

Admiral Arthur William Radford, U.S. Navy

(1896–1973)

Commander in Chief, Pacific Command
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

VITA

Born in Chicago, Illinois. Graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy (1916). Served on board the battleship *USS South Carolina* (1916). Completed flight training (1921). Assigned to the fleet, at naval air stations, and in the Bureau of Aeronautics. Appointed chief of aviation training (1941). Commanded carrier division eleven in the Pacific (1943). Served at the Navy Department (1944). Commanded carrier division six (1944). Became the Vice Chief of Naval Operations (1948) and the Commander in Chief, Pacific/High Commissioner, Trust Territory of Pacific Islands (1949). Appointed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1953). Involved in the so-called “revolt of the admirals”; as Chairman supported President Eisenhower’s “new look” policy and also dealt with the Formosa and Suez crises. Retired in 1957 and remained active in national security affairs, often being called upon for advice by the White House. Died at Bethesda Naval Medical Center.



U.S. Navy

On arrival in Washington, I wasted no time in reporting to . . . Secretary [of the Navy Forrestal]. He said something like this:

“Radford, I have become increasingly concerned with the situation in regard to the merger fight or unification of the services. . . . I have, therefore, had you ordered back to take charge of the Navy’s efforts to insure, if at all possible, that legislation on this subject, which is sure to be passed in the not-too-distant future, is satisfactory from our standpoint. My personal position is that an improved and unified defense organization is needed. The President wants one quickly, and the Army is pushing for speedy action with his complete backing. You are to set up an office, under me, and go to work as soon as you can.”

By 1946 I had a broad knowledge of the problems of the services. In my new job I tried to establish and define my own position. I concluded that:

- There was no doubt that the services could not return to the earlier status quo, two separate and independent Departments of War and Navy.
- Any new organization must attempt to coordinate military with national planning in political and economic fields.
- A “joint chiefs of staff” organization, similar to the one that had worked so well under President Roosevelt in World War II, must become a statutory body.

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