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The Battleship Era

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stations, and the formulation of a Joint General Staff with its officers permanently divorced from the services (exactly what the Congress has continually tried to prevent through the years). Any of these unoriginal ideas may well be legitimate issues for congressional and executive evaluation, but Loory has failed to present any acceptable credentials to support his judgments.

Defeated is a compendium of wild charges, allegations, and half truths—McCarthyism in print. Like McCarthy, Loory has just enough germs of truth to make his points appear credible, on the whole, to those who would prefer to believe that the country's Armed Forces are indeed "defeated." The book is, at best, sloppy and biased journalism and demonstrates that Loory simply has not done his homework very well. The evidence cannot, however, be discarded out of hand—as in rape, there are many degrees of consent related with the act. To the original questions of fairness, reasonability, and accuracy, the answers all must be no. To the larger question of whether Loory may have pointed out problems and symptomatic conditions that should require the full attention of our military hierarchy, the professional reader must respond with a qualified yes. The military professional is quite conscious of the need for aggressive, thoughtful examination, and overhaul of his institution. There are just enough uncomfortable truths in Loory's book to compel some agonizing evaluations about the status and future of the American Military Establishment, and, to this end, Loory's uninhibited allegations may be useful. The U.S. Armed Forces can well use a first-rate book that provides a hard, balanced, and objective analysis of its status and values. Such a book must be believable and based on thorough investigation, perceptive insights, and a fundamental understanding of the organization, people, and societal role of the Military Establishment in America. Un-

fortunately, *Defeated* fails on all counts.

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Padfield, Peter. *The Battleship Era*. New York: McKay, 1972. 321p.

Except during a brief appearance of *New Jersey* in the late 1960's, few Navy men on active duty today have ever seen a battleship. Once the dominant factor in naval thinking, battleships are a part of the old Navy and, but for a few floating museums and "mothballed" ships, are extinct.

The eclipse of the battleship by the carrier during World War II was a result of technological developments, much like the rise to prominence of the battleship had been a triumph of the technology of the Industrial Revolution. Peter Padfield has ably chronicled the rise and fall of the battleship in a way that should fascinate navy men and naval buffs alike.

The commencement of what was to be a revolution in naval thinking came on 4 March 1858 when the French laid the keel of *Gloire*. Shellproof iron plates were bolted over timber to give the protection needed to counter the effect of newly developed projectiles. Although considerable expense was involved, the French felt the cost necessary if they were to outflank British naval superiority in the naval arms race. Unfortunately for the French, however, British industrial might proved to be an irresistible force far superior to what the French could muster. A month before *Gloire* was launched, the British launched H.M.S. *Warrior*, a ship that, with 4½ inches of solid wrought iron over wood and engines that combined with sails could give her 14½ knots, was stronger and faster than *Gloire*.

America has the honor of being the scene of the first battle between iron-clads. Yet even before the *Monitor-Merrimack* standoff in Hampton Roads on 9 March 1862, *Merrimack*, renamed

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C.S.S. *Virginia* by the Confederates, had proven the value of ironclad warships in combat with ships of wood. *Virginia* had the day before rammed and sunk the Federal sloop-of-war *Cumberland*. A second ship, *Congress*, fled before this formidable foe but had the misfortune to run aground before being finished off by *Virginia*. The most notable point of the action at Hampton Roads was the invulnerability of iron ships to gunfire.

The iron warships of the 19th century saw only two open sea fleet actions. The first was in the Adriatic at Lissa in 1866 between Austrian and Italian forces. Ironclads were involved in this knockdown, drag-out fight, but only two ships were sunk. A small Italian gunboat blew up after a shell hit her magazine, and the Italian flagship *Re d'Italia* was sunk after having been rammed by the Austrian flagship. This ramming, combined with the sinking of *Cumberland*, unfortunately gave rise to a preoccupation with ramming that lasted almost until the first World War.

The final fleet action in the 19th century involving ironclads occurred at the Battle of the Yalu in 1895 between the Imperial Chinese and Japanese fleets. The Japanese victory can, however, be attributed more to the superior handling of superior ships against poorly handled inferior ships than to any effect of armor.

Mr. Padfield has used exciting accounts of naval engagements and substantial amounts of detail to develop his central theme: the battleship was a product of technology which, in turn, worked to eclipse it. Within 50 years the world's major navies had evolved from wooden ships with muzzle loading guns driven by the wind to steel ships with breech loading guns driven by steam turbine engines. How naval architects and the leading navies kept apace of what must have seemed to be bewildering kaleidoscopic change not only makes good reading, but it also gives some insight into present attempts to

keep abreast of technology.

Battleships were built for battle fleets, the purpose of which was to engage enemy battle fleets and destroy them. This concept, brought into vogue by Alfred Mahan, dominated naval thinking for most of the first part of the 20th century. World War II showed the limitations of the battleship, but recent experience in Vietnam showed a continuing need for big guns, even if they are not used against an enemy battle fleet. Again, the demise of the battleship demonstrates that the ultimate naval weapon is vulnerable to technological development—that obscure weapon system fermenting in the minds of men.

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Quester, George. *The Politics of Nuclear Proliferation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973. 245p.

One of the most fundamental aspects of nuclear diplomacy is the relationship between the number of nuclear actors and the risk of deliberate or accidental holocaust. As the number of nuclear nations increases, the risk of nuclear war also rises, but at a greatly accelerated rate. Recognizing this fact, the major world powers in the late 1960's sought to permanently limit the number of nuclear nations.

In discussing this attempt, Cornell University political scientist George Quester has done a first-class piece of research, thinking, and writing in *The Politics of Nuclear Proliferation*. Professor Quester marches straight through the politics, complexities, and national fears of this amazingly vital but little understood international issue. His positive, nontechnical, and candid discussion, based on a lifetime of observation and study, deserves a wide readership.

The strength of Quester's work lies in his organization and presentation of