

1979

The Armed Forces of the USSR

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Recommended Citation

Thach, Joseph E. Jr.; Scott, Harriet Fast; and Scott, William F. (1979) "The Armed Forces of the USSR," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 32 : No. 6 , Article 21.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol32/iss6/21>

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for those interested in strategic studies to avoid.

ROGER A. BEAUMONT
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Scherer, John L., ed. *U.S.S.R. Facts and Figures Annual*. Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1979. v. 3. 308pp.

A review in these pages of the 1977 volume of this series commented on the accuracy and completeness of the information in that volume and noted that if "appropriate information can be presented in tabular or statistical format, it probably can be found in UFFA." Those comments remain valid.

This, the 1979 volume, continues to fulfill the promise of its editor to provide "recent, basic data in fifteen major areas of Soviet life." The organization of the series remains generally fixed; that is, there are chapters on Government, Party, Demography, Armed Forces, the Economy, Agriculture, etc., but information is not repeated from year to year. Rather, each volume of UFFA is planned as a continuation of earlier volumes. This will obviously keep the cost of each volume at a reasonable level but will require that its users have access to the entire series. In this regard it is suggested that the editor reprint the table of contents of preceding volumes in the current *Annual* or provide some other sort of index to material previously published. Scholars and reference librarians will appreciate the added convenience (as they must already appreciate the convenience of one excellent source for such a wide range of information).

Institutional libraries and individuals whose research requirements include broad Soviet data will come to depend on UFFA (and they may wish to enter a standing subscription with the publisher) but even the casual browser will benefit (list of new Soviet movies, information on crime and crime rates, instant

history in the year in review, major events from 1917 to the present, lists of artists and scientists, the complete constitution of the U.S.S.R., rental rates, the price of a television set, particle beam weapons assessment, biographic sketches, etc.). *U.S.S.R. Facts and Figures Annual* is the *World Almanac* of specifically Soviet information.

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Scott, Harriet Fast and Scott, William F. *The Armed Forces of the USSR*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1979. 439pp.

In the delicate strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, the precise assessment of such quantitative power factors as orders of battle, force levels and technological developments represent only part of the matrix for determining the current posture of Soviet military power. Just as important, even if less tangible, are such qualitative areas as doctrine, strategy and organizational dynamics that add a meaningful thrust to the overall scope of the burgeoning Soviet military buildup as it has progressed over the past decade and a half. Despite the wealth of Soviet military source materials that has appeared during the post-1960 "Revolution in Military Affairs" period, there continues a distinct Western analytical tendency to "mirror image" or otherwise equate Soviet views on these qualitative factors with those more prevalent outside the U.S.S.R./Warsaw Pact region. In contrast, the work at hand allows the reader to view the Soviet Military Establishment as it perceives its own missions and roles in line with the above trio of qualitative factors and thereby helps clarify many of the misperceptions still apparent among the Western analytical community.

Both authors are highly qualified observers of the contemporary Soviet military scene. A former Air Force

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attache and intelligence officer, Dr. Scott served two tours in Moscow from 1962 to his retirement in the rank of colonel a decade later. Since that time, he has lectured and written widely on the topic, as has Mrs. Scott who, in her own right, has prepared a number of excellent analyses on current developments in the Soviet high command and on the U.S.S.R.'s national civil defense program over the recent past. With such credentials, the Scotts are particularly able to skillfully penetrate the often perplexing facade of official Soviet policy pronouncements and precisely identify key conceptual elements of its military doctrine and strategy. As briefly cited above, this facility permits the reader to better comprehend the actual nature of modern Soviet military power while simultaneously avoiding analytical pitfalls emanating from either Soviet jargon or from the common Western propensity for mirror imaging. Based almost entirely on Soviet sources, including many written by prominent military leaders and theoreticians, their painstaking research effort has successfully refined these materials into a clear, crisp analytical presentation that should capture the attention of specialists and general readers alike.

Following a three-part, twelve chapter organization, the work reveals a major contextual strength with its consistently smooth literary transition from the more theoretical aspects of Soviet military doctrine and strategy to their practical application within the Soviet Armed Forces and in their militarizing effect on other key sectors of the modern Soviet state system. Initially featuring a comprehensive, but incisive, historical overview of the Soviet military from the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution to the close of World War II, this chapter serves as solid background for their later treatment of more contemporary matters. Moreover, their attention to the Soviet military past as a firm prelude to the current era continues

throughout the book and provides both added dimension and flavor to their discussions of latter-day doctrinal concepts and organizational dynamics. Another major strength, this feature is readily apparent in the remainder of Part I (Chapters 2 and 3), which traces the origins and development of Soviet doctrine and strategy, and in their examination of the high command and its intricate network of force components and organizational support (Chapters 5 and 6).

The authors' ability consistently to maintain a contextual nexus between the theory and practice of modern Soviet military affairs is equally as pervasive as is their historical bent. After establishing the dominant role played by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in both doctrine and defense policymaking, they further emphasize that there is but one officially approved view for the conduct of modern warfare. The most consistent theme in recent Soviet military writings along that line, they observe, is that the development of powerful strategic nuclear forces on a par with or superior to those of the United States is an absolute prerequisite to any projection of its military power and presence under either nuclear or nonnuclear warfare conditions. Carried a step further for nonconflict situations, this Soviet perception helps explain its recent activities in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World. Applying this factor of CPSU dominance to its political elite's almost total control of the already tightly knit, highly centralized defense structure with respect to the military, the economic sector and the national mobilization/training base, the Scotts provide a penetrating assessment of the U.S.S.R. as a modern "nation-in-arms" in Parts II and III. Their treatment of the military educational system, particularly its senior officer academies, in Chapter 11 also deserves special mention for its impressive insights into Soviet per-

spectives on this vital area. For naval readers, the sections on the Soviet Navy in terms of its leadership, doctrine and operational force components are especially worthwhile, if somewhat brief, for their relevance to the overall fabric of Soviet military affairs.

There are a few errors throughout the work. For example, the famed Red Army leader Marshal Blyukher is portrayed as the chief Soviet Advisor to Nationalist China from 1924 to 1929 (p. 190). In fact, he had been expelled in mid-1927 after an abortive Soviet-CCP coup attempt and, by late 1929, had already commanded the famed Special Red Banner Far Eastern Army during the first modern Sino-Soviet border clash that autumn. Elsewhere, the Soviet IL-12 aircraft is described as "identical" to the famed U.S. DC-3 transport (p. 158), when the actual equivalent was the Lisunov LI-2 which the U.S.S.R. had both obtained from the U.S. and built under a Lend-Lease licensing agreement during the Second World War. Such slips are merely superficial and hardly detract from the authors' otherwise uniformly superior presentation of much more substantive issues.

Amply supported by nearly 150 charts and tables along with considerable photographic coverage, the work is as attractive as it is informative in its portrayal of the Soviet Military Establishment and the doctrine that comprises its driving force. The Scotts' analysis should serve as a solid source for forming judgments on such current issues as SALT II, MBFR and the East-West military balance and should endure as an authoritative topical reference.

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Shawcross, William. *Sideshow, Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979. 396pp.

Sideshow is a gripping portrayal of men's frailties. It is a story of man's

inhumanity to man, of deceit, psychological shock, bombing, torture, starvation, murder. William Shawcross would like to establish that Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger were the villains directly responsible for all these excesses. Yet, somehow, the ultimate impression gained is that Cambodians themselves were most cruel to their countrymen, with Vietnamese, North or South, showing no sympathy for their neighbors and running a close second in cruelty.

If American leadership were error prone, it was less so than that of the grossly inept rulers of South Vietnam and Cambodia. Perhaps another team in Washington could have dealt with Vietnam and Cambodia more to Shawcross' satisfaction than did Nixon and Kissinger. Regardless of who made U.S. decisions, the problems certainly would have been vastly different had stronger men than Sihanouk and Lon Nol ruled in Phnom Penh. No, the author's argument simply won't wash. It is obvious that the real villains in the story were the leaders who made fewest errors as they implacably prosecuted their war, the Hanoi Politburo. *Sideshow* does not include this rationale.

Shawcross seems unable to understand that war is by nature irrational. War is best regarded as a gutter fight, where any participant uses the weapons he has and where even the noble, when perplexed, can lash out. He misreads history if he thinks that America had never lashed out prior to Vietnam.

Henry Kissinger reportedly has deferred publication of his memoirs in order to refute the record of Cambodia deduced by Shawcross. This is fortunate, because although *Sideshow* is touted as history by its publishers, it is lacking on two counts.

There is no sense of perspective. Shawcross has painstakingly compiled and excitingly related a wealth of facts, but does not put them in perspective. He is the barker for his sideshow, but he doesn't relate it to past sideshows.