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The Sixth Continent: Mikhail Gorbachov & the Soviet Union

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sance began after World War II even though there are several histories that trace the start of those efforts to both the Air Force and Navy early in that war. Neither this book nor *Deep Black* mentions the Navy's efforts in this area, a curious omission in view of the writings of Captain Don East and others on the subject.

Guardians does discuss the U-2/ aircraft carrier feasibility studies. It also has excellent histories of the Manned Orbiting Laboratory and the Soviet *Salyut*. In fact, the coverage of all the Soviet systems is very good. The book also has very interesting discussions of the French and Chinese fledgling space programs.

The book ends with an excellent primer on "Orbital Mechanics Made Easy" and an enlightening appendix, "U.S. and Soviet Military Satellite Launches 1959-1985." It would be very interesting to see what Curtis Peeples believes is happening on board *Mir*, the first true space station, and to read his analysis of where both we and the Soviets are going in space now that *Mir* is a fact.

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Frankland, Mark. *The Sixth Continent: Mikhail Gorbachov & the Soviet Union*. New York: Harper & Row, 1987. \$22.95

Time magazine's 1987 Man of the Year, Mikhail Gorbachov, received top billing in the title of Mark

Frankland's book. However, the title is incomplete. A senior British journalist, fluent in Russian, Frankland concentrates on the political intrigue and domestic problems in the 1980s leading up to the current overhaul of Soviet society.

The author's message is that a new energy exists in the U.S.S.R., manifested by a leadership with a visible vitality, in contrast to the lazy, corrupt Brezhnev years, which were characterized by benign neglect. The government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union drowned themselves in self-delusion by exaggerating the country's achievements and hiding its failures.

The author dispels the notion that Mikhail Gorbachov is a one-man show with his own unique vision of the U.S.S.R.'s destiny. The true restructuring began under Yuri Andropov. When Andropov ascended to the position of Party General Secretary following Brezhnev's death in November 1982, he was appalled at the sloth in Soviet society. Andropov wasted little time in implementing radical changes, such as firing high government and Party officials who had prospered under Brezhnev's inefficient bureaucracy.

Andropov aspired to revive Bolshevik traditions. He climbed the Party ladder under the harsh school of "he who is ready to punish himself wins the right to coerce others." Unlike the jovial, hard-drinking Brezhnev, Andropov was an ascetic who drew on Lenin for inspiration

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and sought to redirect the U.S.S.R.'s destiny back to that established by Lenin.

Andropov's untimely death in February 1984 threw these plans into abeyance. The elevation of Konstantin Chernenko, a Brezhnev crony, to General Secretary meant a shift back to easier times for the massive government and Party apparatus. The Chernenko era was short, however; Frankland calls him the "Temporary Tsar." In March 1985 the U.S.S.R.'s leadership once more was in the hands of an orthodox Leninist: Mikhail Gorbachov.

Gorbachov immediately resumed the course set under Andropov. He called for the Soviet people to "restructure" themselves in order to accelerate the gains made by the Revolution in 1917. Gorbachov and the reform-oriented members of the Politburo believed that part of the U.S.S.R.'s decline in the 1970s and early 1980s was due to the ability of government and Party officials to work in secret. This belief provided part of the impetus for the well-known *glasnost* campaign.

The author limits the scope of the *The Sixth Continent* to the great domestic drama that ensued between the death of Brezhnev and the rise of Gorbachov; thus, he spends little time on items of particular interest to naval officers, such as foreign and defense policy. Still, he devotes the last chapter to the Soviet Union's relationship with the rest of the world.

Frankland displays a keen understanding of the Soviet Union. He was

a journalist in Moscow in the early 1960s and from 1982-1985. He also has written a biography of Khrushchev in a style that tends to be anecdotal; *The Sixth Continent* reads like a series of political profiles in a long election campaign. Nevertheless, he is capable of incisive analysis. For instance, he criticizes the Soviet thinking which maintains that the U.S.S.R. progressed nicely until "Stalin drove the Soviet Union out of the paradise that Lenin had so carefully planted." He asks to what degree the Party had corrupted itself by claiming absolute power.

The Sixth Continent's story ends in late 1986, before *perestroika* entered the political lexicon of the West. But even without using the word *perestroika*, Frankland provides a fascinating glimpse of its genesis. The restructuring of the Soviet Union did not begin with the publication of Gorbachov's *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* in 1987. Instead, restructuring is a force that has influenced Soviet politics since Brezhnev's last years and is destined to influence it for years to come.

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Podet, Allen Howard. *The Success and Failure of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, 1945-1946: Last Chance in Palestine*. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986. 351pp. \$59.95

Military officers have long been aware—often frustratingly so—of