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## Soviet Naval Doctrine and Policy 1956–1986

Tom Fedyszyn

Robert Waring Herrick

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a nadir today,” Turner calls for “the dissolution of the CIA” as part of “a bold transformation” of U.S. intelligence.

The 444 endnotes citing interviews, NARA files, articles, and many books prove that Turner has maintained a scholar’s interest in the field he once practiced. A surprise may be that no endnote cites John Ranelagh’s *The Agency* or any book written by Jeffrey Richelson—or perhaps Langley’s reviewers extirpated every one of them.

TOM GRASSEY  
*Naval War College*



Herrick, Robert Waring. *Soviet Naval Doctrine and Policy 1956–1986*. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 2003. 3 vols., 1,415 pp. \$129.95, \$129.95, \$139.95

It is no accident that each volume in this set comes with Fleet Admiral Sergei Gorshkov’s picture on the cover. In fact, the time period encompassed by this trilogy coincides precisely with the Gorshkov era—the central figure in all of the strategic and doctrinal debates of this study. This massive series is the capstone achievement of Robert Waring Herrick, a former U.S. naval attaché to the Soviet Union and an experienced student of Soviet navy development. The subject, the Soviet navy’s growth from a small coastal force into a balanced force capable of contesting the United States for command of the seas, is similarly the capstone achievement of Admiral Gorshkov, who played a key role in its development. Appointed chief of the Soviet navy in 1956, he took the job surrounded by an army-oriented general staff and the political leadership of Nikita Khrushchev, who

was obsessed with missiles and nuclear weaponry. Over his thirty-year tenure Gorshkov brought the Soviet navy “into the world ocean” and seriously challenged American-led Western supremacy at sea. From the official Soviet perspective, this work dissects the smaller debates that attended this growth: coastal versus oceangoing; offensive versus defensive; submarines versus balanced fleet; navy nuclear first strike versus strategic reserve.

If one follows the maxim that “budgets are strategy,” Gorshkov comes out the clear winner in his competition within the Soviet bureaucracy, ultimately building not only a bigger navy, but also a “balanced” blue-water force. In fact, the book would offer additional insights if it managed to relate official pronouncements with actual building programs. This would lay to rest the speculation made throughout the book that some of these official pronouncements were unvarnished reality while others were exaggerations or Aesopian fables in which the Navy lobbied for forces as projections of Western successes.

The most useful contributions this study offers are found as Gorshkov evaluates and assesses the effect of the growing U.S. Navy during the Reagan administration. Most notably, Herrick shows that Western practices were the foundation upon which Gorshkov built his navy. The Lehman “Oceanic Strategy” of the early 1980s gave a second wind to Moscow’s shipbuilding program. Herrick also reveals the complete disutility of using “dissuasion” as part of a deterrence strategy with the Soviets. Could a nation ever build a navy so large that the nearest competitor simply was dissuaded from trying to keep up? Reflecting classical balance of power

theory, Herrick's evidence persuasively suggests that there was no single factor that induced Soviet shipbuilding more than the fear that America might surge too far ahead in the naval arms race of the 1980s. The Reagan "600-ship Navy" was all the ammunition Gorshkov needed to lay the keel of his first real aircraft carrier. Ironically, however, Gorshkov's winning campaigns against the Soviet defense bureaucracy helped bankrupt the Soviet Union.

This study is designed for the specialist. It is not easy to read. It is overly long (1,415 pages)—it quotes, paraphrases, and synthesizes too many articles and editorials found in Soviet newspapers and journals from over the thirty-year period. Herrick is comfortable in this terrain and appreciates the way Soviet leaders conducted their strategic debate, helping the reader to understand the hidden (and sometimes contradictory) messages they made. He is particularly good at helping readers "split the hairs" of the debate, noting the shifting doctrinal priorities from year to year, which few laymen could discern. However, he repeatedly revisits such central topics of strategic debate as command of the sea, homeland defense, and sea-lane attack. Few readers will have the patience to follow.

TOM FEDYSZYN  
*Naval War College*



Hornfischer, James D. *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors*. New York: Bantam, 2004. 499pp. \$14

James D. Hornfischer writes a gripping novel of the U.S. Navy's last major surface engagement of the twentieth

century. The battle described here is the engagement between Task Unit 77.4.3 "Taffy 3" under the command of Rear Adm. Clifton "Ziggy" Sprague and the Japanese Center Force under Vice Adm. Takeo Kurta, charged with ultimately halting Gen. Douglas MacArthur's Leyte invasion force. By October 1944 the war in the Pacific seemed well in hand, yet the Japanese navy still posed a threat.

From the first line in the book, "A giant stalked through the darkness," the reader is caught up in life onboard a World War II ship. Hornfischer begins his story with a desperate Japanese fleet. The Japanese carrier force is virtually ineffective because of the severe loss of planes and, to a greater extent, the loss of pilots to fly them. The remaining Japanese strength resides in its battleships—two of the largest ever built, assigned to the Japanese Center Force—*Yamato* and its sister ship *Musashi*. Hornfischer describes the battle that took place in the morning hours of 25 October 1944 between the overwhelming firepower of the Japanese Center Force and the relatively slow and poorly armed Taffy 3.

The tone is set with carefully provided background on the ships of Taffy 3 and their crew while the combat information centers and radio shacks try to work out the puzzle of random reports flowing in. At the same time, a significant portion of American firepower, the U.S. Third Fleet, under Adm. William F. Halsey, is rapidly steaming north in hot pursuit of the remaining Japanese carrier fleet. This deception move, which was part of the Japanese strategy, worked as it was designed—it essentially took Halsey out of the fight.