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The Death of the Tirpitz

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the career ladder. Graduating from the Academy in 1916, he saw active service in World War I, becoming a naval aviator in 1920. With World War II, he attained flag rank, commanding CARDIV 2 and TG38. Expecting retirement, he was next assigned to the Secretary of the Navy to head the Navy effort on "unification." For that, read: "Navy effort to survive in the mission/budget wars." A surprisingly clear and well-drawn picture of the congressional hearing process emerges from his pages, with the whole B-36 controversy also quite dispassionately recounted, detail by detail. The self-image that emerges is ultimately that of a quite sympathetic person, committed to his own cause with whole heart, but not inclined to confuse his enemies with the devil incarnate.

Despite this service advocacy (or, perhaps, initially because of it), Radford is promoted to four-stars in 1949 and made CINCPAC/CINCPACFLT and then, in 1953, is nominated by President Eisenhower to be chairman of the JCS. In between these points on his career ladder, he was present at the fateful Wake Island meeting of President Truman and General MacArthur. Of this, Admiral Radford gives some clear clues about where and how these two spoke past one another.

In the last section, intended to cover 1953-1957, the emphasis becomes politicomilitary and diplomatic. From today's perspective it seems odd how much JCS energy went into the problem of how to cope militarily with what everyone assumed was an aggressive, expansive China. Indeed, the ultimately tiresome discussions between the U.S. and French authorities over the Indochina situation always begin from that assumption. The Vietnam problem, seen initially in that context, begins its slow transfiguration in American thinking during Radford's last period in office, especially as the climax of French operations (and

imminent disaster) is reached as the noose tightens around the French garrison at Dien Bien Phu.

Scholars will appreciate the new light that Radford's papers shed on precisely how the United States reacted to that coming event. Radford quotes extensively from French General Ely's own memoirs, showing not only the complexity of the American official reaction but the stark simplicity of the French understanding of that reaction. In the very last two pages of the memoirs, Radford quotes Ike's letter to Churchill that, on the one hand shows a willingness to have the United States use force to aid the French, but insists that it must be a coalition effort. Radford comments (p. 449) that "there were some, including myself, who thought *we should intervene by ourselves if we could not get additional help*," but adds that 18 years later "I feel the President's position was the correct one." Despite Radford's personal views, his record documents his scrupulous adherence to official policy.

All in all, this is an interesting book. Now and again Radford lapses into loose generalizations, showing extreme and vintage cold war views, particularly in assuming that a harder stand should have been made somewhere, which would have then prevented the problems which followed: $A + B = C$. In contrast, where he writes of things he did himself, or had a direct hand in, his essentially workmanlike and pragmatic approach is sharply in evidence.

FREDERICK H. HARTMANN
Naval War College

Kennedy, Ludovic. *The Death of the Tirpitz*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1980. 176pp.

The German battleships of World War II offer contrasting challenges to the historians. *Bismarck*, ploughing her glory-course through starshell blaze and torpedo wake, never fails to seduce the

reader. Her story is a historian's delight. *Tirpitz*, however, lurking in a lairlike fiord—dangerous, elusive, waiting hungrily to feed—left behind a story of dark sorties and slow death. *Bismarck* fought a championship fight; *Tirpitz* succumbed at last to a series of assassination attempts. *Pursuit: The Chase and Sinking of the Bismarck* was a triumph of recreative history, full of the immediacy and passion of savage chase and imminent battle. The book at hand, by the same author, has none of these qualities.

Granted, it is difficult to lend the same kind of dramatic intensity to an attenuated "end game" as it is to a tension-filled chase. But there are different dramatic variations to all endeavor, and the story of *Tirpitz* is as rich and suspenseful as that of her sister. To make his chronicle of *Bismarck* crackle with excitement, first-person immediacy and authenticity, Kennedy interviewed hundreds of survivors of that episode. For *Tirpitz*, in contrast, Kennedy seems to have confined himself to a handful of well-known secondary works, blending in a few recently released ULTRA dispatches for flavor.

They are not enough. The text is limp and colorless. The ULTRA messages are interesting as a sideline notation but more suited to a focused essay on Admiralty intelligence efforts.

The "death scenes"—the valiant runs of X-6 and X-7, the *Barracuda* dives, the final *Lancaster* bomb-release—these heroic moments are never effectively evoked, as Kennedy did in *Pursuit*. Even more conspicuous in its absence is a feeling for *Tirpitz* and her crew. Perhaps Kennedy could not decide on a specific focus. Perhaps both he and his publisher merely intended to reprint the text of his BBC documentary "Target Tirpitz," along with some still photo padding.

This is a coffeetable book, like so many being published today in Britain

about the war. It would make a great pictorial introduction for a young boy. It is not, however, a vision of history. This is an unfortunate judgment but in the case of Kennedy, unavoidable. He set, after all, such high expectations.

MICHAEL VIAHOS

Liska, George. *Russia and World Order*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980. 194pp.

George Liska's new book has a central theme, as illustrated by the title. But in form it came to be a book by unring pieces produced for other occasions. The focus begins on Europe "without Gaullism" and the United States "without imperialism," then shifts to "the issues," and then to "strategy." This last section, "multiple revolutions and the two world systems," is followed by a conclusion and a "coda." The central theme focuses on diverting the Soviet Union into less of a confrontation role. Liska says that "Any U.S.-Soviet condominium in Europe going beyond a shared interest in the politico-military evolutions in the two Germanies is the least likely prospect" but, by contrast, he believes that what he calls "Soviet global outreach" has "promise" because it will "expose the Soviet Union to global learning and is likely to ease Soviet Russian complexes induced by regional confinement."

In style, the book does not make for easy reading. In compensation, there is much in the content that reflects Liska's originality of approach. And because the book is not at all rigid about the coverage of topics, comments are included on many fairly separated subjects besides the main focus.

I found the last fourth of the book, which deals with a wide range of subjects, the most interesting part, beginning with about page 150. To give a sample of both his style and approach in this section, on page 153, remarking on the argument about whether state-