

Correspondence

Three-Star Trek

To the Editors: Concerning the article "Admirals Never Become President" by Frederick C. Dyer (*Worldview*, November, 1979), the statement that Japan has had "no navy men in top political positions" is not correct. Admirals became prime minister in Japan on seven occasions:

Adm. Yamamoto Gombei—2/20/13
Adm. Kato Tomosaburo—6/12/22
Adm. Yamamoto Gombei—9/2/23
Adm. Saito Makoto—5/26/32
Adm. Okada Keisuke—7/8/34
Adm. Yonai Mitsumasa—1/16/40
Adm. Suzuki Kantaro—4/7/45

It is noted that Japan's postwar Constitution specifically prohibits a military man from becoming either prime minister or a minister of state. Article 66 of the Japanese Constitution states in part that "The Prime Minister and other Ministers of State must be civilians."

Carl E. Ellsworth

Kailua, Hawaii

Frederick C. Dyer Responds:

Ellsworth is to be thanked for his hard data (though I wish he'd given the length of their terms too). I'm surprised

that he and others haven't pointed to the admiral who became president of Ecuador only last year (but while my piece was on press). Also, "TRB" starts his column of December 8, 1979, in *The New Republic* thus: "Of 38 American presidents, 10 have been generals...." I had listed 8. I sent "TRB" a copy of my Excursus and asked, "Who are the two I missed?" No response to date, but a friend has just given me the following list of generals who became U.S. presidents (his source is the *Reader's Digest Almanac*):

Washington	Grant
Jackson	Hayes
W.H. Harrison	Garfield
Taylor	B. Harrison
Pierce	Eisenhower

If more *Worldview* readers come forth with new counts, I will accept their corrections, additions, or deletions immediately and cordially. However, I hope that they will consider my basic question: "Why have so many governments, nations, peoples—since the brief period of Athens's preeminence—been reluctant to choose admirals for appointive positions, much less for elective ones? Does the cause lie in their training at sea or in us the followers?"

Oddly (?) enough, the basic themes and plots of the *Star Trek* series have been the relationships of a "Navy captain" as the leader and commander of the crew. What about Spaceship Earth?

WORLDVIEW

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