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The Rockets' Red Glare: Men America Goes to War

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of the American ship that rescued him, he was cheered for a full minute by the American sailors. In 1988 I spent seven weeks at sea aboard the Spanish aircraft carrier *Principe de Asturias*. The executive officer, Commander Jaime Cervera, jokingly remarked, "My great grandfather Pascual was a 'guest' of the U.S. Navy in Annapolis for two years after 1898." Pascual Cervera was the same water-logged Spanish admiral who had stood on deck of the USS *Iowa* to the cheers of the American sailors and who had indeed been imprisoned in Annapolis. It would have eased my mind that day if I had known that we had treated him so well the day of his capture.

There are one or two discrepancies I would like to mention. First, the leader of the USS *Enterprise* dive-bomber attack on the three Japanese carriers at Midway was better known as "Wade" McClusky than as Clarence. Second, there were three carrier groups, not two, in the Aleutian exercises of 1982: those of the *Midway*, *Coral Sea*, and *Enterprise*.

The author brings to mind things I had learned long ago and had forgotten, but I also found information I had never known—the most important being that while we professionals understand the need for a U.S. Navy, the public must be repeatedly educated to gain this appreciation. (After every war the United States reduces the fleet and sends the sailors home.)

It will not have been a waste of time and effort for any officer who reads this book.

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Barnet, Richard J. *The Rockets' Red Glare: When America Goes to War*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990. 442pp. (No price given).

Richard Barnet has described his study as the story of "the role the American people have played in the critical decisions of war and peace." The text is divided into four eras, based upon the primary national interest of the time: the Federalist period (steering clear of the Napoleonic wars); the nineteenth century (westward expansion); the Colonial period (expansion of empire at the turn of the twentieth century); and World War I to the present (saving Europe from dictatorial rule while picking up the mantle of world leadership). The book is therefore an examination of the relationship between presidential conduct in foreign policy and the will of the people.

Rulers of the past had usually managed to ignore the will of the people. Foreign policy was the business of kings. However, as a result of foreign policy's crucial impact on the American Revolution, a strong interest in it developed throughout the United States. Therefore, from the beginning each president has been forced to consider the impact of public opinion regarding foreign policy decisions. It was quickly learned that

a democratic government made it difficult to conduct a rational foreign policy, especially when public emotion ran counter to national interests.

Barnet points out that during the first years of the republic, existence and trade were so intricately tied to events in Europe that there was little difference between our foreign and domestic policy. His description of late eighteenth-century America is reminiscent of what we face today, with our economic and military interests comingled with the rest of the world. In fact, several analogies can be made: presidential use of force without declaring war; manipulation of the press to sell foreign policy; media portraying themselves as fact-finders while selling their version of the truth; hobo armies taking over the streets; and the presidents' sometimes successful attempts to read the will of the people. After the Vietnam War, the national security community relearned the importance of public opinion and the necessity of the people's backing in any military operation. Secretary of defense Caspar Weinberger epitomized this when he declared, "the armed forces will not fight wars that the American people will not support."

Unfortunately, when the author discusses the 1970s his objectivity slips. His last two chapters contain personal opinions and errors that weaken his otherwise excellent analysis. Barnet's concluding chapter introduces topics not formerly discussed, such as the "growing awareness of the suicidal consequences of

even so-called conventional wars," and the "potentially catastrophic consequences of man-made ecological degradation." Important as these issues are, they are forced into his conclusion.

Up to the Kennedy years, however, this is a compelling work. Mr. Barnet has done an excellent job of combining different events and personalities into a coherent thesis. *The Rockets' Red Glare* will show the military professional how and why the principle of the will of the people originated, and that it continues to be important in any national strategy.

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Pearson, Mark. *Paper Tiger: New Zealand's Part in SEATO 1954-1977*. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Institute of International Affairs with the Ministry of External Relations and Trade, 1989. 135pp. (No price given)

For almost twenty years, the South East Asian Treaty Organization (Seato) played a prominent role in the Western alliance's approach to Southeast Asian security problems during an era in which that region was fraught with instability and conflict. Yet, what is surprising is that the contemporary academic literature on this now moribund alliance is limited indeed. With the exception of the excellent book by Leszek Buszynski, *SEATO: The Failure of an Alliance Strategy* (1983), there are few historical