

1979

Guide to Far Eastern Navies

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Recommended Citation

Hurlburt, J.S. (1979) "Guide to Far Eastern Navies," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 32 : No. 2 , Article 15.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol32/iss2/15>

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American relations which are more competitive than cooperative.

Using professional papers written by the leading Chinese-American specialists, the editor offers a book that provides both a broad understanding and varied opinions on a widely controversial subject. Thoughtful readers will find *China and America: The Search for a New Relationship* valuable background for examining Sino-American relations and their importance in world affairs.

MARTHA WALLS
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Blechman, Barry M. and Berman, Robert P., eds. *Guide to Far Eastern Navies*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1978. 586pp.

Although perhaps better titled, "Guide to East Asian Navies," this regional look at the navies of China, Japan, the two Koreas, the Philippines and Taiwan is a refreshing attempt to provide more than just a compilation of photographs and technical data. To achieve this, the book is divided into two distinct parts. The first, comprising slightly more than half the pages, is a series of essays, each dealing with one of the six subject navies and written by individuals of different naval repute, including Norman Polmar writing on the two Koreas. One could question the inclusion of the Philippine Navy in this work in terms of locale, capability and interaction with the other navies; but the essay is informative. Part II of the book contains the usual photographs, silhouettes and technical data on ships and aircraft. While not quite as detailed as some of its larger counterparts, it is adequate.

The significance of this naval guide then lies in Part I. The editors hope to inform the reader "about the quality of each force, its strengths and weaknesses, the role it plays in peacetime in support of foreign policy and its potential wartime roles, and how it is likely to evolve in the future." That is no mean task,

considering the complexity of such countries as China, Japan and Korea, but it is carried off reasonably well. As might be expected, however, there are as many new questions raised as old ones answered. This is not really so much a fault of the authors and editors as it is a reflection of the realities of the region. Only the most intrepid of analysts or futurists would dare to predict which of the various options available to the nations of the area will, in fact, be pursued, how these will affect the selection of options by the others, and how this interaction will influence naval forces. None of the authors appears this intrepid; thus, what is presented is a menu of possibilities for the future that the reader may or may not find reasonable. Yet it may well be that these uncertainties are precisely what makes this work a timely and significant contribution, as suggested by Admiral Zumwalt in his Foreword.

Notwithstanding the uncertainties of the future, the historical perspective and commentary on the present status and roles of these navies is solid. It is here that the naval reader and layman alike will find most items of interest, although this may reflect this operator's penchant for fact over hypothesis. Despite the multiple author approach, two themes suggest themselves throughout the essays. The navies, as they exist today, reflect post-World War II political realities rather than traditional Western naval concepts. For example, if the size of one's navy has traditionally been held to be a reflection of one's maritime interests, then Japan, with worldwide trading interests and significant dependence on the sea as a source of food, should maintain a navy with global reach. Instead, reflecting the political reaction to the experience and results of WW II and her American-imposed Constitution, Japan maintains only a Maritime Self-Defense Force, credible in home waters, but lacking any real open ocean capability. China, with a merchant

marine of some 550 ships and growing continues to rely on a coastal navy more suited to a form of guerrilla war at sea than a traditional sea control role. In this case, fiscal and technological constraints also may play a role, although the implication is that they are not dominant. There are signs of change, but any new direction must await the results of the current internal debate on modernization. What grows on the reader is a perception of East Asian interest in a continued U.S. naval presence in the Western Pacific to guarantee what they are unwilling or unable to protect.

The second thread is a sense of a regional naval balance in which each of the navies, less the Philippines, is evaluated as being effective in defending its own home waters while posing no credible offensive threat against any other. One gets an eerie feeling of 1922 naval ratios achieved by happenstance rather than agreement. What this means, of course, is that the dominant naval forces in the area are those of the U.S. 7th Fleet and the Soviet Pacific Fleet. This issue is handled in a lead essay, written by the editors, that provides a rather gross comparison of the two forces and postulates how they might interact with each other and with the navies of the region. This chapter seems rather shallow with too many caveats. Had it been placed at the end of the section as a wrap-up, rather than a lead-in, it would have proven far more effective. Such statements as "The size of the U.S. Navy will increase in the future, as the growth in U.S. shipbuilding appropriations, initiated in the early 1970s, results in greater numbers of new ships, while the Soviet Navy, facing a worsening obsolescence problem in submarine and major warships, will become smaller," will cause a raising of eyebrows.

On balance, *Guide to Far Eastern Navies* achieves its stated purpose of providing a dynamic view of the navies of East Asia rather than the typical snapshot. It remains to be seen whether it is the forerunner of a series of regional

guides and how such volumes may be kept current. For now, this one is worth the readers' attention.

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Buchanan, A. Russell. *Black Americans in World War II*. Santa Barbara: Clio Books, 1977. 148pp.

World War II profoundly affected black Americans. In spite of the racism, segregation, discrimination, and frustration that blacks experienced, the war engendered a racial awareness and brought about great changes in their status. Many of the advances of the Civil Rights revolution began during the war. This story of promise, challenge, and change is the subject of A. Russell Buchanan's short, descriptive volume, *Black Americans in World War II*. Although derived mainly from secondary sources, the book does show the author's research in the papers of the NAACP and National Urban League. Those papers, however, are sometimes used to the exclusion of such other equally important sources as the black press. During the war the black press had an important influence on both black and white America, in spite of Buchanan's contention that it did not reach the masses, and this point demonstrates one of the major problems when an author depends too heavily on too few primary sources.

Black Americans in World War II contains nine topic chapters and a summary but there is little continuity between chapters, and each is without any significant introduction or conclusion. Still, the chapters do relate a rather interesting and exciting history, pointing out the different racial conditions in the north and south, the March on Washington Movement, violence in 1943, black women, the unique situation in the military, and the Double V campaign. The work contains little analysis or interpretation, being pri-