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## The Soviet Union in Arctic Waters: Security Implications for the Northern Flank of NATO

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This policy of trying to mold old empires into new ones was peculiarly inappropriate for Egypt. These over-arching assumptions, combined with the political inadequacy and responses by the old empires, particularly those of Anthony Eden (whom Heikal asserts believed Nasser to be a personal enemy), and the sophistication of the Third World leaders (chiefly Arab and Indian) were a prescription for the disaster which did in fact result.

One of the most poignant, perhaps unintentional, elements of Heikal's story are the similarities in political behavior on the part of both Israel and Egypt when faced with the strains of nation building. Egypt under Nasser responded in ways which were not admirable. In the attempt to extricate itself from the colonial grip, Israel, facing problems of the same nature, with the same political ambitions for internal and external security, and the same European and great power hostility, chose a course remarkably similar to Egypt's. With this in mind, it is wise to remember that of all the countries of the Middle East which abandoned or were abandoned by Europeans, Israel and Egypt are two with great political and emotional communality of experience. Heikal's perspective on Suez provides us with an understanding of why this should be so.

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Ostreng, Willy. *The Soviet Union in Arctic Waters: Security Implications for the Northern Flank of NATO*. Translated by Eric Hansen. Honolulu, Hawaii: The Law of the Sea Institute, Univ. of Hawaii. (Occasional paper No. 36, 1987.)

The Arctic above Europe is one of the world's most important maritime theaters. Its waters are the operating area of the large Soviet Northern Fleet. It is there that 35 of the Soviet's SSBNs are deployed. Also, the Northern Fleet currently deploys about 32 cruise and 90 torpedo-attack submarines. In addition, over 40 major surface combatants, including two Kiev-class VTOL aircraft carriers are assigned to that fleet. Should war come, many expect U.S. attack submarines and carrier-based aircraft to be employed in the Arctic.

Mr. Ostreng's work is one of the few studies in the West that deal with the Arctic theater and its naval dimensions. It was originally published as *Sovietinordlige Farvann: Atmostrategien, Nordflaten og norsk sikkerhet* in Oslo, 1982. His views on the Soviet presence in the Arctic are almost exclusively from the Scandinavian or Western perspective. From 121 notes accompanying the text, only two are from Soviet open sources. So, it appears that the author made almost no attempt to provide Soviet views on the subject.

It is a short book that contains only 77 pages of text, including 11 maps. It has neither introduction nor conclusion. It's focus is on the possible scenarios for the employment of the Soviet Northern Fleet and how

Norway's security might be affected. Ostreng has arbitrarily chosen to define four basic interpretations of Soviet actions on how the Northern Fleet might be used in wartime: "operationalist," "revisionist," "geostrategic," and "processist."

The author poses and counterposes the views of the so-called revisionists, operationalists, and other experts on various aspects of the combat employment of the Soviet Northern Fleet. Their opinions are presented with little connecting or explanatory analysis. While there is too little analysis, there are too many statistics. Matrices provided in the text oversimplify the problems and are of little use.

Chapter 2, which deals in some detail with geographic and oceanographic characteristics of the area, is probably the most instructive. The discussion of the Soviet geostrategic problems in the Arctic in chapter 3, has some interesting observations.

Ostreng rightly concludes that various proposals aimed at removing nuclear weapons from the Arctic are unrealistic. There is simply too much asymmetry in the positions of the U.S.S.R. and the United States to reach any equitable agreement on the issue. He is critical of the Canadian plan called Flexible North of 60-Degrees Plan (FN60-plan). However, he seems to endorse a proposal to create a sanctuary for strategic submarines. Its acceptance would presumably make the Soviets more open to discussing the arms control agreements in other regions of the world.

This book suffers from the rapid changes in the Soviet Union since its publication. But, despite its shortcomings, people who are interested in the problems of the Arctic will find it a useful summary of various Western views on the Soviet potential and probable actions in the Arctic theater. There are also some good maps.

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Luckett, Richard. *The White Generals*.  
London: Routledge & Kegan Paul,  
1988. 413pp. \$25

It is seventy years since the end of the Russian Civil War. Now, seven decades after the Red triumph over the White Generals, the Bolshevik regime is collapsing upon itself. Just as the Russian parliament, (the Duma) eventually supplanted the Tsar who formed it, one is tempted to wonder whether the newly restructured Supreme Soviet will dethrone Gorbachev and the Party. If so, will the Soviet Union disintegrate into anarchy and civil war again?

Amidst the political chaos of 1917, General M. V. Alekseev, then Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces, stated that "Russia is dying. She stands on the edge of an abyss. A few more shocks and she will crash with all her weight into it." Substitute Soviet Union for Russia and the words seem as valid today as they were 74 years ago.