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978-0-521-31064-2 - The USSR in Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in
Local Wars 1945-1980

Bruce D. Porter

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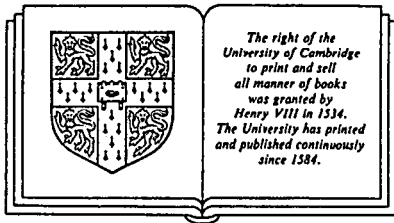
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Soviet arms and diplomacy in local wars
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BRUCE D. PORTER



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PREFACE

The USSR in Third World Conflicts was written principally under the auspices of the Center for International Affairs (CFIA) at Harvard University during the academic year of 1979–80. I was serving at the time as a postdoctoral fellow in the newly formed program in national security studies at CFIA. As with most books, however, the genealogy of this work is rather more complicated than that. It originally was a doctoral dissertation, written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Ph.D. in political science at Harvard University. The dissertation was completed in the autumn of 1979, a few months after my fellowship at CFIA had actually begun. When I left CFIA roughly one year later, the work of transforming the dissertation into a book had been largely completed, but some additional research and a thoroughgoing revision were still called for. This final reworking took place at an unconscionably slow pace from 1981 to 1983, while I was employed full-time as a research analyst of Soviet foreign policy at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Inc., in Munich, West Germany.

The long gestation period of this book (alas, typical of doctoral dissertations that see print) necessitates numerous acknowledgments. I am particularly indebted to three persons: Professors Adam Ulam and Samuel P. Huntington of Harvard University, and Keith Bush, Director of Research at Radio Liberty. Adam Ulam originally encouraged me to write a dissertation on the topic of Soviet involvement in Third World conflicts on the basis of a paper I presented in a graduate seminar he taught; he later became the principal adviser of the dissertation and provided constant intellectual inspiration and needed moral support. Samuel Huntington was the second reader of the dissertation; his incisive analysis and commentary on the work as it unfolded were major factors in shaping it. He also made possible the one-year postdoctoral fellowship at CFIA that enabled me to turn an unwieldy dissertation into something resembling a book. Since the time I left CFIA, Dr. Huntington has tenaciously encouraged me to finish the book, and without his encouragement this work probably would never have been finished. I owe him much. Keith Bush of Radio Liberty also encouraged me to devote spare hours to a second revision and arranged for needed secretarial assistance.

A number of professional colleagues read individual chapters of the work at various stages of its development and provided useful

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The Danforth Foundation provided financial assistance that enabled me to work full-time on a doctoral dissertation during my last year as a graduate student at Harvard. The Smith-Richardson Foundation provided the grant to CFIA that made possible the one-year postdoctoral fellowship mentioned earlier. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Inc., provided funds for secretarial assistance in the final preparation of the manuscript. Without the support of these institutions, the book could never have been completed.

Finally, I wish to thank my wife, Susan, and my children, David, Christopher, and Lisa, for their encouragement and support. They bore the burden of having a preoccupied scholar in the house, and they managed to keep my feet on the ground whenever my head was in the clouds. My thanks to them comes last, but it is far from least.