Soviet decision to embody a substantial part of the nation's strategic reserve in their SSBN force. It focused attention on the force's security and led to the concept of deploying the submarines in defended ocean bastions in the Greenland and Barents Seas and in the Sea of Okhotsk. Meanwhile, as more antisubmarine systems became available to the Soviets in new surface ships, submarines and aircraft, it must have become increasingly clear that these traditional methods had inherent limitations against *Polaris*. This led to a shift in ASW emphasis away from the Eastern Mediterranean and Arabian Sea, to extending the inner defense zones of the Northern and Pacific Fleet areas and to providing them with watertight defenses.

The shift in operational priority to protecting the SSBN bastions generated a fundamental change in the design criteria for distant water surface units. Previously, the emphasis had been on the capability to weather a preemptive attack long enough for them to be able to discharge their primary mission of striking at Western carriers and *Polaris* submarines, after which they were expendable. However, the security of SSBN bastions now had to be ensured for the duration of a protracted war. Surface ships therefore had to be capable of the sustained operations needed to gain and maintain command of a large sea area such as the Norwegian Sea, and this required long endurance, large magazine loads and an underway replenishment capability. Establishing command would be facilitated by seizing key stretches of coast and in the Pacific this probably involves the Japanese side of the two southern straits that give access to the

Sea of Okhotsk, and could extend to the whole northern coast of Hokkaido. In the Norwegian Sea, the requirement may include key islands as well as stretches of the Norwegian coast.

A contemporary development that reinforced the pressure for more capable distant water surface units was the increasing possibility of war with China, generating a requirement to be able to supply the Far Eastern Front by sea in the likely event that the Trans-Siberian railway were cut. These shipments would need protection, and the threat of attack reached back to the northwestern part of the Indian Ocean, where it could be posed by Chinese submarines using friendly bases, by U.S. forces, or even by regional navies.

To meet these new requirements, it was decided that the follow-on classes to the *Kara* and *Kresta* programs (which would be due to begin delivery in 1980) would be some 25-30 percent bigger, providing greatly increased combat endurance. A scaling-up process was also applied to the amphibious program, the *Polnochny* size being dropped from the inventory, the *Alligator* size (*Ropuchka*) carrying on, and a much larger ship, the *Ivan Rogov* class, being added. The latter and the new *Berezina* class of underway replenishment ships are notable for being relatively heavily armed with self-defense systems, reflecting a new emphasis on being able to survive in a hostile environment.

These follow-on classes would all be built within the navy's existing allocation of shipyard facilities. However, a completely new type of ship was included in the surface program, a heavily armed battle cruiser, which would be able to provide the command facilities that had been found so necessary to forward deployment and that would be essential in a protracted war. This addition to the program required the return to naval use of construction facilities that

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had been turned over to civilian construction in the mid-fifties.

These new classes appear to have been included in the 9th Five Year Plan that was approved at the 24th Party Congress in the spring of 1971. However, despite the substantial increase, the navy did not consider that this would be sufficient to meet the new demands being placed upon it, and took its case to a wider audience by means of the articles in *Morskoj sbornik* that have become known as "the Gorshkov series." This debate had other ramifications that will be touched on later, but a major strand concerned the importance of general-purpose forces, particularly in the submarine support role, and the need for a greater diversity of surface ship types, whose characteristics should provide for long range at high speeds. The in-house argument would have focused on the specifics of the threat to the Soviet SSBN. The direct threat would come from the U.S. attack submarines, but the latter's success would depend on the suppression of Soviet ASW defenses by supporting U.S. surface forces. The Soviet Navy would have had to assume that U.S. carrier groups would be deployed in support of their SSN, whereas Soviet shore-based air would cease to be available after the initial exchange. Without the air component, there would be no certainty that the Soviets would be able to prevent the carrier groups from penetrating the outer defense zones. It could be assumed that the U.S. carriers would seek to establish command of the surface and the air, denying their use to Soviet ASW forces, that they would harry the defending SSN, and they might even become directly involved in hunting down Soviet SSBNs. If the Soviet Navy was to prevail against this kind of force, it would need a comparable capability, including effective sea-based air.*

Presumably, it was the inherent plausibility of this scenario that allowed

the Soviet Navy to win at least part of its case. By mid-1974, an additional class of surface ship, comparable in size to the *Kresta* replacement, had been added to the plan, allowing for task specialization between classes. It may also have been at this stage, when SALT was in place, that it was agreed to give the new battle cruiser class the capability for "long range at high speed" by appropriating nuclear propulsion plants earmarked for the SSBN program. More important, it appears that authority was given to go ahead with the design of a large air-superiority carrier, which would enter service in the second half of the eighties.

The new surface ship programs represent both an increase in the number of oceangoing warships delivered each year and in the size of the various ship types. The end product will be a much more powerful fleet, with a greatly enhanced general-purpose capability. And this is taking place at a time when the Navy's political standing has markedly increased and the role of seapower in Soviet policy is being reevaluated.

Evidence that a fundamental shift in the theoretical basis of Soviet naval policy may be underway is provided by the reviews of the book *Seapower of the State*, published under Admiral Gorshkov's name in 1976. Authority to produce this book was a byproduct of the debate over the navy's role in war and peace. While it restated much of the material published in "the Gorshkov series," the book was about three times as long, its scope was much broader and included an extensive discussion of the ocean and the nonmilitary aspects of

*For a summary of the evidence that in 1972, Gorshkov was arguing for carriers, see my "Naval Power and Soviet Oceans Policy" in *Soviet Oceans Policy*, John Hardt, ed., U.S. Govt. Print. Off., October 1979, pp. 118-119. (Prepared by the Congressional Research Service for the Senate Committee on Commerce and the National Oceans Policy Study.)

seapower, a subject that was treated very cursorily in the articles. The book was well received and the tenor of the reviews is exemplified by Marshal of the Soviet Union Bagramyan's comment in *Izvestiya* that "for the first time in Soviet literature, the author formulates the concept of seapower as a scientific category." This judgment is echoed by other reviews, all of which stressed the book's contribution to military science and noted that the role of maritime power had, for the first time, been given a scientific formulation. This does not mean that all the ideas in the book have been fully accepted, but it does imply that the concept is now established in the mainstream of Soviet analytical discourse and (to quote Admiral of the Fleet Lobov), "the book will be an important source for developing a correct viewpoint of the seapower of the state." This is significant, because up to now Soviet theorists have had an ideological aversion to the concept of seapower, which they equated with Mahan, capitalism and colonialism. Just as Keynes' "General Theory" legitimized the idea of deficit financing and induced a shift in Western national economic priorities, so may this "scientific formulation" engender a shift in Soviet perceptions of the navy's role in war and peace.

But the book is not just an exposé of the role of seapower in the contemporary world, but part of a continuing argument about naval missions and the allocation of resources, one in which the navy has been notably successful. During the decade the naval position has evolved from defensive advocacy, to a more rounded discussion of the importance of the ocean and of seapower in a broader sense, to challenging the primacy of the continental theaters of war. In the articles, Gorshkov was careful not to attack the army-dominated military leadership directly. In the book he challenges them through his criticism of

Napoleon's failure to make effective use of the French Navy. This failure was not owed to Britain's maritime superiority, but to Napoleon's "one-sided strategy, which stemmed from his preoccupation with operations in the land theaters and his lack of understanding of the navy, his disregard for its capabilities in war, and as a result, his inability to use it in a struggle with a naval power...." The book also emasculates the new doctrinal priority given to the army-inspired mission of "fleet against shore" by defining it so as to encompass almost all forms of traditional naval operations. The generally combative tone is preserved in the second edition, and extended to challenging the Soviet dogma that military operations in the continental theaters will be decisive throughout a future war, and to arguing that at certain stages the oceanic theaters will inevitably take precedence, with all that implies in terms of tasking the other branches of service.

Further evidence of the navy's increasing political clout is provided by the procedural trappings of the ongoing debate. The initial argument was deployed in the navy's "own" journal during 1972-73 as some 54,000 words spread over 11 issues and 13 months, and ran into problems with the military censors. Three years later the argument had been extended, improved and restated in a book of 151,000 words, which had an unusually large printing of 60,000 copies and was brought out ahead of schedule to meet the political deadline of the 25th Party Congress. Within 4 years a second 60,000 word edition had been published, which was one-eighth longer and included a new section that further extended naval claims. The military publishers categorized the first edition of the book as being for "the military reader"; the second edition is specifically for "admirals, generals and officers of the Soviet Army and Navy." And as a final mark of approval, three of the

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contributing authors were promoted between the first and second edition, two to vice admiral and one to rear admiral. Tangible evidence of the navy's improved standing is also provided by the out-of-plan addition to the regular procurement planning process. There is a world of difference between the way in which the ill-conceived "cruise missile solution" was imposed on the navy in the mid-fifties, and the successful argument about naval requirements in the mid-seventies. The debate is still in progress and there are bound to be strong institutional interests that feel threatened by this steady rise in the navy's relative importance. However, even if the navy's political advance is now checked, substantial gains have already been achieved.

Whatever the outcome of the political and theoretical debates, the Soviet Union is now committed to building a new *kind* of navy. In the past, the Soviets have been mainly successful in holding down the growth in size of successive classes, and for several decades the dimensions of the main ship types have remained roughly constant, most notably the "destroyer-sized" type at about 3,500 tons and the "escort-sized" type at about 1,200 tons, and it was analytically useful to make use of those categories. However, some 2 or 3 years ago the Soviet Navy redesigned the destroyer-sized *Krivak* as an "escort ship" and at the same time altered the type-designation of various other classes to reflect a distinction between antisubmarine and antisurface capabilities. Bearing in mind Gorshkov's original argument that all-purpose ships had never proved successful, plus press reports that of the two smaller new "cruiser" classes, one will carry antisurface systems and the other will be primarily ASW, it seems likely that these redesignations presage the future structure of the fleet.

On this assumption, when looking to the nineties it is useful to think in terms

of four main sizes of ship, with the type-designator indicating the general role: a battle cruiser size; a cruiser size of about 12,000 tons; a destroyer size of about 8,000 tons; and an ocean-escort or frigate size of about 4,000 tons. I assume that the battle cruiser and cruiser sizes will have a general-purpose capability and that only one class of each will be built at the same time, whereas there will be at least two classes of destroyer size ship under construction, each optimized for different aspects of maritime warfare. The destroyer-sized ships will be able to operate as fleet escorts, whereas the frigate-sized will lack the long range anti-air and antisurface systems required for such a role. It is not suggested that this categorization will apply immediately, but this could be the general fleet structure by 1990, at which date the present inventory of antisubmarine and antisurface ships will be obsolete or obsolescent, except for the *Kara* and *Kresta II* classes, both of which would be treated as destroyer-sized types.

What sort of numbers are we talking about? Counting only those ships built or converted after 1957, but using the former categorization of types (where the cruiser size is around the 8,000-ton mark), at the beginning of 1980 the Soviets had about 27 cruiser size ships (*Kynda*, *Kresta*, *Kara*), about 60 destroyer size ships (including *Krivak*), and about 100 escort size units. They also had 2 modified *Sverdlov* command cruisers and 4 air-capable ships (2 *Moskva* and 2 *Kiev*). By 1995, allowing a 25-year life cycle and using the new categorization, we could expect about 15 cruiser-size ships, 65 destroyer size (including *Kara* and *Kresta II*), and 55 frigate-size ships (*Krivak* and successor). There would also be 5 battle cruiser/command ships and perhaps 7 or 8 air-capable ships, comprising 2 *Moskva*, 4 *Kiev* and 1 or 2 new type large carriers. To put it another way, every 3 years the Soviet Navy will

acquire a powerful new battle group comprising a heavily armed battle cruiser, 3 cruisers, and about 10 large destroyers. The first three or four of these battle groups will rely on a *Kiev* to provide a modicum of sea-based air support; but thereafter we might expect to see one fully capable air-superiority carrier for every two battle groups.

On the submarine side the picture is obscure. Past patterns of production implied that a new family of submarines were to be expected to begin delivery in 1978. Instead, we are now into the 13th year of the *Victor*, *Charlie* and *Yankee/Delta* programs. This suggests that there have been changes in the original plans and/or delays because of technological problems. We have yet to get a proper understanding of the current production cycle, but the general impression remains one of expectation.

U.S. statements indicate that the delivery of nuclear submarines has dropped from ten to seven a year, and that missile tubes are being removed from the *Yankees*. This suggests that SSBN production is now running at three a year, and in measure as new SSBN join the fleet, *Yankees* are being converted to attack submarines, the ballistic missile force remaining within the SALT I limit of 62 hulls. It is not clear, however, whether the *Delta* program (or some derivative) is continuing or whether it is being replaced by a *Trident*-sized *Typhoon* class, but the general implication is that by 1987 the force could still stand at some 60 submarines carrying 950-1,050 missiles. Allowing a 25-year hull life, the Soviets may have planned to stabilize their force by the end of 1992 at 1,200 missiles carried by 60-75 SSBN.

The picture for attack submarines is even more confused. If past building rates persist and the *Yankees* are indeed converted to attack submarines, this would mean that seven attack units would join the fleet each year, compared to about four during the previous

decade. Assuming that the overall production of nuclear hulls remains at seven a year, this would boost the attack force to about 135 nuclear-powered units by the end of 1987, reducing thereafter to stabilize at about 100 units by the end of 1992. However, it seems unlikely that this pattern will be maintained. Although several *Alphas* are now said to be seagoing, it is not clear whether the class is yet in series production, or whether these are multiple prototypes. The *Alpha's* genesis takes it back to the 1961-64 decision period and it may originally have been designed for the *Polaris*-trailing role. Meanwhile, a very large submarine of perhaps 16,000 tons surface displacement is now fitting out at Severodvinsk. It is said to be in series production and to carry 12-20 cruise-missile launchers of the kind fitted in *Kirov*,* the new class of battle cruiser recently completed in Leningrad. The large hull allows a massive weapon and sensor load, and one is inclined to categorise this submarine as an underwater equivalent of the *Kirov*, its primary role being the battle for command of such areas as the Norwegian Sea, in defense of the SSBN bastions. Such a submarine would have a powerful general-purpose capability, including minelaying. It is possible that this class and an *Alpha* derivative will make up the attack program for the eighties.

The future of the diesel submarine force is uncertain. If current building rates continue, the force could dwindle to about 95 by the end of 1987, stabilizing at about 75 in the mid-nineties. It would, however, be prudent to assume a substantially larger number as the Soviets have the experience of

*Admiral Hayward, U.S. CNO, reported in *Aerospace Daily*, 20 June 1980, Vol. 103, No. 36, p. 281-82. The submarine is said to be 480 ft. long and 57 ft. diameter (compared to *Trident* at 560 x 44) and will probably carry the SS-NX-19; *Air Force Magazine*, July 1980, p. 19.

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higher force levels, they have spare building capacity and they could easily boost production in the years ahead. Within the Soviet concept of operations, submarines are an all-purpose defense unit and it is hard to have enough of them.

Lastly, and almost as a footnote to the regular procurement process, we can expect *Backfire* to replace *Badger* as the primary land-based strike aircraft, although it is not clear whether the naval force will remain at its present strength of about 350 aircraft. On the one hand, while the navy is getting half the *Backfires* that enter service, the annual production rate is low and at present two old aircraft are being retired for every new delivery. On the other hand, the improved aircraft now entering service with frontal aviation make it likely that the tactical air force will take over ground targets that were formerly the responsibility of the long-range air force. This may well release LRAF aircraft for naval missions.

Further inferences concerning future capabilities can be drawn from these developments. First, submarine technology. The *Alpha* represents an important breakthrough for the Soviets, inasmuch as it can go substantially faster and deeper than the latest U.S. submarines, although it is still more noisy. However, the wider significance of the *Alpha* is that it represents the first real end product of the 1957-58 decision that singled out the submarine as the key component of the Soviet Navy, with all that implies in terms of priority for research and development resources. Bearing in mind the Soviet capacity for innovation and their penchant for adopting unconventional means to outflank a superior capability, we should expect the *Alpha* to be only the first of a series of advances, which could challenge our technological lead in the submarine field, and may also affect our future antisubmarine capabilities.

The "monster" fitting out at Severod-

vinsk is another indication of this unfavorable trend.

Second, the tactical employment of ballistic missiles and the use of shore-based systems. We should pay serious attention to what the Soviets have written about the employment of ballistic missiles against ships and submarines. There tends to be substance in their technological claims, even though they often advance the claim when the capability is in sight rather than in service. It is quite likely that the *Yankee* was originally conceived as a tactical missile battery for use against carriers. It is quite likely that the SS-NX-13 terminally guided submarine launched ballistic missile was shelved because of SALT and not because of insuperable technical problems. It is clear that important elements of the military leadership have always been attracted to the concept of "calling down fire" from land-based systems on naval targets, using satellite surveillance systems, or ships and submarines as forward observers. Even if the Soviets have yet to develop a fully successful system, there is every reason to suppose that they will persist in their efforts because of the operational and political advantages such as a "global system" would bring.

And third, strategic ASW. The Soviets have now invested 18 years of research and development in non-acoustic and/or space-based detection systems, seeking to breach the concealment of the ocean that protects the U.S. SSBN force. Basic research is a Russian forte and the West is not investing enough in unconventional ASW to be certain of what they have achieved. Meanwhile, the *Alpha* is now available to develop trailing methods, perhaps using active sonar. They may not beat the problem, but we can be certain that they will persist in their efforts to develop a counter to Western SSBN operating in the open ocean.

Looking to the future, the West faces the combined effects of a sharp increase change in the allocation of resources to Soviet naval construction; the introduction of powerful new types of warships; and the ongoing results of a continuous research and development process. But the significance of recent developments is only partly related to this increase in capabilities. Ambitious building programs and a large navy are nothing new for Russia, and for the last 100 years she has needed substantial forces to defend against assault from the sea and to thwart attempts by maritime powers to dictate the outcome of events in adjacent areas. Nor has the navy been overlooked in Soviet contingency planning for war. During the last 20 years, the increasing scope and importance of maritime warfare have been explicitly recognized by the military leadership, who acknowledge that navies could have an enormous effect on the entire course of a future conflict. Nevertheless, Russia was and is predominantly a land power; the mortal threats to her existence have come by land; the army has been the basis of security at home and of influence beyond her borders. Up to now the navy has been seen as an expensive necessity, rather than (as in the West) a preferred instrument of overseas policy.

But this attitude may be changing. The role of naval power is being reassessed in the Soviet Union. The navy's political standing has increased significantly over the last decade and may still be waxing. Meanwhile, naval design criteria have shifted from short-term survivability to sustaining combat operations for the duration of a war. For the first time, wartime requirements will generate a general-purpose navy with a true worldwide capability, suitable for use as an instrument of state policy in peacetime.

The political use of Soviet naval forces in peacetime has evolved progressively over the last 15 years. The

role emerged initially as a byproduct of the presence in distant sea areas of ships on forward deployment but, during the last decade, changes in perceptions of threat, and of risks and opportunities combined to make the navy's political role increasingly important. This coincided with a more assertive Soviet policy and the increasing use of a Soviet military presence in support of overseas objectives. However, the navy's contribution to this policy has been secondary and the primary instruments have been the provision of arms, military advice and training; the transport of men, munitions and equipment by merchant ship and long-range aircraft; and direct participation by the combat troops of revolutionary states. Up to now the navy's role has been to serve as an earnest of Soviet commitment, to offer limited logistic support and to provide protection against intervention by local forces. And it has yet to demonstrate its readiness actually to engage Western naval forces, in order to prevent them from intervening against a Soviet client state.

This may change in response to developing opportunities and capabilities. While the requirement to defend the SSBN bastions will tend to work against continuous distant deployment,

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



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concern for the Chinese threat acts in the opposite direction, as do wartime interests in the Persian Gulf area. The Soviet Navy will be emboldened by increasing operational experience and bolstered by a new theory of seapower, and will have a strong voice in Moscow. As the more capable warships begin to join the fleet, we may see a new Soviet willingness to use naval forces to counter the projection of military power in time of peace.

In the event of war, operations like the Battle of the Norwegian Sea will

become of critical importance. However, maritime conflict will not be limited to the outer defense zones and the sea lines of communication, and Gorshkov's writings suggest that the Soviet Navy thinks in terms of wide-ranging operations in the subsequent stages of a nuclear war. While it is hard to envisage detailed scenarios with any confidence, the mobility and firepower embodied in warships could have a critical impact on a protracted conflict, in what may well be a largely preindustrial world.

