

his survey of countries chapter. The country-by-country breakdowns of the levels of the Islamic revival are useful as an overview but flawed by specific emphases or lack of emphasis. The overemphasis on the Sunni-Shi'i factor in Iraq and the absence of any mention of religious orders in the section on Morocco are examples.

Mr. Pipes has provided for nonspecialists a comprehensive understanding of the roots of the Islamic revival and what it means in the politics of an important part of the world. For specialists he has written a provocative book. It is the rare work on Islam, and a prodigious feat of writing, that can have the influence on both groups this study should have. We have but to see whether a systematic rebuttal will appear before Mr. Pipes's predictions come to pass.

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The Russians Are Coming

The Grand Strategy of the Soviet Union, by Edward Luttwak (New York: St. Martin's Press).

This is less a book than a provocative and insightful essay, less a scholarly treatise than an intelligent and persuasive polemic. Edward Luttwak, the *enfant terrible* of American strategic studies, has brought to bear on the study of the Soviet Union a breadth of scope that, though not without its faults, is as unusual among students of strategic matters as it is welcome. Equally important, he brings a rare technical understanding of military matters to a field often left to political scientists or historians ignorant or disdainful of such specialized knowledge.

The author's writings make up something less than half of this short volume, some 118 pages, to be precise. The rest consists of two articles by associates of his on the Soviet economy and the anatomy of the Soviet armed forces. Their technical articles (replete with charts and tables), useful though they may be as reference material, have neither the charm nor the penetration of Mr. Luttwak's analysis.

Mr. Luttwak compares the grand strategy of the Soviet Union to that of other great empires, including Rome and the British Empire. This is more than affectation, since Mr. Luttwak is the author of a sound and scholarly work on the grand strategy of the Roman Empire and has long taught courses on comparative grand strategy. To his credit, he does not make a mechanical use of reasoning by analogy; one of the most interesting parts of his book, for example, discusses why the process of Soviet imperial collapse will be quite different from that which worked on the postwar European empires.

The Soviet Union's leaders, Mr. Luttwak argues, at once justly fear for their countries' ability to survive in the long term, even as they realize the enormous power of

their large, well-equipped, and well-run armed forces. This is a dangerous state of affairs: "... it is notorious that the conjunction of a long-term regime pessimism with current military optimism is the classic condition that makes deliberate war more likely." Without exaggerating the Soviet Union's real military weaknesses, from its dependence on non-Russian nationalities to the defectiveness of Soviet technology in some areas, Mr. Luttwak argues that Soviet power is, temporarily at least, on the rise—and dangerously so.

According to Mr. Luttwak, it is unlikely that this power will be used directly against Western Europeans and the United States; instead, the Soviets will try to crumble and attenuate the Western Alliance, for their goal is less the physical domination of Europe than its reduction to a state of benevolent neutrality. The real likelihood of a Soviet-launched war could occur in the Far East, to end for good the latent threat of a modernizing China. The Soviets' ability to launch a successful first strike against Chinese nuclear weapons and facilities is far greater than ever before—greater even than when Soviet officials approached their American counterparts some 15 years ago seeking to discover what American attitudes would be to a preemptive Soviet attack on the People's Republic of China. An attack on the PRC would have as its operational objectives the destruction of nuclear and scientific facilities, the separation from China of the vast thinly populated glaxis between the core areas and the Soviet border, and ultimately the division of China into weak and feuding states.

The Soviet armed forces now possess the ability to intervene swiftly and decisively in many corners of the world. Mr. Luttwak contrasts the speed and craftiness of the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan some four years ago with the mechanical breakdowns, bumbling soldiering, inadequate intelligence, and general ineptitude of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. He points out the skill with which Soviet special forces neutralized possible Afghan resistance (the engines of an Afghan armored unit, for example, were withdrawn shortly before the invasion supposedly for a periodic overhaul) and the speed with which Soviet forces penetrated a mountainous country well-suited to armed resistance. He observes that contrary to stereotype, Soviet military leaders have shown themselves capable of adroit and flexible military operations. He gives a brief but fascinating account of how a Soviet general managed an unwieldy trination force of Soviet advisers, Cuban proxies, and Ethiopian peasants in 1978, an operation that culminated in the establishment of a reliable Ethiopian client state.

This, for Mr. Luttwak, is the most significant development of the last decade and a half, the development in Soviet leaders of operational confidence in their armed forces. Here, perhaps, his argument is most provocative and most open to question. He explains that the failure of Soviet-trained and Soviet-equipped Syrian forces in the recent war with Israel reflects not on the deficiencies of the Soviet Union but on the capabilities of the Israelis. He does not mention (the book was in press) the shooting down of KAL 007 and all that it revealed, not simply of the failures of the Soviet air defense system, but of the

inability of the Soviet system to cope with failure.

In many areas of *deployed* technology, Mr. Luttwak asserts, the Soviet armed forces are now the equal or even the superior of their Western opponents. It is only now, for example, that the United States has begun the production of an infantry vehicle comparable to the Soviet BMP. He spends less time on Soviet organization, morale, and training, in which areas the Soviets are less well off, although such matters are of course difficult to quantify. Nonetheless, one can only conclude that the Soviet Union has conducted a campaign of armament unprecedented in history, one that has paid substantial dividends, as demonstrated in Africa and now Afghanistan. Although the United States could hardly remain neutral in the event of an attack on China or in southwest Asia, Mr. Luttwak doubts that American forces will recover the capability they once had to physically contain Soviet expansion. In this connection, he strikes the reader as being far more pessimistic than the current administration, which seems to believe that some marginal increases in defense spending will restore the United States to the position of relative military superiority that it had in the early 1960s. As Mr. Luttwak observes, such hopes are chimerical.

Mr. Luttwak has a reputation—well-deserved—for acidic judgments and cutting humor wielded without mercy against inept opponents. To those put off by that reputation, this book will come as a pleasant surprise. His judgments are thoughtful and balanced: His picture of the Soviet threat is a complicated and sophisticated one that takes full account of the many weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the Russian regime.

Mr. Luttwak does not pretend to be a Sovietologist. He is, rather, a student of general history and of military history in particular. There will be those who will regard this book as a presumptuous intrusion into a domain that should be reserved for those who devote a lifetime to the mastery of Russian history, language, and politics. Yet there is a place for the reflections of those whose interest in the Soviet Union is serious but not all-consuming. In an age of arid academic overspecialization, Edward Luttwak's writing serves a particularly useful purpose in helping us understand this country's greatest adversary.

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Nowhere Men

The Coercive Utopians: Social Deception by America's Power Players, by Rael Jean Isaac and Erich Isaac (Chicago: Regnery Gateway).

In 1979 the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs granted \$131,526 of taxpayers' money to the Environmental Action Foundation, whose paperback primer *Ecotage!* offers suggestions of action ranging from sprinkling nails on the highways to mailing dead fish to oil executives. In 1976 the United Church of Christ merited a \$10,000

award from the People's Bicentennial Commission for "evidence likely to lead to the arrest and imprisonment of the chief executive officer of a Fortune 500 company." In July 1981 the Department of Education sent out the second installment of a \$244,000 grant to the Council on Interracial Books for Children for a new third-grade reader because existing textbooks "deny the realities of capitalism and all that goes into it—classes, conflicting class interests, and the ongoing struggle between the few who control wealth and those many who are trying to share wealth."

In 325 fact-filled pages, Rael Jean Isaac and Erich Isaac show how left-wing groups deftly use government and foundation monies to exert an influence far beyond their number. Borrowing a term first used by scientist-journalist Peter Metzger, the Isaacs have entitled their book *The Coercive Utopians*. Philosophically, the activists are utopian because of their implicit belief that "man is perfectible and the evils that exist are the product of a corrupt social system"; practically, this translates into a hatred of the marketplace, a paranoid distrust of technology, and a concomitant romanticization of collectivist regimes. Indeed, the leaders of public interest groups, according to a poll by Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter, give Fidel Castro an approval rating of 34 percent, seven times higher than Ronald Reagan's 5 percent. Since the mass of human beings traditionally prove uncooperative in adapting to utopian planning, sooner or later the utopians are reduced to coercion in the name of perfection.

Environmentalism provides a perfect paradigm of a movement that somewhere crossed the line of reasonable reform into fanaticism. Originally, the environmentalists enjoyed broad popular support, simply because most Americans wanted cleaner air and water. But environmentalists lost all perspective about risk and cost, promoting policies that were often both fiscally insane and scientifically dubious. In 1980, for instance, an independent oilman reported that he had to pay \$1,400 to have 40 acres of a prospective oilfield certified free of Indian arrowheads before he could file an environmental impact statement.

Typically, the environmentalists have been quicker with the regulatory trigger than with the hard evidence. The 1972 decision of William Ruckelshaus, head of the Environmental Protection Agency, to ban DDT was less a scientific than a political response; Mr. Ruckelshaus did not attend the hearings on DDT, nor did he even bother to read the transcript, which contained the hearing examiner's conclusion that "DDT is not a carcinogenic hazard to man" and that "there is a present need for the essential uses of DDT."

Such laws as the Endangered Species Act, "originally passed out of concern for the dwindling numbers of buffalo, whooping cranes, sperm whales, and other increasingly rare creatures," have been stretched to the point of farce. Sometimes the "discovery" of new endangered species stalls federal projects, as was the case with the infamous Furbish louswort on the site of the proposed Dickey-Lincoln Dam in northern Maine. A whole new industry has been created to search for these