

1961

The Memoirs of General Lord Ismay

Hastings L.I. Ismay

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Ismay, Hastings L.I. (1961) "The Memoirs of General Lord Ismay," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 14 : No. 2 , Article 11.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol14/iss2/11>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

struggles and liquidations by which the Communists achieved absolute sway. Though it is practically impossible for a Westerner to grasp the details and Chinese proper nouns, this book is convincing in its authenticity. The author concludes by discussing the weaknesses of the Communist regime and the hopes for China. There may yet be a great leap forward by those who have nothing to lose and their humanity to regain.

Ismay, Hastings L.I. *The Memoirs of General Lord Ismay*. New York: Viking, 1960. 488 p.

This autobiography covers the life of General Ismay from his initial service in India in 1902 until his retirement in 1957, the most emphasis being on the World War II period. It is a very clear description of the central direction of the war by one who was "in the middle of the web" as Churchill's Chief of Staff. General Ismay worked continually with the principal British and American leaders and attended the main wartime conferences at Moscow, Washington, Yalta, Cairo and Teheran. His reporting appears to be straightforward and factual, does not indulge in personalities and tells of his own involvement with modesty. Churchill's figure, as it should, permeates the narration of decisions and events. The writer includes portraits of the major Allied leaders but is somewhat noncommittal about the contributions of General de Gaulle, possibly reflecting Churchillian sentiments on the "cross of Lorraine" which the Prime Minister bore. In his reporting of the associations with the Russians, the reader may detect the influence of future events, for he appears to have foreseen the nature of the postwar East-West relations. This autobiography is very easy reading and is of interest to one desiring a brief account of the central direction of the war—the organization, the decisions and the personalities involved.