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Soviet Strategy in Europe

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nerability to air defenses; and, lastly, their terrain following guidance gives a small CEP- the authors contend that all these factors combine to make the cruise missile a most desirable system for all services, a true "Defense Bargain."

While the study is both remarkable in its thoroughness and commendable for its brevity, there are three areas of constructive criticism I would offer. First (and possibly a problem only in semantics), the authors have relegated the U.S. Navy to a role of "sea denial" rather than the more assertive missions usually stated. This implies a relegation to lower quality vis-à-vis the Soviet Navy than most of us are ready to accept.

Second, I found the book dangerously optimistic in its statements of capabilities for the cruise missile. No single design or variants on a single design can be fired from sea, air, land, and submerged launchers; and proceed at any range out to 2,000 miles; and remain invulnerable during this flight then deliver a nuclear or conventional warhead or even a device the size of a CAPTOR mine at a land or sea target within a 30-foot circular area. SLCMs may or may not be the decisive factor to reverse the NATO/Pact balance in Europe and provide defense/deterrence in that theater as claimed. Cruise missile technology must be developed, and tested in a family of missiles each with realistic operational requirements. They should not be oversold while in advanced development until proven, lest an enemy believe we truly will have a capability for remote warfare by some specific date and overreact, or lest some economizing zealot in Washington begin trading off procurement of cruise missiles against proven systems.

Last, a reader could conclude from this study that the era which started in the late 1940's when strategic weapons necessarily meant nuclear warheads may now be drawing to a close. The time is

at hand for a redefinition of strategic vs. tactical missions and a dialogue concerning the place of conventional and nuclear warheads in each role. Perhaps we can now achieve counterforce strategic capabilities with conventional weapons.

These criticisms aside, cruise missiles provide the greatest potential of any weapons system to come on the scene in years. Pfaltzgraff and Davis have provided a text that should be required reading at all levels.

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Pipes, Richard, ed. *Soviet Strategy in Europe*. New York: Crane Russak, 1976. 316pp.

Particularly at a time in U.S. history when major reassessments of its chosen foreign policies have been receiving increasing polemical and, perhaps even substantial, attention, a work meant to be examining "the persistent elements in Soviet Russia's European policy and to assess that policy's successes and failures," should be most welcome, especially if contributors include such first-class analysts as John Erickson, Michel Tatu and Thomas Wolfe. However, despite their noteworthy attempts and other sound articles by Christopher Civic, Lothar Ruehl, Philip Hanson, Michael Kaser and John and Pauline Pinder, the value of *Soviet Strategy in Europe* rests on the individual contributions of its authors rather than as a meaningful, thorough and cogent interpretation of Soviet "policy."

Perhaps a more extensive commentary by the editor, Richard Pipes of Harvard, which sets out a rigorous and objective analytic framework underscoring the issues and interpretations surrounding Soviet policy would have been an effective way of tying together a series of papers written under the sponsorship of the Stanford Research Institute. By identifying the constraints as well as the successes of, Soviet

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policy, one establishes a reference against which that policy can be measured.

Professor Pipes argues that "there exist in the world the most fundamental differences in the psychology and aspirations of its diverse inhabitants." The various elements of Russian historical experience in conjunction with Russia's peculiar governmental tradition (namely, that comforts or privileges come only from the state), persistent Russian expansion, the background and conditioning of the present elite under conditions of the "most ruthless political infighting known in modern history" and the peasant origins of that leadership have combined to create "a very special kind of mentality, which stresses slyness, self-interest, reliance on force, skill in exploiting others, and, by inference, contempt for those unable to fend for themselves." Since, in Professor Pipes' view, "political thinking and behavior are shaped largely by the experience gained in the arena of domestic politics, . . . [and] [F]oreign policy is . . . an extension of domestic politics," the West is at a particular disadvantage and, worse, may not realize its jeopardy.

While the foregoing may be correct both in truth and in logic, what Professor Pipes fails to incorporate as part of the Soviet domestic and foreign policy process, is the pragmatism and caution which have been fundamental characteristics of the Soviet leadership at least since the early 1920's. Without this ingredient, it is easy to make an excellent case for unlimited suspicion of virtually unlimited ends to Soviet objectives. All of which is not to diminish the critical fact that an adversarial relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union has existed, exists today, and will continue in the future. But, what is needed is better analysis of that relationship including examination of the very real constraints to "unlimited" Soviet ambitions.

excellent analyses in the book. Michel Tatu updates his earlier powerful study of Soviet decisionmaking (*Power in the Kremlin*[1968]). Lothar Ruehl and Christopher Civic write sensibly on Soviet relations with West and East Europe. Thomas Wolfe and John Erickson produce their usual excellent standard of analysis of Soviet military capabilities and intentions in Europe and divide somewhat in their conclusions over the "conventionalization" of Soviet military power. Both suggest that the meaning of recent increases in Soviet conventional military capabilities in the Central Front over the past 6 or 7 years is partially uncertain. However, Professor Erickson, with specific and necessary caveats, concludes the evidence may be more than just pointing in that direction and that a "conventional" as opposed to a "strategic nuclear" option exists. Hanson, Kaser and both Pinders write incisively about the economic dimension with the first pair advancing a well-measured analysis of COMECON import-export requirements and a penetrating examination of "technology transfers," reviewing Soviet constraints as well as benefits and objectives.

In summary, *Soviet Strategy in Europe* is helpful as a vehicle for publishing some very good individual papers about our primary adversary. But, in analyzing the broader view of Soviet policy, of U.S.-Soviet relations during a period of so-called "detente" it could profit from the eminently sound interpretation of "Detente Under Soviet Eyes" made by Adam Ulam:

Detente in the Soviet view has meant a new type of relationship with the United States, but this relationship does not automatically put the Soviet Union under an obligation to pursue policies Americans would approve. Detente was never assumed by Moscow to mean a specific series of agreements, not to

mention an alliance. It was meant to provide a framework within which the two powers could seek agreement; an atmosphere conducive to political bargaining free from threats of war, enabling both sides (the Russians obviously hoped primarily themselves) to gauge more accurately each other's interests and intentions. But the mere existence of detente does not, the Russians feel, put any restraints on their policies, even though they are pleased when the State Department feels it does put restraints on America.

That type of introduction blended in the European context would have been far more desirable and useful in reinforcing the high standard and quality of the contributing writers.

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Potter, Edward B. Nimitz. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1976. 507pp.

This thorough and workmanlike life of Adm. Chester W. Nimitz is also somewhat frustrating, owing to circumstances largely beyond the author's control. For his subject, however eminent as a naval officer, was singularly unhelpful as the subject of a biography. Although he himself apparently enjoyed writing, Nimitz adamantly refused to write his own story, nor would he permit others to attempt the task during his lifetime. Not until 4 years after the Admiral's death and 25 years after V-J Day did Professor Potter start work on the volume. Not only were most of Nimitz' contemporaries dead by this time, but the single most valuable collection of source material had been lost, for Mrs. Nimitz had burned almost all the daily letters her husband wrote her during the war.

The outline of the career is clear enough, and shows a highly competent

officer rising steadily through the various grades, with a single mishap in 1908 when he put a destroyer up on a mudbank in the Philippines. Nimitz' early concern with submarines and diesel engineering led him by way of the diesel-powered tanker *Maumee* to involvement in the first operational effort in underway replenishment, the refueling of Commander Taussig's destroyers on their way to Europe in 1917. Transferred to the staff of Submarine Force, Atlantic Fleet, he acquired an influential patron in its commander, Capt. Samuel S. Robison. A year at the Naval War College in 1922-23 involved, along with the obligatory study of Jutland, exposure to the novel possibilities of the circular cruising disposition, with which Nimitz subsequently experimented while Assistant Chief of Staff to Robison during the latter's tours as Commander Battle Fleet and Commander in Chief U.S. Fleet. From 1926 to 1929 he was the first commander of the naval ROTC at the University of California; in the middle 1930's he served as flag captain of the Asiatic Fleet and Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Navigation; promoted to rear admiral, he had a tour in command of Battleship Division 1 before reporting as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, in which post Pearl Harbor found him.

Inevitably, the period of the Pacific War forms the bulk of the book. Here Professor Potter gives us an interesting description of the campaign as seen from headquarters at Pearl Harbor and Guam. The importance of communications intelligence comes through clearly. Suitable emphasis is given the various problems of personality, strategy, and organization which developed with the great augmentation of strength of 1943-44, with the upward mobility of naval and Army aviators, with Marine command of Army troops, and in the relations with Commander Southwest Pacific Area. Perhaps the most surprising revelation here is that in late