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The Admirals Lobby

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Davis, Vincent. *The Admirals Lobby*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967. 329 p.

Admirals — past, present, and future — will not find in this book a named group of Admirals constituting a “lobby,” notwithstanding the catchy title. This is a scholarly study of the “politics of the policymaking process out of which military policy emerges” by a behavioral scientist who has major misgivings about relying so extensively on personal sources and the improvisations which characterized his research. He, therefore, regards the work under review as “only an early report.”

In part I the author leads the reader through an exhaustive historical review of the Navy and its problems prior to 1941, including centralization versus decentralization, the impact of the airplane, and the implementation of Mahan's theories. U.S. foreign policy, particularly during the period between the Spanish-American War to Pearl Harbor, is examined in some depth — related to naval affairs, of course. The author cites and agrees with Ambassador George Kennan that American policy was “seriously defective.”

The heart of this study will be found in parts II and III where the author examines what he labels the “political” activities of naval officers and draws at least tentative conclusions. It appears that these political activities are simply the lobbying in which the Navy has engaged in the Executive and Legislative Branches, and its public relations efforts outside the Government, to achieve its goal of a Navy “second to none.” In spite of naming well-known naval and civilian figures, e.g., Admiral Burke and Secretary McNamara, and using somewhat startling subheadings such as “Overt” and “Covert Approaches” (Office of Legislative Affairs and Op-

23), the author reveals little that has not been known generally in Government circles and by the informed public. He does provide a welcome analysis of these political activities, backed by impressive documentation — in spite of his own misgivings. The final section summarizes the author's findings in some five pages. In brief, the inference is that naval officers do not like to lobby (engage in “political” activities) except under pressure of any threat to the Navy and its ability to contribute to the security of the United States.

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Divine, A. David. *The Broken Wing*. London: Hutchinson, 1966. 400 p.

The Broken Wing is an unduly severe criticism of Britain's defense establishment, which, Mr. Divine asserts, has served the country's defense needs poorly in the 20th century. The Admiralty and the War Office are both dealt their fair share of invectives, but it is the Air Ministry, Royal Air Force, and Ministry of Aviation (and their progenitors) which receive the brunt of the attack. The individuals involved in the many incidents examined are also singled out, and concise and illuminating evaluations of their roles in the development of British military and naval airpower are provided. Few are complimentary. Most harshly treated is Lord Trenchard, widely revered as the Father of the Royal Air Force. He is portrayed as a self-centered, self-seeking opportunist whose convictions and decisions were often, if not always, subordinated to personal career enlargement and empire building. Just as severe is the charge that Lord Trenchard instilled in the RAF a false philosophy and doctrine (that of Douhet and Mitchell) and deceived the public as to the capabilities and potential of airpower. That false philosophy, which permeates