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## U.S Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat

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ability to take advantage of rapidly shifting circumstances within the framework of a general plan.

Most people interested in military history have some idea of the course of the battle and of the legends surrounding it. Duffy explodes many of these legends. For example, the story that thousands of Russians drowned in the lakes on the southern edge of the battlefield is simply not true. More important, however, is the fact that the author gives a fine analysis of both the battle and Napoleon's generalship.

STEVEN T. ROSS  
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Freedman, Lawrence. *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1977. 235pp.

This book is a valuable primer for anyone interested in understanding the issues involved in strategic arms negotiations. Although Freedman's effort leaves quite a bit to be desired, he does succeed in weaving a generally coherent picture of the process of U.S. strategic arms policy development during the last two decades. This is no small feat if one considers, as Freedman does, the long roster of "players" (Secretaries and Under Secretaries, Agency Directors, Representatives and Senators, Academics, Presidential advisors, generals and admirals, and "staffers" of every description) who were, at any given time, likely to be participants in this process. Far from being open to straightforward analysis, the interactions of these people were characterized by a complex interplay of institutional, political, and ideological motivations. Into this tapestry Freedman expertly weaves the story of the CIA and the other intelligence agencies as providers of the information and estimates of Soviet strategic capabilities and programs.

In many ways, this "revised revision" of Freedman's Oxford D.Phil. thesis is a history of the CIA's apparatus for estimating the "strategic" capabilities of the Soviet Union. He traces the rising and falling influence of this apparatus principally embodied in the Office of National Estimates (ONE) through the early years (the fifties), the overestimations known as the "missile gap" (1960), to the underestimations of the mid to late sixties, and the final demise of the ONE in 1973. We see the formation of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) in 1961, and then Secretary of Defense McNamara's preference for CIA estimates to hold the military in "check." Later, Freedman describes the ascendance of the National Security Council (NSC) under Kissinger, in which the National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs) produced by the ONE were changed from a coordinated effort footnoted by dissenters (DIA, etc.), to one in which competing viewpoints were much less diluted and Kissinger and his NSC staff took over the interpretive role (expressing the conclusions in National Security Study Memoranda or NSSMs). I should note at this point that if the reader is beginning to gag on the acronyms, this is only a sample of what is in the book. Unfortunately, it is unavoidable. From another viewpoint, however, it is part of the story—the amazing regularity with which intelligence boards, panels, and studies have been formed and dissolved in the last 20 years, reflecting dissatisfaction (on the parts of different people at different times for different reasons) with what had previously existed.

The author convincingly describes the problem of the analyst(s) attempting to provide useful information, on a national scale, about an adversary in an environment in which it is assumed "... that the outside world is knowable, that it is the job of the intelligence officer to know it, and that if he fails to provide warning of some

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external event then that is a reflection on his capabilities rather than the nature of the world." Making things even more difficult is the fact that the intelligence estimator's world is the world of the future, and that a "... judgment on what the Soviet Union will most likely build, by way of military equipment, requires some judgment on Soviet military objectives." As Freedman describes it, the estimator's response to this challenge is to approach an analysis with a "set of expectations" about the target country, or what he aptly names an "adversary image," through which capabilities and intentions are seen as interdependent. This is markedly different from the popular image of the cold-blooded, facts-only, watchdog of enemy behavior. A major theme of the book is that this concept of adversary image has played a key role in the continuing controversy in the United States over precisely what the Russians are up to and why.

About halfway through the book, the author presents what appears to be a central thesis: that the intelligence community was not really at fault in the consistent failures to assess accurately the Soviet strategic arms buildup of the sixties. Instead, he argues, the inaccurate estimates were caused by the Soviets continual modification and alteration of the program. He then embarks on a highly speculative assessment of Soviet thinking through a series of crises (U.S. ICBM buildup under Kennedy, Cuba, Vietnam, and the Dominican Republic, U.S. ABM and MIRV development), each impelling them to make shifts in their program. Thus, the intelligence analysts were not to blame as they based projections on current capabilities that were always changing. This unnecessary defense of the intelligence community with a totally unsupported argument reflects a major weakness of the book, namely that a great deal of Freedman's analysis is highly speculative, or based upon

unexplained sources. One explanation for this is offered at the beginning of the book, where the author advises that the "about 50" interviews he conducted in 1973 were confidential, that the information thus acquired was incorporated in the text without reference, and that the reader must accordingly "... take a certain amount on trust ..."

Notwithstanding this criticism, the book is well worth reading for novices as well as old hands and specialists, first for its informed description of the strategic intelligence process, but more important because it grapples with the confusing, often esoteric world of modern weapons and the interaction of people and institutions that underlies U.S. strategic arms policy decisions.

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Gabriel, Richard A. and Savage, Paul L. *Crisis in Command: Mismanagement in the Army*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978. 242pp.

This is a flawed book, one that many will discount because it falls short of fulfilling its academic and scholarly pretensions. Supporting data, frequently referred to, often fail to materialize; much opinion is advanced as fact; and there is a sometimes confusing melange of description, diagnosis and highly prescriptive assertion.

But to dismiss the book on these grounds would be to miss the point. The authors have something important to say, and it has relevance for all the services in the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate, post-McNamara era. There is something terribly wrong with the leadership and the professional climate in the Army today, they believe. These two, now academicians but each with some military service to draw upon, try to explain what has caused the problems and what can be done about them. In the process they are wrong about as