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La puissance maritime sovietique

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again, it was not prepared to fight in the mountains and cities of Lebanon. But if Gabriel has one single important message, it is to study the Clausewitzian dictum that before starting a war, there should be a clear understanding of its political purpose and operational objective. *Operation Peace for Galilee* showed that the Israelis not only ignored Clausewitz, but they paid scant attention to their own strategic assumptions. Further, they ignored the basic ingredients for the successful use of force which they have used so well in the past: it should be in pursuit of vital interests, be used as a last resort, support the diplomatic effort, have clear objectives, have domestic support, and be winnable.

Operation Peace for Galilee is important and should be read not only for its discussion of the campaign in Lebanon and Israeli strategy, but because it contains larger, more far-reaching concepts. These concepts involve the connection between Israeli policy in Lebanon and US regional objectives as well as a classic example of the problems which military forces can have in limited wars with limited objectives.

Coutau-Bégarie, Hervé. *La puissance maritime soviétique*. Paris: Institut Français des Relations Internationales, 1983. 198pp. 95F.

Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, a young French political scientist writing under the auspices of the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), has taken a major step toward a needed diffusion of knowledge by producing this work. It merits our attention for two principal reasons. First, it is, in its own right, a first-class professional job on a complex topic. Drawing from an extensive bibliography, the author carefully and comprehensively discusses the functional components of maritime power which have been exploited to bring the Soviet fleet to today's place of prominence. The second reason is equally important. H. Coutau-

Bégarie brings a fresh voice and differing insights to the problem. He also represents a continental West European constituency which has a vital stake in Soviet developments. As he notes in his bibliography, most of the major works on the subject are *not* available in French libraries. Only when the dimensions of this relatively new Soviet threat to Western democracies are known to those threatened will national consensus be reached to counter the threat.

The back cover provides a good encapsulation of the author's views:

"Confronted with that new situation, the Anglo-Saxon strategists have reacted in contradictory ways and are mired in Byzantine squabbles over the real import of this new dimension of the Soviet threat. . . .

One learns then that the USSR has been able to become a maritime power on all counts: its strategic force rivals that of the United States; its fleet and naval aviation threaten the positions and traffic of the West and support diplomacy all over the world. The interventions in Angola, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Exercise Okean are very clear warnings."

The author points out the importance of the watershed of Cuba in 1962 when the Soviets not only embarked on an accelerated building of maritime power but also mandated the progressive enlargement of the navy's missions to allow it to intervene in local crises. Thus a major step was taken away from the traditional defense of Soviet territory toward the much broader role of "protection of the interests of the state." He also notes that the new role of the Soviet Navy did not really become apparent to Western observers until the Six-Day War in 1967 when they were taken aback by the appearance of Soviet warships on the scene.

Throughout this writing, M. Coutau-Bégarie sensibly takes a cautious approach and urges discretion in predicting the actions of the Soviet Navy in time of war. Drawing upon the writings of our own Frank Uhlig, he cites the examples of the Germans before 1914 and the Americans before 1941 on the switch from the anticipated use of submarines against warships to their employment against merchant shipping. He also warns against focusing on the strategic ASW battle or the anticarrier battle because Soviet literature

reserves them a major role. He notes that the Gorshkov writings are viewed by most Western analysts as self-serving and not an actual expression of doctrine. An interesting and instructive quotation from Moltke the Elder is used: "In war, the enemy always has the choice among three solutions, in general it is the fourth that he selects."

In summing up the difficulties of analyzing the Soviet naval enigma, the author warns against coming to a single conclusion as long as the flexibility of maritime power exists. He does not feel that the analyses done to date have been in vain. Rather, he says that a number of valid conclusions have been reached over the past decade (once the futile discussions on the offensive or defensive nature of Soviet naval strategy are set aside). He thus concludes that the differences in view on Soviet naval posture are in degree rather than kind. He postulates that a fleet of the first rank must fulfill three functions: strategic nuclear, general military, and political. Each of the ensuing chapters is then dedicated to each of these functions with an objective examination of them and an assessment of how well the Soviet Navy can perform them.

A great deal of factual information is presented textually and in accompanying tables and annexes. The chapter on general military functions is particularly good as types of ships and naval aviation are described as well as bases, logistics and personnel. Each is analyzed in the context of overall strategy. While the primary

theater of operations has now been changed from neighboring waters to the high seas, possible scenarios in both areas are discussed with a careful eye to Soviet weaknesses as well as strengths. The author judges that, for now, Soviet deployments are very limited and can only be seen as demonstrating a presence. Soviet deployments are thus for political as well as military purposes.

It is in the political realm that the author is at his best. His final chapter provides an excellent overview of Soviet naval diplomacy and the importance the Soviet Union attaches to it. The credibility of the USSR in the Third World and the symbolism of the fleet as evidence of US-Soviet parity in the strategic arena rank high as Soviet aims. Short but fascinating case histories of Soviet naval diplomacy—adventures as well as misadventures—are used to illustrate its coercive and its cooperative nature. Successes have been limited and failures have been many.

However, Coutau-Bégarie cautions that one should not underestimate the effectiveness of Soviet naval diplomacy. Just because one cannot measure its influence beyond local crises, one should not conclude that it has no influence. He believes that the fundamental goal of Soviet naval diplomacy is the maintenance of the *status quo*. What really counts is the maintenance of total power and parity with the United States. One should especially not conclude that the military or diplomatic functions are secondary. On the contrary, he

asserts, the fleet is now a key player of the Soviet armed forces and an indispensable instrument in local crises. The author concludes with the view that, whatever the military worth or the degree of effectiveness of its naval diplomacy, the Soviet fleet is first and foremost a method of affirmation of power, and in this role, it has acquired a privileged place in the structure of Soviet power—a role which will only be increased in the course of the coming years.

The “good news” is the book itself. The “bad news” is the fact that it is presently available only in French. Since this work is the first in a series on “Maritime Power in the 1980’s,” one hopes that IFRI will provide an English version as a significant contribution toward the better understanding of a serious problem.

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Sigal, Leon V. *Nuclear Forces in Europe: Enduring Dilemmas, Present Prospects*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1984. 181pp. \$22.95, paper \$8.95

At first blush it would seem like an impossible task to fit the myriad complexities of the Euronuclear issue into 173 pages of text. But Leon Sigal has come close, in this well-organized and cogently argued book.

Sigal reminds the reader that while deterrence is the *raison d'état* behind the Euromissile force, deterrence