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From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: The Memoirs of Admiral Arthur W. Radford

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associated with his name, "containment," Kennan rightly or wrongly has consistently downplayed its military aspect and focused instead on its political and psychological dimensions.

In short, "Contending With Kennan" is an intelligent and noncontentious guide to the voluminous writings of one of America's outstanding scholar-diplomats. It is difficult to quarrel with his final summing up of Kennan's intellectual journey as that of an observer who always saw too much folly and tragedy for his own peace of mind. Mr. Gellman is too intelligent, as well as too modest, to suggest that he has all the answers to the problems posed by George Kennan's analysis of America's role in world politics. He does, however, know a good many of the questions and is not hesitant about raising them in a clear and reasoned way.

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Jurika, Stephen, Jr., ed. *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: The Memoirs of Admiral Arthur W. Radford.* Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1980. 476pp. $16.50

Admiral Arthur Radford might have been Chief of Staff of the US Air Force! Probably he would have been a good one. According to his memoirs, General Carl Spaatz one day invited him to lunch and laid a startling proposition on the good admiral. In the midst of the unification debate, Spaatz sought Radford's aid in bringing all military aviation into a single service—and in return suggested that he would work to make "Raddy" its commander! But Radford turned down Spaatz's offer, and went on to a tough fight in the unification debate and many other things besides. He begins his story with Pearl Harbor and ends it rather abruptly with a discussion of the troubles in Southeast Asia in 1954. The picture that emerges is one of an intelligent man, highly loyal to his organization and a formidable opponent to those outside of it.

Admiral Radford spent several years in the late sixties and early seventies writing these memoirs, and had about 2,000 pages of typescript when he dropped the work in 1972. Dr. Stephen Jurika, himself a retired naval captain, aided by some colleagues at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, undertook to edit that manuscript into the present book. In general, they have done a creditable job and certainly Jurika's expertise in the international relations of the Far East is evident throughout. The editorial staff might have gone a bit further, though, in checking accuracy—given the stature of Admiral Radford and the Hoover Institution. Most of the errors are minor annoyances, to be sure, and do not seriously impair the academic value of the work.

Radford is more candid than the average in the writing of these memoirs. His treatment of his role in World War Two is regrettably short, but in it he does not shrink from criticizing either Halsey or Nimitz

himself. After the war, Radford was brought to Washington to head the Navy's effort to limit its loss of autonomy in unification and the scope of the new Air Force. His treatment of this period is one of the best parts of the book. Congress awarded a posthumous medal to Billy Mitchell during the same fall the US Air Force was created, but if Mitchell were watching from the Great Beyond he could not have taken much satisfaction in it all. Forrestal, Radford and the rest of the Navy had done a splendid piece of defensive organizational in-fighting. Hap Arnold privately complained to Spaatz that the Air Force seemed to have done most of the compromising and Radford admiringly remarked that "Secretary Forrestal always had several ways to skin a cat—or the Air Corps." *Memoirs* goes on to cover the B-36 controversy in an interesting way, and here the Navy was not quite as successful. It is clear enough that Radford was no great fan of Louis Johnson, who starred it all off by cancelling the building of the USS *United States*.

Radford had been working for Admiral Louis Denfeld rhrough all this and when the latter was relieved, he moved on to head PACOM and to his fourth star. He got there in time for the outbreak of the Korean War, and his treatment of those times is revealing. Radford never excuses President Truman for his false economy on military expenditures during the late forties, but he does admire the courage of the man. He also has a good deal of sympathy for MacArthur in his controversy with the President, but Radford really never makes a choice between the two. A large part of the work has to do with Truman's successor, Eisenhower, and his handling of the Vietnam Crisis of 1954. Though Radford thought at the time that Eisenhower should have gone to the rescue of the French even without allies, he is less reserved in his admiration of Ike than of Truman. In the end, he confesses that Eisenhower was probably right in his policy on Dien Bien Phu.

As Admiral Radford took charge in the Pacific just as Nato was coming to life, his memoirs are especially valuable in making clear the connection between our Nato policy and the genesis of our involvement in Vietnam. He moves on to tell of his role as Chairman of the JCS at the time of the French defeat. It is clear enough that the military leaders of the United States knew that the strategic value of the place was not very great and that the pitfalls were many. He does not use the words "massive retaliation." But his explanation of the notion that it would be better to conserve US strength for use against the source of aggression rather than to fritter it away on the periphery in places like Vietnam does not seem as far-fetched as the media and scholars have made it. Of interest is the connection between the support of the French in Vietnam, our policy of defending the West on the northern European plain and our own involvement in Southeast Asia. The connection was something not well under-

stood among the writers of the 60s and 70s and Radford's memoirs should be useful when historians get around to deal with the subject in a more dispassionate way.

Pity that Admiral Radford did not finish the story, nor deal with its beginnings! Still, *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam* is well-written and informative and belongs on the reading lists of serving officers and military historians alike.

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Humble, Richard. *Fraser of North Cape: The Life of Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fraser* (1888-1981). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983. 386pp. $29.95

Bruce Fraser is not one of the better known senior British flag officers of the Second World War. While he held responsible posts, including First Sea Lord with the rank of Admiral of the Fleet from 1948 until his retirement late in 1951, other famous Royal Navy officers come more readily to mind: Dudley Pound, A.B. Cunningham, Mountbatten, Rawlings, and Vian, for example. Such men were where the action was, either as makers of grand strategy or in the thick of it in the war at sea. Despite his competence as a professional naval officer, Fraser never bad the opportunity for the equivalent kind of visibility save his victory in personal combat when he commanded the Home Fleet forces that sank the German battleship *Scharnhorst* in 1943. Indeed, when he later was nominated for a peerage he chose the title "Fraser of North Cape" in recognition of the area off Norway where the battle had been fought. Thus it would seem that in Fraser's mind his greatest achievement in some 48 years of naval service had been the destruction of a single enemy warship.

That battle symbolized, in a number of ways, the kinds of contributions that Fraser made to the naval service, for he was above all else the senior member of the Royal Navy's gnn club. The very caliber of the 14-inch guns of the *Duke of York,* Fraser's flagship at North Cape, had been the result of Fraser's authority as Director of Ordnance in the mid-1930s, when he had chosen that size main armament for the *King George V* class battleship. He considered the more powerful 16-inch guns, whicb the United States and Japan wonld select for their battleships, as incompatible with the naval treaty tonnage limitations in force at the time.

It was with such heavyweight armament that the prewar Royal Navy establishment concerned itself, owing to the mind-set of such influential bureaucrats as Fraser who, despite their intelligence, failed to foresee the emergence of naval airpower, of naval forces with long sea legs, and of the kinds of logistical support necessary for extended naval campaigns. Even the prewar commnand of an aircraft carrier apparently had little effect on Fraser's way of thinking. As a consequence German land-based airpower denied Great Britain control of the sea on the Murmansk lines