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## From the Editors

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## FROM THE EDITORS

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On 2 March 2011, the Type 054A Jiangkai II-class guided missile frigate *Xuzhou* arrived off the coast of Libya after transiting the Suez Canal to oversee the evacuation of the thousands of Chinese civilians working in that country's oil industry. This was evidently the first time a Chinese warship had ever entered the Mediterranean. There is thus a particular timeliness to our lead article, Daniel J. Kostecka's "From the Sea: PLA Doctrine and the Employment of Sea-Based Airpower." Through an analysis of doctrinal and academic writings on this subject, the author explores current Chinese thinking concerning the production and employment of aircraft carriers and large-deck amphibious vessels of several types for the projection of power far from China's own shores. He argues that the increasingly firm Chinese commitment to procuring such capabilities has little to do with any Taiwan-related scenario but reflects primarily China's determination to protect what it now insists is its "core" national interest in the South China Sea and, to a lesser but nevertheless significant extent, its desire to develop options for asserting a Chinese naval presence in distant seas for a range of contingencies such as counterpiracy, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and the protection of Chinese citizens abroad.

The acquisition of aircraft carriers has long been a matter of controversy for not only the Chinese but the Japanese as well. In "A New Carrier Race? Strategy, Force Planning, and JS *Hyuga*," Vice Admiral Yoji Koda, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) (Ret.), surveys the prehistory of efforts by the JMSDF to develop carrier-like through-deck destroyers for antisubmarine warfare (ASW)—a politically sensitive issue for Japan and its neighbors, given memories of the offensive role of the Japanese carrier fleet in World War II. The author describes in detail the interplay of operational, strategic, and political factors that contributed to the development and procurement of Japan's first through-deck helicopter ASW destroyer, JS *Hyuga*, commissioned in March 2009. He argues that this new class of warship should be understood as a logical evolution of long-standing Japanese thinking about the vital ASW mission rather than as a radical new departure. Vice Admiral Koda was commander in chief of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Fleet prior to his retirement in 2008. His most recent contribution to this journal was "The Emerging Republic of Korea Navy: A Japanese Perspective" (Spring 2010).

Next, Lieutenant Alaina M. Chambers, USN, and Steve A. Yetiv, in “The Great Green Fleet: The U.S. Navy and Fossil-Fuel Alternatives,” review the ambitious steps the U.S. Navy is in the process of taking, under the leadership of Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, to reduce the dependence of the sea services on traditional fossil fuels. The current unrest throughout the Middle East and North Africa and the rising price of oil globally only underline the importance of this initiative.

The Navy continues to pay close attention to the regime of international maritime law and regulations, particularly in the context of the continuing disputes between China and its neighbors over territorial claims in the South China Sea. Andrew J. Norris, in “The ‘Other’ Law of the Sea,” provides a detailed overview of the lesser-known international maritime conventions that supplement and support the framework provided by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Commander Norris, USCG, is on the faculty of the International Law Department at the Naval War College.

This year marks the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of U.S. naval aviation. Robert F. Dunn, in “Six Amazing Years: RAGs, NATOPS, and More,” looks back to the early years of jet aircraft in the Navy and traces the organizational innovations the service introduced in order to standardize pilot training in this new and challenging type of airplane as well as to reduce the extraordinarily high accident rate that plagued the carrier jet force at this time—a subject also explored by Robert C. Rubel (“The U.S. Navy’s Transition to Jets”) in the Spring 2010 issue of the *Review*. Vice Admiral Dunn, USN (Ret.), is a former Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Air Warfare.

War gaming is a perennial topic for the *Review*, given the place of honor this discipline holds at the Naval War College’s Center for Naval Warfare Studies. In their “Why Wargaming Works,” veteran war-game designers Peter P. Perla and ED McGrady make an intriguing argument for the value of at least certain kinds of serious gaming, using insights derived from an unorthodox array of sources, from literary theory to cognitive science. They locate this value in war gaming’s ability to construct a “narrative” that can have a “transforming” effect on an individual’s relationship with real-life experience.

Finally, George H. Quester, in his essay “The Last Time We Were at ‘Global Zero,’” in our Commentary department, explores the prospect—apparently embraced by the Obama administration—of a world without nuclear weapons, by way of comparison with a world on the brink of the nuclear era in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The result is a fascinating thought experiment that helps us weigh the merits of this once unthinkable transformation of the global strategic environment.

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Our editorial offices are now located in Sims Hall, in the Naval War College Coasters Harbor Island complex, on the third floor, west wing (rooms W334, 334, 309). For building-security reasons, it would be necessary to meet you at the main entrance and escort you to our suite—give us a call ahead of time (841-2236) or use the phone at the main Sims Hall entrance (1-2236).