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The Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet

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modernization and reform.

Trask's book is of value for anyone interested in the early experimentation of the United States with its role as a great power. Even at the high price, it is an indispensable addition to the library of any serious military or naval historian.

GRAHAM A. COSMAS
U.S. Army Center of Military History

Polmar, Norman. *The Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet*. 12th ed. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1981. 421pp. \$24.95

The 12th edition of this book continues Norman Polmar's tradition of excellence, at least in the pictorial reference part, which is, of course, the great bulk of the book. The photography is very good, and the statistical data certainly accurate enough for this kind of reference.

It is a big book, over 400 pages. It breaks down the ships of the U.S. Fleet by general type, with 11 categories of ships and 7 kinds of craft. Classes and types of ships are described in terms of their missions, design objectives, and a brief history of the class in some cases. The Military Sealift Command is ably covered, as are the many kinds of service craft, drydocks, and other support ships which might have been left out of a lesser work. Naval aviation receives an equally comprehensive treatment, including descriptions of the types, organization, air wing deployments, and even the markings of different squadrons, wings, and fleets. The aviation photography complements the text just as well as does the ship photography in the first part of the book. The book concludes with sections on weapons and electronics, once again with useful photographs to highlight what might have been uninteresting data. The final chapters cover the U.S. Coast Guard and the 14-ship "fleet" of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(NOAA). The chapter on the Coast Guard is far superior to other such fleet references because the Coast Guard gets the same overview treatment as the Navy: organization, missions, aviation, personnel, and then coverage of specific types of ships and craft.

If there is any criticism to be offered, it concerns Mr. Polmar's rather bleak presentation of the Navy's problems and its capacity and will to resolve them, presented in the four-page introduction entitled "State of the Fleet." The problems are certainly there, and, as Mr. Polmar says, they will be hard to solve, but they are more a reflection of the state of flux in national foreign and defense policy than disarray in the Navy.

In summary, *The Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet* is the definitive reference on the subject. The information is concise, well organized, accessible, and very nicely displayed. It is well worth the price and should be purchased by every ship and ready room in the fleet.

P.T. DEUTERMANN
Commander, U.S. Navy

Bucknell, Howard III. *Energy and the National Defense*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1981. 235pp. \$19.50

In this short, easily read book, Howard Bucknell presents a comprehensive summary of the national and world energy situation and its implications for national security. He makes clear the urgent need for aggressive action to relieve our heavy dependence on oil and gas, outlines available alternatives, and discusses the political and economic factors which bear on our collective decision process.

The recent "oil glut" makes it easy for us to forget that oil and gas are finite resources which have been heavily depleted. Howard Bucknell marshals an impressive array of figures and graphs intertwined with effective argument to