

1979

The Sea Power of the State

W. R. Pettyjohn

S. G. Gorshkov

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Pettyjohn, W. R. and Gorshkov, S. G. (1979) "The Sea Power of the State," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 32 : No. 6 , Article 14.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol32/iss6/14>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

112 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Gelb and Betts felt compelled to extend their study and to take a look at Nixon's and Ford's policies. It is understandable that they would feel it necessary to review this later period before pronouncing judgment. However, the coverage is so brief that the insight and research is not of the high caliber of the remainder of the book.

After supporting their thesis that the system worked, the authors develop two schools of thought on Vietnam, summed up and evaluated as follows:

The Win School would have America vindicate mistakes in victory, while the Reformist School would have it avoid another mistake. Neither is comforting. The former gives promise of only threats and force. The latter suggests a certain naivete. . . . The problem, then, is not so much prevention as extrication, and the solution is not so much governmental restructuring as changing fundamental attitudes about and within the system.

Finally Gelb and Betts conclude that the basic lesson of the Vietnam war is "the need for pragmatism more than doctrines, formulas, and ideologies."

In the area of its main effort, an explication and analysis of Washington decisionmaking on the Vietnam war up to Tet 1968, the book is excellent and makes a fine contribution to the growing body of literature on the war. Upper level Political Science courses interested in the study of Presidential decisionmaking will find it especially useful.

DOUGLAS KINNARD
University of Vermont

Gorshkov, S.G. *The Sea Power of the State*. Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1979, 290pp.

It may be that Admiral Gorshkov's book will be as frequently cited and as seldom read as Mahan's *The Influence*

of *Seapower Upon History* is nowadays, but there seems little question but that it "will influence navies and governments for the rest of this century." This last judgment is from a review article, "A Primer on S.G. Gorshkov's *Sea Power of the State*," that appeared in the Spring 1977 issue of this journal. That review was of a translation prepared by the Naval Intelligence Support Center, and while the translation was widely available to those who knew how to seek it out, one couldn't pop into the local bookstore for a copy. That inconvenience has been erased with this, the commercial publication of the "authorized" English version.

Because of the earlier review here, this note will not presume to provide further analysis of the work but rather is intended to announce the book's availability and to applaud the decision of the Naval Institute Press to arrange, with Great Britain's Pergamon Press, its American distribution.

Some of Gorshkov's views, particularly on differing American and Soviet rationale for and contribution to several episodes in World War II, will be offensive to some readers, but an awareness of those views adds, as does the study of this book, to our understanding of the design and purpose of the man and the powerful and impressive Soviet fleet that he has built. *Sea Power* is essential, not just to the naval officer, not just to the military professional, but to all who ponder international security questions.

W. R. PETTYJOHN
Commander, U.S. Navy

Heilbroner, Robert L. *Beyond Boom and Crash*. New York: 1978. 111pp.

In an age known to Michael Harrington as "The Twilight of Capitalism," one rarely encounters authors temerarious enough to protest that reports of the demise of capitalism are, indeed, greatly exaggerated. Witness the personification of capitalism, Henry Ford,