

1970

Russia's Road from Peace to War

F. H. Hartmann

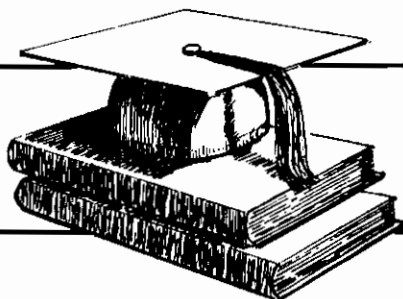
Louis Fischer

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PROFESSIONAL READING

Bonnet, Stanley. *The Price of Admiralty*. London: Hale, 1968, 272p.

This account of Royal Navy history commences with the era of Lord Nelson's victory at Trafalgar in 1805 and continues to the present. The major political turning points and milestones of the Royal Navy are recounted and analyzed from sail through steam and beyond to the nuclear submarine force. Major naval problems, such as the shift from sail to steampower, the shift from destroyers to battleships, the Royal Navy negative approach to submarines, and the innovation of engineer ratings with the advent of steam propulsion are discussed on both the national and ship-board level. One can see parallel motions in the U.S. Navy of today. Just as the United States is currently resisting the change from oil to nuclear power, so Great Britain resisted the shift from sail to steam and thus began her downfall as a seapower. Evidence of the continuing opposition to structural change is found in the following policy statement of 1858 regarding the trend toward iron ships:

... it is not to the interest of Great Britain possessing as she does so large a navy to adopt any important change in the construction of ships of war which might have the effect of rendering necessary the introduction of a new class of very costly vessels until such a course is forced upon her by the adoption by Foreign

Powers of formidable ships of a novel character requiring similar ships to cope with them.

This book is very interesting reading from the point of view of a naval historian. The rise and fall of the Admiralty is objectively accounted for in an unemotional framework. The work is recommended for one who is interested in the actions and reactions of maritime forces when pitted against frequent changes in government and resultant shifts of command and privileged pressure groups within the Admiralty.

W.G. CARTER
Commander, U.S. Navy

Fischer, Louis. *Russia's Road from Peace to War*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969. 499p.

Louis Fischer's book treats of Soviet foreign relations between 1917 and 1941. This reviewer's reaction to the book may or may not be typical, but he found the style difficult and the book hard to read. The detail given is sometimes overwhelming, and the "themes" are not much highlighted. Consequently, it is easy to get lost unless one is a professional historian. The book is divided into three parts. Part One ("Forging a Foreign Policy") is over half the total length, while Part Two is about 150 pages ("Hitler and Stalin"), and Part Three ("Origins of the Soviet-German War") is a scant 50 pages. The "new" material in the book adds up to no great revision of previously generally

held ideas, although the detail of Soviet involvement in China in the 1920's—some of it fresh—is interesting. Among the better parts of the book are comments on internal disagreements within the Soviet Union on foreign policy. But Fischer, of course, like everyone else, runs shorter of this kind of material as he gets nearer the present day. The book is especially complete in its attention to the secret German-Soviet military collaboration of the 1920's and early 1930's.

F.H. HARTMANN
Alfred Thayer Mahan Chair of
Maritime Strategy

Institute for Strategic Studies, *Problems of Modern Strategy*. London: 1969. 2 pts.

The Adelphi Papers numbers 54 and 55 grew out of the Tenth Annual Conference of the Institute for Strategic Studies which was held in September 1968. The conference assessed what has been accomplished in strategic studies in the past two decades. Here are published nine selected papers which were presented at the conference. Each paper is an informed discussion of a major segment of modern strategy. Collectively, the papers provide a survey of the whole subject of modern strategic thought as it has evolved since World War II, a major theme being how this thought has been affected by the existence of nuclear weapons. With the explosion at Alamo-gorda, the world turned a corner. Even though many of the concepts of the famous classical strategists such as Mahan and Clausewitz still apply, there is a new dimension. The possibility of nuclear war is added. The probability of limited war is changed, conditioned as it is by the effect of the nuclear war possibility in the background. The major ideas covered by the papers include the legacy of earlier strategists, the theories of the nuclear age (deterrence, flexible response, escalation, nuclear parity, et

cetera), social systems analysis, limited war, ethical and moral questions, arms control, Great Power intervention, the effects of technological progress, the strategic uses of revolutionary war, and others. The papers are carefully researched and erudite. They are most highly recommended for the sophisticated reader.

R.M. TUCKER
Captain, U.S. Navy

Lendvai, Paul. *Eagles in Cobwebs*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969. 396p.

This book aims to provide a more sophisticated approach to what is called the "Communist world," in particular, the Balkan States of Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, and Rumania. The author contends that "despite two decades of professed adherence to the social gospel known as Marxism-Leninism, the quest for national identity has proven more powerful than ideological bonds." Therefore, the Soviet Union could no more contain this nationalism than cobwebs could contain eagles. This is an in-depth study of the Balkan States under Communist rule, presented in infinite detail, with a comprehensive analysis of the development of nationalism in these countries. Its timeliness is clearly shown by a postscript on the meaning of the Czech tragedy, and this analysis alone would be worth searching out the book. The author contends that this incident supports his argument that nationalism is growing and will eventually undermine Soviet domination and influence over the area. As he says in conclusion, "tanks can slow down, but they cannot stop the historic process of decolonization and national emancipation."

The main weakness in this volume lies in the overabundance of detailed information in the individual country analysis. It clearly shows the author's personal knowledge about the area and his thorough and extensive research.