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## From the Editors

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## FROM THE EDITORS

On 22 March, in an exemplary display of democracy in action that seems to have been little noticed in this country, the people of Taiwan voted by an unexpectedly large margin to reject the presidential candidate of the governing Democratic Progressive Party in favor of the leader of the main opposition party, the Kuomintang. President-elect Ma Ying-jeou promises to be a more predictable and reliable interlocutor for the United States than outgoing President Chen Shui-bian, who has antagonized both Beijing and Washington in recent years by pressing in various ways the envelope of Taiwanese independence. His election therefore opens a major window of opportunity to reduce tensions across the Taiwan Strait as well as in U.S.-Chinese relations generally. But it also may open the way to a new approach on the part of both Taiwan and the United States to the military defense of Taiwan against actual or threatened invasion of the island by the People's Republic. The exponential growth in Chinese military forces arrayed against Taiwan, particularly in the area of short-range ballistic missiles, has been well publicized, but its dire implications do not seem to have been fully digested either in Taipei or in Washington. In a timely and (we believe) pathbreaking and important article, "Rethinking Taiwan's Defense Policy," William Murray, a former naval officer and now an analyst associated with the China Maritime Studies Institute at the Naval War College, provides a comprehensive and detailed survey of Taiwan's current strategic predicament, together with a cogent analysis of the inadequate and—as he argues—deeply misguided efforts undertaken by Taiwan's current government to address this situation. Moreover, he faults the United States for promoting an arms assistance package for the Taiwanese that is at the same time costly, provocative, and strategically ineffective. Murray's own recommendations, it may be added, track in important ways with recent statements on defense policy offered by President-elect Ma himself.

If anyone doubts the significance of China's buildup of short-range ballistic missiles, it is enlightening to listen to the Chinese themselves on this subject. PRC military analyst Wang Wei, in a piece entitled "The Effect of Tactical Ballistic Missiles on the Maritime Strategy System of China," shows that the Chinese are increasingly confident in their ability to hold at risk with these weapons not

only Taiwan but deployed U.S. naval assets in the western Pacific. Other articles in this issue touching on China include that of Toshi Yoshihara and James Holmes on the U.S.-Chinese-Indian triangular relationship in the Indian Ocean and Mackubin Owens's "Reflections on Future War." Owens reminds us that America's preoccupation with Iraq and "the Long War" should not cause us to lose sight of the implications of the rise of China as a near-peer competitor in the coming years, especially since we can very probably expect from the Chinese an approach to major-power warfare involving unconventional or irregular features that we have been unaccustomed to dealing with in the past.

This issue also offers two articles under the rubric "Leadership and Decision." Commander Christopher Hayes, USN, a recent Naval War College graduate, provides an authoritative analysis of the limitations of existing institutional arrangements and procedures within the Navy for cultivating operational leadership. This study is an outgrowth of ongoing research on leadership being done by a select group of students (the "Stockdale Group") under the auspices of the Naval War College's newly established College of Operational and Strategic Leadership, currently headed by Rear Admiral Thomas Zelibor, USN (Ret.). Finally, we have asked Professor John Hattendorf to allow us to republish in revised form an article on the career of Admiral Richard G. Colbert, not only because of its interest for the history of the Naval War College (whose panoramic Colbert Plaza memorializes him) in the immediate postwar years but even more for its relevance to the Navy today as it rethinks maritime security co-operation under the impetus of its new maritime strategy.

#### **EDWARD S. MILLER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP IN NAVAL HISTORY**

The Naval War College Foundation intends to award one grant of \$1,000 to the researcher who has the greatest need and who can make the optimal use of the research materials for naval history located in the Naval War College's Archives, Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College Museum, and Henry E. Eccles Library. Further information on the manuscript and archival collections and copies of the registers for specific collections are available on request from the Head, Naval Historical Collection ([evelyn.cherpak@nwc.navy.mil](mailto:evelyn.cherpak@nwc.navy.mil)).

The recipient will be a research fellow in the College's Maritime History Department, which will provide administrative support during the research visit. Submit a detailed research proposal—a full statement of financial need, a comprehensive research plan for use of Naval War College materials, curriculum vitae, at least two letters of recommendation, and relevant background information—to Miller Naval History Fellowship Committee, Naval War College Foundation, 686 Cushing Road, Newport, R.I. 02841-1207, by 1 August 2008. For further information, contact the chair of the selection committee, at

john.hattendorf@nwc.navy.mil. Employees of the U.S. Naval War College or any other agency of the U.S. Department of Defense are not eligible for consideration; EEO/AA regulations apply.