Global Reach: Revolutionizing the Use of Commercial Vessels and Intermodal Systems for Military Sealift

Since the 1980s, strategic sealift has been formally designated as a U.S. Navy mission. With over ninety percent of all military equipment and supplies required to support U.S. military forces in combat being delivered by sea, and as globalized interests and risks continue to spread, this mission is vital to the country’s economic and national security. Despite its necessity, sealift is rarely discussed as anything other than an operations adjunct and must be carried out in an environment of unprecedented fiscal constraints.

Global Reach provides a unique examination into the development and implementation of more than a century of U.S. national defense sealift policy. Presenting a comprehensive history on the evolution of sealift from the Spanish American War (1898) to Operation Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom (2002-12), Herberger, Gaulden, and Marshall reflect on what has and has not worked in that time from both a legal and operational perspective.

As international demands grow and change, so too must the sealift policies that are directly tied to how the nation will address them. With its thorough history and cogent analysis, Global Reach provides the context necessary to understand this complex, important topic, but also lays out a roadmap for how the U.S. can continue to meet and respond to the increasing challenges of the years to come.

"When the joint force is deployed, either to fight or to assist, there are usually several givens. The first is that ninety-five percent of the 'stuff' required to do the job goes by sea and the second is that operator ignorance of logistics in general, and the potential contributions of sealift/American Merchant Mariners in particular, are legion! Global Reach, a very well written and informative combination history and reference book, can help bridge this chasm and should be required reading for all joint commanders--repeat ALL JOINT COMMANDERS!"

--Vice Adm. Jim Perkins, USN (Ret.), former commander, Military Sealift Command

"This is an insightful and excellent analysis of the challenges faced by the U.S. military in the deployment and the immediate sustaining of modern day forces in distant and multiple theaters. It defines the relationships formed by the military, the U.S. commercial industry, and the maritime unions under the maritime security acts that have produced solutions capable of meeting the demands of combat while being cost effective. Many lessons to be learned here, well done."

--Gen. Duane Cassidy, USAF (Ret.), former commander in chief, U.S. Transportation Command

"Sealift as a Navy mission rarely gets the level of attention it deserves, and in this book the authors rectify that with an in-depth look at the development of U.S. Military Sealift Command's strategic sealift capability, covering the vast build-up of U.S. forces for Operation Desert Shield/Storm on through 2012, the drawdown from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The authors give a historical perspective on the origins of U.S. sealift in the Spanish-
American War through the two World Wars and the post-war era. They also assess the sealift policies and the military, commercial and union factors that influence them, and make recommendations to shape an effective strategic sealift capability for the future."

--Seapower