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On the Shores of Bab Al-Mandab

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life he foresaw the need to shift conceptually from a foreign policy based on containment and limited war to a policy reflecting the developing diversity of world affairs amid the dissolution of the early cold war's strict polarization--limited peace, as he liked to describe it.

Several points emerge from this lengthy narrative to form a basis for assessing Stevenson's influence on his times. As a candidate in the 1950s, albeit a losing one, Stevenson kept alive a healthy Democratic Party organization. His personal leadership, so Martin suggests, brought large numbers of capable young people into party political activity, which made possible the successful campaigns of Kennedy and Johnson in the next decade. Further, in 1956 Stevenson set out ideas basic to the New Frontier and Great Society programs and it is easy to see still today, in Carter administration programs and policies, a rather large debt to the body of thought produced in the course of the 1956 Stevenson campaign. Finally, Martin argues that as Ambassador to the United Nations Stevenson gave that organization a standing with the American people that it did not enjoy before his tenure and has not since.

In all, Martin's two-volume study of Stevenson meets the severest test of biography: to illuminate the times, the character, and the concerns of the chosen subject. It is difficult to tell in this case whether Martin's success comes in spite of the masses of quotation and detail encumbering the narrative or because of them. Yet the book is unquestionably valuable. It contributes substantially to the history of the 1952, 1956, and 1960 Presidential campaigns. It augments in several important respects the accounts now available of foreign policy in the Kennedy Presidency. And, despite the need for a brief, more analytic treatment of Stevenson's public life, Martin's biography constitutes an essential source for people interested in the intellectual and

political antecedents of contemporary American party politics and foreign affairs.

THOMAS H. ETZOLD
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Novik, Nimrod. *On the Shores of Bab Al-Mandab: Soviet Diplomacy and Regional Dynamics* (FPRI Monograph No. 26). Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1979. 83pp.

Until recent years, the Strait of Bab al-Mandab received little international attention except for cursory recognition as a strategic chokepoint along the Mediterranean-Indian Ocean sealanes. Since 1968, when Great Britain terminated its traditional "protecting power" status east of Suez, the U.S.S.R. has sought to extend its influence in the Strait area. In this comprehensive monograph, Professor Novik traces the Soviet ascendancy with attention to its effect on regional interactions and, conversely, the effects of the area's complex relationships on Soviet patterns of behavior towards Third World countries.

Holding that the U.S.S.R. has maintained longstanding interests in the Strait within its overall ambition to secure dominance in the Middle East, Novik's introductory chapter provides solid background for more recent events in the African Horn and Southwestern Arabia. He contends that while Soviet activities in Somalia, Ethiopia and the two Yemen republics might serve its strategic defensive aims by denying U.S. Navy SLBM presence in northern Indian Ocean waters, this factor is more than offset by its aggressive quest for power and influence among these Third World states. He particularly asserts that the rapid switch in Soviet allegiances during the 1976-1977 Somali-Ethiopian conflict is typical of the intensive, but deliberate, "no holds barred" brand of Third World power politics in which the U.S.S.R. is currently engaged.

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In separate chapters, Novik assesses Soviet involvement in the currently volatile PDRY-YAR and Somali-Ethiopian relationships. His treatment of recent trends and events on both sides of Bab al-Mandab are an especially valuable feature. On the two Yemens, his analysis serves as helpful background for assessing the February-March 1979 border clash between the pro-Soviet PDRY and the Western/Saudi-backed YAR. Likewise, Novik's coverage of the Somali-Ethiopian conflict in the Ogaden includes solid analysis of both internal and external factors that led to the sudden Soviet turnabout in its superpower patron role. If somewhat critical in his judgments regarding Western inaction in the face of these Soviet initiatives, Novik concludes that it is essential for the United States to reexamine its regional interests before developing a clear-cut responsive policy.

This analysis should prove useful in interpreting recent events along the Strait and also the current nature of Soviet involvement. Its skillful integration of Soviet and Arab source materials are particularly helpful in gaining sophisticated comprehension of the area's complex internal, regional and superpower politics.

These features especially recommend the work as one from which specialist and general reader alike may reach informed opinions.

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The Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, ed. *Royal United Services Institute and Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1978/1979*. London: Brassey's, 1978. 365pp.

At its price of \$49.50 when procured through Crane, Russak, its U.S. distributor, this book would be the last on my list for addition to a personal library. It does not fulfill its stated purpose. It is

dated where it claims to be current, hence not authoritative. Data readily available in 1978 were not included. It is also contemporary where it might be timeless. It is poorly composed and edited. It is general where it should be specific and detailed in offering simplistic trivia. It reflects an "England first" viewpoint, perhaps understandable, but that becomes distracting to an objective reader. Its jacket price of £15, compared to its cost in \$U.S., reflects more strength to the pound than one would find elsewhere.

Brassey's is divided into three parts. Part I "Strategic Review" is the best—a series of 12 articles on the United Kingdom, U.N. and NATO military matters suitable to a quality British periodical, but they are not matched by the remainder of the book.

Part II is entitled either "Weapons Systems" or "Weapons Technology," depending where in the text one chooses to seek its title. It is inconsistent in quality with internal disagreements among paragraphs and between text and tables. It is obvious that this part, especially the section on naval weapons, has not been updated for several years. Available data in the tables is missing; that provided is sometimes incorrect. The writing style is less able than that of Part I.

Part III is an Anglophile's view of important "Defence Literature of the Year" and a "Chronology of Events June 1977-May 1978." Neither seems complete nor are the criteria for inclusion apparent.

There are many credible reference works on defense matters available on both sides of the Atlantic. There are also acknowledged forums that publish contemporary essays quarterly or monthly. This contribution of Brassey's seems to enter both arenas tentatively and sorely unarmed in light of the competition—89 years of experience notwithstanding.

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