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U.S.-Russian Naval Cooperation

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BOOK REVIEWS

A book reviewer occupies a position of special responsibility and trust. He is to summarize, set in context, describe strengths, and point out weaknesses. As a surrogate for us all, he assumes a heavy obligation which it is his duty to discharge with reason and consistency.

Admiral H.G. Rickover

“A New Policy Direction?”

Meconis, Charles A., and Boris N. Makeev. *U.S.-Russian Naval Cooperation*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1996. 151pp. \$55

CHARLES MECONIS AND BORIS MAKEEV, the former an American naval arms control analyst and the latter a retired Russian naval officer, have collaborated on a thoughtful analysis of the benefits to the United States, Russia, and indeed the entire global community, of the world's two great naval powers seriously discussing and adopting significant naval arms limitations agreements.

The authors define naval arms control as “any action, agreement or statement . . . that reveals, restricts, restrains or reduces the operations, capability, composition, structure, or size of any nation's naval forces for the purposes of preventing conflict, reducing damage should conflict occur, and reducing the cost of procuring and maintaining forces.”

After each author reviews the naval aspects of his own nation's national security, Makeev describes the development program of the Russian Navy, while Meconis outlines U.S. naval strategy as promulgated in “. . . From the Sea: Preparing the Naval Service for the 21st Century” and “Forward . . . From the Sea.” All of this serves as background for the authors' strong support for meaningful naval arms limitations discussions and agreements. Meconis and Makeev have concluded that the need to prevent or contain maritime conflict in the post-Cold War era still exists and that naval arms control can play a major role in that effort and in establishing a framework for U.S.-Russian naval cooperation and possibly even partnership. This is so, in their opinion, because in the post-Cold War era the Russian Navy no longer seeks full parity with U.S. naval

forces and Nato, and because the Russian Navy is no longer interested in limiting American naval power in areas that do not affect Russian interests.

The authors propose a three-stage approach to the realization of their naval arms control agenda. The initial phase, which is already in progress, promotes maritime confidence-building measures. It is envisioned that this stage would reinforce existing confidence-building measures at sea and would include the following: a verifiable agreement for the prevention of incidents involving submarines; a full and formal exchange of information on the makeup, location, missions, and building and decommissioning plans of the ships and aircraft of both navies; an increased exchange of ideas concerning strategy, doctrine, and operations through direct navy-to-navy contacts; and prenotification and observation of naval exercises.

The second stage would be more difficult to reach agreement on and would be perceived as essentially one-sided in nature. The proposal calls for a bilateral agreement to limit the size and activities of U.S. antisubmarine forces in certain areas near the Russian coast, so as to preclude effective "strategic" antisubmarine warfare but not interfere with other types of naval operations, including "tactical" antisubmarine warfare. While not discussing them in any depth, the authors also suggest examining, possibly with the United Nations taking the lead, restraints on submarine warfare and the use of naval mines.

The final stage recommends negotiated limits and reductions of naval forces and weapons, calling for a bilateral agreement to cut the nations' submarine fleets to approximately equal levels; a multilateral regime to prevent the sale or transfer of offensive or destabilizing technology to countries in regions of conflict; and a joint effort to push for multilateral accords aimed at reducing the size of major navies and limiting building plans to levels of reasonable sufficiency.

The recommended first stage is certainly possible in the not too distant future. The individual initiatives within this phase make sense, and several are already in progress. Having served as the senior member of the U.S. delegation at three recent Russian-United Kingdom-United States (RUKUS) naval meetings, I can attest that several of the data exchanges are well underway.

Difficulties would arise in the implementation of stages two and three. The authors point out some of the problems in reaching agreement in these areas. One of the major questions that must be resolved initially is whether promoting the activities proposed is in the best interest of the United States. While the authors mention U.S. global naval responsibilities, they tend not to give them the importance they merit.

Today, the United States Navy is stretched very thin. It has not been uncommon during the last year or so to have more than 50 percent of its ships underway on a given day. The vast majority of our naval activity today has very little to do with the Russian Navy. The impact of the reductions proposed by Meconis and Makeev

on the ability of the U.S. Navy to continue to meet its ever-increasing commitments—in the Persian Gulf, the Western Pacific, the Caribbean, and off the coasts of Africa and Bosnia—must be weighed very carefully.

Cooperation between the U.S. Navy and the Russian Navy is certainly a very good idea that should be pursued whenever it is in our interest to do so. However, with our global responsibilities, the United States simply cannot make a decision about U.S.-Russian naval arms limitations based solely on their impact on the bilateral relationship between our two countries and their navies.

In their introduction, the authors write that if their work stimulates new thought and perhaps a new policy direction, it will have served its purpose. This book should certainly prompt thoughtful analysis of the proposals put forward. It reinforces several of the bilateral exchanges currently ongoing. Whether it will contribute to a new policy direction will be decided by future civilian and naval leaders in both countries. Members of the national security community interested in naval issues and particularly naval arms limitations will find this a useful book.

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Chayes, Antonia Handler, and George T. Raach, eds. *Peace Operations: Developing an American Strategy*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense Univ. Press, 1995. 178pp. (No price given)

Because it is probable that the American military will frequently be committed to peace operations in the future, today's policymakers, commanders, and service members would be prudent to prepare for these missions. *Peace Operations* may assist them in their task by adding to the discussion of what concerns must be addressed when considering and participating in such interventions.

This short book of essays originated in the congressional Commission on the Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces. The editors and authors, many of whom were members of the commission, have

political, military, legal, and academic backgrounds; several have hands-on experience; and two have done important research on this topic at the Henry L. Stimson Center, a defense-oriented think tank in Washington, D.C.

This work counters the notion that Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) detract from the participating units' warfighting abilities. The authors point out that regardless of the strains and dangers of operational deployments, units are more likely to be at high levels of morale, cohesion, and discipline when they are doing something real than when they are in garrison. They assert that there are general points that account for the success or failure of a peace operation: the match between force capabilities and mission requirements; the force's ability