

1968

## Book Reviews

The U.S. Naval War College

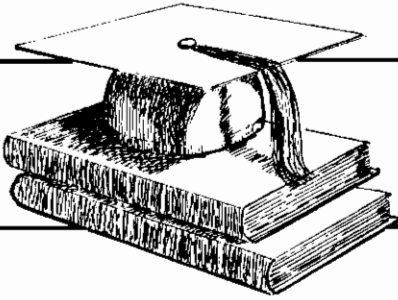
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## PROFESSIONAL READING

The evaluations of recent books listed in this section have been prepared for the use of resident students. Officers in the fleet and elsewhere may find these books of interest in their professional reading.

The inclusion of a book in this section does not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the Naval War College of the facts, opinions or concepts contained therein.

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Barber, Willard F. and Ronning, C. Neale. *Internal Security and Military Power*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1966. 338p.

The authors have compiled an interesting book dealing with the problems of promoting security and reform in Latin America. They have presented only one aspect of the role of the military in Latin America: that of meeting the current threat of insurgency. Both Willard Barber and C. Neal Ronning have, between them, studied, traveled, and lived in all of the American republics, except Cuba, in order to present this study. Trends, events, and conditions existing in Latin American countries since 1947 are outlined in order to show their importance to policymakers of the early 1960's in formulating doctrines relating to counterinsurgency and military civic action. In developing the doctrine of military civic action, the authors question the function or role assigned to it. It is their feeling that closer interdepartmental harmony in administration and coordination of the counterinsurgency effort and of the civic action component should be established. Illustrations are used to show the coordinating groups to supervise all activities in counterinsurgency. In addition, there are appendices and tables of particular interest. The success of military civic action has not been and cannot be uniform in purpose, concept, administration, organization, or results. However, the authors feel that the program

with the broader plan of social reform will have a better chance of success; just a means to perpetuate a military regime won't stem the tide of insurgency. The dilemma of attaining political stability amidst rapid demographic, social, economic, and ideological changes continues to be the problem of the elements attempting to promote security and reform. This book is very readable and is recommended as a reference source for those desiring a better understanding of the concepts and programs of military civic action in Latin America.

W.H. LOWANS  
 Captain, U.S. Navy

Herrick, Robert W. *Soviet Naval Strategy: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice*. Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1968. 197p.

Among all the authors of what looks like the beginnings of an avalanche of new studies (books, articles, theses, dissertations, et cetera) on Soviet naval developments, Commander Herrick is probably the best qualified. He is competent in the Russian language, he was a Soviet naval analyst for ONI, he served two years in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, he has completed most of the work for a doctoral degree from Columbia University's highly respected Russian Institute, and he has even gone to sea in Soviet warships. The book that he has written is in all likelihood the most carefully researched and the most readable survey of the history of Soviet naval developments in this century that is currently available in the English language. It should be on the "must" reading list for all American military and naval officers and for all American civilian officials with any degree of responsibility for formulating U.S. defense and foreign policies. These readers, however, would be well advised to approach the book with a willingness to make their own judgments.

Herrick's diligent research has produced an impressive array of factual

findings some of which may be news even to generally knowledgeable people, for example, his revelations concerning Soviet interests in building aircraft carrier forces during two periods in the relatively recent past. His evidence also challenges such widespread beliefs as the notion that the Russians have a strong traditional impulse to acquire warm-water ports. But where Herrick is open to question is not so much on his facts but rather on the interpretative conclusions that he places on these facts.

Herrick's central argument is that, unless and until the Soviets build large modern carrier strike forces (and he rejects any speculation that such forces may be in the works), Soviet naval forces do not and cannot present any meaningful threat to NATO or to U.S. sea supremacy. Indeed, even if the Soviets should build a large modern surface fleet including attack carriers, Herrick cites geography and other factors to conclude "that the odds against eventual [Soviet] success would be very heavy." He concedes that Soviet sub forces could be a harassing nuisance, but the whole thrust of his conclusions is that there really is no Soviet naval "threat" facing the United States and NATO. To the extent that some people think there is such a threat, Herrick attributes this to Soviet propaganda and to the willingness of U.S. naval officers to cite Soviet claims in an effort to get more political support for a larger U.S. Navy. This will therefore be a controversial book--indeed, the "Publisher's Preface" reveals that there was a dispute within the U.S. Naval Institute as to whether to publish the book. This reviewer thinks the Institute made the right decision, but he also thinks that any reader who disagrees with Herrick should thus accept the challenge to base his rebuttal on research and reasoning that is as careful and thorough as Herrick has presented.

VINCE DAVIS  
 Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve

## 98 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Iriye, Akira. *Across the Pacific*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967. 361p.

This is an outstanding hook and is highly recommended to anyone interested in relations between the United States and Japan and China. The relationships among these three countries from their beginnings in the 18th century until 1967 are treated exceptionally well and comprehensively. Not only are the major phases and incidents of the United States relations with China and Japan described, but the successive images that these three nations have had of one another during the last century of their association are analyzed. The most impressive aspect of the book is its objectivity. This is no doubt attributable to the unique qualities of the author, Dr. Akira Iriye. Dr. Iriye was born in Japan and received his first preparation for objective appraisal of international conflict from his father, who was educated in law at Waseda University in Tokyo; lectured and wrote on international law; served as a journalist in Geneva and Paris (1938-1941); spent 2 years in Nanking during the Japan War (1943-1945); and published books on Russia, China, Anglo-Russian rivalry in China, and the failure of the Versailles Treaty system. Dr. Iriye received his bachelor's degree in English History at Haverford College in 1957 and his doctorate at Harvard in 1961. He was a member of the History Department there until he joined the staff of the University of California in 1966. This background probably makes Dr. Iriye better prepared for writing this book than almost anyone else and certainly contributes to its unusual quality.

With the United States deep involvement in Asia today, it would be well for Americans to study this volume in order to see their past mistakes and some successes that they have experienced in dealing with Asians. Professor John K. Fairbank in the Introduction says, "Mr. Iriye's appraisal suggests that too often

we have leapt before looking and become partisan in feeling before making a serious intellectual effort to see all sides, including particularly our own side."

J.W. COTTON, JR.

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force

Vo-nguyen-Giap. *Big Victory Great Task*. New York: Praeger, 1968. 120p.

This essay is a reprint from a series of General Giap's articles that appeared in September 1967 in two Hanoi periodicals that receive wide distribution among the populace of Vietnam. These articles are obviously designed to bolster the morale and fighting spirit of the population of North Vietnam and the troops and supporters of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam. Giap's emotional articles are variations of the central theme that the NLF troops are supreme in fighting ability, doctrine, and tactics and therefore have won every engagement with the enemy and ultimately will crush and destroy him (the imperialistic United States aggressors and their Saigon puppet forces). The following quote from one of the articles outlines the victory motif which is repeated in a highly emotional style on practically every page of the book.

The puppet army and government have daily declined and will surely arrive at complete disintegration and collapse. This actually has happened and is happening in the South of our country [South Vietnam]. This proves that the U.S. imperialists have sustained heavy defeats on the path leading to the ultimate goal of their neocolonialist aggressive war.

While Giap generalizes about the many decisive battles that have been won by NLF troops, he never provides any specifics concerning places, dates, and casualties. In many often repeated statements in the book, he predicts with absolute certainty that the enemy will ultimately be destroyed and driven from South Vietnam; but, here again, he fails

to include any details on just how this feat will be accomplished. Since this type of propaganda is such an obvious departure from a realistic appraisal of the past and present situation in Vietnam, Giap, an experienced social psychologist, probably concluded that specifics would detract from the emotional appeal of the articles. He apparently believed that constantly reiterated slogans, broad generalizations about past, present, and future victories, and generously sprinkled accounts of

the defeat and destruction of the enemy were more effective than dates, places, and body counts.

General Giap's articles that are reprinted in this book are obviously propaganda documents. They should appeal to the reader who is interested in gaining some understanding of this Communist military tactician and political leader.

J.C. MIZE  
Colonel, U.S. Army



The habit of the arm-chair easily prevails over that of the quarter-deck;  
it is more comfortable.

*Mahan: Naval Administration and Warfare, 1903*



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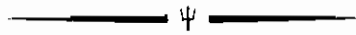
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I should not deem a man-of-war complete without a body of Marines . . . imbued with that *esprit* that has so long characterized the "old Corps."

*Commodore Joshua R. Sands, USN:  
Letter to Brigadier General  
Archibald Henderson, USMC, 1852*