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Decline of an Empire: The Soviet Socialist Republic in Revolt

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Michael Deane examines the role of Soviet programs in strategic defense, and is intended to complement two earlier AISI monographs on Soviet military strategy, *The Role of Nuclear Forces in Current Soviet Strategy* by Leon Gouré, Foy Kohler and Mose Harvey (1974), and *War Survival in Soviet Strategy* by Leon Gouré (1976).

As do the two earlier AISI studies, Deane's monograph relies heavily on published Soviet sources in an attempt to present a Soviet perspective on nuclear strategy in general and on strategic defense in particular. These uniquely Soviet views, Deane asserts, differ markedly from traditional U.S. concepts that have moved away from "fighting" a nuclear war to "detering" nuclear war. The Soviets in fact, if one is to take at face value their many public pronouncements on the subject (as indeed the author clearly does), "appear to subscribe to the long time basic rule of war *fighting* which mandates superiority in terms of both offense and defense." (emphasis added) U.S. preoccupation with deterrence and concepts of unacceptable damage, mutual vulnerability, and in particular assured destruction, asserts Deane, result in a strategic posture void of civil defense and an antiballistic missile capability and is, in short, a military posture lacking in credibility. Citing Soviet military manuals, Deane attempts to show that Soviet doctrine, on the other hand, emphasizes the need to destroy the enemy's nuclear arsenal, smash important groupings of his troops, undermine his economy and to disorganize his state and military control. What's more, adds Deane, Soviet authorities clearly prefer that these attacks be carried out preemptively. Here he cites in particular Col. M.P. Skirdo in *The People, the Army, the Commander* (*Narod, armiya, polkovodets*). This reviewer drew no such conclusion from the cited remarks of Skirdo when read in context.

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Deane's conclusion is that we are witnessing a growing U.S.-Soviet strategic asymmetry that if permitted to continue "virtually guarantees that in case of a nuclear war the U.S. will suffer defeat and probably annihilation as a functioning society while the USSR and its system will survive and with sufficient power intact to establish the world hegemony that its leadership has always considered its ultimate due." Surely one must look far and wide to find an equally bleak assessment of our future national security! To support his thesis, the author employs an analysis of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, contrasting Soviet and American views. In fact, more of the monograph is devoted to the ABM issue than to any other.

The solution to this problem of impending doom? According to the author, the United States should upgrade its offensive systems to ensure more effective penetration of Soviet defensive systems, and perhaps more germane to the book's basic thesis, should also "fully develop and deploy a comprehensive strategic defensive system, supplemented by a reasonably effective civil defense preparation," for as one regularly hears from AISI, the Russians are coming.

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d'Encausse, Helene Carrere. *Decline of an Empire: The Soviet Socialist Republics in Revolt*. New York: Newsweek Books, 1979. 304pp.

This very dispassionate and timely book provides a starting point for those who must think beyond the first battles and on to the final campaigns that will probably seek to overthrow the predatory Soviet State—the U.S.S.R. Far too many people continue to think of the Soviet Union as being one vast, monolithic, integrated state impervious to outside influence. It is not, and this book highlights important aspects of the

conglomeration of almost 100 distinct nations and peoples making up the U.S.S.R. Often speaking diverse languages, this half of the Soviet controlled population (Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Kazakhs, Ukrainians, Belorussians, etc.) actively retain diverse aspirations and rising expectations. The motivation for this undying nationalistic spirit is rooted in the fundamental desire of these peoples to achieve some degree of independence and self determination or, in short, to live their own lives with minimal interference from a central authority (Moscow). The author analyzes aspects of the national consciousness of each major ethnic group in terms of language, economic situation, religion, culture, and heritage and tradition. Her information reinforces what such Russian dissidents as Andrei Sakharov and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and others have been saying during this past decade: that the fires of nationalism have yet to be extinguished and that the dream of independence still lingers on among a majority of the Soviet-dominated peoples (as well, perhaps, among the Warsaw Pact satellite nations).

The Bolsheviks with Lenin and Trotsky cleverly exploited this spirit through the use of lies and false propaganda to overthrow the czarist government and consolidate the October Revolution of 1917. Roughly a quarter-century later in 1941, invading German armies were initially greeted enthusiastically throughout the western and southwestern U.S.S.R. as liberators by a totally disillusioned peoples. Unfortunately for the German Army, Hitler's demonic mind and intoxication with military success caused him to abandon the then brilliant opportunity to use the highly motivated anti-Stalinist ethnic groups against the Soviet apparatus. Confronted with the false alternative of German domination, these same people later waged a particularly vicious and highly successful guerrilla campaign

against the Germans that proved to be a contributing factor to the latter's ultimate defeat in Russia.

Today this indomitable spirit continues to be a real vulnerability that the Soviet State has never been able to totally repress or hide despite deportations, genocide, and force of terror. Established here is the potential climate that the astute psychological campaigner and military strategist can exploit. Any military-political campaign against the U.S.S.R. can be greatly enhanced by exploiting the subtle, indirect approach that recognizes each nationality within the U.S.S.R. and fosters each nation's independence.

As the author correctly intimates, the motivation for initiating an *open* revolt will very likely only take place when the physical presence of a liberating force is firmly established and felt on territory previously controlled by the U.S.S.R. The psychological bomb of oppressed and disillusioned peoples, which the Berlin Wall so well serves as an appropriate symbol, is ready and waiting to blow the Soviet apparatus apart. This potential should not be underrated. Helene Carrere d'Encausse, Professor and Director of the U.S.S.R. Studies Section at the Institute of Political Sciences in Paris, has provided some very useful light by which a future victory may be seen.

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Dismukes, Bradford and McConnell, James M., eds. *Soviet Naval Diplomacy*. New York: Pergamon Press, 1979. 426pp.

In 1980 the Soviets commissioned a new nuclear-powered battle cruiser and launched a huge cruise missile submarine and an even larger ballistic missile submarine. The Soviet Navy is developing and deploying a massive fleet which, by sheer mass of hardware, cries out for close examination. Unfortunately, with some notable exceptions such as Robert