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# The Imperialist Revolutionaries

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## 126 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Rounding out the "War-Fighting" section is the most stimulating and entertaining essay in the book, "U.S. vs. Soviet Style Fleet Design," by Norman Friedman. He uses fresh and freewheeling historical analogy to look at the Soviet Navy from novel angles. By daring to be wrong, Mr. Friedman may be startlingly right over a wide range of topics. New thought about the Soviet Navy has always been scarce and is sometimes not officially welcomed.

Shifting the focus to peacetime issues are short sections on the Soviet view of naval arms limitation and Soviet forward naval deployment. Sophisticated analyses by Abram N. Shulsky, Albert E. Graham and a trio from the Center for Naval Analysis, Robert Weinland, Anne Kelly Calhoun, and Charles Peterson are equal to the complexities of the subject.

A nice bonus is the compact mass of reference material tabulated in the appendixes and interspersed in the text. A glossary of selected Soviet naval terms is unusual and illuminating. Much is suggested by subtle differences in our naval language.

*Naval Power in Soviet Policy* is recommended reading for military professionals. Mr. Murphy, assisted by his wife Margaret Murphy, should repeat this fine effort 2 or 3 years hence. The Air Force is commended for making so much information and expert opinion available in a compact, affordable book. Similar collections on Soviet ground and air forces are needed.

HAMLIN CALDWELL

Seton-Watson, Hugh. *The Imperialist Revolutionaries. Trends in World Communism in the 1960s and 1970s.* Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1978. 152pp.

Readers in the Kremlin, if there are any, will not like this book.

Hugh Seton-Watson, the dean of Western historians specializing in communist affairs, plays hard ball:

One point on which Marxist-Leninists and old-style Russian imperialists could unite... was that what was good for the CPSU and the Soviet state was also good for its non-Russian citizens...

... the system of repression by the Committee of State Security (KGB) is immensely more ruthless and comprehensive than was any modern European colonial repression...

The language of Russian falsifiers of the histories of non-Russian peoples strikingly recalls the language of Victorian British or Wilhelmian German imperialism... for the Soviet Russian myth-makers are one more in the line of upstart imperialist elites glorifying their supremacy over lesser breeds...

Soviet propaganda has created a grotesque dreamworld of blissful brotherhood among socialist nations: judged by this standard, Soviet reality is shameful and oppressive...

The public posture of the rulers of the second super power was arrogant, boastful, and self-righteous.

Seton-Watson's purpose is to survey the activities of communism in the world in the 1960s and 1970s. Tasks of this magnitude usually are undertaken through collective action and the result is an uneven volume of essays by assorted authors. By contrast, *The Imperialist Revolutionaries* is an even, strong, brief work of scholarly interpretation that packs important political and strategic punch.

Starting on the basis that polycentrism is a fact (two centers of communist power: Moscow and Peking; an illusory third center, Havana, actually subservient to Moscow; and a possible fourth center, Hanoi), Seton-Watson proceeds to survey the globe. More comfortable with East European and

## PROFESSIONAL READING 127

Soviet internal developments, he nevertheless casts a critically interpretive eye on events in Western Europe, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and the Asian southern and eastern rims. Conclusion:

The events of the last decade showed less progress for the communist cause in developing societies, and more progress in advanced industrial societies, than was to be expected in the early 1960s.

The basis for this judgment is not that of revolutionary takeovers. These occurred in five developing states: Cuba, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Angola. Rather, the basis is that of growing Communist Party strength in Western Europe, "The Enigma of Eurocommunism," simultaneously with the lapse of noncommunist resolve into "short term hedonism and a collective guilt complex." Seton-Watson sees a failure of nerve in the West that bodes ill.

However, if the European communist parties succeed to power, he does not accept that they will be clients of Moscow:

... Italian or French Eurocommunists might conceivably welcome NATO as a defense against Soviet attack. It was, after all, true that the Chinese and Yugoslav governments had long reckoned with the possibility of armed resistance to Soviet forces; why should not West European communists do likewise?

Thus Seton-Watson sees Eurocommunism as, at best, a mixed blessing and, at worst, a curse, for the Kremlin. Eurocommunist issues impact on the Soviet succession. Brezhnev's heirs likely now are taking sides on how to treat its possibilities. If it succeeds, the impact in Eastern Europe and among the nationalities may result in upheaval difficult to control. If it fails, the peaceful road to socialism will be seen

to have dead-ended. The military road, with its deadly uncertainties, will remain.

For their part, the Eurocommunists face horrendous choices. To be too revolutionary is to drive the middle classes to the right. To be too conciliatory is to drive the workers and intelligentsia to the extreme left. If they successfully participate in coalitions, they risk feedback on the Eastern European communists. If they defend the Soviet record, they lose votes. If they succeed in reducing defense expenditures, they risk Soviet occupation. If they support defense expenditures, they are typed as American stooges.

To complicate their dilemma there is the Chinese aspect. Seton-Watson notes that Peking is recommending energetic defense measures and Atlantic unity, but the phenomenon is much more significant and deserves more emphasis. The Chinese Government is fully committed to the strategy of a second front against Moscow and is using all means available, ideologic, economic, psychological, to gain that end. Moreover, Peking's counter-Soviet efforts extend around the globe and encompass the spectrum from espionage and subversion, propaganda, psychological warfare, and diplomacy to proxy combat. This was apparent during the period covered, but is insufficiently highlighted.

One hundred and fifty-two pages of profound interpretation by a great historian, this book is one of true merit.

WILLIAM A. PLATTE  
Captain, U.S. Navy

Suid, Lawrence H. *Guts & Glory*  
... *Great American War Movies*.  
Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley,  
1978. 357pp.

There is only one problem with this book; it's mistitled. What if a seductive nude had been used as the cover for Gray's *Anatomy*? A potential reader who is attracted by the title and cover