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From the Editors

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FROM THE EDITORS

Over the last several months, the strategic environment has been profoundly altered by the financial crisis that has engulfed Wall Street and continues to spread throughout the American as well as the global economy. The implications of this crisis for the defense strategy and programs of the United States under the new administration of President Barack Obama remain unclear, but it seems increasingly obvious that they will be substantial, and in some respects perhaps game changing. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates has warned of leaner budget times ahead and indicated that all major defense programs will be subject to challenge in the course of this year's accelerated Quadrennial Defense Review (now due to be completed by August). He has also made it clear that he plans to take a personal interest in fixing the defense acquisition process. This larger context needs to be kept in mind as we wrestle with the question of the future force structure of the U.S. Navy. In our lead article in this issue, "The Navy's Changing Force Paradigm," Robert C. Rubel, dean of the Naval War College's Center for Naval Warfare Studies, attempts to advance the discussion of this vital issue in the light of the Navy's recently promulgated maritime strategy document as well as the evolving strategic and technological landscape. Rubel suggests that we have entered a period of transition from the carrier-centric navy of World War II and the Cold War to a new era of more distributed and diversified naval platforms, critically supported by a new global command-and-control architecture.

But the Navy's ability to operate effectively in the world of today and tomorrow will depend not only on its platforms and weaponry. The conflicts in which this country has been continuously engaged for over seven years have demonstrated the importance of cultivating a generation of naval officers fully proficient in joint, interagency, and combined operations; further, the Navy's new maritime strategy has emphasized the vital role of international security cooperation at sea. In the view of Admiral James Stavridis, currently commander of the U.S. Southern Command, and Captain Mark Hagerott of the U.S. Naval Academy, the emerging requirements levied on naval officers call for a broad rethinking of the system of officer education, assignment, and promotion. In their article "The Heart of an Officer: Joint, Interagency, and International Operations and Navy Career Development," Stavridis and Hagerott argue that it is

time to move beyond the current model of a single line-officer career toward a more diversified model that makes greater room for the preparation demanded by these new operational requirements.

“Gunboats for China’s New ‘Grand Canals’? Probing the Intersection of Beijing’s Naval and Oil Security Policies” is the latest contribution of the Naval War College’s China Maritime Studies Institute to understanding evolving Chinese views concerning naval and maritime security. Professors Andrew Erickson and Lyle Goldstein examine the geostrategic context for China’s current oil security–related actions and the role of oil in China’s recent turn to the sea; analyze Chinese perceptions of the roles of China’s sea lines of communication (SLOCs) and potential threats to them; explore the implications of a more assertive Chinese naval presence driven by oil-security concerns; and examine Chinese arguments in favor of international SLOC security cooperation. They find reason to conclude that cooperation may triumph over the possibility of conflict, given the common interests the Chinese share with the United States and other maritime powers. This has been starkly demonstrated in recent weeks as China has—for the first time—deployed naval forces in distant waters, to help counter the growing threat of piracy off the coasts of Somalia.

Two historical pieces round out this issue. In his “The Naval Battle of Paris,” Professor Jerry W. Jones tells the little-known story of the contentious diplomacy between representatives of the United States (including President Woodrow Wilson himself) and Great Britain over naval and maritime issues at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. This is an instructive example of how differing national perspectives on naval power, if not sensitively managed, can jeopardize relationships even among close allies, and it underscores the need to keep such perspectives firmly in mind today as we seek to build an expanded regime of maritime security cooperation in the face of current global challenges. Finally, in a look at some of our own institutional history, Professor Scott A. Boorman revisits the thought of Henry D. Eccles, a distinguished naval officer in the Pacific War who left a strong imprint on the Naval War College through his incisive views on strategy and, especially, the importance of logistics to naval warfare.

OUR NEWEST NEWPORT PAPERS

Newport Paper 32, *Major Naval Operations*, by Milan Vego, of the Naval War College’s Joint Military Operations faculty, is available both in print and on our website. Professor Vego has published widely on the history of German and Soviet military doctrine; he is also the author of *Operational Art*, an authoritative textbook. This new work looks back to the richly instructive experience of the U.S. Navy in World War II (as well as in more recent operations during the Korean

and Vietnam wars and in the Persian Gulf) to develop a taxonomy of naval operational art that can help inform the thinking of the Navy as a whole today.

U.S. Naval Strategy in the 1980s: Selected Documents, edited by John B. Hattendorf (the College's Ernest J. King Professor of Maritime History) and Peter M. Swartz (of CNA), is also available, both in print and on our website; it is Newport Paper 33. It is the latest in the series wherein Professor Hattendorf has collected and annotated the U.S. Navy's key strategic documents of recent decades. The series also includes, to date, Newport Papers 27 (the 1990s) and 30 (the 1970s); Newport Paper 19 collected writings relating specifically to the Maritime Strategy of 1986.

OUR WEBSITE AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES

In fall 2008 the Naval War College was granted permission to transfer from the "mil" electronic domain to the "edu." That change has now been implemented, with immediate and beneficial effects. For the Press, the practical impact is in electronic addresses—see page ii for our new website and staff contact addresses (the old "mil" addresses will continue to work, indefinitely). The change is by no means cosmetic: for instance, it puts the College in a close and potentially fruitful electronic relationship with major northeastern civilian universities. For the Press, release from the security and space constraints of the "mil" domain has made our website dramatically more accessible than it was in the last two years and now allows us to post articles individually once again. The site (in fact, the College's entire Web presence) is in transition, but we're optimistic that it will be a convenient and useful resource for readers, students, and researchers.

RECEIVING THE REVIEW

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