



Aircraft Carriers: 2

Norman Polmar

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In the post-1945 era, the aircraft carrier has remained a valued weapon despite the development of nuclear weapons, cruise and ballistic missiles, and highly capable submarines. At times, as in the early days of the Korean and Vietnam Wars and in the Falklands conflict, carriers alone could deploy high-performance aircraft to the battlefield. In other operations, such as enforcing the no-fly zones and the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, only carriers could provide the bases needed for sustained combat and support operations.

This second volume of Norman Polmar's landmark study details the role of carriers in the unification of the U.S. armed forces and strategic deterrence, fiscally constrained Great Britain, the development of British Commonwealth and ex-colonial navies, and the efforts of France and the Netherlands to rebuild their fleets. The role of the modern carrier-nine nations currently possess them-is discussed, as are the issues confronting nations that might acquire them. Chapters on the Soviet Union's effort to produce carriers are included for the first time. The development of both carrier planes and the many "oddball" aircraft that have flown from carriers-such as the U-2 spy plane-are also examined. Appendixes include comprehensive data on all carriers built and converted through 2006.

This volume is a valuable companion to the critically acclaimed Volume I, which covers aircraft carrier development and operations from 1909 to 1945.

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