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Soviet Submarine Operations in Swedish Waters, 1980-1986

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no secrets, had they wanted to build the *Eisenhower* they almost certainly could have done it.) And thirdly, the tables had turned. The Soviets could make the West dance to some of their tunes.

We can expect the sequel to this book, then, to be a fascinating study, for the kinds of ships the Soviets built, what they wrote and what action they took was almost certainly the direct result of a world view freed from many of the savage constraints of the pre-Brezhnev years. But without this first volume we would not be in a position to understand the next, especially in this country, where the collective historical memory cannot be expected to reach back more than half a generation. As it is, we can look forward with confidence to having the main texts for a cultural history of formal Soviet naval thought.

Leitenberg, Milton. *Soviet Submarine Operations in Swedish Waters, 1980-1986*. New York: Praeger, 1987. 199pp. \$31.95

Milton Leitenberg has produced an exhaustive account of the continuous series of violations of Sweden's coastal waters by foreign (assumed to be Soviet) submarines which occurred during the first seven years of this decade. The book, however, is much more than simply an annotated chronology of these incursions. Leitenberg enriches his text by examining the domestic and international political contexts within which the operations were construed, and by subjecting every possible explanation of the Soviets' motives to rigorous analysis on the basis of all the available evidence.

Most importantly, the author exposes the contradictions and weaknesses inherent in the Swedish government's policy regarding these submarine operations by consistently and convincingly comparing govern-

ment statements with the acknowledged facts, only to find that the former come up short every time.

One of the book's strengths is Leitenberg's obvious knowledge of the complex workings of Sweden's military and political structures—knowledge gained, no doubt, while he was a research associate at the Swedish Institute for International Affairs between 1979 and 1987. The author's in-depth knowledge of his field is exemplified by the broad range of Swedish military and political sources upon which he draws to illustrate his thesis.

Leitenberg exploits these sources to greatest effect in his discussion of the weakness demonstrated by the Swedish government in the face of overwhelming evidence that the Soviet Union was routinely violating (neutral) Sweden's territorial waters and had on occasion sent submarines deep into the heart of her most important naval bases. This aspect of the submarine crisis is documented so

exhaustively by the author that the reader unfamiliar with the Swedish political situation is left dumbfounded by the (at best) sheer naiveté exhibited by the Swedish authorities, or (at worst) their apparent unwillingness to recognize the submarine threat for what it was and to take effective action against it.

Although the Swedish government admits to at least 150 "probable violations" of Swedish territorial waters by foreign submarines during the years covered in the book, only twice were the submarines involved positively identified by the government as Soviet vessels (a fact Leitenberg partially attributes to the paucity of Swedish anti-submarine warfare capabilities, and to official rules of engagement which inhibited Swedish naval commanders from either forcing the submarines to the surface or sinking them).

One of these two incidents was the infamous "Whiskey-on-the-Rocks" case in October 1981, when a Soviet Whiskey-class submarine accidentally ran aground inside the Karlskrona naval base in southern Sweden. On this occasion, the Swedish government had no option but to call a spade a spade, and the Soviet government, in turn, was forced to apologize for the incursion (which it excused by explaining that all the submarine's navigational instruments had simultaneously malfunctioned).

On most other occasions when submarine violations of Swedish territorial waters were recorded, Leitenberg demonstrates that the

Swedish government seemed determined to avoid coming to the politically inconvenient conclusion that the Soviet authorities were both lying to them about previous submarine operations and ignoring their pleas that such operations be discontinued.

The unwillingness of the Swedish government to acknowledge the extent of the submarine incursions extended even to a reluctance to believe the testimony of their own armed forces, who during 1983 publicly released sonar recordings of an intruding submarine. "When it came to the question of 'evidence,'" Leitenberg informs us, "the Swedish government [which from 1982 to 1986 was the Social Democratic government of Olof Palme] even contradicted their own previous statements of their efforts to make reality conform to their own view of events." In April 1984, after one of the longest series of submarine incursions, Swedish Foreign Minister Lennart Bodstrom stated that the "Swedish government places great weight on the assurances that [Soviet] Foreign Minister Gromyko made that the USSR has not violated Swedish territory since the grounding in Gasfjarden in 1981." Leitenberg notes that Bodstrom's statement was at odds with his own government's position, which identified the Soviet Union as responsible for the lengthy series of submarine intrusions in October 1982 at Harsfjarden, close to Sweden's major naval base at Musko.

The author summarizes the Swedish government's attitude as follows: "Swedish [government] policy clearly was unable to face realities and their unpleasant, complicating implications."

Having exhaustively chronologized this seven-year series of intrusions and the diplomatic maneuvering which accompanied them, Leitenberg turns his attention to an analysis of the Soviets' motives for initiating the operations and for continuing them in the face of (admittedly muted) Swedish protests. The theories which come under his scrutiny include such seemingly farfetched hypotheses as the one posed by a Swedish naval captain who suggested that the Soviets were trying to persuade the Swedes to increase their ASW resources so that in time of war they would be able to prevent NATO submarines from hiding in Swedish territorial waters.

Leitenberg ultimately rejects what he terms "purposeful provocation theories" such as that above in favor of "military/operational motives." In what the author describes as the "most plausible" theory, British defense analyst Michael MccGwire suggests that the operations fit neatly into the Soviet military concept of "preparation of a naval theater (MTVD) for military action." According to MccGwire, the incursions are rehearsals for wartime operations in which the Soviets would "neutralize" Swedish coastal installations, particularly those that could be used in the context of ASW.

Despite its exhaustive approach, Leitenberg's book does contain some weaknesses, not the least of which is

the absence of any detailed maps of the area under discussion. Those readers lacking comprehensive knowledge of Swedish geography will be left somewhat perplexed as the author describes the routes taken by various submarines.

In addition, not enough attention is paid to the role of Spetsnaz troops (Soviet special forces) during the incursions. This aspect of the operations deserves to be explored in greater detail in the light of two factors: first, Leitenberg's acceptance of MccGwire's theory that the operations were aimed at Sweden's coastal defenses; and second, the physical evidence of the large-scale use of midget submarines by the Soviets during the incursions. Both of these suggest substantial Spetsnaz involvement in the submarine operations.

Perhaps the book's only serious flaw, however, is the author's apparent failure to conduct any interviews with those Swedish government officials directly involved with the submarine crisis. Leitenberg quotes liberally from media interviews with these officials to buttress his own assertions. Yet despite being ideally situated in Stockholm between 1979 and 1987, Leitenberg appears never to have sought out those responsible for Swedish government policy during this period. His failure to do so is the only major weakness in an otherwise invaluable work.

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