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Securing Command of the Sea: NATO Naval Planning 1948-1954

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of "almost unthinking opposition to communism." Admirals were another unenlightened class, "archaic as well as conservative," leaders of a "Navy . . . usually top-heavy with traditionalism and inertia." There are even "two-fers" —"Admirals were almost to a man knee-jerk anti-Communists." Such ad hominem comments detract from an otherwise excellent narrative.

Still, there are lighter moments. For example, after forty-five years, even naval officers can laugh at the Air Force's claim, following USS *Missouri's* hard grounding in 1950, that "the battleship is here to stay!" And the author's reference to the "delights of Rotterdam" is wonderfully oxymoronic, at least to an ex-resident.

Michael Isenberg is an associate professor at the U.S. Naval Academy. He is the author of numerous books, including *Puzzles of the Past: An Introduction to Thinking about History*. A retired Naval Reserve captain, Isenberg is a veteran with eleven years active duty as a surface line officer.

Shield of the Republic is entertaining history, but more importantly, it is also a useful book for those struggling to determine the direction in which the Navy should go. The circumstances we presently live under bear striking resemblance to the period following the Second World War. As was the case then, recent combat experience suggests that the conduct of warfare might be changing in major, though as yet unforeseen, ways. Just as in the 1950s, we are experiencing rapid advances in a variety of technologies that have military relevance. And, following the collapse of our major foe after pro-

longed national exertion, we too are in a new world situation, and it is not clear who our future foes will be or what the nature of the conflict may be. *Shield of the Republic* is an instructive account of how our predecessors dealt with the uncertainties they faced fifty years ago.

JAN VAN TOL
Commander, U.S. Navy

Maloney, Sean M. ed. *Securing Command of the Sea: NATO Naval Planning 1948-1954*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1995. 292pp. \$38.95

Sean Maloney is a Canadian military historian with a special interest in the Cold War. His latest offering depicts how Nato maritime commands evolved from historical precedents and trial by fire in the World War II experience. The evolution of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization command structure unfolds like a mystery thriller, highlighting the difficulties encountered by the victors of the war—the United States, Great Britain, and Canada. Only these three countries had significant military forces available to resist the Soviet Union.

Beginning with the chain of command used during the war, and giving prominence to the difficulties experienced, Maloney clearly describes the founding of Nato against the backdrop of such grim events as the 1947 coup in Hungary, the 1948 coup in Czechoslovakia, and the Berlin blockade. It was apparent that the Marshall Plan would not be enough to stop Soviet aggression.

Developing complex, trilateral war plans appeared easy, however, when compared to dividing up the command, as the military arm of Nato took shape. The essential principles agreed upon were that the nation providing the majority of the forces had first pick of command positions, unless some vital interest of another nation was involved, in which case command boundaries were often altered to accommodate the vital interest.

When it was recognized that only two major Nato commanders were required, and that the greatest number of forces in both commands would be from the United States, the vital-interest card quickly came into play. The underlying, fundamental issue in this arrangement was the rise of a new superpower, the United States, and the decline of a great power, Britain, whose resources had been decimated by war. Since Britain could not provide the majority of forces to any area in question, it had to rely on its claim to vital interest. Because Britain required absolute control over the waters surrounding it, an independent major command was formed (Commander in Chief Channel), and to protect its lines of communication to the Middle East the Mediterranean was divided in patchwork fashion with Italy, Greece, and Turkey, becoming Allied Forces South (with land, air, and U.S. naval forces [STRIKEFORSOUTH]). This command protected British vital interests and ensured that American nuclear weapons aboard aircraft carriers remained under U.S. control.

This easy-to-read account fills an important gap in the literature and will be

of interest to historians of the Cold War. The numerous organizational charts are clearly laid out and help tell the story. It is essential reading for the serious student of Nato and for present and future naval planners wrestling with problems of coalition command and control at sea.

WILLIAM D. SMITH
Admiral, U.S. Navy, Retired

Kingseed, Cole C. *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1995. 166pp. \$22.50

Colonel Cole Kingseed, U.S. Army, researched and wrote the early drafts for this important study in the Advanced Research Department at the Naval War College. He set out to examine how President Dwight D. Eisenhower made decisions in times of crisis. In laying out his agenda for his research in documents at Princeton, the Naval Historical Center, the Eisenhower Library, the National Archives, and a variety of oral history interviews, Kingseed asked whether Eisenhower borrowed exclusively from his military experience or was flexible in his approach. This central issue posed a number of subsidiary questions. In the foreign policy area, did Eisenhower subordinate himself to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, or did he take the lead? How effective was the president when personally dealing with allies and adversaries? Under Eisenhower, what were the roles of the CIA, the National Security Agency, and the State and Defense departments?