l!Se to the NEWS

RELEASE: MARCH 24, 1978

by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Box 618, **Alton, Illinois 62002**
Phone: **618-462-5415**

THE NAVAL BALANCE

Our Navy has shrunk from 976 ships in 1968 to only 459 ships today. During the same ten years, the Soviet Union increased its Navy to 981 ships, more than twice as many as we have.

The Soviet Union has 91 nuclear-missile submarines to our 41, 260 attack submarines to our 77, and 195 destroyers and frigates to our 129.

True, we have 13 aircraft carriers to the Soviets' one. But the Soviets have the equivalent of dozens of aircraft carriers in the Caribbean only 90 miles off our coast. Cuba never has to be refueled and it cannot be sunk.

The Mediterranean used to be called an American lake because of the number and power of our ships deployed there, and the fact that no one could challenge us. On an average day the Soviets now have about 45 ships sailing the Mediterranean.

Privately, some admirals say that it would be suicide to keep our ships in the Mediterranean if war broke out. They would be subject to destruction by superior Soviet sea and air power, including the big Soviet bombers now flying out of the giant airbase we built at Wheeler Field in Libya and then surrendered to Qaddafi (one of Panamanian dictator Torrijos's dictator friends).

The Soviet naval aviation arm is equipped with jet-propelled Backfire bombers armed with anti-shipping missiles. As pointed out in the March Naval Institute Proceedings, it is a highly capable naval attack aircraft. In addition it poses a very serious threat to our merchant shipping.

Our Navy has internal problems, too. Its desertion rate is the highest in its history, far higher than in wartime when casualties were high. Out" of every 100 who enlist, 42 fail to finish their first term.

Meanwhile, the Soviet navy is growing larger and its threat is coming closer.

(more)

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, former Chief of Naval Operations, has stated bluntly: "The fact is that there are Soviet submarines off the New Jersey coast, and I feel it is my duty to say so."

Nothing has changed to diminish the threat about which William P. Clements, Jr., warned when he was Deputy Secretary of Defense. He said that Soviet submarines are stationed off both U.S. coasts with atomic warheads targeted at every major American city. "The threat to our national security is real and growing," he added; "let there be no doubt about this."

Admiral Moorer points out that over the past ten years the United States has had a 23 percent reduction in naval manpower, a 50 percent reduction in ships, a 31 percent reduction in aircraft, and a 22 percent reduction in total tonnage.

Sergei Georgiyevich Gorshkov is responsible for building the Soviet Navy into the largest in the world. He has been described as "a/ man of high pragmatic accomplishment ... who fused a discredited Slavic navy to the bankrupt philosophy of Marxism and produced a weapon that can help destroy Western civilization.a'

Gorshkov has written a new book called Sea Power of the State whi'ch some say will influence navies and governments for the rest of this century. He confidently predicts that "the next war will be fought with forces on hand and on station. No opportunity will exist to move, let alone to build ships. Contemporary weaponry is so lethal that he who fires first probably will win."

One reason why the United States is at a disadvantage in staying ahead of the Russians is that the Soviets spend only about 25 percent of their defense budget for personnel, leaving 75 percent for procurement of ships, planes and weapons. We devote more than half of our defense budget to personnel costs.

However, a recent poll taken by the respected Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton shows that the American people are so eager to be "superior" to the Soviets in military strength that they would willingly finance up to $10 billion a year in new military programs to achieve that goal. Even if it means higher taxes.

(end)