The Naval War College’s Patriots Memorial, dedicated on 9 September 2002 to the memory of the ten students and alumni of the College who were killed in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon on 11 September 2001. Constructed through donations from students, faculty, and friends of the College, the memorial stands in a grassy area between the College’s McCarty Little Hall and Conolly Hall (pictured in the background). It comprises, beside two benches and inscription blocks, a pentagon of hand-laid bricks surrounding a five-foot block of Indiana limestone recovered from the Pentagon’s west facade, which was severely damaged in the attack. The bronze plaque reads, over the names of the ten (nonresident) students and alumni:

In Memory of
Naval War College
Students and Alumni
Who Gave Their Lives
While Serving the Nation.

The Patriots Memorial is a vivid reminder of the global challenges for which the Naval War College plays an important role in preparing officers of the U.S. armed forces—a role addressed by this issue’s lead articles, by Paul Wolfowitz, Major General William F. Burns, U.S. Army (Ret.), and Admiral Gregory G. Johnson, U.S. Navy.

Photograph by PHC Jon H. Hockersmith, U.S. Navy
From the Chief of Naval Operations

President’s Forum

Professional Military Education

“The Greatest Deeds Are Yet to Be Done”

The Deputy Secretary of Defense assured the June 2003 graduating Naval War College class that their studies had prepared them to bring fresh ideas to the process of innovation and to study new developments from a critical perspective. The most important development during their year in Newport, of course, was the Iraq campaign—the ultimate classroom for the military profession, with lessons that point to lasting changes in the way the U.S. armed forces will operate in the future.

The Education of “a Modern Major General”

Gilbert and Sullivan’s fictitious Major General Stanley would have had little or no opportunity for formal professional military development. The U.S. military has evolved senior service colleges, including the U.S. Army War College, at which that nineteenth-century “modern major general” would find no place. These colleges must sustain their vital role in educating officers to meet the challenges of the emerging and future world.

A Larger Meaning, a Larger Purpose

The Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe/Commander in Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe, in remarks delivered on 19 June 2003 to the graduating Naval War College class, recalls the decisions early in his career that kept him in the Navy and sent him to the College—and the benefits that the "spirit and legacy of inquisitive and critical study" of that institution brought him.

The Casualty-Aversion Myth

It has been, since Vietnam, conventional wisdom that the American public will not accept military casualties. There is, however, no evidence that the public is intrinsically casualty averse. It is a myth that distorts policy making and execution, and it is a issue that in itself has no place in professional military advice and judgment.
Corbett in Orbit
A Maritime Model for Strategic Space Theory .............................................. 59
Lieutenant Commander John J. Klein, U.S. Navy

“Where,” it has been asked, “is the theory of space power? Where is the Mahan for the final
frontier?” Both can be found in the past. The theory of space power is implicit in thinking about
the maritime environment, and its exemplar is the early-twentieth-century theorist Sir Julian
Corbett.

China’s Aircraft Carrier Ambitions
Seeking Truth from Rumors ................................................................. 77
Ian Storey and You Ji

For a decade, the media has been rife with apparent evidence that the People’s Liberation Army
Navy wishes to operate an aircraft carrier. However, the aircraft carrier today has no champion in
the Chinese navy. Strategic priorities, costs, technical difficulties, and the likely reaction of
neighboring countries all now argue against a Chinese carrier battle group. However, the PLAN
has not abandoned the idea altogether—merely shelved it.

Debate & Response
Small Navies Do Have a Place in Network-Centric Warfare ....................... 95
Rear Admiral Patrick M. Stillman, U.S. Coast Guard

Still Worth Fighting Over? A Joint Response ............................................ 102
P. H. Liotta and James F. Miskel

Commentary
National Security Book List ............................................................... 109
Congressman Ike Skelton

Review Essays
A Reflection of Saddam’s Biography ......................................................... 113
Saddam Is Iraq: Iraq Is Saddam,
by Jerrold M. Post and Amatzia Baram
reviewed by Brenda L. Connors

The Korean War Remembered ............................................................... 117
Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History,
by William Stueck
Unexpected Journey: A Marine Corps Reserve Company in the Korean War,
by Randy K. Mills and Roxanne Mills
Their War for Korea: American, Asian, and European Combatants and
Civilians, 1945–53,
by Allan R. Millett
reviewed by Donald Chisholm

What the Benefits of Enlarging NATO Again Might Be ......................... 122
Coming in from the Cold War: Changes in U.S.-European Interactions
since 1980,
 edited by Sabrina P. Ramet and Christine Ingebritsen
NATO Enlargement 2000–2015: Determinants and Implications for
Defense Planning and Shaping,
by Thomas S. Szayna
Growing Pains: The Debate on the Next Round of NATO Enlargement
edited by Tomas Valesek and Theresa Hitchens
reviewed by Joyce P. Kaufman

In My View .......................................................... 125
Book Reviews

Asymmetrical Warfare: Today’s Challenge to U.S. Military Power,
by Roger W. Barnett
reviewed by James A. Russell .................................................. 135

El Dorado Canyon: Reagan’s Undeclared War with Qaddafi,
by Joseph T. Stanik
reviewed by James Stavridis ...................................................... 138

Seapower and Space: From the Dawn of the Missile Age to
Net-centric Warfare, by Norman Friedman
reviewed by William C. Martel .................................................. 139

The Geopolitics of East Asia: The Search for Equilibrium, by Robyn Lim
Chinese Grand Strategy and Maritime Power, by Thomas M. Kane
reviewed by Bruce Elleman ....................................................... 140

reviewed by Amer Latif ............................................................ 143

Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict, by Michael T. Klare
reviewed by Peter Dombrowski ................................................ 144

The Age of Sacred Terror, by Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon
reviewed by S. Douglas Smith .................................................. 146

Prime Time Crime: Balkan Media in War and Peace, by Kemal Kasparic
reviewed by Clemson G. Turregano ........................................... 147

Military Education: Past, Present, and Future,
edited by Gregory C. Kennedy and Keith Neilson
reviewed by Judith Stiehm .......................................................... 149

Steel My Soldiers’ Hearts, by David H. Hackworth and Eilys England
reviewed by Jon Czarnecki ......................................................... 151

Secret Empire: Eisenhower, the CIA and the Hidden Story
of America’s Space Espionage, by Philip Taubman
reviewed by Frank C. Mahnke .................................................... 152

Bipartisan Strategy: Selling the Marshall Plan, by John Bledsoe Bonds
reviewed by Robert S. Wood ...................................................... 154

Patrick Blackett: Sailor, Scientist, Socialist, edited by Peter Hore
reviewed by Chris Eldridge ......................................................... 156

Navies of Europe, by Lawrence Sondhaus
Technology and Naval Combat in the Twentieth Century and Beyond,
by Phillips Payson O’Brien
reviewed by Christopher Bell ................................................... 157

First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country
a World Power, by Warren Zimmermann
reviewed by Cole C. Kingseed ................................................... 159

Books Received ...................................................................... 161

From the Editors ...................................................................... 163

Of Special Interest ................................................................ 165

Index of Volume LVI
Articles and Essays ................................................................. 166
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE CHANGE OF COMMAND

From the Chief of Naval Operations, 9 July 2003

Admiral Rempt has acknowledged our VIPs, and I just want to say it’s wonderful to be here in Newport. It’s always fun to come up here and see great friends. If I started going through the honors and acknowledging all of them, it would take longer than [we have]. There are a lot of them here this morning. I’m here because I believe that this tradition, this event that we are here to observe is very important to our Navy, this thing called the change of command.

Admiral Rempt, Rod, I’m grateful for and I thank you for inviting me to be here. I wouldn’t have missed it for anything. That’s a fact. This ceremony is important to our institution. In our Navy, we have taken great care to preserve the principle that’s embodied in this change of command ceremony. This Naval War College is now a joint war college, and each of the services does this event in its own unique way. For us, it highlights a sacred trust that we give to individuals in command in our Navy, to commanders, to leaders. In this case, we are here to acknowledge Admiral Rod Rempt and that sacred trust that he has held here for the last twenty-three months as the president of this institution.

Of course, trust is an important word, and with trust comes a trust in his abilities. We laid it on his shoulders. I never apologize for that. In fact, I’m proud of the fact that we give authority to individuals and assign them responsibility. Sometimes the other part of that leadership triangle that people like to shy away from is the accountability part of it. But we believe in it. Rod, we’re very proud of the job that you have done up here in Newport. You have absolutely performed superbly.

By my calculations, I’ve been to this site more than any other in the Navy since I’ve been the CNO. I appreciate the history, the people. But most of all, when I come up here, I love seeing the powerful teamwork that occurs and exists here in Newport, Rhode Island, and that exists here in this world-class institution. I often speak about the asymmetric strength of the United States Navy. Too often we speak in terms of the capability of our enemies, but our asymmetric strength is the selective genius of our people. The Naval War College is the nucleus of that genius, a place where leaders stretch their minds to improve themselves and our Navy and other services. The College has formed leaders like Nimitz and Halsey.
But equally important, it has formed thousands of leaders around the world today who are fighting the global war on terrorism. I’m very proud of what the War College does, because it creates leaders and operational concepts needed to face the challenges that we all are confronted with in this twenty-first century.

Now, we birth future leaders of commands around the United States, places like Great Lakes Officer Candidate School, Naval ROTC—seventy-one universities around the United States, by my count—and, of course, the Naval Academy. These places create beginnings for our people, our bedrock. The Naval War College, on the other hand, is a place for our people to grow and mature and create the vision of who we will be, the future Navy. This place is very, very important to our Navy. I’ve come to believe that leaders serve an institution and that part of that service requires the establishment of a vibrant legacy. The Naval War College does exactly that. It educates. It inspires naval, joint, international leaders. It broadens their horizons and exposes them to new ideas. The students here of every service are the men and women who will lead our institution when people like me and these two individuals, the principals of this ceremony, are long gone, and I’m thankful for that.

Now, to the officers in our Navy, I frequently say things like, “If you’re not growing, you’re dead.” The Naval War College brings life into the officer corps of this institution. It’s vital to the intellectual health of our Navy. So this morning, I just want to be on record as saying: The importance of the Naval War College cannot be overstated. Our future leaders also need the tools, the warfighting capabilities. Let’s see. I was here in June last, when I described a road map for the future Navy called Sea Power 21. Since then, I didn’t know you were going to call it Team Newport, but Team Newport has worked nonstop to move that vision to reality. The synergy here in Newport between the War College and the Navy Warfare Development Command and the Strategic Studies Group is incredible, and it’s unique within the Navy.

In summary, the Naval War College is a national treasure. The output of this institution is vital to our nation—not just to our Navy but to our nation. While we’re very proud of your accomplishments here, I believe when we look back on your leadership, we’ll talk about it as a time remembered for great team building marked by incredible spirit of enthusiasm. Under your leadership, this institution has taken its place as the center of strategic thinking. I like to say that as leaders we get to talk about policy and put structure and mechanisms in place. You’ve created mechanisms and forums to advance our visions, and you’ve stretched the minds of hundreds of young Americans and leaders of other nations of the world. These are the tools that our Navy must possess to remain the greatest Navy that has ever sailed the sea.
As is always the case, success brings with it a lot of responsibility, and there are a lot of rumors about Rod Rempt’s future. When you’re the object of one of these rumors, sometimes it puts you in a difficult spot. I remember one time when I was in such a position, and a salty retired admiral walked up to me and said, “Congratulations on the rumor,” and walked on.

On Monday, the rumors were confirmed and the president of the United States nominated Admiral Rod Rempt to become the superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy. When confirmed, Rod will have the high honor again of leading one of our most important organizations in the Navy, and I should say one of our most important developmental organizations in our Navy, instilling the spirit of naval service and the essence of naval leadership in our future leaders—again, building upon the legacy of that great institution and the United States Navy.

So my wish for you today is simply this: I wish you a speedy confirmation. Pam, a special thanks to you, a key player, and I know Rod’s teammate in every single respect. You made everyone here feel like a part of the family. You’re a wonderful friend and a real leader. Your spirit of service is legendary, donating your time and your enthusiasm to students and staff, volunteer organizations, and the like.

Admiral and Mrs. Route, welcome aboard to the Naval War College team. You didn’t have to come too far, Ron. I know that you will be the first to say that you have issues and challenges. But I am absolutely confident that you will do an equally superb job here at this institution. Ron comes to this job very well prepared. He’s a sailor, a surface warrior. He commanded the USS Lake Erie and the George Washington battle group. He’s a scholar, holds a graduate degree from the Naval Postgraduate School, and is a member on the Council on Foreign Relations. He’s an innovator, serving as commander of the Navy Warfare Development Command. He has demonstrated a knack for getting new ideas to the forefront, and more importantly, getting them out into the fleet. Ron, I know you’re ready to take the reins. Now, I confess to you in front of this audience, as a matter of record, that when we assigned you to the NWDC last September, almost a year ago now, I had this day, this event, in mind. I know that you’re ready to do this.

I’m grateful for the wonderful work that your tenure has produced. I’m a great believer in output. I’m very grateful for the work that your team has produced at NWDC, and I promise you that I will have a relief up here for you for that part of your assignment soon. My challenge to you and this great faculty and this staff is simply this: Challenge our young men and women. We need the creative thought of this place, and we need to keep this War College at the forefront of the Navy’s intellectual lessons, and to create for our Navy a robust legacy at this vital institution, leading it to even greater heights.

Ron, help us see the future.
Rear Admiral Route reported in July 2003 as President, Naval War College after duty as Commander, Navy Warfare Development Command. Prior to arriving in Newport in September 2002, his assignment was Director, Navy Programming Division (N80), Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

Rear Admiral Route commanded Cruiser Destroyer Group 2 and the George Washington (CVN 73) Battle Group from May 1998 until April 2000. He also commanded USS Lake Erie (CG 70), homeported in Pearl Harbor, from July 1994 until July 1996. During this period, Lake Erie deployed for six months to the Western Pacific and the Persian Gulf as a unit of the Constellation (CV 64) Battle Group. Lake Erie won the Battle Efficiency “E” and CINCPACFLT Golden Anchor Award for 1995.

Other assignments at sea included command of USS Dewey (DDG 45); surface operations officer for Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group 2 and the America (CV 66) Battle Group; chief staff officer for Commander, Destroyer Squadron 4; executive officer in USS Halsey (CG 23); weapons officer in USS Roark (FF 1053) and later USS Wainwright (CG 28); aide and flag lieutenant to Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group 2; and antisubmarine warfare officer in USS Barry (DD 933).

Ashore in Washington, D.C., Rear Admiral Route served as Director, Politico-Military Affairs Division (N52), Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, his first assignment as a flag officer. Other Pentagon assignments have included Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) for three assistant secretaries in two administrations; long-range planner and surface ship readiness analyst in CNO’s Program Resource Appraisal Division (now N81); and naval warfare analyst in the Joint Analysis Directorate (now part of J-8), Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A native of Denver, Colorado, Rear Admiral Route attended the U.S. Naval Academy, graduating in 1971 with a bachelor of science degree in systems engineering. He was awarded a master of science degree in operations research from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, in 1976. Selected to a Navy Federal Executive Fellowship, he completed a year-long assignment as a Military Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City in June 1997. He became a Council member in June 1998.

Rear Admiral Route’s personal decorations include the Legion of Merit (six awards), the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards), and the Navy Achievement Medal.
When I assumed the presidency of the Naval War College last July, I was tremendously impressed by the commitment to excellence I encountered in personnel at all levels of the command. I found this commitment in everyone I met, from senior educator to junior groundskeeper. Everyone believed in the value of what the College does and in the importance of his or her contribution to mission accomplishment.

A large degree of the credit for creating this “culture of excellence” goes to my predecessor, Vice Admiral Rodney P. Rempt, USN. His tenure as the forty-ninth President of the Naval War College was marked by careful analysis of alternatives, data-driven decisions, and tireless advocacy of increased professional education for the service’s officer corps. Within weeks of assuming command in August 2001, Admiral Rempt established a “skunk works” team to study graduate and professional military education. The team’s resulting report, “Transforming Graduate and Professional Military Education,” became the road map for a series of new initiatives that, once implemented, will substantially improve the professional preparation of the Navy officer corps. After 9/11, he also mobilized the College’s impressive research, analysis, and war-gaming resources to focus on combating terrorism and defending the homeland. This resulted in dozens of point papers and crisis-management games that have helped establish the nation’s new Homeland Security posture. The College and indeed the nation owe Vice Admiral Rempt a debt of gratitude for his service here in Newport.

The “state of the College” is certainly strong, and all indications are that we will grow even stronger in the months and years ahead. One of our primary missions is to prepare future leaders to face the evolving challenges of ensuring national and global security. Technological advancements, political changes, and the rise of “nonstate actors” all increase the complexity of the security solutions
that must be generated and sustained around the world. They also demand a new breed of enlightened “warrior-scholars” to lead the increasingly sophisticated military services and other security-related agencies. No school is better suited to producing these leaders than the Naval War College. The hallmarks of all of our educational programs have been, and will continue to be, their:

**Rigor.** Our academic programs demand intellectual engagement from our students and skillful mentorship from our faculty. As a fully accredited graduate school, NWC meets (and exceeds) the standards established by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The College will stand for reaffirmation of the accreditation of its master’s degree program in September 2004. In recent months, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has reaffirmed the accreditation of both our resident and nonresident professional military education programs to award Joint Professional Military Education Phase I credit for another five years.

**Relevance.** NWC’s academic programs are focused primarily on achieving one outcome—improvement of the ability of our graduates to make sound decisions in command and in staff positions. We do this by producing graduates who are “passionate about dispassionate strategic analysis”; understand the challenges inherent in leading change in large, complex organizations that deal with national security; and are practitioners of operational art. Readings, case studies, and guest lectures are directed toward the practical application of the leadership and management skills required to provide for the common defense, to deter wars when possible, and to win wars when necessary. We educate future leaders in the techniques of joint warfare, as seen from a maritime perspective.

**Quality.** NWC’s seminar-based teaching methodology encourages active learning and places a premium on developing the student’s ability to communicate orally and in writing. Exams, exercises, and war games serve to assess the student’s progress and to provide opportunities to synthesize the lessons learned. Our nonresident programs strive to duplicate, to the maximum extent possible, the quality of the educational experience found on our Newport campus.

These are the same traditions established by Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, our founding President, and reiterated by Admiral Stansfield Turner, the College’s thirty-seventh President, whose “revolution” over three decades ago established the academic foundations upon which our current programs are based. The strategic traditions established by these two officers are the College’s “anchors to windward.” One of our greatest challenges will be to maintain these bedrock principles while improving access to our programs for a larger segment of the Navy officer corps. We envision both increased participation in our
resident programs and skillful employment of distance-learning technologies to reach every officer with demonstrated future leadership potential.

The state of our research, analysis, and war-gaming programs is also very strong, with a potential for significant growth. Our research programs are closely aligned with, and often embedded within, our academic programs. They are also scientifically rigorous, relevant to fleet needs, and qualitatively superior. The faculty and staff of the Center for Naval Warfare Studies are doing leading-edge research in a multitude of areas, including Seapower 21, international law, regional studies, and advanced concepts. Increasingly, the Navy is looking to Newport as a primary source for unbiased research and analysis on the most complex issues. We will have more to say about this important aspect of the Naval War College’s dual mission in future issues of the Review.

On a personal level, my wife Kip and I are thrilled to return to Newport. Our previous assignments on a destroyer homeported here, followed by various courses at the Surface Warfare Officers School, have been rather brief but very enjoyable. We are looking forward to putting our roots down for an extended stay in beautiful and historic New England. Our thanks go to the wonderful men and women who make up the “greater NWC family” for their warm welcome, and to Rod and Pam Rempt for providing us with a great foundation upon which future successes will be built.

RONALD A. ROUTE
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College
Dr. Paul Wolfowitz became the twenty-eighth Deputy Secretary of Defense on 2 March 2001. For the previous seven years, he was dean and professor of international relations at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University. From 1989 to 1993, Dr. Wolfowitz served as Under Secretary of Defense for Policy with major responsibilities for the reshaping of strategy and force posture at the end of the Cold War. For three years during the Reagan administration, he was U.S. ambassador to Indonesia. Prior to that posting, Dr. Wolfowitz’s government service also included tours as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, head of the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Regional Programs, in the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and as a management intern at the Bureau of the Budget.

Dr. Wolfowitz received a bachelor of science degree from Cornell University in mathematics and a doctorate in political science from the University of Chicago, and has taught at Yale and Johns Hopkins. In 1993 he was the George F. Kennan Professor of National Security Strategy at the National War College. He has written widely on the subject of national strategy and foreign policy and has been a member of numerous advisory boards, including those of the journals Foreign Affairs and National Interest.

These remarks were delivered in Newport to the Naval War College graduating class on 20 June 2003.

"THE GREATEST DEEDS ARE YET TO BE DONE"

The Honorable Paul Wolfowitz

It is customary in commencement speeches to say something about the dynamic world that graduates are about to enter and how that change is going to affect their lives. But that traditional message does not work on this occasion, with this audience. You are graduating, but you are certainly not commencing. “To commence,” after all, is “to begin.” When you return to your fleet or to your units you will not be beginning a brand-new career. You will be going back to the noble profession to which you have chosen to dedicate your lives. But you will be going back enriched by what you have learned here and by what you will continue to learn with the tools that you have acquired here.

There have been dramatic changes in the world during your year at the Naval War College, particularly in the world of the military. You will be going back to operational assignments having had a chance to study those developments from a critical perspective. Your study here has prepared you to bring fresh ideas to the dynamic process of innovation that is under way in our military today.

One of the most significant elements that you observed was the battle of Iraq. I expect that, like the rest of the country, you were glued to televisions for much of March and April. The battlefield—or what we should more correctly call “the battle space”—is the ultimate classroom for your profession, and we are still learning the lessons from those crucial weeks. But some of those lessons are already obvious, and they indicate lasting changes in the way the U.S. armed forces will operate in the future.

Some of the changes that led to these lessons have been in the works for quite a long time. I am sure that many of you have contributed to those changes. But in the last year the whole world has had a chance—thanks in part to yet another
innovation, the concept of embedded reporters—to see what they are, and the
effect has been dramatic.

The first has been the application of new networking and communications
technologies, which have taken the integration of air and ground forces to an en-
tirely new level and have given our soldiers and Marines on the ground nearly
instantaneous access to precision air support. The presence of those brave sol-
diers and Marines in turn enabled our long-range striking power to find targets
with precision. That too represents a quantum leap. Precision weapons are only
good if you have precision targeting; we can now combine the two in dramatic
new ways.

That new capability, in turn, enabled our ground forces to advance at an as-
tonishing speed over distances far exceeding those of DESERT STORM. It also
made possible the use of Special Forces on a scale that would have been difficult
to conceive of in the past. More than a hundred Special Forces “A teams” were
deployed throughout Iraq in this conflict. That in turn led to the disappearance
of a “front” in the traditional sense, to be replaced by the concept of battle space.

We also saw some remarkable organizational innovations. Who would have
imagined a conventional tank unit under the command of a Special Forces lieu-
tenant colonel? Or the first-ever combined forces land component commander,
integrating Army, Marine Corps, and coalition forces in a single, brilliant land
combat campaign?

We saw revolutionary application of new technologies, such as unmanned
aerial vehicles and hit-to-kill antimissile systems. So the question is not whether
you in the audience today will adapt to these changes. I have no doubt that you
will. You are professionals. The real question is whether the organizations that
we work in will adapt as well.

But adapt they must. The world has changed, both technologically and politi-
cally. The armed forces that many of you joined were organized to fight an en-
emy that no longer exists, along boundaries that were fixed and identifiable. Our
enemy today does not have those attributes. He is elusive and often invisible. He
uses unconventional weapons against unconventional targets, including the
American heartland. The conflict is, in a word, asymmetric, and we must be able
to respond in kind.

The battle in Iraq—like the battle in Afghanistan before it—is a dramatic vic-
tory in the war on terrorism. In the last year there have also been important si-
lent victories, achieved by extraordinary international cooperation among
intelligence, law enforcement, and military authorities of dozens of countries.
These combined efforts have killed and captured terrorists, among them the
mastermind of the 11 September attacks, Khalid Shaykh Mohammad. But these
victories are just battles in the larger war on terrorism. As President Bush said in
announcing the end of major combat operations in Iraq, “The battle of Iraq is one victory in a war on terror that began on September the 11th, 2001—and still goes on.”

Our purpose is not to “manage” terrorism or simply to arrest and prosecute terrorists after they have attacked us. Our goal is to destroy and delegitimize terrorism the way slavery and piracy were delegitimized in the nineteenth century.

The global war on terrorism needs to be understood as a two-front war. The first and most obvious front is the effort to kill and capture terrorists and to dismantle terrorist networks. That is not just a military operation; it is an effort that requires all the instruments of national power, including intelligence, law enforcement, and diplomacy. We are making important headway every single day. The enemy is on the run. We are destroying his bases of operation, his organization, his sources of funds, his ability to move and communicate, and his ability to strike. That is the first front in the war on terrorism. In the command and staff positions you will be assuming shortly, you will be on the front lines of that war. Let there be no doubt, we will win this war.

As the president has said, “We do not know the day of final victory but we have seen the turning of the tide. No act of the terrorists will change our purpose, or weaken our resolve, or alter their fate. Their cause is lost. Free nations will press on to victory.” We will win in part because our military is the best-equipped, best-trained, best-led fighting force on earth, and we have the support of dozens of other freedom-loving nations that are part of our coalition—many of them represented here today. When we engage militarily, the outcome is certain.

But there is a second front in the global war on terror—the challenge to build what President Bush has called “a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror,” particularly in the Muslim world. That means helping a liberated Iraq to become the free and democratic country that it can be. It means resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. Winning the peace is an even greater challenge than winning the war.

But even as the war on terrorism continues to consume our time and attention, it is vital that we also continue transformation, the initial effects of which were demonstrated so dramatically in the battle in Iraq. We need to sustain that effort not only to win the war on terror but to deter the wars of the future, or if necessary, fight them successfully. The American military has an extraordinary history of innovation in time of war. Some might even say that we are more innovative under the stress of war than in the leisure of peace. We should use the urgency of the present war on terror to continue transforming our military not only to win this war but to be prepared to win, or—even better, to prevent—the next one.
 Needless to say, transformation means profound change. Not only technological change. Not even primarily technological change. The changes enabled by new networking and information technology take the potential of joint operations to a dramatically new and unprecedented level. And that is more than a mechanical change. It requires a change in the way we think and the way we organize. It is properly described as a cultural change. If we are going to depend on one another in wartime, we must forge the bonds of trust in peacetime. That means our training has to become increasingly joint as well.

With that thought in mind, we are developing a joint national training capability to create a distributed, global environment in which individuals and units will receive training and experience in joint operations at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. It should include a live training component that connects live training exercises and allows the best practices to circulate among the services. It should also include a virtual capability to link service training centers. We want to increase the amount of joint field training that our forces receive, because we need to train like we fight, as a coherently integrated team. All of that requires what Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has called a culture of “innovation and intelligent risk taking.”

Someone once remarked on the huge number of failures that Thomas Alva Edison had suffered in his efforts to develop a new battery. “Some fifty thousand failed experiments,” this observer said, “with no results.” “Results?” Edison replied. “Why, I’ve gotten a lot of results. I know fifty thousand things that don’t work.”

I am sure I do not need to tell this audience that military organizations, for all of their outstanding attributes, are not always the most welcoming of change. That great American inventor Robert Fulton, best known for his invention of a successful steamboat, was contracted by a foreign government to try to build a submarine. After an embarrassing trial of the design he produced, an admiral from that foreign navy snorted, “Thank God we still fight our battles above the waves and not beneath them.”

Well, we have to be prepared for change. In the interest of jointness let me tell a story on the Army—our Army. It is a story of an infantry officer who, here in the United States in the 1930s, began to write about the future of armored warfare. Instead of receiving support, he was chastised by his commander, who told him that if he published anything that was contrary to what was called “solid infantry doctrine,” he would be court-martialed. That soldier so interested in the future of armored warfare who was so nearly retired as a colonel was Dwight David Eisenhower. It took the intervention of General John J. Pershing’s chief of staff to save his career.

The rest, as they say, is history.
In one sense, of course, the successful organization is right to question too much innovation. There is an old proverb that says, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Given the high stakes that attach to military decisions, there are good reasons to be conservative about risk taking. But there is another side to the same story. Professor Clayton Christensen of the Harvard Business School has pointed out in his book *The Innovator’s Dilemma* that the most successful companies—the ones that seem to have done everything right—have been the most vulnerable when disruptive innovations come along. As he put it, “The very decision-making and resource-allocation processes that are key to the success of established companies are the very processes that reject disruptive technologies.”*

Today one of our fundamental challenges is to encourage prospective Eisenhowers, to inspire each of you to think about the war of the future. During my present tour at the Pentagon, I have been privileged to know some remarkable innovators—and I am sure there are many in this audience today as well. The commander of Central Command, General Tommy Franks, is a great example. In Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan, for example, Special Forces on the ground took nineteenth-century horse cavalry, combined it with fifty-year-old B-52 bombers, and, using modern satellite communications, produced a truly twenty-first-century capability. When Secretary Rumsfeld was asked what he had in mind by reintroducing the horse cavalry into modern warfare he replied, with a big grin, “It’s all part of our transformation plan.”

As I am sure you are all aware, the Naval War College has been one of the great generators of innovation for the U.S. military. During the period before World War II, naval officers here first thought about the concept of mass carrier operations. It was here that Plan ORANGE—the prophetic concept of operations for a war against Japan—was developed, long before Pearl Harbor. More recently, under the leadership of Vice Admiral Arthur K. Cebrowski, this college developed the concept of network-centric warfare. At the same time this institution maintains a curriculum that is traditional in substance, with a focus on the Great Books and history. Some of you probably say it had too much history, because you had to struggle with it. But that combination of innovative and classical thought has enabled the Naval War College to produce military leaders who harness an understanding of the past and the potential of technological progress to produce new ideas for the future.

So as you graduate you will take with you what is in effect a liberal education in the military art. The capacity for independent, critical thought and reflection and the ability to question assumptions and previous modes of warfare will give you an advantage over your adversaries in an age of great uncertainty and rapid change.

That classical education does several things. For one, it imparts a healthy skepticism about pat answers or easy solutions. It should make you wary about received wisdom. Second, it exposes students to a tremendous variety of experience. As someone once said, “History has more imagination than any scenario writer in the Pentagon.” In the summer of 2001, who would have dared to predict that by the end of the year Americans would have been viciously attacked on their own shores by an enemy without any capital, without any conventional military force? Who could have predicted that within weeks of that attack America would be at war in landlocked Afghanistan? Or who would have dared to predict that by the time the last fires of the World Trade Center were extinguished, U.S. forces would already be in Kabul?

Third, a classical education makes one think differently. It prepares one to continue self-education. It makes one more intellectually adaptable as circumstances change and one confronts surprise. While technology confers many advantages, it cannot synthesize the value of interpersonal debate and discussion. There is simply no substitute for face-to-face learning and interaction between students and faculty, and among students themselves. Keep in touch with your classmates after you leave. You will cross paths again, and you can continue to learn from one another.

Education, as opposed to training, teaches us that clichés about war—like the three-to-one rule for offense—have fallen by the wayside. Unorthodox battle plans, such as those employed in Afghanistan or in Iraq, cannot be found in any textbook or manual. They were produced by military leaders who grasped the lessons of military history and applied them in entirely new circumstances.

Let me mention just one example. In preparing for the urban offensive on Baghdad, one that many predicted would result in horrendous loss of life, General Franks and his staff developed a brilliant plan that was informed by the lessons of the Russian military experience in Grozny, the capital city of Chechnya. But rather than simply accepting the superficial lesson that urban operations can defeat advancing conventional armies and therefore should be avoided, they applied a critical thought process to discern a fundamental difference about Baghdad—a city with people awaiting liberation and blessed with wide boulevards. That was an important distinction from Grozny that could easily have been missed. No manual could tell you that. It proves that education is not the same thing as training.

We have entered a period in which discrepancies between militaries are far greater than at any time in the recent past. The world of homogeneous armed forces that fought the same way with the same weapons is a recent development. Asymmetric warfare is not a new phenomenon. It is the story of our own national military history—of Continental Army forces firing from behind trees
and wearing down a numerically superior, better trained, and better equipped British force.

Whatever conflicts lie ahead, you can be sure they will be as different from Iraq as Iraq was from Afghanistan—as Afghanistan was from Kosovo—as Kosovo was from DESERT STORM—as DESERT STORM was from JUST CAUSE. Meeting the challenges of the future will require continuous questioning of accepted truths, a constant pursuit of lessons from history and of lessons from technology that may have relevance to the contemporary situation. Because of the premium we place on innovation, we require a joint officer corps that has studied not only the technique of its profession but the very logic of war as an instrument of policy; we require a joint officer corps that is not afraid to ask questions or to offer answers that seem to violate bureaucratic norms and conventional wisdom.

It is no accident that the commanders in Iraq include distinguished graduates of this institution. They include a former commander of the Atlantic Fleet, Admiral Robert Natter, who won the college’s Distinguished Graduate Leadership Award in 2000. They include a former Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William Fallon; the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Vice Admiral Charles Moore; and the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Readiness and Logistics, Vice Admiral Dennis McGinn, who recently retired. It is a long list.

It has been said that this college made its greatest contribution to winning the present war ten or fifteen years ago, when it educated the men and women who are now taking the fight to the enemy. You will be following in their footsteps. You have been preparing for what we expect will be senior leadership responsibilities. That is the sole purpose of this institution. In the twenty-first century we need leaders who can both think creatively and carry out orders.

Charles William Elliott had a distinguished career over forty years as president of Harvard. When he was retiring in the early part of the last century, he was treated to a dinner by his faculty. The Harvard faculty fell all over themselves offering praise, one after the other, for the retiring president. One finally said, “President Elliott, during your tenure here, Harvard has become a veritable storehouse of knowledge.” Elliott replied, “What you say is true, but I can claim little credit for it. It is simply that the freshmen bring so much and the seniors take so little away.”

You have brought much to this institution, but I am pretty certain you are also taking a great deal away. So I want to congratulate you, wish you best of luck as you continue your careers, and in closing leave you with the words of President Theodore Roosevelt, who walked these very grounds near the turn of the last century. A man of great vision and courage, Roosevelt said, “We see across the dangers of the great future, and we rejoice as a giant refreshed. The great victories are yet to be won, the greatest deeds yet to be done.”
THE EDUCATION OF “A MODERN MAJOR GENERAL”

Major General William F. Burns, U.S. Army, Retired

For my military knowledge, though I’m plucky and adventury,
Has only been brought down to the beginning of this century;
But still in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
I am the model of a modern Major-General.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

Over a century ago, Gilbert and Sullivan developed a caricature of a contemporary general officer of the British service in their operetta Pirates of Penzance. Almost three decades ago, Colonel Donald F. Bletz of the U.S. Army War College faculty published an article using this caricature, Major General Stanley, as a model of what should not be the typical general officer of the future. Since that future is now, it is useful to examine the factors that contribute to and influence the development of a professional military officer, particularly an officer who has achieved general or flag rank and so can be considered a strategic leader.

Of course, a number of factors enter into the selection and development of such officers. This article will consider only one—the education of potential strategic leaders. I will discuss a bit about its antecedents and speculate about its future. In doing this, I will restrict myself essentially to the U.S. Army. I do this for two reasons: first, the Army is the case with which I am most familiar; second, the recent evolution of “jointness” in the U.S. armed forces has made career patterns and educational requirements converge more and more. Thus, an examination of the Army model should provide insights into problems and possibilities in the other services as well.

Major General Burns was the ninth director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, has served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs and Special Envoy to Russia for Nuclear Dismantlement, and is judge emeritus of the Court of Judicial Discipline of Pennsylvania.

General Burns entered the Army in 1954, commissioned from the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at La Salle University. He served as a field artillery officer, including brigade and battalion command, taught in the ROTC program, and was a faculty member at the U.S. Army War College, where he served later as deputy commandant. He also was assigned as deputy assistant commandant of the Field Artillery School. After his retirement from government service he continued to teach at the college level and is currently a Distinguished Fellow at the Army War College. He serves on a number of boards and committees, several involved in professional education.
Words are important both for what they mean objectively and for how we employ them in common and specialized usage. Some terms relating to the development of military leaders are used at times rather loosely, and it seems important to establish their meaning for our purposes here. First, a profession is defined (by Webster’s Third International) as “a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive preparation including instruction in skills and methods as well as the scholarly principles underlying such skills and methods, maintaining by force of organization or concerted opinion high standards of achievement and conduct, and committing its members to continued study and to a kind of work which has for its prime purpose the rendering of public service.” Education means “to develop (as a person) by fostering to varying degrees the growth and expansion of knowledge, wisdom, desirable qualities of mind or character, physical health or general competence especially by a course of formal study or instruction.” Training, in contrast, means “the teaching, drill, or exercise by which the powers of mind and body are developed[;] . . . the development of a skill or a particular group of skills; instruction in an art, profession, or occupation.”

“Professional” and “professionalism,” then, describe a rather narrow class of educated people who have embraced particular ways of life, mastered specific bodies of knowledge, and embarked upon careers—lifelong, in most cases—that make significant and lasting contributions to the common good. Medical doctors, lawyers, and “professed” religious immediately come to mind. However, professionalism has become more loosely construed in the past decades by commentators and observers who mean (aside from the obvious sense of “paid”) simply “highly skilled” or “dedicated.” In this way we refer to professional athletes, professional actors, and professional construction workers.

A true professional of whatever vocation must master the body of knowledge that provides intellectual and philosophical substance to the profession, as well as the requisite training for action. According to Webster’s definition, this education and training is a lifelong endeavor, constantly honing the ability of the professional to perform at ever-higher levels. These characteristics accurately describe a military officer today. The system of military education and training of officers is designed to foster such ability and performance. At the senior service colleges—which constitute the culmination of the educational rather than the training aspects of professional development—officers can find professional fulfillment and satisfaction to the highest degree their profession offers, short of command in combat. It is up to the senior military leadership to ensure that this is so.

The interplay of education and training takes place throughout a professional career, with varying relative emphasis. Both are essential, but one often
dominates, depending upon the individual’s evolution and progress in the particular profession.

Success in training is amenable to rote memorization and practice, and knowledge and abilities thus gained are essential to the prosecution of war. Close-order drill, disassembly of a weapon, operation of complex electronic equipment, or the writing of a five-paragraph field order can be learned, practiced, and tested to an established standard. Curricula supporting such training can be outlined clearly in terms of tasks, conditions, and standards. Objective testing, using either a pass-fail or percentage grading system, can at the least establish whether the student can or cannot accomplish the task. Tactical operations at lower levels can be studied and categorized in the same way. The Army’s National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, has developed for this kind of training an evaluation system that is second to none. The efficiency of companies and battalions can be assessed and compared, and lessons can be derived.

Educational attainments cannot be so easily assessed. Papers can be graded and examinations given, but no one can truly determine the future performance of a senior leader in a classroom. Looking back on four years of experience as a faculty instructor at the Army War College, I recall a number of officers who later succeeded to senior posts, including major unified commands. Not many of these successful strategic leaders had been “honor students.” Certainly, they were thoughtful, knowledgeable, and active participants in seminar rooms, but few had made major academic contributions or advanced the profession through learned articles or books. Those who had were not always selected for rapid advancement to senior rank.

SENIOR OFFICER EDUCATION BEFORE THE MODERN ERA

Military officers of the past were often amateurs at heart, brought up in an area of noblesse oblige, dedicated to military service because in their social class it was the thing to do. Wars were fought with, by modern standards, primitive weapons. Personal courage, stamina, and a bit of luck were part of the mix that resulted in victory on the battlefield, and personal skill and success in arms were essential prerequisites of a strategic leader. Classic works recounting successes and failures in past battles were the essential textbooks.

Gilbert and Sullivan’s Major General Stanley of the nineteenth-century British army would have had little or no opportunity for formal professional military development. Military schools and colleges existed but provided primarily precocmissioning education. Stanley’s knowledge would have come from assimilation and practical application, allegedly made easier by his aristocratic heritage and association with officers of similar upbringing and outlook.
In the American military too, professional military education in the nineteenth century depended very much on individual motivation and study. Given geographic isolation and, as the century progressed, stability on its land borders, the growing republic could make do with a small army and limited naval forces. Most of the U.S. Army was scattered in western outposts. When troubled times arrived, it expanded by calling upon the states for militia, officered by men chosen and characterized by bonds of friendship, popularity, and politics rather than professional interests or abilities.

President Abraham Lincoln’s difficulties with senior commanders in the Civil War were legendary. After the reductions following that war, the Army returned to its frontier outposts. Officers isolated in small units at widely dispersed locations in the West had little time for formal professional education. None at all was provided for senior officers aspiring to high command or staff positions.

The Navy was the first to establish a senior service college, the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island; education at the senior level for Army officers did not begin until 1903, with the founding of the Army War College. That college, however, was an extension of an Army educational system that had developed, sometimes haphazardly, over the previous hundred years, beginning with the Military Academy at West Point, New York. Training institutions (“schools of practice”) for the infantry, cavalry, and artillery were established to meet the technical needs of the principal branches of the Army during the nineteenth century; a smattering of professional education through reading and lectures was provided at these institutions. The advent of advanced military schooling at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1881 established a sound basis for instruction in command and staff procedures for midlevel career officers.

It seems to have been assumed that professional soldiers would continue their military educations privately, through reading and observation. The foundation laid at West Point was only that—a foundation. It was common for officers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to attend maneuvers of other nations’ armies in peacetime and to participate as observers in wartime, learning about tactics, strategy, and strategic leadership at first hand. For example, First Lieutenant Douglas MacArthur accompanied his father, General Arthur MacArthur, to Japan in October 1904 to observe the strategy, tactics, and political underpinnings of the Russo-Japanese War. Young MacArthur later asserted that the visit to East Asia was “to color and influence all the days of my life.”

Even then, however, it was becoming clear that unorganized learning and self-education were not enough to develop a professional officer corps.
THE ROOT REFORMS AND THE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER

Major changes in the Army came about after weaknesses in planning, operations, logistics, and leadership became evident during the war with Spain in 1898. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Secretary of War Elihu Root spearheaded reforms that included the establishment of a war college (at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, in 1903) to educate officers for senior command and staff positions. The idea was derived in part from the German kriegsakademie and the Prussian general staff concept. However, Root’s dictum that the Army War College was founded “not to promote war but to preserve peace” is often quoted to this day and was a particularly American adaptation. Of the officers qualified by education and past assignments for the general staff on the U.S. model, a number were selected to serve for relatively short periods and then revert to their regiments. This approach required a greater pool of educated candidates than a system that assigned an officer once and for all to the general staff, with periodic experience in command, as was the Prussian practice. The American model established senior officer education on a broad basis and created a class of senior officers, identified at least in part by their formal military education credentials, from which strategic leaders and senior staff officers could be drawn.

A formal education and training system, culminating in the senior service colleges, was a necessary precursor to the professionalization of the officer corps in the twentieth century. Through the Root reforms, particularly as they pertained to education, officers became professionals, earning that title through education and practical application, and their calling embodied the same defining characteristics as the classic professions.

The changing nature of war and the rapid technological advances of the next century radically affected the way that military officers were required to perform. This change, in turn, affected the educational basis of the profession of arms. Ground commanders evolved from the traditional “man on horseback,” leading their troops from the front, to leaders who appeared before their troops from time to time but more than likely spent most of their waking hours in command posts, in front at first of maps, eventually display screens or computer monitors. Today, a crucial task for an officer education system is to keep abreast of changing leadership styles. Napoleon literally sat his horse on a hill overlooking the battlefield while aides-de-camp galloped to and fro delivering messages and orders. Bands played, and banners waved in the distance. What must we do today, in the educational system and beyond, to compensate for the gloom of a van, the flicker of a cathode-ray tube, the hum of an electrical generator? With what do we replace the bands and the banners?
The wars of the twentieth century created large army, naval, and air forces involving tens of millions of American citizens. The association of so many Americans with the armed forces eliminated much of the mystique that had surrounded the military in the past and, to a degree, became an engine of reassessment and further democratization of the military. This was institutionalized in the late 1940s by law and regulation, resulting in removal of many of the remaining distinctions between officers and enlisted personnel. However, the realization that there were good reasons for preserving a difference between the leaders and the led, particularly on the battlefield, caused a renewed interest in what makes this difference.

The rapid development of the officer corps into a professional institution caught the attention of eminent political and social scientists, who provided useful analyses of the educational needs of the profession. Morris Janowitz and Samuel Huntington were in the forefront of such work in the 1950s. Other authors both in and out of uniform have continued to examine military professionalism since that time.

One of the positive outcomes of the post–World War II reassessment of military professionalism was the creation of the National War College, the reconstitution of the Army Industrial College as the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and the reestablishment of the Army War College after a ten-year (originally wartime) hiatus. Today’s structure of five senior service colleges, with the amalgamation of the National War College and the Industrial College to constitute the National Defense University, provides a remarkable and diverse academic base for continuing professional development at the highest levels. Each service places a different emphasis on senior service college attendance. However, the importance of joint operations makes such attendance essential for any aspiring officer. Arguments among officers are still heard over the status of the National Defense University as the premier institution, but all recognize that it is at least primus inter pares. Recent requirements for joint service education as a prerequisite for assignment and senior promotion have placed greater emphasis on this aspect of professional education even at senior service colleges not part of the National Defense University.

EDUCATIONAL EVOLUTION AT THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE
The development of the system of senior officer education at the U.S. Army War College has been cataloged in detail by Colonel Harry P. Ball in two editions of his definitive history of that institution. The college originally vacillated between serving as a planning adjunct to the War Department General Staff and as a purely educational institution. In its planning role, officers learned
professional skills by actually accomplishing them, through on-the-job training. Less time was devoted to personal study or professional lectures. In later years, the development of war plans ceased to be a major focus, and students followed primarily academic pursuits.

The “Four Army War Colleges”
Ball identifies four distinct phases in the growth and development of the Army War College. The “First War College” began with the Root reforms and lasted until the college suspended operations for World War I. This phase was dominated by the concept of a senior service college as a planning resource. The “Second War College” describes the period during the interwar years (when the Army War College was known for a short while as the “General Staff College”). Planning for future conflicts remained important, but the academic and educational goals began to dominate the curriculum. The college closed again in 1941 for World War II. The Army did not reestablish a senior service college until 1951. During this hiatus, the National War College was founded as the primary joint institution of higher learning. The Cold War dominated the curriculum of this “Third War College” for the next forty years. Earlier curricular trends continued, however, especially that of educating generalists on a broad basis rather than narrow military specialists. Senior reserve officers were brought in for short courses, and for a time senior Department of the Army civilians were provided initial orientations at the Army War College. A nonresident program was established by which students not selected for the regular resident course could pursue a war college diploma by correspondence over two years, in addition to two summer sessions of two weeks each. The resident course and what became to be known as “distance learning” operated at the same education level. This early experimentation with nonresident instruction provided valuable insights into its utility and practicability on a wider scale.

The “Fourth War College,” the present institution, developed quickly in the aftermath of the Cold War. The curriculum has been sharpened to educate strategic military leaders, new technologies have been employed, exercises and war games complement seminars, and lectures have been reduced in number. The proportion of civilian faculty has increased, and the capabilities of the faculty to teach, guide, and evaluate have improved. In these years the faculty developed from a group that facilitated and advised to a truly teaching faculty. This shift was driven in part by the educational reforms required by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in the mid-1980s as well as by congressional concern about the education of senior officers. The student body now includes a higher percentage of non-Army students and a larger number of civilian U.S. government officials, and therefore represents a more cosmopolitan and diverse assemblage of talent.
A major innovation in the late 1970s was the enrollment of International Fellows—officers from the armed forces of other nations—in the annual course. These changes broadened the educational experiences and associations of the Army students as well as contributed to knowledge about the U.S. Army and land warfare for people who were not of the Army themselves.

**The Army War College Today**

The modern Army War College curriculum is the product of thirty years of development, the impact of withdrawal from Vietnam, the reconstruction of the ground forces that followed, and the success achieved by this “new model army” in the first Gulf War. The revolution in military technology that accompanied these changes, or is at least partially responsible for them, has been paralleled by changes in senior officer education. The Army War College mission states this succinctly:

> To prepare selected military, civilian, and international leaders to assume strategic responsibilities in military and national security organizations; to educate students about the employment of land power as part of a unified, joint, or multinational force in support of the national military strategy pursuant to a Masters Degree in Strategic Studies; to research operational and strategic issues; and to conduct outreach programs that benefit the USAWC, the US Army, and the Nation.4

The operative words are “prepare,” “educate,” and “research.” The preparation is academic, social, and psychological. The education at the Army War College is comparable to a graduate school, and research by both faculty and students is encouraged. Emphasis is no more on purely Army matters but on the employment of the Army “as part of a unified, joint, or multinational force.”5

For the student, completion of the program results in a diploma, a Military Education Level 1 certification, and since recently an advanced academic degree.6

The current curriculum supports the mission statement with a multiphased program. A general overview phase considers the elements of power, national strategy, national military strategy, force structure and deployments, leadership and command, and the world environment in which these elements exist. During this phase, students are grouped in seminars, where social bonding takes place as well as learning. Students prepare regional appraisals, in which the International Fellows make a vital contribution.

Two terms of elective subjects follow in which students may select from a wide variety of courses. These selections are made based on interest, possible future assignment, or current military specialty. Electives are at a graduate level and are of proportionate rigor. Each is designed to advance the professional education of the student. A student research program is conducted concurrently with the elective courses—students with something to say are encouraged to say
Papers are examined carefully by the faculty and are forwarded to applicable Army and Defense staff agencies as appropriate.

Two programwide events take place during the ten-month course. First, students, faculty, and visitors take part in a Strategic Crisis Exercise (SCE) for two weeks in March each year. The purpose of the SCE is to develop strategic leaders in two ways: by integrating and applying knowledge acquired during the academic year, using exercises, automation, and simulations to enhance the experiential learning process; and by pursuing mastery of the strategic and operational art within the framework of crisis-action planning and execution.

The second event, the Annual National Security Seminar, provides a forum in which distinguished speakers discuss their views on issues of importance to the nation’s security and welfare with the students, International Fellows, and faculty of the Army War College and with invited guests from across the country. It provides an extended opportunity for a free and candid dialogue between the college community and a widely representative group of American citizens, drawn from varied sectors of American life and endeavor. Finally, the Annual National Security Seminar enables, on one hand, representative citizens to get to know some of the prospective leaders of their armed forces and government and, on the other, permits officer students to understand better the society they serve.

Both of these programwide events integrate learning and reinforce educational objectives. They are complemented by student travel opportunities, principally a visit to New York City during which the class is familiarized with the United Nations. Small groups visit state and local governmental organs as well as business enterprises to become acquainted with the operations, needs, and relationships of these elements to national security policy. A “staff ride” over the Gettysburg battlefield (about thirty miles from the college) is a traditional exercise that relates historical examples to modern strategic leadership concepts. International Fellows are offered additional opportunities for travel in order to become informed about the United States and its military and naval capabilities.

The presence at Carlisle Barracks of the Military History Institute’s vast collection of documents as well as objects of historical interest is an added bonus for professional research. Together with the Army War College Library, it provides fertile resources for reflection and professional development.

The Army War College curriculum has developed in an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary manner. It has taken thirty years to move from a course of lectures and discussion to a varied approach to learning that includes guided seminar discussion, electives, lectures, and major exercises. A century has elapsed since the Root reforms began that evolution. Concurrently, a teaching faculty has been developed to match the curriculum. Today, a Major General Stanley would probably find no place at the U.S. Army War College.
SUGGESTIONS FOR . . .

The changes in the world since the collapse of the Soviet Union have been dramatic, among them international terrorism and unrest. We can expect these challenges to affect the education of strategic leaders. The future will call for continuing development of the senior officer education system. The evolutionary change described above seems likely to be accelerated. Two “players” must be particularly involved in this evolution if it is to be effective: the Army Chief of Staff and the Commandant of the Army War College.

We all woolgather from time to time concerning “what might have been” or “what we would do in the same circumstances.” We can never place ourselves in the actual position of another, experiencing all the pressures and insights that go with it, but we can still examine a problem from a leader’s viewpoint. I offer the following suggestions in that vein.

. . . The Army Chief of Staff

A periodic review of the Army War College curriculum is now in progress. Permit this review to advance unhindered. It is a great temptation for senior military officers to offer advice in informal conversation, but it can be considered directive in nature. I remember once as a battalion commander mentioning casually to a first sergeant that I liked the color of blue in which his battery had just painted a dayroom. Within two weeks, all the dayrooms in the battalion were the same shade of blue.

Ensure that the location of the Army War College and its educational independence are preserved. Over the course of years, the college has been subordinated to various headquarters and staff agencies. A decision was made recently to remove it from the responsibility of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans (G-3) and place it under the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC); that change becomes effective 1 October 2003. The TRADOC staff must adjust to the difference between the concept of training and the educational experience at the Army War College, which will be unique among the institutions under its command. Senior commanders must ensure that this change is not permitted to affect the education of senior officers negatively. The college’s location is important, since it is close enough to the nation’s capital for easy access but far enough away not to be a mere adjunct of the Army Staff. These factors should weigh heavily in any future base-closing scheme.

From time to time, commandants, higher commanders, and the Congress have raised questions of cost, productivity, and utility concerning senior service colleges in general and the Army War College in particular. The Army War College is situated alone at Carlisle Barracks, whereas the other senior service institutions are collocated with at least one other educational or training facility.
paper at least, this increases the per capita costs for the Army. Further, it would seem that it would be economical to provide most or all such education as distance learning, which has been successfully used at the Army War College; smaller class sizes through more careful selection and evaluation of student potential might also save money. Amalgamation of all senior service education into one facility—or subordinating all other senior institutions to the National Defense University—could be another apparent cost saver. However, cost should not be the critical factor in the future of senior officer education.

Continue to fund the International Fellows Program at current levels. It is important that each seminar group have at least two International Fellows from different regions of the world. It is equally important that International Fellows be able to make direct contributions to the curriculum and have a reasonable facility with the English language. We need to invite not only our friends and allies to send fellows but also nations with which we have or might have differences in the future.

Ensure that civilian government employees who are enrolled as students are selected not only for their own career development but also for the contribution their expertise and backgrounds can make.

Ensure that assignment of students to the various senior service colleges is balanced with regard to the relative standing of individual officers as assigned by the selection board. From time to time in the past, at least the perception has been that the officers on the fastest career tracks attend the National War College.

Assign commandants with great care. The proper combination of acknowledged leader, accomplished educator, and humane, ethically sound soldier is difficult to find given the limited number of general officers—but not impossible. The Army War College has been fortunate to have had several commandants in recent years who possess these qualities to a marked degree. The post of commandant should never go to an individual as a reward for service in another assignment or as a holding assignment while he or she waits for better things. Commandants’ tenure should be a minimum of three years to provide continuity and to allow them to manage change effectively.

The system of academic reports used by the Army is antiquated and of little use. It often is reduced to a trite, repetitious recitation of basic facts on the curriculum, information found in greater detail in the course curriculum pamphlet. In my experience, little is ever said in war college academic reports that reflects positively or adversely on the specific student; they simply record attendance, in stock phrases drawn from other places. Instead, a knowledgeable member of the faculty should prepare the academic report for each officer graduate. The officer’s strengths and weaknesses in terms of aptitude for senior assignments should be cataloged; specific, positive accomplishments should be
The commandant should be required to endorse the report and make specific comments, positive or negative, concerning aptitude for promotion. This requires the commandant to be actively involved with students during the academic year. It will not permit him to spend much time on administrative matters—but that is why he has a deputy. If the academic report is too burdensome, it should be abolished, at least at the senior service college level.

...the Commandant of the Army War College

The commandant must be a leader, a tutor, and a mentor. This is a tall order when the student body, from all sources and in several modes of learning, approaches one thousand each year. Thus, the commandant must be innovative, accessible, and genuinely interested when engaged with students. He or she must also understand the distinction between education and training, as well as the long-term professional impact that senior service college education can have. The commandant must be dedicated to delivering that education.

For the resident class, an approach found quite useful in the past should be revived. Over a number of years, a program called under several names but most recently “discussions with the commandant” enabled him to meet during the academic year for perhaps two hours with small groups of students at his quarters. The commandant provided refreshments, and the agenda was completely open. As a student, I found this event to be one of the most stimulating of the year-long course. As a member of the faculty, I recall that this program was among the most popular for each class. It requires a good deal of the commandant’s time, but it gives him or her a special opportunity to serve as a role model, contribute to the education of each student, and become aware of what each student is thinking. Given the size of the present resident class, this could be a tall, even unmanageable order. However, it might be possible to share the burden with senior officers from Washington who are amenable, or with retired general and flag officers in the area.

Encourage student research. Facilitate the work of officers who have always wanted to write on a professional topic, no matter how esoteric, but have never had the time. A listing of topics on which research would be immediately helpful to Army planners encourages students who are not already attached to a particular subject. Such a list has existed, but it should be screened and pruned to ensure that the topics are suitable for student research. At the same time, resist attempts to employ students during their academic year to work on “real world” issues—even important studies, critical exercises, or crucial missions—that require answers and decisions now. Short-term utility can have long-term cost.

The Army War College is fortunate to have both a civilian professor of ethics and an Army chaplain on the faculty. For a number of years there has been an
ethical component in the curriculum. On concerns ranging from just war theory to right personal conduct and proper understanding of the ethical dimensions of strategic leadership, future senior leaders need the opportunity to learn, study, and reflect. The commandant must not only ensure that the curriculum is properly developed in this regard but provide an institutional atmosphere that supports high ethical standards. Ethical and moral considerations must permeate studies.

The utility of distance learning has already been raised, but there is an aspect that requires special attention. There are five senior service colleges; it should be possible to develop horizontal distance-learning applications—that is, in common among the colleges—as well as vertical ones (within each college). Attempts have already been made to link activities, particularly exercises, of two or more war colleges. This seems a fertile area for immediate development: lectures could be shared, seminar groups could interact, and joint student research projects could be developed. As the senior service colleges explore and evaluate new technologies that enable them to export their curricula in new ways to students not in residence, they should also accelerate exploration of how this technology will enable them to work more closely together.

MAJOR GENERAL STANLEY WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE US

When this article was in its first drafts, American forces were at the gates of Baghdad; the international airport at its outskirts had just been seized by elements of the 3rd Infantry Division. The tasks assigned to ground forces in the subsequent pacification of the country and its rehabilitation have been controversial if not unique in our military history. Again, strategic military leaders have been called upon to adapt as they lead hundreds of thousands of soldiers, marines, sailors, and airmen in harm’s way at the call of our elected officials. Again, the officer corps is meeting that test masterfully.

How much the military senior education system contributes to the effectiveness of the officer corps is extremely hard to measure in concrete ways. But if analytical methods are inadequate, common sense suggests that we would be hard pressed to overestimate the importance of the senior service colleges. The costs involved are minute compared to most other aspects of U.S. defense expenditures. Nonetheless, the future shape of senior officer education is unclear at this point. A cost-saving formula—one that necessarily limits the great advantages of the present system in terms of development of the professional officer—could be adopted. It is more likely that the present system, in some modified form, will prevail. In either event, there are certain fundamental requirements that should be met if a professional officer corps out of which senior strategic leaders can
arise is to be maintained. This article has offered some ways to address these requirements.

The education of future senior officers will remain essential for the formulation and execution of national security policy. Senior leaders must keep in mind and understand the differences between the long-term impact of professional education and the often short-term, if equally important, purpose of military training. Attendance at the Army War College (as well as the other senior service colleges) should remain the lodestone of the profession of arms. Membership in its faculty should be considered an accolade by the entire military profession. Both a new Army Chief of Staff and an Army War College commandant have recently assumed their duties. They now jointly bear the prime responsibility and enjoy the opportunity to preserve and improve the already excellent senior officer education system for the benefit of the nation and future members of the armed forces.

NOTES

5. The development of the Army War College curriculum over the past century is beyond the scope of this article, but it has not been without difficulties. Focus is always a problem as Army Chiefs of Staff and Commandants come and go, sometimes in rapid succession and with quite different ideas. For a summary of this process, see Ball, pp. 491–99.
6. A master of strategic studies degree has been conferred on graduating students since the class of 2000. Full accreditation is expected in 2003. The Army War College emphasizes that this is a professional degree, not a degree in either the arts or sciences. This is philosophically consistent with the nature of the college as a professional institution.
7. The directive that prescribes the academic report, AR 623-1, “Academic Evaluation Reporting System,” describes (chap. 4) senior service college evaluations only in broad outline. The regulation perpetuates a system of doubtful value. As president of a senior service college selection board in the late 1980s, I found these reports, as prepared, the least useful of all tools available for evaluation. I doubt that assignment officers seriously consult them today.
Admiral Johnson is Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, and Commander in Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe. A native of Westmanland, Maine, Admiral Johnson was commissioned through the Aviation Officer Candidate School program in 1969 and was designated a naval aviator in 1970. He served in Attack Squadrons 66, 86, and 174, and commanded Attack Squadron 105 and Carrier Air Wing 3. He graduated with highest distinction from the Naval War College, College of Command and Staff. His shore duty before promotion to flag rank also included service on the staffs of Commander Naval Air Force U.S. Atlantic Fleet, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As a flag officer he has been Director of Operations, Plans and Policy of the staff of Commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; Commander, Carrier Group 8/USS Theodore Roosevelt Battle Group; Senior Military Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense and to the Secretary of Defense; and Commander Sixth Fleet and Naval Striking and Support Forces Southern Europe.

This article is adapted from remarks delivered on 19 June 2003 to the graduating Naval War College class, at a ceremony during which the President of the Naval War College conferred on him the College’s 2003 Distinguished Graduate Leadership Award.
We must always be thinking about the next war, about the twenty-first century. The only thing that we can say with certainty is that things will change. They will change dramatically, and we will be surprised.

Twenty-nine years ago, when I matriculated at the Naval War College in August 1974, the world was also undergoing a time of great change and surprise. President Richard Nixon resigned, and Gerald Ford became president. Congressman Carl Albert was the speaker of the House. Mike Mansfield was the majority leader. The year I graduated, 1975, was a very difficult one for me and for the nation. The Vietnam experience was coming to a conclusion when on 30 April we evacuated Saigon, which became Ho Chi Minh City. I remember the College’s military-media conference of that year, and its uneasy tension. That year saw the beginning of the end of the old system in Congress: that year the Democratic Congress came back; Congressman F. Edward Hebert from Louisiana was replaced as Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee by Melvin Price; and John Stennis became the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Retention in the Navy was 15 percent on a good day. The combat readiness of our forces was abysmal. We were plagued by drug abuse and racial tension.

Not all was bad and disheartening. There were good things happening in the armed forces. The draft had ended in 1973, and we were just beginning to evolve into the all-volunteer force that today serves our nation so well. The twenty-eight years since then is 25 percent of the life of the Naval War College. Since its establishment in 1884, the College has formed the professional soul of over twenty-five thousand officers and senior government officials from fifty
nations around the world and has produced some of the nations’ most influential leaders across all walks of public service—the best and brightest of our nation’s services, departments, and agencies, as well as those of other nations. Graduates of this fine institution have walked on the moon and have become service chiefs, ambassadors, chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and even heads of state—for instance, the president of Lebanon, President Emile Lahud.

The academic year that I spent here determined my fate. That was twenty-nine years ago, which means one of two things—that I am very old now (perhaps true) or that I was very young when I attended the College (also true). When I arrived as a student, I had been in the Navy five years. I had been a lieutenant for all of two years, and I was raring to learn something. I had heard that lieutenants were wanted at the Naval War College. I had just finished my first sea tour and was an A-7 Crusader instructor pilot at Cecil Field near Jacksonville, Florida. There, as one of perhaps fifty lieutenants, I was unhappy about the leadership—all that mattered was logging flight hours and carrier landings. Our nation did not, I thought, spend the money it did for aircraft carriers, the aircraft on them, the support they required, and our training simply so that we could fill up our logbooks; there had to be some larger meaning, some larger purpose. I could not quite figure it out myself, and none of my leaders could explain it to me.

So I asked the officer assignment branch in Washington to send me to Newport. The detailer advised me to inform my commanding officer, which I did. That was a naive thing to do, because I did not expect his response. My CO threw me out of his office; he did not want anyone in “his Navy,” he said, who would give up a seat in a cockpit to go to the Naval War College. That was how I came to this great institution with a fitness report from my former command that the Bureau of Personnel might use as an example of how to write a damning evaluation.

I was disgruntled. It was a hard time for our military. I had effectively been kicked out of naval aviation, and I did not know if I was going to stay in the Navy. But Newport embraced me, and I embraced it. I felt that I was in the presence of greatness; it started to change my attitude, my worldview. My seminar mates included two lieutenant commanders eight years senior to me; both of them (Lieutenant Commanders Ted Lockhart and Len Oden; they both later became distinguished flag officers) were wonderful role models for me. My professors—Bing West in Strategy and Policy, and Rich Lloyd in National Security Decision Making—showed remarkable patience with this immature, precocious lieutenant. It made a difference. They began to teach me what critical thinking was really about. I remember a case study about close air support. Of course, being an A-7 pilot, I had strong opinions and gave my two cents’ worth about how the Air Force never really wanted to do close air support and therefore never really wanted to buy the A-7. An Air Force major, fresh from supplying close air
support to the Army in Vietnam, let me have it right between the eyes. I will never forget that; when he was done with me, I thought to myself, perhaps I don’t know everything.

I began to think about the business that I was in. I was no longer just a pilot trying to fill up my logbook; I was a member of the national security profession, and national security was, in my view, the nation’s highest calling. As my eyes opened, I began to realize that though I was very proud to be a pilot, flying was simply a means to an end, not an end in itself. So many of my commanding officers had thought it was the end of the world when their command tours ended and they went to desk jobs. That, I thought, cannot be right. So it was that my wife Joy and I had one of those kitchen-table conversations and made the decision that I would stay in the Navy. My Naval War College study was to serve me well.

As the institution’s founder, Commodore Stephen B. Luce, declared, the Naval War College was established as a place to study the art and science of war. The aim is simply to invite officers to meet together to discuss questions pertaining to the higher branches of their profession and to enable each one, according to his or her inclination, to prepare for the highest and most responsible duties that can devolve upon a naval officer. That is exactly what this institution did for me. It extended my horizons to the higher branches of this profession, and I will ever be in its debt.

On 3 October 1889, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain—a distinguished Civil War soldier who, like me, was modestly proud of being from Maine—declared at the dedication of the Maine monuments of the Gettysburg battlefield, “In great deeds something abides.” The founding of this institution was a great deed. The spirit and legacy of inquisitive and critical study of the higher branches of the military profession will abide in each of its students as they lead our Navy, our armed forces, and our nation in the twenty-first century.
Lieutenant Colonel Lacquement is professor of strategy and policy on the faculty of the Naval War College. He holds a Ph.D. in international relations from Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. In his over nineteen years of active duty he has been a field artillery officer and a strategic plans and policy specialist. His operational assignments include the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) (serving during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM), the 3d Infantry Division, the 1st Armored Division (Gulf War, 1991), and the 82d Airborne Division. He has also taught American politics and international relations in the U.S. Military Academy’s Department of Social Sciences. He is the author of Shaping American Military Capabilities after the Cold War (2003) as well as articles in Army, U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, Military Review, and Field Artillery.

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THE CASUALTY-AVERSION MYTH

Lieutenant Colonel Richard A. Lacquement, Jr., U.S. Army

What is the nature of the American public’s sensitivity to U.S. military casualties? How does casualty sensitivity affect the pursuit of American national security objectives? The first question is easy to answer: There is no intrinsic, uncritical casualty aversion among the American public that limits the use of U.S. armed forces. There is a wide range of policy objectives on behalf of which the public is prepared to accept American casualties as a cost of success. Squeamishness about even a few casualties for all but the most important national causes is a myth. Nonetheless, it is a myth that persists as widely accepted conventional wisdom.

The second question is more difficult to answer. Avoidance of casualties is an unassailably desirable objective. It is precisely the natural nobility of the argument that makes it susceptible to misuse in the policy-making process, potentially leading to ineffective or inefficient choices. The persistence of the myth also causes adversaries to misjudge the likely reactions of the United States. In both of these ways, the myth of deep-seated casualty aversion among the American public hinders the pursuit of American national objectives.

The evidence indicates that the public response to casualties is a function of leadership and consensus among national policy elites, who have wide latitude in this area. They should not allow concern about casualties to replace thorough consideration of the larger context of costs and benefits. National leaders must not let unsubstantiated assertions of American casualty aversion distort the national security policy-making process or compromise professional military ethics.
This article briefly describes the nature of American casualty sensitivity, identifies some prominent negative effects of widespread acceptance of the casualty myth, and offers recommendations that may produce a more accurate understanding of the American public’s casualty sensitivity.

AMERICAN CASUALTY SENSITIVITY
Are the American people in fact reluctant to risk lives? In a superficial and unhelpful sense, the American public is always reluctant to risk lives, particularly if there is some other reasonable way to accomplish objectives. No one wants casualties.

Myth and Conventional Wisdom
We had 500 casualties a week when we [the Nixon administration] came into office. America now is not willing to take any casualties. Vietnam produced a whole new attitude.

HENRY KISSINGER, 1999

It’s obvious that there’s a political agenda to have low casualties. . . . If my Achilles’ heel is the low tolerance of the American people for casualties, then I have to recognize that my success or failure in this mission [in Bosnia] is directly affected by that.

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM L. NASH, 1996

[America is] a nation intolerant of casualties.

EDWARD LUTTWAK, 1995

And the hearts that beat so loudly and enthusiastically to do something, to intervene in areas where there is not an immediate threat to our vital interests, when those hearts that had beaten so loudly see the coffins, then they switch, and they say: “What are we doing there?”

SENATOR WILLIAM COHEN (LATER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE)

These are just some of the many similar expressions of the conventional wisdom of American public casualty aversion. The conventional wisdom is strong among civilian, military, and media elites. Steven Kull and I. M. Destler have recorded many interviews—with members of Congress and their staffs, the media, the executive branch, and leaders of nongovernmental organizations—that support this view. Other interviews with members of the media and military leaders also confirm a widespread belief that the American public is unwilling to accept casualties.

The wellspring of this conventional wisdom is generally understood to be the Vietnam War, as reinforced by experiences in Lebanon (1983) and Somalia.
(1993). The tremendous efforts by civilian and military leaders to minimize casualties in other operations—the Persian Gulf War (1991), Haiti (1994), Bosnia (1995), and Kosovo (1999)—can be read as a reaction to the public’s purported low tolerance for casualties. Rising casualties in Iraq following the end of “major combat operations” have also been portrayed as an important factor affecting the public’s willingness to support the mission. The abandonment of military intervention in several instances in which it was seriously considered has also been attributed to casualty aversion. Examples include the Balkans (before 1995), Rwanda (1994), and Zaire/Congo (1995).

Manifestations of this conventional wisdom are many and widespread—the “Vietnam syndrome,” the “Dover test,” the “CNN effect,” part of the Weinberger/Powell doctrine, the concept of “post-heroic warfare,” and a social equity effect attributed to the absence of American civilian elites and their children from military service.

The “Vietnam syndrome” is commonly understood as a general reticence among Americans to use military force abroad as a result of negative lessons of the Vietnam experience. It is “that revulsion at the use of military power that afflicted our national psyche for decades after our defeat.”5 It is a comprehensive generalization about the American public’s unwillingness to continue to support U.S. foreign military efforts, particularly as casualties rise. This aspect of the Vietnam syndrome relates casualty aversion to the idea that public support for military operations in Vietnam declined because of the human costs of the war.6 A variant attributing the decline in popular support to media portrayals of events in Vietnam has fed negative attitudes toward the media, particularly among many members of the military.

Senator John Glenn’s “Dover test” (alluded to in the first epigraph, above) refers to the American public’s assumed response to American service people returning to the United States in flag-draped coffins. This oft-repeated image symbolizes the cost in casualties of American military operations. In an interesting response to its presumed visceral effect, the Department of Defense has prohibited media coverage of such events since 1989: “There will be no arrival ceremonies for, or media coverage of, deceased military personnel returning to or departing from Dover AFB [Air Force Base] or Ramstein AFB [in Germany], to include interim stops.”7 In a sense, this provides an official endorsement of the presumption that casualties have a powerful effect on the public.

The “CNN effect” refers broadly to the purported impact of certain types of visual images, to include American casualties, when broadcast on the news. Like the Dover test, it suggests that visual images of casualties will elicit an immediate response from the public. Its various formulations convey the idea that the public can respond precipitately to gut-wrenching depictions of human suffering,
not only military casualties but starving children and other civilian victims of war. This dynamic is also assumed to induce a similar visceral response to such dramatic pictures as those of the body of an American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu in 1993.

The Weinberger/Powell doctrine is a set of six tests, drawn in part from the Vietnam War experience, that, its advocates believe, should govern the use of American military power. One test is the presence or absence of the support of the American public and its elected representatives. In policy debates considering the use of force, it is in the framework of this test that assertions about the willingness of the public to handle casualties enter decision making.

"Post-heroic warfare" is the idea that the scope of casualties resulting from the clash of armies at close quarters is no longer tolerable to the American public. Edward Luttwak asserts that America is "a nation intolerant of casualties"; he relates this to the decreasing size of American families in the post–World War II era. Luttwak believes that there exists a powerful unwillingness among Americans to permit military operations that might endanger their children.

Finally, sociologist Charles Moskos posits that the American public’s sensitivity is a function of inequitable social relations created by the absence of elite members of society or their children in the ranks of the military. “Only when the privileged classes perform military service does the country define the cause as worth young people’s blood. Only when elite youth are on the firing line do war losses become more acceptable.”

THE NUANCED REALITY

Nonetheless, there are many interests and national objectives for which Americans have readily found the risk of casualties an acceptable cost. There is in fact no evidence that the public is intrinsically casualty averse. Several studies based on polling data demonstrate that the American public is willing to accept casualties when the need and the likely consequences are explained to them by national leaders. This readiness is not restricted to issues of vital national interests or self-defense. The public takes its lead from how national leaders characterize and justify the mission. Leadership plays a crucial role in influencing how the public responds to casualties.

One of the best studies on this topic is Eric V. Larson’s Casualties and Consensus. In this detailed study, Larson explores the relationship between public support for military operations and the level of casualties for World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Panama, the 1991–92 Gulf war, and Somalia. The findings are very instructive.

Majorities of the public have historically considered the potential and actual casualties in U.S. wars and military operations to be an important factor in their support,
and there is nothing new in this. But the current attention to the public’s unwillingness to tolerate casualties misses the larger context in which the issue has become salient: The simplest explanation consistent with the data is that support for U.S. military operations and the willingness to tolerate casualties are based upon a sensible weighing of benefits and costs that is influenced heavily by consensus (or its absence) among political leaders.15

Further, casualties do not trigger an immediate public desire for withdrawal from an operation. Both in Vietnam and in Somalia, for example, the public was willing to accept casualties even as the political leaders signaled that the United States would extract itself. The public supported orderly, not precipitous withdrawal. In both cases, Larson’s analysis suggests that an important consideration was the public’s support for continued engagement until prisoner or hostage issues were resolved.16

In a study that differentiated between the mass public, civilian elites, and military elites, Peter Feaver and Christopher Gelpi found the mass public more willing than policy elites to accept casualties in hypothetical national missions ranging from conventional war to peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention. They also found civilian elites more ready than military leaders to accept casualties in intervention missions short of conventional war.17

Polling data indicates that though the American public’s willingness to accept casualties is related to the strength of U.S. interests involved, a wide range of justifications is acceptable. The public does not require a direct threat to U.S. or allied security or other such vital interests to endorse the use of armed force. Instead, it supports broader American efforts on behalf of democratization, humanitarian assistance, and cultivation of a favorable international environment for the United States and other nations, including for the United Nations and UN peacekeeping.18 Polling related to operations in Afghanistan as well as with respect to military operations against Iraq also demonstrates robust public support for military operations, even with expectations of casualties.19 Polling data, then, reinforces what many analyses have noted over the years—Americans are motivated by considerations of both realistic national interests and idealistic international aspirations.20

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE CASUALTY-AVersion ASSERTION
If the response to the supposed casualty aversion is simply the use of alternative means to accomplish the same objective, there is no problem. Unfortunately, perceptions of casualty aversion can have more negative effects. Misplaced concern on this point can significantly impede the pursuit of national objectives, in four main ways.

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Inefficient or Ineffective Execution

Belief that the public cannot withstand casualties can skew choices concerning the use of force in ways that cause operations to be conducted inefficiently or ineffectively. Recent combat operations in Kosovo (1999) and Afghanistan (2001–present) illustrate this point. Another aspect of this negative effect is the manner in which American armed forces, overly concerned about casualties, pursue force protection and “zero defects” to such an extent that mission effectiveness is hindered.

In 1999 in Yugoslavia, NATO found itself in a dilemma partly, if not wholly, based on the priority given to avoiding friendly casualties. On the first night of the war, President William Clinton announced that he did not intend to use ground forces in Kosovo. This knowledge made it possible for the Serbs to hide weapons and troops—forces that otherwise would have been tactically deployed and therefore more easily detectable—from the NATO air campaign. Furthermore, the difficulties in accurately targeting from the mandated fifteen-thousand-foot altitude made accidental civilian deaths and injuries (“collateral damage”) more likely. Meanwhile, the Serbian forces (regular, police, and irregular), free to operate near civilian targets that NATO was taking care to avoid, were able to accelerate their efforts to force Kosovar Albanians to leave.

Ultimately, in terms of lost U.S. lives, the Kosovo operation was a resounding success, if not a rapid one. In terms, however, of one of the operation’s principal objectives—support for the Kosovar Albanians and an end to ethnic cleansing and atrocities—the effect was less gratifying. Did an unwillingness to threaten, much less use, ground forces or to deliver lower-level and more accurate aerial attacks exacerbate and extend the suffering of the people we intended to help? A counterfactual but plausible argument suggests that military tactics that would have posed greater risks to friendly forces would also have ended the conflict more swiftly and, quite possibly, with much smaller loss of life overall.

Casualty aversion hindered operational effectiveness in Kosovo in other ways as well. For instance, Task Force HAWK, which combined Apache attack helicopters and the Army Tactical Missile System, was not given permission to attack inside Kosovo because, among other things, Serbian targets, having been dispersed, were no longer appropriate targets for the Apaches, which had been designed to attack massed armored formations. The modest rewards expected from flushing out dispersed Serb units was outweighed in the minds of many Americans involved by the high risk of casualties.21 An Air Force officer assigned to one of the key NATO intelligence centers said, “If he [Slobodan Milosevic] kills one U.S. pilot, he wins. . . . [H]e knows that, and we know that.”22 This view had much to do with keeping Task Force HAWK sidelined.
The negative effect of excessive casualty aversion was evident in the war in Afghanistan, despite the clear, self-defense justification for the operation and its overwhelming public support.

Addressing the nation when the bombs began to fall on 7 October, Bush said the troops might have to make the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. Despite such warnings, there is some evidence that U.S. officials have questioned whether Americans would accept significant casualties, in spite of polls indicating that they would. An adviser to senior Pentagon officials said concerns about high American casualties led the Bush administration to craft a strategy that relied on air power and small numbers of commandos, as opposed to tens of thousands of American ground troops.

“They are risk-averse about casualties,” said the adviser, who requested anonymity. “They didn’t know what we were facing.”

An important cost of this approach was the failure to capture or destroy large numbers of al-Qa’ida and Taliban forces—and possibly Osama Bin Laden himself—during the Tora Bora fight of December 2001.

It was widely acknowledged that the attacks on al-Qa’ida and its Taliban hosts had been forced upon Americans as a matter of self-defense. As after Pearl Harbor.
Harbor, Americans were strongly committed to fighting the perpetrators of mass murder and their accomplices. Polls conducted in the months after 11 September 2001 demonstrated willingness to accept the risks of significant ground force operations, even high casualties.²⁴

The initial U.S. military forces on the ground included small contingents of special operations forces coordinating the support by American aerial attacks of the operations of Afghan allies. The strategy worked brilliantly in the first phase, unseating the Taliban government and seizing major population centers. However, even when the enemy was pushed into the mountainous hinterlands, the same American strategy continued—a low-level commitment of U.S. ground and air power, in favor of heavy reliance on local coalition partners. In retrospect, it appears that as a result large numbers of enemy soldiers and leaders were able in December 2001 to escape into neighboring Pakistan or remote areas of Afghanistan.²⁵ Having interests different from those of the American forces, local Afghan coalition members appear to have made deals that permitted these escapes.

[An Afghan] commander, Hajji Zaher, said in an interview in Jalalabad that he had pleaded with Special Forces officers to block the trails to Pakistan. “The Americans would not listen,” said Mr. Zaher, 38. “Their attitude was, ‘We must kill the enemy, but we must remain absolutely safe.’ This is crazy. If they had been willing to take casualties to capture Osama then, perhaps they’d have to take fewer casualties now.”²⁶

A more substantial American ground force might have crippled al-Qa’ida—that is, would have better achieved the national objective at Tora Bora. A stronger American effort could have rendered ineffective enemy fighters intent on continuing attacks against American or allied forces in Afghanistan, maybe even disrupted or destroyed cells dedicated to further terrorist attacks on the United States itself. The additional risks would have been easy to justify. If casualty aversion among military leaders was a significant factor in this misjudgment, the implication is that the military, for institutionally dysfunctional reasons, may be unwilling to accept prudent risks in the pursuit of national interests—even when public support is unequivocal.

This unhealthy state of affairs is a factor not only at the upper levels of military and civilian leadership. As emphasis on risk avoidance filters down the chain of command, junior commanders and their soldiers become aware that low-risk behavior is expected and act accordingly. As Brigadier General Daniel Kaufman, dean of academics at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, has said,

What it [priority on force protection] says is officers no longer have the right to use their judgment, to make decisions based on the situation on the ground and act decisively in accordance with what they believe to be the requirements of carrying out their mission. You do not deploy somewhere to protect yourself. If you want to do
that you stay in Kansas. You deploy somewhere to accomplish a mission. And, oh, by the way, an ancillary part of that is you never put your soldiers in harm’s way recklessly, but you understand that in operations that’s the nature of war.27

Concerned about the effects of any casualties, then, commanders and small-unit leaders become hesitant to act, fearing that even small events at the tactical level could have important strategic effects.28

Recent studies have revealed the existence in the services of a degree of safety consciousness and focus on risk assessment that reinforces risk aversion in general.29 To prevent the automatic investigations and presumptions of error that attend any death—in peace or war—commanders make tremendous efforts to avoid such an event and, in some cases, to shield themselves from blame if a fatality does occur. Such efforts, however well intentioned or understandable in themselves, are inappropriate and even professionally unethical if they override mission accomplishment. “Force protectionism” as an end in itself can corrupt professional standards of service to society, as represented by the assignment of the mission in the first place.30 It places the interests of the members of the armed forces and of the institutions themselves first, and the mission second.

**Emboldening Adversaries**

Another negative effect of embracing the unsupported conventional wisdom on casualty aversion is that it needlessly encourages American adversaries. With respect to the 1999 war in Kosovo, the NATO commander, General Wesley Clark, observed,

> There was continuous commentary on the fear of NATO to accept military casualties. This, unfortunately, is unlikely to be unique to this operation. Of course, using friendly personnel on the ground risks friendly casualties. Neither political nor military leaders will want to take these risks. But our adversaries will exploit our reluctance by facing us with the dilemma of either inflicting accidental injuries to civilians or risking our own people on their territory.31

There are numerous examples of the perception by foreigners that the United States is unwilling to risk casualties.32 This perception has been a factor in the considerations of the nation’s enemies. Saddam Hussein before the 1991 Gulf War, Slobodan Milosevic before the Kosovo War in 1999, and Osama Bin Laden and al-Qa’ida generally in 2001 all appear to have had great confidence that the United States lacked the moral courage to face a deadly military confrontation. This assurance made them less susceptible to diplomatic maneuvers or military threats. They seem to have considered the prospect of U.S. military action, particularly the use of ground troops, a bluff.

During the first Gulf war, it appears that the central element of Saddam’s strategy was to keep his forces in place during the air war and wait for the ground
attack, when, he believed, they would be able to inflict massive casualties and therefore cause the United States to give up. “Saddam Hussein clearly believed that his greatest chance of success lay in inflicting the maximum number of casualties on coalition forces through close combat.”

In the 2003 war, the apparent Iraqi plan to draw the coalition into an urban battle in Baghdad seemed to have presumed that the Iraqi army would cause unacceptable U.S. casualties. The guerrilla-style war that (at this writing) still continues in Iraq, whether representing the organized resistance of remnants of the former regime or external terrorist groups, also seems based on the premise that simply inflicting casualties on American forces will break the will of the American public and thereby lead to withdrawal.

The supposed American glass jaw with respect to casualties is often connected to the battle in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, in 1993. In another incident that seemed to reinforce this point, Haitian thugs prevented the USS Harlan County (LST 1196) docking and offloading troops in Port-au-Prince just a week after the battle in Mogadishu. Osama Bin Laden was to cite Somalia as a reason to expect to be able to force the United States to withdraw from the Middle East. In his 1996 declaration of war on the United States, Osama Bin Laden dismissed the idea that the United States would be able to sustain support for a military response if it suffered casualties.

Your most disgraceful case was in Somalia, where after vigorous propaganda about the power of the USA and its post cold war leadership of the new world order you moved tens of thousands of international force, including twenty eight thousand American soldiers into Somalia. However, when tens of your soldiers were killed in minor battles and one American Pilot was dragged in the streets of Mogadishu you left the area carrying disappointment, humiliation, defeat and your dead with you. Clinton appeared in front of the whole world threatening and promising revenge, but these threats were merely a preparation for withdrawal. You have been disgraced by Allah and you withdrew; the extent of your impotence and weaknesses became very clear.

To Bin Laden, the fact that the bombings in 1998 of two U.S. embassies in Africa elicited only cruise missile attacks in retaliation was further confirmation of this weakness. Ultimately, the planners of the suicide attacks launched against the USS Cole and then the World Trade Center and Pentagon appear to have relied heavily on the presumption of acute casualty sensitivity by Americans. In an October 2001 al-Qa’ida videotape (released just as the U.S. attacks on Afghanistan commenced), Osama Bin Laden’s lieutenant, Ayman Zawahri, expressed a conviction that the American will to fight would weaken quickly after a few casualties. The United States would retreat, just as it had “fled in panic from Lebanon and Somalia.”
Casualty/Technology Trade-offs, Force Structure, and Weapon Programs

The American way of war has long been characterized by a search for ways to substitute firepower for manpower. In its most recent manifestation, this laudable quest has emphasized the utility of airpower, applied at stand-off range, to accomplish coercive aims. Airpower has been a valuable force multiplier for the United States and is regularly advocated in terms not only of effectiveness but of the higher casualties that ground operations would likely produce. Stating the argument directly, Edward Luttwak has suggested that the United States focus more on the development of long-range attack forces, particularly aviation, as an alternative to ground forces, which he asserts are less usable in practice because of casualty aversion on the part of the American public.

Casualty-aversion arguments also provide convenient support for a variety of particular weapons programs. A typical example is the Crusader artillery program. Informed that the system was under consideration for cancellation, Army officials attempted to defend the system by lobbying members of Congress that its termination would put soldiers' lives “at risk.” This argument, however, was more sensitive than the Army knew and seems to have had much to do with the rather nasty and public manner in which the issue was finally resolved: the cancellation occurred more swiftly than originally envisioned, the Army was flailed in public, and the person responsible for drafting the “talking points” lost his job.

Another example was opposition to STREETFIGHTER, a prospective naval weapon system, on the premise that it posed a casualty risk. The concept was to complement the small number of high-cost large warships that currently dominate the Navy force structure with more numerous, smaller ships. Like the PT boats of World War II, these boats would provide flexibility and a capability to attack close to shore. Larger numbers and smaller crews make individual STREETFIGHTER ships less indispensable to the overall force. Unlike the PT boats of World War II, however, they would not be expendable—because of the potential effect of the loss of even their small crews.

Exaggerated concern about casualties can inhibit the selection and development of new systems that can add important capabilities and improve the effectiveness of the armed forces. It may also impede the progress of transformational tactics and approaches—swarming, dispersed operations, network-centric warfare—that by their nature would not provide the degree of force protection afforded by large platforms and massed formations.

Self-Constraint in the Use of Armed Forces

Another negative effect is the failure or reluctance to use the U.S. armed forces at all, due to mistaken beliefs about the public’s likely response. To the degree that policy makers believe that the American public cannot endure casualties, leaders
may well decide that the risk of casualties is disproportionate to the value of an objective and refrain from taking action in situations. This effect was apparent in debate over use of force in Bosnia (1992–94) and in Rwanda (1994). Failure to intervene probably saved U.S. lives, but counterfactual (yet plausible) scenarios in both cases suggest that hundreds of thousands of lives could have been saved by intervention, and peace and stability reestablished much earlier.

Assertions of casualty aversion may simply reflect the normative preference of individuals for what the public ought to find acceptable or not. Speaking of the pursuit of Serb war criminals under the Dayton accords, the former commander of the Implementation Force in Bosnia, Admiral Leighton Smith, gives an example:

What’s it going to take and what’s it going to cost? Then I’ve got to feed that back to the politicians . . . “All right, you want me to do this, this is the price.” Remember what I said about the war criminals [whom the military might be asked to arrest]? “You want me to do that, it’s going to cost you lives. We’re going to get people killed doing this. I might have to go to Kansas and tell Johnny’s mama that he got his head blown off trying to arrest [Ratko] Mladic [a Bosnian Serb military leader and indicted war criminal] in a coffee shop somewhere. Or better, in a bunker.”

In this formulation, it is not a matter of whether the public is willing to accept casualties but this officer’s opinion that the public ought not to accept casualties for this mission. In this way the public’s supposed casualty aversion may become a screen for other objections to a particular mission. It may be easier and more morally persuasive to invoke casualty concerns than to pursue a complex or sensitive argument.

POLICY APPLICATIONS
The concept of the American public’s casualty aversion is a myth—an inappropriate oversimplification of an important issue. The fundamental policy need is to reject this oversimplification—leaders must understand the more complex reality of the public’s reaction to casualties, a reality that in fact affords wide latitude. With a better grasp of this issue, national leaders can avoid errors that distort the policy-making process and corrupt professional military ethics.

Latitude for Leadership
The likely response of the American public to casualties is primarily an issue of leadership. As many studies have noted, even when support for a military operation wanes over time there is no compelling evidence that the public expects either immediate withdrawal or escalation simply in response to casualties. The American public weighs the costs and benefits of the use of force, and the interests involved. In general the public takes a permissive view, one that allows
national leaders tremendous discretion to launch military operations and to persevere in them even as casualties mount. It’s about leadership.

Elected civilian leaders play a critical role in shaping the public’s response to casualties and in characterizing the missions for which they may be incurred. The dynamic is somewhat circular—the extent of public willingness to abide casualties is a function of the degree of consensus among policy leaders, whereas public reaction to cost has much to do with how elites present the situation. Congressional leaders and their agreement with the administration, or lack of it, have an important effect on the public’s sensitivity to casualties. Average citizens perceive policy elites—privy to classified material and detailed analysis, subjected to innumerable inputs from interest and advocacy groups, and served by extensive staffs—as better placed than themselves to weigh costs and benefits. Unsurprisingly, opinion on such major issues as the use of force reflects a “follower effect,” whereby individuals take their cues from the nation’s civilian and military leaders. There is also evidence that members of political parties tend to favor the positions and policies supported by their parties’ leaders—particularly when those leaders include the president.66

This understanding also reveals a certain circularity in the Weinberger/Powell rules—that is, though it is undeniably desirable to have American public support for any military operation, the public takes its cue from the political leadership as a whole. Broad agreement among national leaders tends to give the public confidence that the costs of action, including casualties, are being incurred in support of important national interests. If the country’s leaders are unsure, the public is unlikely to accept the price willingly.

The public’s tolerance for a particular level of casualties in a specific case is not predictable. Moreover, there is considerable evidence that casualties exceeding original expectations may generate greater scrutiny over military operations in question, without changing the commitment to the objectives sought. In fact, it is common for such sacrifices to cement more firmly the commitment of those who favored force in the first place. Casualties already suffered, far from being dismissed as “sunk costs,” are often perceived as requiring redemption, increasing the value of the original purpose.

Not only are the dynamics of casualties difficult to anticipate, there is a natural tendency in the midst of war for casualties to trigger passions that can overwhelm reasoned consideration of government policy. It is valuable to recall Clausewitz’s metaphor of the “remarkable trinity” of passion, creativity, and reason:

As a total phenomenon its dominant tendencies always make war a remarkable trinity—composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded
as a blind natural force; of the play of chance and probability within which the cre-
ative spirit is free to roam; and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of
policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.47

Policy makers are responsible for managing the application of reason in the
realm of war. This responsibility extends to a clear-headed understanding of the
costs and benefits of military operations and the manner in which their results
are likely to shape the public attitude.

The Cost-Benefit Policy Equation
A nuanced understanding of the public’s willingness to accept casualties should
frame the policy process. Leaders should be careful not to let overemphasis on
casualty avoidance lead to risk-averse behavior that jeopardizes American policy
interests. A misperception of the public’s willingness to accept casualties distorts
the cost-benefit calculations of civilian and military leaders as they consider
when to use military force and how. As General Edward Meyer, former Chief of Staff
of the Army, has warned, “No commander likes to lose soldiers, but if he starts
out with [no casualties] as his goal, nobody is going to accomplish anything.”48

The public’s understanding of casualties is neither capricious nor fickle. The
emotional commitment of liberal societies to the dignity and worth of individu-
als is part of the foundation of those societies. Human costs weigh heavily—but
not too heavily. The public understands and accepts that risks to individuals are
sometimes required by the larger interests of society. The public wants to mini-
imize casualties—not just among members of the American military but also in-
ocent civilians and sometimes even enemy combatants. However, as numerous
studies have shown, the public understands in essence Clausewitz’s dictum that
“war is merely the continuation of policy by other means.”49 Military force is
used as a means to a policy end; it is difficult to consider the costs (of which casu-
alties are but one) in isolation from the benefits sought. This is true both in the
midst of conflicts (for example, Korea and Vietnam) and in the consideration of
future military operations. It is extremely difficult to articulate succinctly and in
advance all possible ends of policy against which casualties might be measured.
Moreover, the value of each new casualty is of uncertain subjective weight that
varies tremendously from one citizen to the next.

Evocations of the casualty-aversion assertion by national leaders can, as we
have seen, cause serious problems. They can embolden adversaries and cause
them to overestimate the strategic value of inflicting casualties. They can under-
mine the deterrent effect of American threats that otherwise might have averted
the use of force. Casualty aversion can also give the impression that the United
States is trying to shift to allies casualty risks that it is unwilling to accept itself.
Technology has significant drawbacks here; the technology/casualty trade-off debate has been a long one. Again, it is perfectly laudable to pursue methods that minimize casualties; arguing the converse would be ludicrous. More important, however, are the strategic effectiveness and opportunity costs that accrue from the use of various military instruments in singular, sequential or synchronized ways. The casualty-aversion issue can become a surrogate for decades-old interservice arguments between airpower and ground-power advocates. Such often-misdirected disputes focus on the special interests and constituencies of particular means at the expense of national strategic ends. That an option is ostensibly cheaper should not relieve it from the ultimate tests of military effectiveness in achieving national ends. The conviction that technology can or must substitute for risk to human life has a pernicious tendency to distort the consideration of risks and rewards. Cheaper, less risky means may also make more likely the use of force in situations of marginal importance—in which the prestige and effectiveness of the United States and its allies may require escalation to achieve success.50

The Professional Military Ethic
How the American public is likely to react to casualties in a particular case is not within the scope of military judgment; officers must stick to their own professional expertise and ethics when rendering advice on the use of armed forces. One reason that concern about casualties has been allowed to cross over into military planning is the Weinberger/Powell doctrine. In particular, its fifth test—which requires “reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people”—seems to require judgment by national security planners about American public opinion.51

Predicting the likelihood and magnitude of casualties in a particular mission is in itself an appropriate professional judgment, firmly grounded in expert knowledge and military experience. Assessments of the impact of casualties on military effectiveness are similarly appropriate; for example, a planner would properly recommend against a course of action in which casualties were likely to render the force unable to complete the mission. However, judgments of the “social weight” of casualties or their effect on public opinion are matters for civilian leaders.

Of course, urging civilian leaders to consider that factor in their decisions to use armed force is appropriate. It is a very weighty matter, touching on important values; military leaders should be confident that civilian leaders have carefully addressed it. However, suggesting in advance what level of casualties, if any, the American public would accept, as an element of considered military judgment, is inappropriate. It represents a corruption of the professional military ethic. Military leaders should recognize the issue of casualty sensitivity for what
it is—a question of how potential costs will be valued in terms of policy aims. “If a military officer expresses preferences among policy goals while acting in an official capacity, that officer may come to be seen as more a political figure than a military expert.” Such a reputation would undermine the professional credibility of the officer on other issues.

There is no objective, a priori standard for predicting the American public’s toleration of casualties on behalf of national interests—vital, important, routine, or otherwise.

There is no doubt that military leaders have a profound responsibility to their subordinates and to society more broadly to minimize casualties and take all prudent and reasonable measures to protect the precious human resources entrusted to their care. As servants of society, senior officers are obliged to provide the best possible professional assessment of military alternatives and their likely costs. Advice on military capacity to achieve objectives is appropriate; opinions as to whether the costs or risks are acceptable exceed the professional responsibility of officers.

This is a significant civil-military relations issue. Assessment of the military costs and risks of a given operation in support of national policy is an appropriate element of professional military judgment and the management of violence, what Clausewitz called the “grammar of war.” To decide whether the costs and risks are worth it is to judge the policy itself. That is a decision reserved for civilian leaders.

Public casualty aversion is a myth. There is no evidence that the American public has an intrinsic, uncritical aversion to U.S. military casualties. There is strong evidence that the American public seriously considers the costs and benefits of particular missions and that it judges the acceptability of casualties against the value of objectives. Historically, the relationship between public support for military operations vis-à-vis the level of casualties has been a function of national leadership.

The myth’s persistence as widespread conventional wisdom is harmful and should be vigorously opposed. The myth impedes efforts to achieve national objectives. National leaders—civilian and military—should work to dispel the presumption that the American public will not endure military casualties; this would place debates on national objectives on a firmer foundation. Dispelling the casualty-aversion myth would allow more precise and appropriate consideration of when to use military force, more effective and efficient political and military decisions, and more accurately communicate American resolve to potential adversaries.
NOTES


3. Steven Kull and I. M. Destler, Misreading the Public: The Myth of a New Isolationism (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999). Kull and Destler “conducted a series of eighty three interviews with persons selected from four groups: twelve members and sixteen staff of the U.S. Congress; nineteen officials of the executive branch; eighteen representatives of the media and eighteen senior professionals at nongovernmental organizations” (pp. 25–26).

4. To clarify the nature of this conventional wisdom among policy elites, I conducted over twenty interviews with members of major news organizations, with particular emphasis on correspondents, producers, and analysts experienced in defense and national security interests. I also conducted interviews with over a dozen senior military leaders (current and former). The focus of the interviews was the respondents’ perceptions of the American public’s aversion to casualties.


8. For a detailed treatment of this subject, see Susan Moeller, Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War and Death (New York: Routledge, 1999).


15. Ibid., p. xv.

16. Ibid., p. 66.

18. Kull and Destler, Misreading the Public, pp. 81–112.

19. For example, see a CBS News Poll released 24 September 2001, based on a nationwide random sample of 1,216 adults, 20–23 September 2001. Before military action began in Afghanistan, 72 percent of the public supported military action against whoever had been responsible for the terrorist attacks, even if that meant “thousands of American military personnel will be killed.” ABC News polls since 11 September 2001 also continue to show strong support for military action, even when the public believes there will be significant U.S. military casualties. There is evidence of increasing popular concern about casualties since the end of major combat operations in Iraq. Nonetheless, there is still evidence of strong support for seeing the mission through in the face of mounting casualties. In an August 2003 ABC News poll, 69 percent of those polled favored the statement, “The United States should keep its military forces in Iraq until civil order is restored there, even if that means continued U.S. military casualties,” versus 27 percent who favored withdrawal of U.S. military forces even if civil order had not been restored.

20. For a recent example of this analysis from a somewhat surprising source, see Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), pp. 834–35.


28. Atkinson, “Warriors without a War,” p. A1. The article describes the concerns of commanders that any casualties will have a tremendous impact on the mission, even the cancellation of the mission and the withdrawal of U.S. forces. Consequently, there is tremendous anxiety about force protection and the actions of even the most junior members of the peacekeeping force. The point is reinforced by the high-level attention paid to the first fatality of the operation, a sergeant killed trying to disarm a land mine against orders.


37. Ibid.


50. A good example of this is the dynamic of the Kosovo intervention. The initial hope was to use only limited airpower, but lack of quick success increased the willingness to escalate, even to include ground forces, which had been ruled out at the beginning. See Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*, pp. 468–78.


52. Ibid., p. 218.

53. Ibid., p. 219.

Despite its growing importance, no comprehensive theory of space power has been formulated.

COLIN GRAY

Since the 1950s, there have been discussions concerning the need to develop a space power theory.¹ In their attempts to formulate such a theory, strategists have noted the similarities of space operations to those of air and naval operations. Consequently, many have attempted to derive a clearly articulated, all-encompassing space theory through analogy and comparison to either airpower or sea-control models. These efforts, however, as observers like the contemporary historian and strategist Colin Gray have noted, have not produced a theory addressing space operations and associated national interests.² Without such a strategic framework for space, some analysts fear that national resources and military force will be applied poorly or even counterproductively.

This article, accordingly, addresses the need to codify a space theory. Do space operations and national interests in space have in fact useful parallels in either air or naval operations? If air and naval models do not fully match the essence of space operations, is there one that does? Given a suitable historical model, what are the principles for a space strategy? Would the resulting space strategic model be borne out by contemporary observations?

We will argue that neither the air nor naval model embraces the breadth of space operations and strategy. However, by expanding naval theory to include broadly maritime concerns, which incorporate the interaction of land and sea, the scope of space operations can be

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adequately modeled. In fact, maritime theory already exists, in the work of Sir Julian Corbett, on the basis of which maritime strategy can be defined and then the principles of space theory developed. The resulting maritime-based space theory largely meets the test of current observations and ideas while highlighting significant areas that contemporary space literature has omitted.

The United States has developed space systems and doctrine quite well without the benefit of space theory; why bother deriving one? The reason is the adage, “You don’t know what you don’t know.” A theory attempts to make sense of what would otherwise be inscrutable, to set forth “rules of the game” by which actions become intelligible. According to the Prussian military strategist and theorist Carl von Clausewitz, theory “gives the mind insight into the great mass of phenomena and of their relationships, then leaves it free to rise into the higher realms of action.”

To achieve in connection with space the kind of insight of which Clausewitz wrote, this article will compare past strategic theories and use the most suitable model as a framework for a strategic space theory. Using historical theories as a guide increases the likelihood of developing a meaningful space theory beyond that which arbitrary choice, pure chance, or blind intuition would allow.

CURRENT OPERATIONS AND NATIONAL INTERESTS
The United States has become increasingly reliant upon space. Space-based technology enters homes, businesses, schools, hospitals, and government offices through applications related to transportation, health, the environment, telecommunications, education, commerce, agriculture, energy, and military operations.

Although the range is indeed broad, the nation’s space activities can be divided into four major sectors—civil, commercial, intelligence, and military. Civil space activities are those aimed at exploring space and advancing human understanding; the missions performed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration fall into this category. Commercial activities are performed by private companies and industry for profit. The intelligence sector involves surveillance and reconnaissance missions conducted by such government agencies as the National Reconnaissance Office. Lastly, military activities are those promoting national security through offensive or defensive operations in and through space. Space-based systems may, consistently with international law, perform essential functions facilitating military activities on land, in the air, and on and under the sea. Because of the diverse and pervasive nature of the space activities of the United States, its space operations have implications spanning all elements of national power—diplomatic, military, economic, technological, or information.
NAVAL AND AIR MODELS

As Colin Gray has observed, space operations have more in common with the sea and the air than is widely appreciated. For just as space operations utilize ground facilities, up-and-down links to vehicles in orbit, and the satellites themselves, so naval and air operations have bases at home and facilities abroad, as well as ships and planes. Like international airspace and waters, space is open to all nations; it is free from claims of sovereignty and national appropriation. Because of these similarities, Gray declares, “the history of sea power and air power offers true precedents for developing a space strategy.” For that reason, many elements of current space power theory have been derived from various tenets of airpower and sea control theories.

The Air Model

There is no single airpower theory of the comprehensiveness and universality of Clausewitz’s work on land power. Air Marshal Giulio Douhet of Italy is generally credited with developing the first of the theories of airpower that now exist. In his *The Command of the Air* he contended that aircraft are the solution to strategic and tactical stalemates, and that all future wars could be won from the air. He found the aircraft’s superiority in its offensive characteristics—freedom of maneuver and speed—which accrue from operating in the air. Furthermore, Douhet’s formula for victory includes gaining command of the air and then neutralizing the enemy’s vital centers.

In a supporting view after the First World War, Brigadier General William “Billy” Mitchell declared, “As air covers the whole world, aircraft are able to go anywhere on the planet . . . [and] have set aside all ideas of frontiers.” Mitchell held that some air operations, such as strategic bombing, can achieve independent results, thereby winning wars through destruction of the enemy’s war-making capability and will to fight. The nation that wins the air war, Mitchell was convinced, is practically certain to win the entire conflict.

Early thinkers on space forces considered them simply “high-flying air forces.” For example, U.S. Air Force space doctrine was first established merely by replacing the word “air” with the coinage “aerospace” in the literature. According to aerospace integrationists, space power is no different from airpower, because it delivers similar products to users. Consequently, in that view, no separate space power theory or definition is warranted, since aerospace power embraces space operations.

Nevertheless, many critics have argued against combining air and space theories, pointing out that the respective propulsive, aerodynamic, and orbital-mechanics conditions and requirements make air and space quite distinct...
These differences are manifested in the differing ability of aircraft and space systems to maneuver and loiter.

If air and space are different media, however, they are made interrelated and interdependent by shared activities and mutual boundaries. For example, no space vehicle can ascend into orbit without traversing the air realm. The history and development of aerospace power theory is, consequently, useful for the derivation of strategic space theory, since it incorporates the interaction of media and forces. The point is that space theory should be “holistic,” addressing the indirect effects of space operations on national strategy and nonspace activities.

The Naval Model

Some strategists, pointing to the similarities between sea and space operations, suggest that the best possible space theory would be achieved by simply substituting “space” for “sea” in naval strategy. Naval theory, however, deals with ships, shipbuilding, war at sea, and military forces associated with navies. Moreover, naval theory is primarily concerned with the means and methods of employing force at sea to achieve national goals while increasing national power and prestige. This emphasis on naval operations and fleet actions results in a “sea” and “navy”-centric perspective. Consequently, the applicability of the naval model to space is limited, since it does not adequately encompass the interaction and interdependence of other environments or military forces.

Both air and naval models are relevant to space operations and activities, but neither possesses the breadth needed for a strategic space theory. The air model, in its aerospace variant, takes into account the interrelationships of other forces and environments, but it has a primarily military focus. The naval model includes national interests, such as prestige and power, but is focused on naval engagements alone and tends to exclude other operations or forces. Yet there is a theoretical model that incorporates other mediums and forces, as aerospace power does, while including broad national interests, as the naval model does.

A MARITIME MODEL

The term “maritime,” in contrast to “naval,” connotes the whole range of activities and interests regarding the seas and oceans of the world, and their interrelationships: science, technology, cartography, industry, economics, trade, politics, international affairs, imperial expansion, communications, migration, international law, social affairs, and leadership. Additionally, maritime theory includes the interaction between sea and land. Since many national and local economies have historically depended upon ports for trade and general
economic well-being, the need to protect maritime trade with fleets arose. Naval theory, therefore, is but a subset of maritime theory.

The maritime model, then, appears to match more closely the various issues of space operations than does either air or naval theory. But a number of major theoreticians have worked in this field. If maritime theory is to be the framework of a strategic framework for space, whose version should be used?

The work of Alfred Thayer Mahan, particularly *The Influence of Sea Power upon History 1660–1783*, has been frequently employed in this connection. Mahan is credited with linking maritime and naval activities to national and international issues, as well as with laying out principles for the formulation of naval strategy. His writings address national policy, sea power, sea control, offensive versus defensive operations, speed and mobility, communications, trade, concentration of force, and strategic position. Indeed, Mahan is extensively quoted, especially in the United States, to promote a variety of ideas. In the search for axioms on strategy, his ideas have been “used, misused, superseded, broadened, and modified.”

Mahan’s strategic theory, properly understood, insists that the “proper sphere” of the fleet is offensive operations and gives little attention to matters, such as interaction with land armies, outside the direct action of navies and fleets. Consequently, Mahan’s theory does not incorporate adequately for present purposes the interaction and interdependence of other mediums and forces. If not Mahan, then who?

Perhaps the answer is Sir Julian Corbett, whose work many (though not all) historians regard highly as a coherent and convincing exposition of maritime principles. Sir Julian Stafford Corbett (1854–1922), acclaimed as Great Britain’s greatest maritime strategist, is particularly renowned for his 1911 work *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, a “fusion of history and strategy.” Corbett took up many of the same issues as Mahan, but his writings are widely considered more accurate, more complete, and “more logically developed” than Mahan’s. Additionally, many historians regard Corbett as the deepest and most flexible thinker among either maritime or naval theorists. Therefore, it is Corbett’s ideas and principles, from *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, that we will use as a framework for deriving a strategic space theory.

Corbett wrote of the implications for national power of maritime operations in both peace and war. Like Carl von Clausewitz—whom he cites extensively—Corbett recognized that both land and sea operations are influenced by national politics and interests. The object of naval warfare being in his view to control maritime communications, including commercial and economic aspects, Corbett held that naval action can influence the balance of wealth and power among nations.
Nonetheless, Corbett acknowledged that sea and land operations are interdependent, that naval strategy and operations constitute only a subset of a nation’s wartime operations. He repeatedly stated the necessity for the closest cooperation of ground and sea forces. In fact, in a departure from the conventional thought of his day, Corbett considered it of paramount importance that naval strategy work within the overall national strategy, since it is almost impossible for war to be decided by naval action alone (Some Principles, page 15). Therefore, the purpose of maritime strategy is to determine the “mutual relations of your army and navy in a plan of war” (page 16).

Another theme of Corbett’s work is “command of the sea,” which he considers different from the occupation of territory by an army, for the high seas cannot be subjected to political dominion or ownership. The inherent value of the sea, in his view, is as a means of communication. Consequently, Corbett defines command of the sea as the “control of maritime communications, whether for commercial or military purposes” (94). He explicitly states, however, that to command the sea is a relative advantage, not an absolute; it does not mean that the enemy cannot act, only that it cannot seriously interfere with one’s actions. The normal state of affairs, Corbett observes, is not a commanded sea but an uncommanded one—that is, command of the sea is normally in dispute (91).

Maritime communications pertain to those routes by which the flow of “national life is maintained ashore”; therefore, they have a broader meaning than land lines of communication and are not analogous to those traditionally used by armies (93, 100). While maritime communications include supply and trade, they also include lines of communication that are of a strategic nature and are thus critical for a nation’s survival. The objective of controlling maritime communications is protection of one’s own commerce and interference with the enemy’s economic interests, ultimately the defeat of the adversary’s “power of resistance” (102). Corbett argues that the primary object of the fleet, therefore, is to secure sea lines of communication, putting the enemy’s fleet out of action if it is in a position to render them unsafe (102).

For Corbett, offensive operations are called for when political objectives necessitate acquiring something from the enemy; as a more “effective” (his term) form of war than the defensive, offensive operations should be the preference of the stronger power (31). Notwithstanding the advantage of the offensive, however, even a superior naval force seeking a decisive victory will likely find the enemy in a position where he cannot easily be affected; throughout naval history fleets have been able to thwart attempts to force decisive battle by retiring to the safety of coasts and ports (158). Still, and despite this limitation, Corbett expressed concern that some naval professionals made a fetish of the offensive. Corbett argued that defensive operations should not be shunned or avoided;
they are, he held, specifically called for when political objectives necessitate preventing the enemy from gaining something (32). Moreover, defensive operations are the “stronger” form of war and, as a rule, should be resorted to by the weaker navy until it is strong enough to assume the offensive (310–11).\(^42\)

Like Clausewitz, Corbett classified wars according to whether the object is limited or unlimited. Because of the nonescalatory nature of truly limited warfare, a nation initiating a limited war needs the “power of isolation” to defend itself against an unlimited counterstroke. Such “isolation” could be achieved by commanding the sea to such a degree as to make it effectively an “insuperable physical obstacle.” In such a case, “He that commands the sea is at great liberty and may take as much or as little of the war as he will.”\(^43\)

Corbett envisioned several actions that may be taken by lesser naval powers to dispute command of the sea. A lesser naval force would be unlikely to win a decisive major fleet engagement, yet it could achieve significant results. Through minor naval actions—such as attacks on sea lanes and coastal raids (261–62)—it could contest a superior power’s command of the sea and thereby accomplish at least limited political objectives. In such ways a lesser power could disturb enemy plans, regardless of its fleet’s size, while strengthening its own national power and prestige (61).

A small navy could also effectively dispute command of the sea through the “fleet in being” concept (166).\(^44\) A decisive defeat at the hands of a more capable navy would make one’s fleet unavailable should the situation later develop in one’s favor (211). Consequently, keeping its fleet actively “in being”—not merely in existence but in active and vigorous life—constitutes a defensive strategy for a relatively small maritime power (214).\(^45\)

Corbett theorized that victory at sea is dependent upon the relative strength of one’s force and the exploitation of one’s “positions”—naval bases, commercial, and nearby focal areas where trade routes converge (106).\(^46\) If correctly exploited, strategic positions allow a naval force to restrict the size of any enemy force, thus creating favorable conditions for battle (72). Corbett specifically considered it more effective to control ports and maritime choke points, thereby threatening the enemy’s commerce and potentially luring his fleet into battle on one’s own terms, than to seek out the enemy’s fleet for a decisive action (185).

Relatedly, Corbett envisioned blockades, of two types, “close” and “open.” The former closes the enemy’s commercial ports. “By closing [the enemy’s] commercial ports we exercise the highest power of injuring him which the command of the sea can give us”—the enemy must either submit to the close blockade or fight to release himself (185). In contrast, in an open blockade a fleet occupies distant and common lines of communication—a means for a stronger navy to force the enemy out of its harbors. “It is better to sit upon his homeward
bound trade routes, thus costing him his trade, or making his fleet come for a de-
cisive battle,” than repeatedly attempt to seek out an enemy who habitually re-
tires to the safety of his ports (156–57).

The obverse of blocking maritime communications—in fact, the object of
 naval warfare, in Corbett’s view—is protecting them. This was to be achieved by
 the “cruiser,” a vessel of endurance and power sufficient for long, independent
deployments to deter and thwart enemy commerce raiding and protect sea lines
of communication. Corbett considered the importance even of the battleship
secondary to that of the cruiser (114). Because of the wide expanses of sea and
the numerous maritime routes and coastlines involved, cruisers had to be built
in significant numbers.

Finally, if cruisers were to be dispersed to distant operating areas, naval forces
had also to be able to concentrate rapidly and decisively when needed (132).
Such a strategic combination of concentration and dispersal in warfare, Corbett
argues, allows a fleet to engage the enemy’s central mass when needed but in the
meantime to preserve the flexibility necessary to control maritime communica-
tions and to meet minor attacks in several areas at once (133).

DERIVING A STRATEGIC SPACE THEORY

With this understanding of maritime theory as described by Sir Julian Corbett,
it is possible to extrapolate and define a theory for space operations. Maritime
operations are not the same as space operations; environmental, technological,
and physical factors are definitively different. Nevertheless, many of their strate-
gic aspects are similar, and therefore they may be presumed to share certain the-
oretical principles. We may attempt, therefore, to derive objectively a space
theory in strict keeping with Corbett’s original context and strategic intent, veri-
fying the applicability of its principles against contemporary literature.

National Power Implications. Space operations and activities utilizing
space-based assets have broad implications for national power in peace and war,
implications that include diplomatic, military, economic, technological, and in-
formation elements. Furthermore, military operations in space are extensively
interrelated with national and political interests, and any action in space, even
minor ones, can impact the balance of wealth and power among nations.

Interdependence with Other Operations. Operations in space are interdepen-
dent with those on land, at sea, and in the air. Space warfare is just a subset of
wartime strategy and operations; accordingly, space forces must operate in con-
cert with other military forces. Moreover, space strategy should work within the
overall national strategy, since it is next to impossible for space operations alone
to decide a war’s outcome.
Command of Space. Command of space is the control of space communications for civil, commercial, intelligence, and military purposes. The inherent value of space is as a means of communications; therefore, space warfare must work directly or indirectly toward either securing command of space or preventing the enemy from securing it. Command of space does not mean that one’s adversary cannot act, only that he cannot seriously interfere in one’s actions. Additionally, the command of space will normally be in dispute.

Space Communications. Space communications are those lines of communications by which the flow of national life is sustained in and through space. These include strategic lines of communication, critical to a nation’s survival, that serve the movement of trade, materiel, supplies, and information. By attack upon space communications, a nation can adversely affect another’s civil, commercial, intelligence, and military activities, thereby reducing that nation’s will to resist. The primary purpose of space warfare is to secure space communications; enemy forces that are in a position to render them unsafe must be put out of action.

Strategy of the Offense. Offensive operations in space are called for when political objectives necessitate acquiring something from the adversary. Generally speaking, offensive operations in space are reserved to the stronger space power. However, an offensive force looking for a decisive victory will likely not find it, since the enemy will usually fall back to a position of safety. Offensive operations must be decided upon with caution; space assets can be thrown away on ill-considered attacks.

Strategy of the Defense. Despite the advantage of offensive space operations, the utility of defensive operations is substantial; offensive and defensive operations are mutually complementary, and any campaign must have characteristics of both. Defensive space operations are called for when political objectives necessitate preventing the enemy from achieving or gaining something. Defensive operations are inherently the stronger form of action and should be used extensively by lesser space forces until the offensive can be assumed.

The Power of Isolation. A nation wishing to initiate limited war in or through space requires a defensive capability adequate to protect itself against an unlimited counterattack. The “power of isolation” is made possible by commanding space and making it an insuperable physical obstacle, enabling one nation to attack another for limited political purposes without fear of a devastating counteroffensive. To paraphrase Corbett, “He that commands space is at great liberty and may take as much or as little of the war as he will.”
**Actions by Lesser Space Forces.** Although a less capable space force is unlikely to win a decisive space engagement, it can still contest the command of space, thereby achieving limited political objectives. To this end the weaker force may seize local or temporary command in areas where the stronger force is not present. Additionally, lesser space forces can disrupt commercial or economic interests or interfere in minor ways with space-based systems. Both types of action are meant to disturb an enemy’s plans while increasing the lesser nation’s power.

Another effective method by which a lesser space force might dispute command is the “fleet in being” concept. It is important for relatively weak space forces to avoid decisive engagements with stronger ones, but they can be kept safe and active until the situation changes in their favor. Furthermore, while avoiding large-scale engagements with a superior space force, a lesser one can conduct minor attacks against space communications or space-related activities, thus preventing the stronger power from gaining general command of space.

**Strategic Positions.** Strategic positions include launch facilities, up-and-down link systems, space bases or stations, and focal areas where operations and activities tend to converge. If correctly exploited, strategic positions allow a space force to restrict the movement of the enemy forces or information, thus improving the conditions for military operations. Since it will prove difficult to force an adversary into a decisive engagement, it is better to control strategic positions and threaten commerce and operations, thereby forcing the enemy to action on favorable terms. By exploiting strategic positions through occupation of the enemy’s space lanes of communication and closing points of distribution, we destroy elements of the enemy’s “national life” in space.  

**Blockades.** Closely related to strategic positions are the methods of blockades, whether close or open. The close blockade for space operations equates to preventing the deployment of systems from launch facilities and to interfering with communications in the vicinity of uplinks or downlinks, as well as impeding the movement of vehicles near space-based hubs. Close blockade may be achieved by physical systems or vehicles or interference measures. In Corbett’s model, suppressing operations at these distribution points obliges the adversary either to submit or fight. In contrast, a more capable space power can impose an open blockade, occupying or interfering with the distant and common space lines of communication, to force an adversary into action. Like the close blockade, methods include both physical systems and interference.

**Cruisers.** The object of space warfare is to control space communications, and therefore a means of establishing this control is required. Consequently “cruisers” are needed in large numbers to defend the vast volumes occupied by space lines of communication. One possible implementation of the “cruiser” concept
would be inexpensive micro-satellites designed to defend high-value space assets from attack or space-based interference. Space systems that perform purely offensive operations with negligible influence on space lines of communication are of secondary importance.

**Dispersal of Forces.** Space forces and systems should in general be dispersed to cover the widest possible area yet retain the ability to concentrate decisive force rapidly. Dispersal of forces will allow the protection of a nation’s space assets and interests, thereby facilitating defensive operations or minor attacks wherever a nation’s space interests are threatened. To defend against or neutralize a significant threat, however, space forces should quickly concentrate firepower or other destructive effects. This combination of dispersal and concentration preserves the flexibility needed to control space communications but allows an adversary’s “central mass” to be engaged when necessary.

**MEASURING UTILITY**

Since the principles of the above space theory were derived from a historical framework, it is necessary to test them against current expert observations and space literature to measure the theory’s potential utility. Two standards will be used: a recent study regarding space operations, and U.S. joint military doctrine.

**Standards**

The 2001 *Report of the Commission to Assess United States National Security Space Management and Organization*, known as the Space Commission Report, covers a broad range of issues pertaining to U.S. space activity. The report lists current U.S. national interests pertaining to operations in space, including: promoting the peaceful use of space; using the nation’s potential in space to support its domestic, economic, diplomatic, and national security objectives; assured access to space and on-orbit operations; space situational awareness; surveillance from space; global command, control, and communications in space; defense in space; homeland defense; and power projection in, from, and through space.

With the exception of promoting the peaceful use of space, the listed national interests are compatible with those of the diplomatic, military, economic, technological, and information national interests in the derived space theory model.

While the Space Commission Report does not explicitly state the need for offensive capability and strategy in space, it does imply this view. The report notes, “Weapons in space are inevitable,” and “we know from history that every medium—air, land, and sea—has seen conflict. Reality indicates that space will be no different.” Given this virtual certainty of future combat operations, the report maintains, the United States must develop the means to “deter and to defend” against hostile acts in and from space. Notwithstanding the use of the
word deter, the method of achieving this is compatible with offensive strategy as developed in the space theory.

Joint Publication 3-14, Joint Doctrine for Space Operations, primarily deals with establishing doctrine for space operations at the operational level of warfare; however, it does address some strategic security issues that can be compared with the space theory model. Like the Space Commission Report, the joint publication states the need to protect U.S. space assets while denying the use of space assets by adversaries. This thought is comparable with the idea of commanding space to protect one’s use of space communications. In fact, the joint publication’s definition of “space control” is similar to ideas in the derived strategic space theory. The publication states:

Space control operations provide freedom of action in space for friendly forces while, when directed, denying it to an adversary, and include the broad aspect of protection of U.S. and allied space systems and negation of enemy adversary space systems.

Space control operations encompass all elements of the space defense mission and include offensive and defensive operations by friendly forces to gain and maintain space superiority and situational awareness if events impact space operations.

Of note, the joint publication states that both offensive and defensive operations are needed, which is consistent with the maritime-based space theory.

Divergences from the Standards
The Space Commission Report discusses topics not within the scope of maritime-based space theory. These topics include reorganization and streamlining of different U.S. space-related agencies, and the need for the United States to invest its resources—both people and monetary investment—to ensure that it remains the world’s leading space-faring nation. Since the report is not attempting to develop space theory, the inclusion of bureaucratic organization and streamlining issues is understandable; certainly, the need to invest in space operations is implicit in space theory.

Differences between Joint Publication 3-14 and the space theory are primarily matters of semantics or due to the operational focus of the publication. Such differences include the use of “freedom of action,” “space superiority,” and “situational awareness,” not found in the maritime-based theory we have proposed. The differences are, however, considered minor when comparing the strategic context of each.

Nevertheless, three ideas from the developed space theory are neither explicitly nor implicitly mentioned in popular space literature. These ideas are the “power of isolation” to prevent the escalation of limited wars, the use of “cruisers” to ensure command of space, and the dispersal of force as a general practice. These differences could mean one of two things: either that these points are
baseless or that they are pertinent but not adequately addressed by contemporary literature. Given the relevance of the majority of the principles of the maritime model, the remaining three ideas—which deal with securing space communications—are likely relevant as well.

This is a significant result: a maritime-based strategic framework points to an effective method of defending space assets and space lines of communications. Through the use of space “cruisers” to protect critical space communications pertaining to the movement of trade, matériel, supplies, or information—a nation can protect its various interests against a space-based offensive. The physical form the space “cruiser” takes is not important, but its function is. Additionally, since the environment of space is vast but limitations on fiscal resources necessitate balancing desired capabilities against number of systems that can be procured, space “cruisers” should have a modest enough offensive capability to allow production in quantity. By dispersing these space systems yet maintaining the capability to concentrate firepower or other neutralizing effects, a threatening adversary can be decisively defeated while one’s own assets and interests are protected.

“SO WHAT?”
A critic might well put that question. Using Corbett’s maritime model to develop a strategic space model has merely substantiated ideas already known or written about. Indeed, much of this strategic space theory is consistent with the Space Commission Report and joint doctrine. Nonetheless, something of real value has been added.

First, we have seen that a historically based theoretical model promises to provide a useful framework for thinking about strategic issues in space. Second, a maritime model matches more closely than air or naval theory the essence of space operations. Third, the strategic space theory derived from a maritime model is congruent with current space-specific theory and observation. The maritime-based model, then, should be usable for predicting new concerns and developing new ideas—such as methods of dispersal and concentration.

Perhaps the thinking of maritime theorists other than Corbett is also pertinent for space theory. For example, the work of Charles E. Callwell, Wolfgang Wegener, Raoul Castex, and James Cable merits revisiting for this purpose. In this way, space strategy and theory will have mined hundreds of years of maritime experience for insight into future operations in and through space.

Colin Gray once asked, “Where is the theory of space power? Where is the Mahan for the final frontier?” The answer is that we have always had him—the maritime theorist Sir Julian Corbett.
NOTES

1. Some theorists have used the term space power theory, while others have used space control. In an attempt to remain objective and unbiased, the term strategic space theory, space theory, or strategic model will be used instead.


5. John B. Hattendorf, “The Uses of Maritime History in and for the Navy,” Naval War College Review 56, no. 2 (Spring 2003), p. 20: “Historical understanding and knowledge of past events is not the object but rather one of several means to improve the ability of professionals to solve problems more wisely than arbitrary choice, pure chance, and blind intuition would allow.”


9. U.S. Joint Forces Command, “Joint Forces Command Glossary,” available at www.jfcom.mil/about/glossary.htm. Diplomatic, information, military, and economic (DIME) areas of national power are leveraged in “effects-based” operations. Information refers to facts, data, or instructions in any medium or form, along with its transfer and its meaning assigned by humans. Technological has since been added to this list of national power elements, having become an area that significantly impacts the others.


11. Thomas and Duncan, eds., p. 150.


15. Philip S. Meilinger, introduction to The Paths of Heaven, p. xiii.


17. Ibid., p. 15.


26. Smith, p. 109: “Aerospace integrationists frequently argue that spacepower is in no way different from airpower because it delivers similar products to users, as if aircraft can do what spacecraft can do. This is simply not the case.”

27. Lupton, p. 65.


29. Ibid., p. 19.

30. Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840–1914) was an American naval officer, historian, and theorist who was commonly regarded at the time, and has been since, as the most important analyst of seapower.


32. Mahan, p. 130.

33. Hattendorf, “The Uses of Maritime History,” p. 27.


35. Ibid., p. xxxvii. Comment attributed to Lt. Alfred Dewar in Pall Mall Gazette, 22 December 1911.

36. Ibid., p. xxxviii, as attributed to the New York Evening Post.

37. Ibid., p. xiv.

38. Corbett’s “Green Pamphlet,” which was issued to students at the Royal Naval War College, will also be used in laying the foundation, since it complements the book and is consistent with Corbett’s ideas. The “Green Pamphlet” appears as an appendix in the edition of Some Principles of Maritime Strategy cited above.

39. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy, p. 117. The remainder of this discussion draws upon this source, at pages indicated.

40. Similarly, in the “Green Pamphlet” Corbett states, “Naval strategy does not exist as a separate branch of knowledge. It is only a section of a division of the art of war. . . . The true method of procedure then is to get hold of a general theory of war and so ascertain the exact relations of Naval Strategy to the whole” (Some Principles, p. 307).

41. Corbett uses the term “military communications,” meaning what is today called land-based “lines of operation and supply.” However, he excludes fishing activities and fishery rights.

42. From the “Green Pamphlet.” These thoughts are like those of Clausewitz.

43. Attributed to Francis Bacon (1561–1626), a prominent Elizabethan and Jacobean politician, lawyer, philosopher, and writer. Reference from Essays 29, “Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms.”

44. Here Corbett counters the “seek out and destroy” school of thought.
45. The first execution of the “fleet in being” concept is attributed to Arthur Herbert, Earl of Torrington (1647–1716).

46. Examples of focal areas include “Finisterre, Gibraltar, Suez, the Cape, Singapore, and many others.”

47. Civil and informational were taken from Corbett’s model, since his theory implies these contemporary areas.

48. Corbett cautions that naval fleets are difficult to replace and should not be “thrown away in ill-considered offensives” when attempting to achieve a decisive victory.

49. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 95. Taken from Corbett’s thought that by exploiting strategic position through occupation of the enemy’s maritime communications and closing the adversary’s points of distribution, “we destroy [the enemy’s] national life afloat.”

50. The Space Commission Report was chosen instead of the Clinton administration’s 1996 *National Space Policy*, National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD-15), even though the latter is the last official U.S. document on space policy. The 1996 report is somewhat dated but includes many of the ideas of the Space Commission Report.


52. Ibid., p. x.

53. Ibid.

54. U.S. Space Command, *Joint Doctrine for Space Operations*, Joint Publication 3-14 (Washington, D.C.: Joint Staff, 9 August 2002), p. x. The publication lists four primary mission areas for space: space control, force enhancement, space support, and force application. Force enhancement includes intelligence, monitoring, communications, and navigation functions. Space support includes operations that launch, deploy, augment, maintain, sustain, replenish, de-orbit, and recover space forces. Space force application operations consist of attacks against terrestrial targets carried out by military operations in or through space.

55. Ibid.

56. Space Commission Report, x.


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For more than a decade there have been persistent reports that the People’s Republic of China (PRC) intends to acquire an aircraft carrier force as part of its ambition to achieve “blue-water” (high seas) naval capability. Some reports suggest that China plans to refit one or more aircraft carriers from the former Soviet Union or other countries. Others claim that China has investigated the possibility of buying a light aircraft carrier from a European shipbuilder. Other reports suggest China has already made the decision to build two or three indigenous carriers and has even allocated funding for the program. However, none of these reports has ever been confirmed, and no firm evidence exists that China really does intend to refurbish, build, or buy an aircraft carrier. Thus the prospect of a Chinese carrier remains subject to a great deal of rumor and speculation.

However, the issue is an important one, for a number of reasons. Were China to begin operating aircraft carrier battle groups, the strategic equations in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea would be altered. Moreover, the appearance of Chinese aircraft carriers would inevitably set alarm bells ringing throughout East Asia, especially in Japan and Southeast Asian capitals. It would also have implications for U.S. naval policy in the Asia-Pacific region.

This article examines the issue of Chinese aircraft carrier capability from several angles. First, it reviews the “development” of China’s aircraft carrier program to date and the various media reports that have appeared over the years. Second, it traces the progress of China’s blue-water ambitions and the debate within the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) as to the necessity of acquiring such vessels. Third, it assesses China’s ability to initiate a carrier-building
program, and the financial, technological, and geopolitical problems involved in such a venture.

CHINA’S AIRCRAFT CARRIER PROGRAM TO DATE

The father of China’s aircraft carrier research and development (R&D) program was Admiral Liu Huaqing. From 1954 to 1958 Liu studied under the great Soviet naval strategist Admiral Sergei Gorshkov at the Voroshilov Naval Academy in Leningrad. Gorshkov was the driving force behind the Soviet navy’s oceangoing offensive strategy, an ambition that came to fruition during the 1980s. Gorshkov’s maritime strategy greatly influenced Liu’s ideas on how the People’s Liberation Army Navy should evolve. Like its Soviet counterpart, the PLAN had traditionally been subordinate to the army, with a primary role of coastal defense. Liu argued that China’s maritime doctrine should evolve through two stages. The first should be a “green-water active defense” that would enable the PLAN to protect China’s territorial waters and enforce its sovereignty claims in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea. The second phase would be to develop a blue-water navy capable of projecting power into the western Pacific. Liu was able to put these ideas into practice during his tenure as commander in chief of the PLAN (1982–88) and then as vice chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission (1989–97).

Liu believed that in order to fulfill a blue-water capability, the PLAN had to obtain aircraft carriers. In 1997, just before his retirement, Liu penned an article in Zhongguo Haiyang Bao (China’s Maritime Paper) in which he argued it was “extremely necessary” for China to possess aircraft carriers. According to Liu, aircraft carriers were needed to protect China’s sovereignty and maritime resources, especially with regard to Taiwan and the South China Sea; guard China’s sea lanes of communications as the country industrialized and increasingly became a major trading power; enable China to keep up with regional powers such as India and Japan; and give the PLAN a decisive edge in future naval warfare.1

On becoming commander in chief of the Chinese navy in 1982, Liu initiated at the navy’s Shanghai Research Institute a feasibility study on the design and construction of an aircraft carrier. Models were constructed and tested in the institute’s six-hundred-meter (656-yard) pool and at Tai Lake in Jiangsu Province.2 In 1985 Liu ordered the establishment at the Guangzhou Naval Academy of a training course for aircraft carrier commanders.3 (Following the American tradition, aircraft carrier commanding officers would be selected from among pilots rather than captains of surface warships.) The importance of the course was underlined by the academy’s president, Admiral Yao:

Since the Second World War, aircraft carriers as the symbols of a country’s important deterrent power have been accorded more attention. For some historical reasons,
China has not yet built aircraft carriers. But the Academy must look forward and train experts needed for the carriers. As the building process is long we simply cannot afford to dig wells after becoming thirsty.4

In 1992, students in the course began active training on board China’s most advanced guided-missile destroyers.5

Carrier design and pilot training received a major boost in 1985 when a Chinese ship breaker purchased the fifteen-thousand-ton Majestic-class aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne from Australia. At that time the Australian government did not oppose the sale, because China was seen as an important strategic counterweight to perceived Soviet expansionism in Asia. The purchase helped the PLAN’s R&D program in two ways. First, as the carrier was being dismantled for scrap, Chinese naval architects and engineers were able to see at first hand how it had been designed and built; using this information naval architects were able to prepare drawings for a light carrier. Second, the flight deck of the Melbourne was kept intact and used for pilot training in carrier takeoffs and landings (though a static flight deck would, of course, have been of limited utility, since it could not replicate the pitch and roll of an aircraft carrier at sea). China’s carrier R&D program remained top secret. In 1987 Colonel General Xu Xing denied that China wanted to acquire an aircraft carrier capability, citing the country’s “defensive” military doctrine.6

During much of the 1980s the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) focused on the land threat posed by the USSR in the Soviet Far East and did not see an aircraft carrier as a strategic priority. However, the collapse of the USSR in 1991 allowed China to turn its attention to strategic priorities in the south and southeast—namely, the South China Sea dispute and Taiwan. Both of these areas of potential conflict required increased naval power. As a result, China’s aircraft carrier R&D program was accelerated.

In the first half of the 1990s reports appeared and persisted that China was interested in purchasing an aircraft carrier from another country as a stopgap measure while it built its own. In 1992 the Chinese government reportedly approached the Ukrainian government with a view to buying the unfinished Soviet Kuznetsov-class carrier Varyag. However, nothing came of these talks; the Ukrainian government in fact denied that any discussions had taken place.7 In December 1992 Russian president Boris Yeltsin visited Beijing, where Chinese officials reportedly expressed to him an interest in buying one of the Russian navy’s forty-thousand-ton Kiev-class carriers.8 Although nothing came of these talks either, Chinese companies were later able, as will be discussed later, to purchase two Kiev-class carriers (the Kiev and Minsk) and the still-incomplete Varyag.
In 1995–96 two European countries approached China with aircraft carrier technology. In February 1995 it was reported that the Spanish shipbuilder Empresa Nacional Bazan had offered to build China a low-cost, lightweight conventional-takeoff-and-landing (CTOL) carrier. Bazan placed before China two designs: the twenty-three-thousand-ton SAC-200 (overall length 728 feet, or 221.8 meters); and the twenty-five-thousand-ton SAC-220 (overall length 787 feet, or 240 meters). The cost of the vessels would be $350–400 million. The SAC-220 would accommodate up to twenty-one CTOL fighters, such as the MiG-29K. According to Bazan, the first carrier could be delivered within five years, with the second three and a half years later. At the time, Bazan was constructing the 11,500-ton carrier Chakri Naruebet for the Royal Thai Navy and was eager to secure further orders in Asia. China expressed an interest in the proposal, and initial talks between the Chinese and Bazan were held in January 1996. However, according to a representative of Bazan who spoke with the authors, the Chinese side seemed more interested in obtaining the blueprints of the carrier than in ordering the actual vessel.

At the end of 1995 it was reported that France had offered to give China, gratis, the 32,700-ton carrier Clemenceau. In return it was expected that French companies would be awarded lucrative contacts to upgrade the vessel’s radar and communication systems. Again, nothing came of the proposal. However, even if the Spanish or French proposals had progressed farther, delivering an aircraft carrier to China would have been politically difficult, especially with the European Union’s 1989 post–Tiananmen Square arms embargo on Beijing still in place.

Beginning in 1997, a series of newspaper articles suggested that China had decided to build its own fleet of aircraft carriers rather than either upgrading secondhand vessels from abroad or buying new ones. In November 1997 the Far Eastern Economic Review reported that the Chinese government had shelved plans to build fixed-wing carriers in favor of smaller helicopter carriers. In 1999 Singapore’s Straits Times reported that the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council had earmarked 250 million yuan for the design and construction of two aircraft carriers, to be completed by 2009.
2000 the respected Hong Kong Chinese-language newspaper Ming Pao reported that construction of China’s first carrier would begin later that year and would be completed by 2003. According to Ming Pao the Chinese carrier would displace forty-eight thousand tons and carry twenty-four fighters, probably Su-27Ks (Su-33s) from Russia. The cost of each vessel would be 4.8 billion yuan ($580 million).

However, to date there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that any aircraft carriers are under construction in the PRC.

EX-SOVIET AIRCRAFT CARRIERS AND CHINA’S R&D PROGRAM

As mentioned earlier, during the early 1990s China repeatedly sought to buy aircraft carriers from the former Soviet Union. By 2000 it had managed to acquire three: Minsk, Kiev, and Varyag. How these vessels were acquired and the purposes to which they have been put make interesting reading.

In 1975 the USSR commissioned the Kiev, the first of a new class of forty-thousand-ton carriers designed to provide organic fighter cover for the Soviet navy. Between 1978 and 1984 three more Kiev-class carriers were commissioned: Minsk (1978), Novorossiysk (1982), and Admiral Gorshkov (1984). Kiev-class carriers (referred to by the Russians as “heavy aircraft-carrying cruisers”) were conventionally powered and capable of carrying twelve Yak-38 Forger vertical/short-takeoff-and-landing (VSTOL) fighters and twenty helicopters. Following the collapse of the USSR in 1991 and the subsequent emasculation of the Russian navy, all four carriers were decommissioned.

In 1995 the Minsk and Novorossiysk were sold to South Korea for scrapping. However, in June 1998 the Minsk was purchased for five million dollars by a Chinese firm, the Minsk Aircraft Carrier Industry Company. Before the sale went through, however, the South Korean firm stripped the warship of its armaments, engines, and communication systems and exacted a guarantee that the new vessel would not be used for military purposes. The Minsk was towed to Guangdong Province, where a four-million-dollar conversion transformed the carrier into a floating museum. The vessel was moved to Shenzhen in September 2000 to form the centerpiece of the “Minsk World” theme park. For an entrance fee of eight dollars, visitors can now board the former flagship of the Soviet Pacific Fleet and see MiG fighters on the flight deck, models of antiship missiles and other weapons systems, and exhibitions on the history of the Russian navy and the Soviet space program. Visitors can also watch displays of Russian dancing in the hangar, eat at a Russian-themed restaurant, and ride on a tank on parkland in front of the vessel. According to the pro-Beijing Hong Kong newspaper Wen Wei Po, Minsk World is aimed at “popularising science as well as
national defense education.” Minsk World has proved a hit with both locals and tourists alike.

In May 2000 the Kiev was purchased by the Tianma Shipbreaking Company in Tianjin for $8.4 million. The contract with the Russian Defense Ministry stipulated that the vessel had to be scrapped. However, local authorities in Tianjin had other ideas for the Kiev. In July 2000 the Tianjin Municipal Standing Committee established a project investment corporation with the aim of turning the aircraft carrier into a tourist attraction. In November 2000 the original contract with Moscow was renegotiated to allow the Kiev to be used for tourism purposes. According to the developer, the Kiev will form part of the Beiyang Recreation Harbor project, which will include “military recreation activities, museums, exhibitions, fun parks, recreational grounds, [and] education sites.”

Planned amenities on the Kiev include a conference center, TV studio, nightclubs, restaurants, and swimming pool.

The most intriguing purchase to date has been that of the Varyag. The second of the 67,500-ton Kuznetsov class, the Varyag was laid down in 1985 at the Nikolayev shipyards in the Ukraine, then part of the USSR. Kuznetsov-class carriers are conventionally powered but unlike the Kiev class are capable of accommodating fixed-wing aircraft, such as Su-27Ks and MiG-29Ks. This class of carrier does not utilize a steam catapult for launching fighters but is equipped instead with a ski jump at the bow to allow short takeoffs. Work on the Varyag was abandoned at the beginning of 1992 following the breakup of the Soviet Union. The USSR’s successor state, Russia, could not afford to pay Ukraine to complete construction. The vessel was 70 percent complete but was without engines, rudders, or armament. As mentioned earlier, the Chinese government expressed an interest in buying the Varyag in 1992, but the sale did not go through at that time.

In March 1998 the Varyag was bought by the Chong Lot Tourist and Amusement Agency for twenty million dollars. Chong Lot was based in the then Portuguese colony of Macau, although the company had no offices there; Chong Lot was in fact a subsidiary of a Hong Kong company, Chin Luck Holdings. In November 1998 Chong Lot unveiled plans to turn the Varyag into a
floating casino and entertainment complex anchored in Macau harbor. Two aspects of this plan were unusual. First, the Macanese authorities did not (and have yet to) receive an application to operate a casino on an aircraft carrier in the enclave. Second, the waters around Macau are too shallow to accommodate such a large vessel.

When news of the sale was announced, the Russian media claimed that Chong Lot and Chin Luck were acting on behalf of the Chinese government. The Chinese embassy in Moscow was quick to dismiss these reports. However, investigations by the Hong Kong media revealed that the two companies involved in the purchase of the Varyag had close connections with the PRC. Two of Chong Lot’s directors were former PLAN officers. In August 1999, Hong Kong–based Goldspot Investments became a majority shareholder in Chong Lot. One of the directors of Goldspot has an address inside a military compound in Beijing. The majority shareholder of Goldspot is China Securities International Ltd., which in turn is a subsidiary of China Securities, a large, state-owned brokerage house.

The plan to tow the Varyag to Macau was held up for fifteen months because the Turkish authorities refused to allow the vessel to pass through the Bosporus Strait, alleging a danger to shipping. In September 2001 Turkey finally gave permission for the passage. After an eventful journey through the Mediterranean and around the Cape of Good Hope, the Varyag arrived in March 2002 at the northeastern Chinese port of Dalian. The owners continue to assert that the vessel will be turned into a casino.

The purchase of these carriers raises two important questions. First, is it mere coincidence that three of the former Soviet navy’s aircraft carriers have ended up in the PRC? Second, if it is not coincidence, how valuable are these vessels to China’s research and development program?

It stretches belief that the acquisition of three ex-Soviet carriers by Chinese companies is mere happenstance. Chinese authorities actively tried to purchase directly one or more Kiev-class carriers and the Varyag in 1992–93 but failed. Beijing has now been able to accomplish this goal through China-based companies. In the case of the Varyag, as noted, the companies involved had links to the central authorities and the Chinese military. For some reason Beijing was particularly keen to acquire the Varyag. Its price, twenty million dollars, was about three times its scrap value. Moreover, it was the direct intervention of Chinese deputy foreign minister, Yang Wenchang, who visited Ankara in September 2001, that finally won clearance to tow the ship through the Bosporus. Yang reportedly offered a $360 million economic aid and tourism package to induce the Turkish government to let the Varyag go.

If the Chinese government was behind the purchases, to what purpose could it put these vessels? Many analysts have contended that Chinese naval architects
and engineers could learn a great deal about the design and construction of aircraft carriers by inspecting the vessels. Presumably PLAN experts have already inspected the three carriers. In May 2002 the Hong Kong media reported that security around the *Kiev* in Tianjin was very tight, leading to speculation that naval architects and engineers were examining the vessel.\(^1\) However, the value of these inspections has probably been overstated. The technology employed was a generation behind that of Western navies; China would simply be learning obsolete technology. Should the Chinese employ this technology in an indigenous carrier, it would be obsolete when begun, let alone after the time it would take to construct and commission it.

**CHINA’S MARITIME DOCTRINE AND THE ROLE OF AIRCRAFT CARRIERS**

Since the early 1980s, and especially during the 1990s, there was much talk of China’s blue-water ambitions. Military analysts generally believed that by the year 2000 or shortly thereafter, the PLAN would have achieved green-water (i.e., coastal zone) status and would be capable of limited power projection into the western Pacific. By 2010 the transition to a blue-water navy would be complete.

As of 2003, however, although the Chinese navy has increased its basic war readiness over the past decade, its overall progress is stagnant. It cannot even exercise sea control in its own coastal waters.

China’s blue-water ambitions have remained unfulfilled for three reasons. First, despite impressive economic growth and industrialization since 1978, the PRC still lacks the financial resources and technological know-how to effect rapid and effective naval modernization. Second, as will be examined later, the Taiwan issue has forced the Chinese leadership to focus on home waters. Third, Soviet influence in terms of operational doctrine, campaign theory, and combat tactics persists, hindering the PLAN’s transition to blue-water capability.\(^2\)

In combat terms, the PLAN is restricted to offshore-water defense, mostly at the campaign level. In other words, although the Chinese naval strategy envisages, on paper, a global reach in the future, for the present it emphasizes the strategic or tactical deployment of naval power. This emphasis limits strategic objectives, weapons acquisition, and battle planning. More importantly, the PLAN’s maritime strategy is reflected in the combat models that actually guide the navy’s modernization.

According to China’s maritime doctrine, there are two combat models: the first is the independent employment of naval power, and the second is that of joint operations with other services, particularly the army.\(^3\) According to the first model, the navy’s role is to project power into areas far from home waters, most likely in the form of strategic independent campaigns against the enemy’s
fleets or land targets. Under the second model, the PLAN’s primary mission is defensive—to engage enemy ships in coastal waters—but the navy also has an offensive role, to assist the army and air force in amphibious operations. At present, the PLAN is limited in scope to missions of the second model, and has accordingly developed a light fleet. Ultimately, though, the goal is to fulfill the first model.

The projection of naval power far from coastal waters (i.e., the first model) is in fact a mission the PLAN already faces, though without the resources to accomplish it. The most likely scenario would be armed conflict in the South China Sea, where the Chinese navy’s mission would be to occupy disputed islands, ejecting the forces of other disputants. Conflict in the Taiwan Strait is a unique case that cuts across the two models. Any action in the strait would be geographically close to home. However, the conflict zone could expand into deep oceans if the United States were to become involved militarily (as the majority of Chinese security analysts fully expect that it would). In this case, the PLAN would have to engage enemy fleets relatively independently and in distant waters while it was assisting the army in amphibious landings on the island.

Sea control and sea denial are two important concepts that sustain the PLAN’s combat models. Admiral Liu set attaining sea control as the service’s most important priority soon after he became commander in chief. The PLAN proposes to exercise sea control within an inner line of defense that comprises China’s three offshore narrows: the Bohai Sea Strait, the Taiwan Strait, and the Qiongzhou Strait. Of these the Bohai is the most important, as it protects Beijing and northern China. The Taiwan Strait is also vital, because it allows the PLAN access to the western Pacific. Aside from these three straits, the South China Sea is an area of major concern for the navy.

In exercising sea control, the PLAN would launch defensive campaigns against enemy fleets in waters adjacent to major coastal cities, such as Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Fuzhou. The Chinese navy would also try to obtain, by means of an offensive campaign—such as an amphibious landing on islands occupied by Taiwan, such as Jinmen—control of the sea around the invasion area and to protect the People’s Liberation Army from the air and sea. As far as the PLAN is concerned, sea control is to be achieved not across a large horizontal geographic area but in a few vertically distributed lanes. It need not be comprehensive; partial control for a limited time would be sufficient.

In contrast, the outer layer of China’s maritime defense is covered by the sea-denial concept. According to senior Chinese naval analysts, the traditional
U.S. ocean frontiers of containment against China involve two “island chains.” The first stretches from Japan to the Liuqi Islands, then to Taiwan and the Philippines. The second island chain stretches from Japan’s Ogasawara-gunto Islands to the Marianas. The PLAN’s second layer of defense and its sea-denial capabilities are designed primarily to break a blockade of the first island chain.  

How is the PLAN’s aircraft carrier program linked to these two combat models? Actually the linkage is not very clear, and this is one of the reasons why the project has been shelved. That said, the program has only been delayed, not canceled altogether. Research and development continues, demonstrating that aircraft carriers are not considered irrelevant to China’s national defense and the Chinese navy’s long-term modernization goals.

The continued relevance of an aircraft carrier capability for China lies in the fact that sea control can be achieved only through air superiority. This reality was the origin of China’s aircraft carrier ambitions. In the 1980s the PLAN perceived a need to acquire aircraft carriers for possible action in the South China Sea. If China was to dominate the area, it needed air superiority. Given the distances involved from the Chinese mainland (950 miles, or 1,500 kilometers) and the very short reach of People’s Liberation Army Air Force fighters, the navy considered that air control could be won only by carrier-based aircraft. Admiral Liu was not convinced that aerial in-flight refueling was the answer to the range limitations of land-based air. In March 1990 Liu visited the air force base where in-flight refueling technology was being developed; he remained unconvinc ed that the tanker aircraft could be protected except by fighters from aircraft carriers.

As mentioned earlier, with the disappearance of the Soviet threat in 1991, the Chinese military focused its attention on the South China Sea dispute and the Taiwan problem. During the first half of the decade, priority was given to the South China Sea dispute, which centered around the Spratly Islands, a group of about two hundred small reefs and atolls. Sovereignty of the Spratlys is contested by six parties; China, Taiwan, and Vietnam claim ownership of all the islands in the archipelago, and the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei claim certain parts of the group. The area includes valuable fishing grounds and is believed to
be rich in oil and gas deposits; additionally, the islands occupy an important strategic position straddling vital sea lanes that link the Indian and Pacific Oceans and carry much of the world’s trade. China bases its claims on grounds of discovery and occupation stretching back thousands of years. In the early 1990s China began pursuing a more assertive policy in the area. In 1992 the Chinese National People’s Congress passed the Territorial Law of the Sea, by which it claimed sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea; in May 1992 Beijing awarded the U.S. oil company Crestone a contract to search for oil in waters disputed by Vietnam; and in July 1992 PLA forces occupied Vietnamese-claimed Da Lac Reef. Most alarming of all, Chinese-built structures were discovered in February 1995 on Mischief Reef, claimed by the Philippines. These structures were upgraded into a permanent military fortress in November 1998.

China’s policy in the South China Sea has been one of “creeping assertiveness”—establishing an ever greater physical presence, but gradually and without military confrontation.

Later in the 1990s China’s focus shifted to the Taiwan Strait, because of a deterioration in cross-strait relations. During the decade Taiwan had democratized, a strong Taiwanese identity had emerged, and the leadership in Taipei had begun to pursue more self-confident and independent-minded policies. Manifestations of this newfound self-confidence included President Lee Teng-hui’s trip to the United States in June 1995, the December 1995 legislative elections, and the March 1996 presidential poll, the first ever held on the island. China was increasingly exasperated by these developments and lashed out at what it saw as moves toward Taiwanese independence. Cross-strait relations reached crisis point between July 1995 and March 1996, when Beijing conducted a series of military maneuvers and live missile tests near Taiwan in an effort to intimidate its voters and to send Taipei an unmistakable and definite signal that it was serious about reunification at any cost. When President Lee announced his “two states theory” in July 1999, Beijing mobilized the armed forces and conducted amphibious landing exercises, again as a warning to Taiwan. The Taiwanese electorate was not intimidated and in March 2000 elected as president the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party candidate, Chen Shui-bian, thus propelling cross-strait relations into a new and uncertain realm. The Chinese government has since repeatedly warned Taiwan that it does not rule out the use of force to achieve reunification.

As China’s primary security concern has shifted to the Taiwan theater, the acquisition of aircraft carriers seems to have lost whatever urgency it had. Should conflict erupt in the Taiwan Strait, operations are likely to be conducted within three hundred kilometers (190 miles) of the mainland. The PLA is confident that as modernization of the air force continues, land-based aviation can control
the air over at least selected maritime areas at that range. In addition, China is increasingly relying on its growing arsenal of medium and intermediate-range Dongfeng ballistic missiles stationed in Fujian and Zhejian Provinces to achieve victory in any attack on Taiwan.

If shifting priorities reduced the strategic impetus for aircraft carrier acquisition, the retirement in 1997 of Admiral Liu Huaqing removed the idea’s main champion. At the same time, proponents of a “revolution in military affairs” (RMA) were gaining influence within the Chinese armed forces. They argue that aircraft carrier battle groups are becoming obsolete. Because of their high radar and electromagnetic visibility, proponents hold, carriers have become easy targets for precision-guided missiles. Further, in their view, aircraft carriers are vulnerable to submarines and mines. Third, the frequent need to resupply carriers at sea makes them vulnerable to the destruction of logistical vessels. For all these reasons, the RMA school believes that in modern warfare aircraft carriers have become “floating coffins.”

In any case, the RMA advocates believe, it is not in China’s interests to develop a costly symmetrical fleet. Instead, China should exploit technological advances and adopt asymmetrical strategies to defeat the larger and more powerful U.S. Navy in a cross-strait conflict. Specifically, they argue, its carrier battle groups can be defeated by disabling command and information systems and severing access to supply, and by attack with such sophisticated weapons as shore-based precision-guided missiles, stealthy surface vessels, and advanced submarines. In fact, the PLAN’s acquisition of Kilo-class submarines and Sovremenny-class destroyers from Russia is part of just such asymmetrical warfare strategy.

TECHNICAL, FINANCIAL, AND GEOPOLITICAL HURDLES

The lack of urgent strategic need is not the only factor that has put the acquisition of a Chinese aircraft carrier on hold. Even if the central government decided that the project was a strategic necessity, Chinese engineers would face formidable problems in transforming their ambitions into reality. In addition, the astronomical cost militates against the project for the time being. Moreover, the Chinese leadership would also have to weigh the geopolitical consequences very carefully.

Building an indigenous carrier or upgrading a secondhand vessel would present a raft of technical and engineering problems. Although China has a competent shipbuilding industry with much experience in constructing large, oceangoing vessels, aircraft carriers require special technologies to which it has had little exposure. These include steam catapults, arresting wires, and large elevators. In addition, a carrier would also require highly advanced electronic warfare and radar systems—an area in which China has a patchy record and has
relied, in the main, on foreign technology. As suggested earlier, the extent to which Chinese engineers can make up for these deficiencies by examining ex-Soviet carriers is doubtful.

Transforming the *Minsk*, *Kiev*, or *Varyag* into operational vessels would be highly problematical. The *Minsk* and *Kiev* have both been stripped of their propulsion machinery, armament, and communications. Replacing these key elements would be difficult and costly. In addition, the vessels had been laid up for over five years, resulting in significant deterioration by the time they arrived in China (the incomplete *Varyag* is in even worse condition than the *Minsk* or *Kiev*).

Moreover, China possesses no VSTOL aircraft that could operate from the carriers as they are now configured. The Russian navy was always disappointed with the performance of its Yak-38s, and in any case these aircraft are no longer in production. It is highly unlikely that Britain, the United States, or Spain would sell secondhand Harrier “jump jets” to Beijing. The Western arms embargo placed on China following the 4 June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre is still in force; in any case, these countries would not want to help equip the PLAN for possible action in the Taiwan Strait or South China Sea. India, which also possesses Harriers, views China as a long-term rival.

China could use these vessels as helicopter carriers. Another option, however, would be to modify the *Minsk* or *Kiev* to accommodate conventional or short-takeoff fixed-wing aircraft. This is what India plans to do with the last of the *Kiev*-class carriers, *Admiral Gorshkov*. In December 1998 India and Russia agreed in principle on the transfer of the *Admiral Gorshkov*; the ship is to be provided free, if India has the extensive refit and refurbishment work done in a Russian shipyard. The weapons forward will be removed to make way for a “ski jump.” The flight-deck elevators will be enlarged and arresting gear fitted. This conversion will configure the carrier for short takeoff but arrested recovery (STOBAR).

The Indian project, however, will cost an estimated two billion dollars—$750–800 million for the refit and a further $1.2 billion for an air wing of fifty MiG-29Ks and a number of Ka-28 and Ka-31 early-warning helicopters. For China, this figure is prohibitive. Construction of a carrier or conversion of a secondhand vessel in a domestic yard would also be extremely costly, especially since much of the technology would have to be purchased abroad, quite aside from the new fighters, helicopters, early-warning aircraft, escort surface vessels, and screening submarines required. Moreover, one carrier would not be sufficient; full operational capability would require, nominally, three whole carrier
groups—one deployed, one in refit, and one working up. Strategically located
naval bases capable of berthing the carriers would also have to be constructed,
adding to the already burdensome bill.

Presumably the technical and engineering difficulties could be resolved over
time, with the assistance of foreign companies. There is no reason to believe that
Moscow would not assist China in the construction of an aircraft carrier, as it
has done with India. Also, the money could be found if the Chinese government
deemed it a strategic necessity; the Chinese economy continues to register im-
pressive growth. After all, the Chinese were able to overcome both technical and
financial problems in the mid-1960s, the height of the chaotic Cultural Revolu-
tion, to develop nuclear weapons; the country’s scientific, industrial, and eco-
nomic bases have been strengthened considerably since then.

The geopolitical consequences, however, are a different matter. The Chinese
government could argue that aircraft carriers are defensive, but other countries
in East Asia would view the matter very differently. A Chinese aircraft carrier
battle group would be seen as a formidable power-projection tool. It would rein-
force fears that Beijing intended to resolve its territorial disputes (especially in
the South China Sea) by force and to become the dominant regional power. The
members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), particularly
those with competing territorial claims to the Spratly Islands, would undoub-
etedly strengthen their military links with the United States, ensuring a continued
U.S. naval presence in the region. Japan would almost certainly initiate its own
aircraft carrier program.

China has been interested in the concept of aircraft carriers since the early 1980s,
when Admiral Liu Huaqing advocated the acquisition of such vessels as part of
his blue-water navy aspirations. With the retirement of Liu in 1997, however, the
aircraft carrier lost its champion in the Chinese navy. At the same time, the need
to control the South China Sea as a strategic priority was downgraded as reunifi-
cation with Taiwan hurtled to the top of Beijing’s agenda. In that context, given
the relative closeness of Taiwan and improvements in the capabilities of the Chi-
nese air force and missile arsenal, aircraft carriers are not now considered vital.
Moreover, the costs associated with building and operating aircraft carriers, the
technical difficulties involved, and the likely adverse reaction of neighboring
countries all argue against a Chinese carrier battle group for the moment.

However, the PLAN has not abandoned the idea altogether—merely shelved
it. The Chinese navy is determined to fulfill its blue-water ambitions, even if it
takes a generation or more. Moreover, public support for the acquisition of an
aircraft carrier seems high. Following the accidental bombing of the Chinese
embassy in Belgrade by NATO warplanes on 8 May 1999, a campaign was
initiated on Chinese Internet sites to raise funds to build a carrier. Provincial newspapers across the country took up the cause; within a month eleven million yuan had been collected. Aircraft carriers are perceived as potent symbols of national power around the world, and China is no different. The memory of the “Century of Humiliation” (1842–1949), when European countries, Russia, and Japan forced a weakened China to grant territorial concessions and then divided the country into competing spheres of influence, still has a deep resonance among the Chinese people. The Chinese see a powerful navy, capable of projecting power into the world’s oceans, as an important tool to prevent China from being “bullied” again by outside powers.

NOTES

4. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
19. The developer’s official website can be seen at kiev-a-c.com.
21. On 20 December 1999, sovereignty of Macau was transferred from Portugal to China. Like Hong Kong, Macau is now a “special administrative region” of the PRC.
24. “No Connection to Naval Ship, Says Embassy.”
26. Ibid.
27. In addition, under the 1936 Montreux Treaty (Amended) aircraft carriers require permission from the Turkish government to transit through the Bosphorus.


37. For a full account of the Mischief Reef Incident and its implications, see Ian Storey, “Creeping Assertiveness: China, the Philippines and the South China Sea Dispute,” Contemporary Southeast Asia 21, no. 1 (April 1999), pp. 95–118.


41. The U.S. Navy clearly does not agree with this assessment, as plans are already well advanced on a new generation of aircraft carriers. As Loren B. Thompson has argued, in order to “kill” an aircraft carrier the enemy must first locate and target the fast-moving vessel, then penetrate its defenses with the aim of causing catastrophic damage—four extremely difficult goals to achieve. In addition, carriers can operate at great distances from enemy territory and destroy the enemy’s surveillance capabilities. According to Thompson, “barring a major tactical error or technological breakthrough, carriers are likely to remain very hard to successfully attack for many years to come.” See Loren B. Thompson, “What It Takes to Kill an Aircraft Carrier,” Defense Week, 11 June 2000.

42. Pillsbury, p. 293.

43. The PLAN operates four Kilo-class submarines and is currently in negotiations with Russia to purchase eight of the newer Project 636 Kilos. See “Chinese Plan Big Russian Arms Deal,” International Herald Tribune, 25 June 2002. In 1997 China ordered two Project 956E Sovremenny-class destroyers from Russia. It is widely believed that the decision to purchase these vessels was made after the dispatch of two U.S. aircraft carriers to the Taiwan Strait in March 1996. The two ships, Hangzhou and Fuzhou, were delivered in December 1999 and November 2000, respectively. In January 2002 China signed an agreement with Russia to purchase two more Sovremenny-class destroyers. See “China Buys Two More Project 956EM Ships,” Jane’s Defence Weekly, 8 January 2002.

44. Because of the condition of the Gorshkov (which had been badly damaged in a fire) and
the high costs associated with refurbishing the vessel, final agreement on the transfer of the vessel was not reached until March 2003. See Ian Storey, “Russia Maintains Top Position in India,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, March 2003.


DEBATE & RESPONSE

SMALL NAVIES DO HAVE A PLACE IN NETWORK-CENTRIC WARFARE

Rear Admiral Patrick M. Stillman, U.S. Coast Guard

In “Small Navies and Network-Centric Warfare” (Naval War College Review, Spring 2003, pp. 1–16), Paul T. Mitchell asked if there is a place for small navies in the world of network-centric warfare. From my perspective as the program executive officer for the U.S. Coast Guard’s Integrated Deepwater System (IDS), the answer is a resounding “Yes!” The price of admission, however, is a network-centric system for C4ISR (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance), modern air and surface platforms, and a well-established relationship with the U.S. Navy.

The U.S. Coast Guard’s experience in addressing the urgent need to recapitalize its inventory of patrol boats, cutters, aircraft, and supporting systems to meet twenty-first-century operational requirements is instructive.

Our situation today bears a striking resemblance to conditions faced by many navies around the world. With an average age of more than thirty years, the Coast Guard’s fleet of high and medium-endurance cutters is older than all but two of the thirty-nine worldwide fleets of similar size and mission. This aging and increasingly obsolete inventory of aircraft, cutters, and systems jeopardizes the service’s future ability to perform its multiple missions in such areas as maritime homeland security, national defense, the marine environment, and maritime safety.
At a time when mission demands are growing, our legacy assets (which are approaching block obsolescence by the end of this decade) are less reliable, more difficult to maintain and repair, and more expensive to operate. As Mitchell correctly emphasizes, the challenges of designing and acquiring a force structure suitable for today’s network-centric age involve formidable technical issues as well as the policies and protocols governing joint and coalition operations with the U.S. Navy. The Coast Guard is tackling these challenges with a two-pronged strategy.

Past Coast Guard acquisition programs—based largely on the one-for-one replacement of hulls and airframes—have resulted in suboptimized interoperability in critical command and control capabilities. Yet as recent combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrate vividly, seamless C4ISR is the sine qua non for success in the netted battle space of the twenty-first century.

The IDS, conceived several years before the terrorist attacks of 9/11, will redress the Coast Guard’s current dilemma. When fully implemented, the twenty-year, seventeen-billion-dollar (fiscal year 1998 dollars) Deepwater program will consist of three classes of new cutters and their associated small boats, a new and upgraded fixed-wing manned aircraft fleet, a combination of new and upgraded helicopters, and both cutter-based and land-based unmanned aerial vehicles.

Deepwater takes an integrated “system-of-systems” approach to upgrading existing surface and air legacy assets while developing new and more capable platforms—including highly improved systems C4ISR and advanced logistics capabilities.

Deepwater’s C4ISR system warrants special mention. It will lead to more effective risk management and more productive force employment in all Coast Guard mission areas. The Coast Guard’s reliance on a capabilities-based system design was based on broad C4ISR requirements established for the IDS contract award.

• **Surveillance, detection, and monitoring:** Capable of determining what and who resides, enters, and exits in the Deepwater area of operational responsibility.

• **Internal information exchange:** Maintain simultaneous real-time voice, video, and data communications between all Coast Guard assets.

• **External information exchange:** Maintain simultaneous real-time voice, video, and data communications with the Department of Defense, other federal agencies, state and local government, NATO, and similar coalitions.

• **Situational awareness:** Maintain awareness of the operating environment, to include fusion of local tactical information with database information in near-real time.
C4ISR capability improvements—including improved sensors and systems to collect and transmit data and information—will give operational commanders the tools they need to develop better situational awareness and a common operating picture. This will lead, in turn, to higher levels of maritime domain awareness (comprehensive information, intelligence, and knowledge of all relevant entities within the U.S. maritime domain, and their respective activities, that could affect U.S. security, safety, economy, or environment).

Under current plans, Deepwater will begin deploying the Coast Guard Common Command and Control (CG-C2) system in 2005. It will be integrated with Deepwater’s sensors, communication systems, and legacy interfaces. A common C4ISR architecture and software implementation across Deepwater’s surface and aerial platforms will reduce operational costs and accommodate an imbedded “technology refresh” capability to obviate obsolescence in the future.

Tactical data from Deepwater platforms will be integrated into a common operating picture through CG-C2; timely and secure data exchange will be ensured by satellite communication data links available twenty-four hours, seven days a week. Sensor integration will be achieved on all assets through correlation of specific data and fusion into the common operating picture.

Deepwater’s network-centric C4ISR architecture will contribute to improved maritime domain awareness through its provisions for disseminating shared tracks and real-time data streams, online intelligence, robust and seamless connectivity with continuous coordination, stand-alone capabilities, a combination of active and passive sensors, expanded surveillance and detection areas, and improved communications with all federal agencies and merchant shipping.

The IDS combination of upgraded and new surface and air platforms also will be more technically capable and designed for increased endurance and range, better sea-keeping, ease of maintenance, and smaller crews. These characteristics translate into added operational capacity, more presence, and lower life-cycle costs. Deepwater’s combination of both manned aircraft and UAVs, for example, will deliver 80 percent more flight hours than today’s legacy inventory of aging fixed-wing and rotary aircraft.

Turning from Deepwater’s technical considerations, the second thrust of our acquisition strategy entails strong partnerships within the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, industry, and state and local agencies. New levels of public and private cooperation with Deepwater’s systems integrator, Integrated Coast Guard Systems (a joint venture between Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman), allow us to draw on its vast experience in designing and developing market-edge systems that strike an appropriate balance between capability and affordability.
As one of the five branches of the U.S. armed forces, the Coast Guard strategy for Deepwater also is guided by its historically close relationship with the U.S. Navy. The *National Fleet Policy Statement*, originally signed in September 1998, codifies this relationship. In July 2002, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Vern Clark, and the Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Thomas H. Collins, reaffirmed and updated the agreement to ensure that both services work together to synchronize our multimission platforms, infrastructure, and personnel to provide the highest level of naval and maritime capability for the nation’s investment. This partnership—a model, possibly, for similar arrangements between the Coast Guard and some of the other twenty-one agencies in the Department of Homeland Security—allows an effective two-way flow of capability to meet both expeditionary and domestic-security imperatives.

One provision of this policy stipulates “all ships, boats, aircraft, and shore command-and-control nodes of the National Fleet will be interoperable to provide force depth for peacetime missions, homeland security, crisis response, and wartime tasks.”

Mindful of this guidance, my counterpart in the Department of the Navy, the Program Executive Officer Ships, Rear Admiral Charles Hamilton II, and I signed a memorandum of understanding in 2002 and formed a working group to specify common technologies, systems, and processes critical to both the Navy’s future Littoral Combat Ship and the design and development of Deepwater’s Offshore Patrol Cutter. This team holds regular meetings and exchanges at multiple staff levels to ensure that we will derive mutual benefits through a cooperative technical approach in areas of common interest.

The renewed cooperation exhibited between the Navy and Coast Guard reflects our awareness that there are necessary and unavoidable transformational intersections where each of our service’s operational requirements overlap.

Tomorrow’s Navy’s network-centric capability will reside in FORCEnet and systems like cooperative engagement capability. They offer the Navy the means to transition to a twenty-first-century force that can share digital tactical information and sensor data seamlessly between ground, air, space, surface, and submerged platforms despite broad geographic separation across an operational theater.

The Coast Guard faces a similar requirement, and it is this network-centric vision that motivates the design and development of a Deepwater C4ISR system that will allow Coast Guard surface platforms to serve as nodes for shared information and operational knowledge with command centers ashore—a potent force multiplier that will contribute directly to the development of a common operating picture and maritime domain awareness.

Deepwater’s incremental C4ISR approach to improve Coast Guard maritime domain awareness will complement the Navy’s FORCEnet initiative. Just as
FORCEnet will transform the Navy’s operational capabilities by enabling more rapid decision making and massed war-fighting effects. Deepwater’s interoperable C4ISR system will provide the means to communicate information and data quickly and securely between Coast Guard assets, the Department of Homeland Security, the Navy, and other federal, state, and local agencies.

What of the U.S. Coast Guard’s many friends around the world? Faced with a widening gap in technical capabilities, they cannot dismiss out of hand the concern (voiced by one commentator cited by Mitchell) that the nature of the U.S. Navy’s network-centric capabilities may ultimately result in more unilateral U.S. operations. Recent history, however, suggests that there are powerful incentives for the United States and its allies to develop compatible navies and to reach agreement on the means to share sensitive information in a networked coalition force of ships and aircraft.

The United States and its partners in NATO have a long history of such cooperation and common purpose. More recently, during Operation Iraqi Freedom, sixty-five ships from coalition nations joined 175 U.S. Navy ships and U.S. Coast Guard cutters assigned to the U.S. Fifth Fleet. This operation was patterned on similar cooperation demonstrated during combat operations in Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002.

For its part, the U.S. Coast Guard encourages foreign partnering opportunities through its Deepwater International Office, my program’s arm for international engagement and Foreign Military Sales (FMS). This office serves as an important link between the overall U.S. Coast Guard acquisition effort and the overseas community. The ultimate goals are to achieve heightened cooperation and interoperability with U.S. allies, increased efficiency of acquisition, and worldwide visibility of the technological superiority in maritime domain awareness that the Deepwater Program will bring to the twenty-first century.

During the past year, the Deepwater International Office has provided information to educate prospective international customers and the security assistance community. The Deepwater staff continuously studies potential foreign markets for Deepwater system and subsystem applicability. To this end, the staff works closely with defense attachés, embassy personnel, and security assistance officers.

In addition to promoting the Deepwater System’s platforms and systems through foreign military sales, the IDS International Office focuses on building partnerships throughout the security assistance community. The Deepwater Office is presently working, for example, with the Director of Security Assistance and Arms Transfers in the Department of State. In the Department of Defense, the office works directly with the Defense Security Cooperation Agency and the U.S. Navy International Programs Office (Navy IPO).
Deepwater International effectively leverages a memorandum of understanding between Navy IPO and the International Affairs Office (G-GI) at U.S. Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C., to pursue security assistance opportunities worldwide. G-CI is the nexus for international affairs policy guidance at Coast Guard Headquarters, and it provides Deepwater with superb support. When briefing security assistance officers at annual meetings hosted by the unified U.S. combatant commands, for example, the International Affairs Office and Deepwater staff follow a team approach to derive mutual benefits.

Deepwater staff officers maintain close ties with the Navy IPO for the explicit purpose of advocating the international market potential of the Coast Guard’s IDS system of systems. As the lead implementing agency for maritime security assistance and associated support, Navy IPO functions as Deepwater’s proponent in pursuit of foreign military sales opportunities. Interested nations route all international queries, informal “Requests for Information/Proposal,” and formal “Letters of Request” directly to Navy IPO.

After appropriate review of the request for releasability and technology transfer issues, Navy IPO tasks the IDS International Office to provide information, pricing, and availability data and/or technical input to the U.S. Government Letter of Offer and Acceptance that will formally offer the requested Deepwater systems, subsystem, or asset to the requesting government. This relationship with Navy IPO provides the U.S. Coast Guard with the appropriate Department of Defense conduit for successful execution of FMS functions that will eventually help to reduce overall costs in the Deepwater acquisition through increased production runs and economies of scale.

The Department of Commerce and the Deepwater International Office have signed an agreement with the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), under which BIS promotes Deepwater platforms to maritime forces around the world. BIS, in cooperation with the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, is exploring unique avenues to develop country and region-specific business plans.

The Department of Commerce and the Deepwater International Office also are working in tandem with the U.S. Export-Import Bank. Due to the Coast Guard’s unique role as a multimission military service and law-enforcement agency, we see a real potential for many of the Deepwater platforms and subsystem components to be acquired by our allies through nondefense related loans guaranteed by the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

Clearly, as Mitchell indicates quite eloquently, many challenges exist if smaller navies around the world are to reverse their shortfalls in recapitalization by making suitable investments in network-centric systems. A failure to transform their forces in ways comparable to the U.S. Navy and its smaller partner, the U.S. Coast Guard, however, is not a feasible alternative. Antiquated
platform-centric navies—large or small—will be relegated to operational irrelevance.

The U.S. Coast Guard’s Integrated Deepwater System provides smaller navies a model for recapitalization that will meet the demands of today’s network-centric operations at an affordable cost. Is there a place for smaller navies in network-centric warfare? Absolutely.
STILL WORTH FIGHTING OVER? A JOINT RESPONSE

P. H. Liotta and James F. Miskel

Readers may recall that in the Autumn 2002 issue of the Naval War College Review, Professor James F. Miskel, of the National Security Decision Making Department, argued that the U.S. government often defines national interests in such general terms that its specific goals are not clearly communicated to the American public and to other governments. In the Spring 2003 issue, Professor P. H. Liotta, also of the National Security Decision Making Department, responded with a counter-essay arguing that while distinguishing core strategic interests—those for which Americans would be willing to die—from significant interests is almost never easy, it is also essential. Liotta disagreed with Miskel that U.S. national interests are “vague platitudes” used by policy makers and argued that they are in fact long-term, enduring, abstract principles that are embedded in the U.S. Constitution. He disagreed as well with Miskel’s argument that national security strategies are simple expressions of national interests. Rather, Liotta argues, national security strategies are presidential declarations of strategic interests and policy objectives, as well as explanations of the means offered to achieve these ends.

In the end, we agree that when there is a need to articulate national interests, when it is necessary to do so (and we both are convinced that there are times when this must happen), it is no time to be half-hearted or vague.

After further consideration of each other’s views, we agreed to disagree on key issues that involve defining and declaring interests and the fundamental purpose of publishing a formal national security strategy (and we have promised to continue to argue with each other). There are areas, nonetheless, where our views are less contradictory than our respective essays might suggest. We thought it would be worth clarifying these areas of agreement because, in light of the latest National Security Strategy of the United States, there are issues where we have mutual concerns about how, when, and where the concept of national interests is used and abused.

To begin, we agree that national interests should express the goals of the nation. While there are, often,
occasions when it pays to be ambiguous in terms of articulating exactly what those goals are, there are also specific times and events where ambiguity is inadvisable. Miskel argues that ambiguity about the national interests is most often the inadvertent product of the domestic political process rather than a deliberate choice made by statesmen. In his view, ambiguity is usually the path of least resistance for policy makers and their spokespersons, not the result of a conscious judgment that ambiguity best serves the goals of the nation. Liotta acknowledges that interests are occasionally defined in ambiguous terms but argues that the ambiguity is more often deliberate than Miskel maintains. There are times, he suggests, when policy makers really have to rely on interests and objectives that build in latitude for action—in other words, “wiggle room”—for specific policy circumstances.

We also agree that ambiguity, even inadvertent ambiguity, is often “good enough.” It is not, however, good enough when the issues require long-term, persistent commitment of national resources. The current post-9/11 security environment may be one of those times.

Miskel argues that some security issues that the nation faces today (the war on terrorism, or nation building in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Balkans, and elsewhere) cannot be resolved without years of concerted effort. Further, this effort cannot be maintained without a clear understanding of national interests on the part of the American public. Liotta counters that despite the evident truth of such an argument, there are at least two problems. First, it is not clear that such goals can be elevated to sustained and long-term, high-level commitments that the public would support, except in rare circumstances—such as the Cold War. Second, it is not clear that the American public has the kind of stomach for imperial involvement on a global scale not known since the United States occupied Germany and Japan.

Perhaps, intriguingly, administrations will end up committing themselves to such interests in the absence of public support or understanding. Notably, former secretary of state Dean Acheson is said to have remarked to Edmund Muskie during his failed bid for the Democratic presidential nomination, regarding foreign policy decisions and national interests, “Why should we care about the American public?” Miskel suggests that Acheson’s reputed advice is particularly ill suited to long-term projects like the war on terrorism or security building in states and regions.

The Bush administration’s early disavowal of nation building, particularly in the Balkans, is a good example for exploring the differences between the perspectives of Professors Miskel and Liotta. Liotta notes with dismay that the current president has reduced U.S. commitment to stability-building measures in the Balkans and that this is a result of what he believes is the administration’s misperception of the national interests at stake in southeastern Europe—among
other regions. Miskel argues that the problem is not misperception but rather a predictable consequence of the failure of previous administration(s) to engage the public in a serious dialogue about the national interests in Balkan stability.

Liotta agrees that statesmen may sometimes choose not to engage in such dialogues for sound strategic reasons but holds that avoidance of public discussion and debate cannot last forever. In the case of the Balkans, the previous administration simply refused to consider the Balkans as an issue in the national interests of the United States—or the NATO alliance—until 250,000 people had died and two million refugees had fled the wars of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Even as the various versions of the Clinton administration’s national security strategy of Enlargement and Engagement to 1995 claimed, as matters of the national interest, the significance of the advancement of human rights and the promotion of democracy, these issues involved neither vital national survival interests nor economic interests and were largely ignored. In November 1995, however, following the Dayton Accords, President Clinton suddenly declared that Bosnia was indeed in the “vital” interest of the United States—although nothing on the ground had essentially changed. Yet the United States, not Europe, acted, rightly or wrongly, to preserve “the vital interest” of the North Atlantic alliance as a credible, meaningful alliance in a time of crisis. Today, we are faced with even more challenges in more places. We can win the war but cannot win the peace alone. We cannot ignore (but likely will, according to Miskel) all the necessary aspects of nation building—or, more appropriately, “security building,” or whatever term one chooses to consider for sustaining communities and regions that cannot sustain themselves by themselves. If we ignore that and fail to admit it in our open declarations, what we face in the future is decades and decades of military engagement and political frustration, with little accomplished.

The problem remains that since the end of the Cold War, we have enforced national interests primarily through the military arm and practiced far less commitment to sustaining security in unstable regions through other means. To be blunt, we are able to “kick in the door in” quickly in hot spots but have trouble putting the door back on and instead tend never to close the door (whether in Korea, the Sinai, the Balkans, or the Greater Near East) but just leave. There are ways to change this practice and actually save precious resources over the long term. But to do so requires radically different thinking that begins with radically different rethinking of national interests.

Confusion or lack of clarity about national interests is not just the by-product of the post-9/11 environment. In truth, the environment we entered after the Cold War—which was, and was not, a large international war in the traditional sense—is radically different from any other experienced in our history. In terms of military power, the United States remains preeminent; in terms of economic
and political power, however, it is strategically dependent on any number of institutions, regions, and realities. Thus, while the Asia-Pacific may offer future economic opportunity (and military threat), the United States remains bound by alliance relationships in Europe and committed to engagements in Central and South Asia (where it would seem to have no vital interests at all). Equally, the slow but certain emergence of the Western Hemisphere leaves unanswered whether or not U.S. strategic priorities will shift from an exclusive East-West orientation to a North-South dynamic as well. Until 11 September 2001, most in the United States largely believed that we were nestled in a period of uncertainty that we uncomfortably and most often referred to as the “post–Cold War era.” (The ironies, of course, persist: the United States and much of Europe remain driven by post–Cold War uncertainties while still having to address the demands of the so-called War on Terrorism.) We are still in the “post–Cold War era,” just as we are locked into the “post-9/11” environment. But—aside from telling us what phases of history we are not in—such “post” phrases do not at all help us define the exact time and issues we face. One could think of these phrases as code for the reasons why it is seemingly so preferable to fail to define national interests precisely, to fail to distinguish convincingly between what Liotta calls “core strategic” and “significant” national interests.

Both of us acknowledge that the formulation of national interests cannot be divorced completely from the political process. Miskel goes farther in arguing that they should not be divorced at all when the issues require long-term investment of national resources. He also maintains that by ambiguously defining national interests, strategists and statesmen may actually be attempting to effect the divorce indirectly.

We agree that there is a difference between interests and objectives—interests being the end states that the nation hopes to achieve over the short and long terms, and objectives being the steps or milestones on the way to those end states. Interests are long-term and abstract (yet fundamental to strategy); objectives should always be clear and precise for the execution of policy. That, sadly, almost never proves to be the case. Thus, interest and objectives become confused, muddled, and perhaps inadvertently ambiguous as well.

We further agree that policy makers do not always recognize the difference, or that if they do recognize the difference, they do not invest enough time and energy in explaining the difference to Congress and the public.

Although the two terms may overlap, there is also a difference between interests and values. A value is not an end state or a goal; it is either a characteristic or attribute of the end state/goal or a principle that may or may not guide the actions that are taken in pursuit of the end state/goal. As an idealized example, the Clinton administration envisioned a world in which democracy was the norm.
Thus it defined as a national interest an “enlarged” family of democratic nations. Democracy was the value to which nations were encouraged to adhere, and strategy was the game plan for actually increasing the size of the family.

Of course, not just the Clinton administration but all administrations from the end of World War II until today have come to recognize the value of an enhanced family of democratic states as a national interest, one (in the words of John Ikenberry) that suggests that the promotion of democracy “reflects a pragmatic, evolving, and sophisticated understanding of how to create a stable and relatively peaceful world order.” Indeed, as Ikenberry and others have noted, the great Wilsonian of our age—the champion of a free world, of democracy, of self-determination—is not William Clinton but rather Ronald Reagan. As hopelessly idealistic as it seems, there are many—including many in the current administration—who believe that we secure our interests by spreading our values.

Liotta and Miskel agree that interests and values are occasionally conflated in official documents like national security strategy reports. To Miskel the conflation results from the fact that the documents maintain such a high level of generality that the distinctions between interests and values remain obscure. Liotta agrees but rejects Miskel’s judgment that the political nature of such documents virtually guarantees their too-general tenor.

Interests, of course, are subjective, based on judgments that come from different perceptions of reality. Policy makers should carefully weigh those perspectives and consider alternative criteria before leaping to the declaration of vital interests.

Despite our differing views about the value of recent national security strategy reports in terms of their specificity on national interests, we agree in principle that National Security Strategy reports can serve a highly useful purpose. That useful purpose is informing the public and Congress about the nation’s main goals or end states (as perceived by the executive branch) and the major policy initiatives and courses of action that the president intends to pursue in furtherance of those goals. In his article Miskel maintains that recent security strategy reports have, in their ambiguity about national interests, largely forfeited the opportunity to inform the public or engage it in a dialogue about the grand purposes of foreign and security policy. Liotta counters that the national security strategies of the 1990s were remarkably consistent in their statement and became increasingly clear in their relevance to specific regions, priorities, and issues of strategic interest over time.

We also share mutual concerns about the latest National Security Strategy of the United States (September 2002, available online at www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html). Specifically, while the strategy itself is grand in purpose and expansive in its lofty and ambitious goals, it sometimes distinctly conflates interests and objectives, often sees interests and values as the same thing, and offers few
specific details as to what are the most pressing priorities—other than the obvious goals of protecting American citizenry and territory from attack—versus those that are merely important to embrace. Indeed, the conflation of these issues appears intentional. In the introductory passage of the strategy, for example, we see the declaration, “The U.S. national security strategy [is] based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests. . . . Our goals on the path to progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity” (page 1). But these goals are in some ways in conflict with each other even in their immediate declaration and are not specific in their emphasis. Even subsequent declarations of interests do not help clarify these goals. Nowhere in the document is there a clear, definitive distinction made between “core values” and “strategic priorities.”

It seems significant, then, that the Bush strategy does not precisely define national interests in its introductory session, “Overview of America’s National Strategy.” Indeed, not until pages 10–11 of the document, in a description of problems in Africa, is there a distinction made between values and interests; specifically, the document refers to “preserving human dignity” as a core value while “combating terrorism” is a strategic priority. Does this distinction recognize a core value as a national interest or only suggest that a strategic priority is one? It never becomes clear in the document itself; by the time some distinction is attempted in the national strategy, the differences between interests and objectives, between interests and values, and between the need sometimes to be ambiguous and sometimes deadly precise may have already been lost on most readers.

In sum, we agree that national security strategies should be published—and revised—but perhaps only when they reflect a definite “rudder shift” for the nation rather than to meet the chronology of congressional mandates. The requirement to state, define, and defend national interests in a public national strategy should remain. According to Liotta, for the United States, stating, defining, and defending interests in the national security strategy both demonstrates a commitment to democratic process and explains how America see its role in the world. According to Miskel, many forms of public debate can (but rarely ever do) generate the necessary clarity about interests that long-term national commitment requires. For both Liotta and Miskel, the important point is that the debate takes place. The national security strategy document would then be revised or rewritten to reflect the results of the debate. National security strategies that do not follow such a debate will be often steeped in ambiguity about national interests or will fail to address adequately the needs of a nation to declare its goals, its purpose, and its place in the world.
NOTES

3. In defense of Acheson, nonetheless, it does seem that the American public is not always well informed or interested in issues of national security and foreign policy, especially over the long term. Even as American opinion increasingly came to favor intervention in Iraq, for example, regardless of whether or not the United Nations approved intervention or allies objected, a survey poll taken by Fox News on 13 March 2003 that asked, “What is your assessment of Prime Minister Tony Blair, French President Jacques Chirac, and Chancellor Gerhardt Schroeder?” revealed some interesting results. Seventeen percent of those surveyed did not know who Tony Blair is, 24 percent did not know Jacques Chirac, and 46 percent could not identify Gerhardt Schroeder.
NATIONAL SECURITY BOOK LIST

Congressman Ike Skelton

[On 9 June 2003 Congressman Ike Skelton (Democrat-Missouri) released his “National Security Book List,” a compilation of books that he recommends as required reading to all officers of the armed forces, to members of Congress, and all others interested in national security issues. In a press release Congressman Skelton explained,

Professional Military Education is a particular interest of mine. I consider myself lucky that my longtime hobby as a military history enthusiast has complemented my work in Congress as a member of the House Armed Services Committee. Through the years, I have benefitted enormously by seeking out books recommended by others who share my interest in history and military affairs. The fifty books I have chosen cover the topics of leadership, character, and military art. The subject matter ranges from ancient to modern warfare, although a large number of my recommendations focus on the Civil War and World War II. By necessity, some excellent works were omitted—such as Churchill’s outstanding six volume history of World War II—but the list is comprehensive and covers each branch of the U.S. military. If one undertakes to read the entire list, I expect it would be about a ten-year project. However, familiarity with this material should be invaluable to any officer preparing to attend a war college.

Congressman Skelton, the ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), was chairman of the HASC’s Panel on Professional Military Education in 1987–88. He is currently the ranking Democrat on the HASC’s Panel on Professional Military Education, which was reconstituted during the 108th Congress.]


The Constitution of the United States of America


A REFLECTION OF SADDAM’S BIOGRAPHY

Brenda L. Connors


This book is a psychological assessment of the style of decision making, motives, and perceptions of the former Iraqi dictator, Saddam Hussein. Its focus is on the deterrence of Saddam’s use of weapons of mass destruction before Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

The first author is Jerry Post, a psychiatrist, former CIA analyst, and current director of George Washington University’s Political Psychology Program, and the other, Amatzia Baram, is a professor of Middle Eastern history.

The book’s title captures the psychological theme of Saddam’s grandiose self-concept that renders him and Iraq indistinguishable. Yet the authors show that beneath such grandiosity lies devastating psychological trauma for which grandiosity is only partially an effective compensation. Post and Baram relate the story of Saddam’s early life in great detail to construct a picture of his fundamental psychology. Deep isolation, abuse, and resultant rage during Saddam’s first twenty years created in him a messianic ambition and an insatiable pursuit of power and control that made him well adapted to revolutionary Ba’athism and the fragmentation of Iraqi politics. Post and Baram argue that in this context, and that of the Middle East more generally, Saddam cannot be considered “mad” but
rather a judicious “political calculator, dangerous to the extreme.” Though
Saddam is “paranoid” and suffers from “malignant narcissism,” in their view he
is nonetheless a “rational actor.” They build their argument convincingly and of-
fer insights by intimately connecting Saddam’s “psychological architecture” to
domestic and foreign policies that proved quite successful. For example, the
book contains documented analyses that argue how Saddam’s psychological
view of himself and the world enabled him to exploit skillfully the United States
and the Soviet Union, and later the United States, the United Kingdom, and the
other permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

The book concludes with the statement that Saddam would not accept exile
because his main goal was “survival in power.” A life not in power would be
death for the dictator. The exile conclusion proved correct, but the notion that a
life not in power would kill Saddam reveals the limitations of this analysis. For
Saddam, one could argue the struggle to survive at any cost, in or out of power,
lies at the basis of his psyche.

This book demonstrates the power and pertinence of such psychological
studies, but it also provides examples of the difficulties that can attend such an
approach to leadership assessment. For example, studying someone from afar
involves collecting enough “reliable” data, which is often difficult, if not impos-
sible, and there are many levels of interpretation that separate actual events from
the account of an adversary. A key issue is how meaningful it can be to describe
someone as clinically paranoid and suffering from malignant narcissism, while
at the same time asserting that he is a judicious political calculator and a rational
actor. The authors cannot have it both ways. Either Saddam must be psychologi-
cally and politically out of touch with reality, at least to some extent, or there is
little point in using this approach.

In fact, it can be argued that both Saddam’s psychology and his political ac-
tions stem from one and the same source. Analysis of an adversary requires that
we appreciate him from “his” perspective.

Each of us has experienced the ability to identify someone because of the fa-
miliar way they hold themselves, gesture, or walk. We also, impressionistically,
use those same sorts of physical cues to help evaluate an individual’s intentions.
Nonverbal communication researchers (of whom this reviewer is one) system-
atically examine these kinds of commonsensical observations. Moreover, a for-
mal, rigorous study of identity can be derived from recurrent patterns of
physical movement and expressions that underpin personality characteristics,
motivations, and decision-making style.

The field of movement analysis has made notable progress, especially
through the use of modern technology to permit close study of so-called
microexpressions related to emotions, cognition, and performance that are generally not under the conscious control of the subject under observation.

A great strength of this direct observation approach is that it eliminates the data problem so often acute in more traditional methods of investigation. The observer has direct contact through video with the subject’s visible physical movements. Therefore, the primary repository of intelligence about Saddam and his perspective is himself, and that information is detectable through direct analysis of his physical behavior, which underlies his thought and action in all contexts. The personality issues described by Post and Baram are represented on the deepest level in Saddam’s body—his biography is reflected in his patterned expression.

Not surprisingly, Saddam has long been the subject of movement analysis. Most noticeable in him is a disconnection between the movement of his arms and his torso. While observing him making speeches and public appearances, he displays his arms to especially emphasize his status and power. In a sense, Saddam’s arms are his power. They are as visceral and personal to him as his next breath, unconsciously integral to his identity. This is reflected in his quintessential wave to the crowds—a symbolic gesture to “relate,” but the appendage is so controlled that the arm is energetically detached from the torso.

As a form of self-compensation, Saddam relates to his “military arms” as powerful appendages to compensate for his fractured self (and the torso/arm connection). The authors link Saddam’s psychological architecture directly to the Mother of All Battles mosque, which has four minarets shaped like Scud missiles and four others shaped like assault rifles. Behaviorally, however, Saddam and his weapons of mass destruction are one and the same, virtual appendages of the man, which, as this profile rightly suggests, made exile or relinquishment out of the question—the equivalent of further dismemberment.

Saddam’s effective routing of the international community in its attempt to expose fully his weapons and inventories powerfully fed his need to prevent this
dismemberment. It is likely that he enjoyed considerable pleasure at his success. These observations are consistent with the essentially impoverished self that is Saddam, as described in the book. The psychophysical data enables us to understand more clearly what those weapons mean to Saddam psychologically, and therefore the poor prognosis of any policy designed to cut off his access to them.

It also makes sense of his self-destructive decisions over the weapons inspections to defy the United States directly, when, as so many have observed, if he had negotiated a little here, or withdrew a little there, the American position would have been seriously undermined. Certainly many U.S. planners expressed concern in 1990 that Saddam, at the last minute, would partially withdraw from Kuwait while retaining its northern oil fields. From a psychological viewpoint, for Saddam, that strategically wise move was very unlikely.

A similar example of disunity of expression occurred during Saddam’s February 2003 interview when he told an astonished Dan Rather that he had won the 1991 Gulf war. While we can presume his statement reflects to a degree calculated defiance against the United States to garner Arab support, direct analysis of his expression reveals a high degree of segmentation in his gesticulation. This is a reflection of the sort of compartmented cognition that suggests both that he believed what he was saying and that he is assuredly not psychologically in touch with reality.

In a last example, Saddam’s physical body attitude communicates his passive detachment, symptomatic of how he was organized to survive early in his difficult childhood. It also provides him with a patterned sense of “timelessness,” which offers another explanation for his being “out of touch” and his tendency to ignore ultimatums and deadlines, so that he can continue to exude the belief that he remains powerful. While today deposed, Saddam surely tells himself that he is here to stay, and his notion of permanence is abetted by the seemingly delusional belief in his weapons, again pointing to the intimate connection between them and Saddam’s psyche.
THE KOREAN WAR REMEMBERED

*Donald Chisholm*


Taken together these three volumes indicate the variety of published works on the Korean War to appear during the past several years, coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of that once-forgotten conflict.

Only one of these books, however, Stueck’s *Rethinking the Korean War*, follows the format of a conventional academic disquisition. Stueck, a distinguished professor of history at the University of Georgia, published his similar but much longer *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton University Press) in 1995; that edition relied heavily on primary sources made available in the wake of the Soviet Union’s collapse and the slight but promising opening of China. He argued reasonably enough that, when viewed in the sweep of history and in the context of the new world order assembling itself from the ravages of World War II, the Korean War constituted a less bloody substitute for what might otherwise have been World War III. Well researched and largely persuasive, the book effectively and clearly demonstrates the vast complexity and uncertainties that characterize the international system, the strangeness of those internal decision-making processes of states that produce foreign policy decisions, the attendant opaqueness of motivations underlying the behaviors of states, and the often bizarre foundations of coalitions and alliances.

As an empirically grounded historical work it was marred, however, by two recurring indulgences that Stueck apparently could not resist: his evaluations of the morality of American motivations and behaviors, based, evidently, on the author’s own unstated ethical code and related “counter-factuals”—those seductive but ultimately empty conjectures that...
frequently bemoan that if such and such had happened the world would be a better place.

Stueck’s *Rethinking the Korean War* represents a distillation and updating of its predecessor, reflecting both the author’s further reflection on the subject and additional information provided by recently declassified archival material from both sides of the Iron Curtain. In a very real sense, it constitutes the book that Stueck would have liked to have originally written. As its title suggests, it directs its attention to the broader canvas of international politics on which the conflict was played out. The book is most persuasive in its analysis of the disparate chain of events that began in various places across the planet and that came together to produce the Korean War: the ideological rigidity, stunning parochialism, insularity, and centuries-old geopolitical concerns of the Soviet and Chinese leaderships; the naïveté of the United States and its confusion about the extent of its global interests and new responsibilities; fear of a monolithic international communism; Kim Il Sung’s unabashed drive to unite and dominate the recently divided country from the north and Syngman Rhee’s equally intense push to do the same from the south—provided all the variables needed to cause the war. Stueck’s narrative of China’s decision to intervene actively in the war is especially well done. He concludes that while operationally and tactically brilliant, the success of the Inchon landing and MacArthur’s subsequent efforts across the thirty-eighth parallel, by rapidly and dramatically reversing the tide of the war, so alarmed the Chinese that their direct involvement on the ground was virtually assured, consequently concluding one war and commencing another.¹

For this reader, the zenith of Stueck’s efforts is in his analysis of why the conflict did not expand beyond the Korean Peninsula. He argues that the most important limiting factor was that both sides reassessed their political aims in light of changing military conditions on the ground and in the larger context of pressures from their respective allies. The Chinese and North Koreans consistently sought more active participation from the Soviets, particularly direct air support from their ground troops (the lack of which had proven their undoing in their autumn 1950 operations). Notwithstanding, the Soviets confined their air operations to a narrow area in the far north of Korea, affording them what more recently would become known as plausible deniability.

For its part, the United States was not anxious to see greater Soviet involvement, and in 1950, at least, America kept very quiet about its use of depth charges on unknown submarine contacts and the shooting down of a Soviet reconnaissance aircraft immediately prior to the Inchon operation. Chinese nationalists actively pursued a larger war, recognizing that this would afford them their only opportunity to retake mainland China. In the early stages of the war, the United States sent its Seventh Fleet into the Taiwan Strait, as much to keep
Chiang Kai-Shek in Taiwan as to deter the communists from mounting a cross-strait invasion. The Chinese nationalists also unsuccessfully tried to gain U.S. approval (General Douglas MacArthur at least entertained the idea) to place their own forces in the Korean ground war. Rhee saw this as his best chance to re-unify Korea under his control.

Unfortunately, Stueck falls into the same pattern in this book as he did in his first—he succumbs to the temptation to engage in several what-ifs. Even so, Stueck has written a very good book that deserves to be carefully read, particularly for his lessons on the necessity to grasp the complexities of international relations at multiple levels of analysis in order to understand the origins and courses of important historical events.

*Unexpected Journey* is at opposite ends of the earth when compared to Stueck. Following the adventures and travails of the members of C Company, the 16th Infantry Battalion corps reserve unit from Evansville, Indiana, from its mobilization through combat, as part of the 1st Marine Division in late September 1950 to its return to the United States in 1951, the book is clearly a labor of love. Rather than a history of operations, the authors provide a collective memoir of the war from the vantage point of reserve Marine riflemen, based on interviews, letters, diaries, and personal recollections. In so doing, they complement well those earlier memoirs of Marines who served in the war.

The story of how a drastically drawn-down Marine Corps managed hurriedly to scrape together, first a provisional brigade with air group, then a reinforced 1st Division with air wing, to hurl into the fight in Korea is by now well known. It withdrew troops from the 2d Division, leaving only a skeleton crew, pulled in personnel from miscellaneous duties, stopped retirements, called up the reserves, and folded in a battalion landing team afloat in the Mediterranean. The effort proved decisive for holding the Pusan perimeter, the Inchon and Wonsan landings, and the fighting withdrawal from Chosin. It also ensured that a Marine Corps much buffeted in the post–World War II defense unification fights would no longer have to worry about its survival.

This account shows that beneath the positive reports to the public from senior Marine officers, all was not copacetic. Despite the high percentage of reservists—especially noncommissioned officers and company-grade commissioned officers—with at least some World War II experience, a significant number had little or no training at all. The protagonists were mostly among those who were in high school or recent graduates who had joined the reserves for all the usual reasons.

Company C did not go to Korea as a unit but rather as a cadre to fill in existing units. Its first battle was the operation to take Seoul. Some of its members remained there as late as December 1951, after participating in the spring
counteroffensive and the static hilltop war in central Korea that followed. Their words reveal how quickly they had matured into Marine infantrymen, recognizing the sublime value of hot water in the front lines, their initial disdain for their opponents that changed into grudging respect, and understanding the “law of averages” and “no more volunteering.”

Overall, this is a worthwhile read. Unexpected Journey balances the overly sanguine official Marine reports and reconstructions by senior officers of the mobilization and deployment process. It shows clearly how even in democracies the interests of individuals are inevitably subordinated to national needs, the danger of counting paper units as effective combat forces, and the historical tension between regular service members and the reserves. However, mostly this book illustrates the extraordinary capacity of the individual American to rise to the occasion.

Their War for Korea presents a puzzle. The author, Allan Millett, is a distinguished professor at Ohio State University who is well known in military history circles and has contributed significantly to the published research on the Korean War. He writes that his aim for the book is to “find the meaning of the Korean War through the experience of individuals and small groups of people caught within the third bloodiest conflict of the twentieth century.” However, it reads like nothing so much as a visit to the bits and pieces of interview notes reposing in the author’s research archives. Having gleaned the substance from those notes for previous works, the author apparently believed that what remained would make a good read.

Alas. Although Millett attempts to give structure to his “war stories” by grouping them into “The Koreans,” “The Allies,” and “The Americans,” the author offers no rationale for the collection, and this reader, at least, could discern no pattern and no criteria for inclusion, other than that the stories constitute the universe of people with whom the author had occasion to speak over the years about the war—even though some stories are obviously assembled only from documents and secondary sources. Thus one finds a retired Australian army major general cheek by jowl with several Belgian officers and the People’s Republic of China’s Renmin Zhiyuanjun. Apparently, those on land experienced the war but those at sea hardly at all. If a book promises to provide a close-up and personal view of war, then unexpurgated oral histories rather than casual third-person narratives are much to be preferred.4

To his credit, Millett provides an introductory overview of the war that provides even the uninitiated reader with historical context for what follows, and an appendix offers a categorized list of selected reading. However, the value of what is published here will most likely accrue only to those well versed in the war’s history and who have a rich context into which to place the stories.
NOTES


WHAT THE BENEFITS OF ENLARGING NATO AGAIN MIGHT BE

Joyce P. Kaufman

Each book reviewed here offers a different perspective on the relationships between the United States and Europe, between the West and Russia, and among NATO allies. This topic has become especially important to students of international security in light of the issues surrounding the decision to go to war with Iraq and the divisions that this decision caused between the United States and its NATO allies in Europe. In spite of the different approaches taken by each book, certain common themes emerge. Where they vary is how each one makes its case and arrives at its conclusion. It is important to note that all three books were published prior to the war with Iraq, which could have changed some of the authors’ points.

Sabrina Ramet and Christine Ingebritsen’s work is by far the most academic of the three. Of the two edited volumes reviewed here, Coming in from the Cold War allows the reader to know it is the result of consultation and interaction between the authors, virtually all of whom are associated with an academic institution. As a result, it is more cohesive and broader than the other edited work.

Rather than focus on the issue of NATO enlargement and what that means for the alliance, Coming in from the Cold War offers a general introduction to and discussion of relations between the United States and Europe. The chapters range from Ramet’s general

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Prior to coming to Whittier College in 1985, from 1977 to 1979 she served as a foreign affairs specialist in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. She spent the next four years working in Washington, D.C., for defense contractors on policy-related issues.

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introduction that establishes the context, to such specifics as relations between the United States and Britain, France, and Germany. While discussion of this topic is expected in a volume such as this, the book also includes less-explored relationships, such as those between the United States and Poland, and the United States and Spain, both of which have emerged as important in light of issues surrounding the war with Iraq.

Of all the chapters, Christopher Coker’s “NATO as a Postmodern Alliance” is especially prescient, particularly in his comment that “the most likely theater of peacekeeping in the future lies not in Europe itself but in its hinterland: in the Middle East. . . . These theaters are the origin of international crime.” As the situations in both Iraq and Afghanistan continue to unfold, it will be interesting to see the ways in which the allies play a role, especially in the peacekeeping function that NATO has been moving toward.

The other two books offer insights of “practitioners,” rather than academic perspectives. *Growing Pains* deals specifically with the debate surrounding the next round of NATO enlargement, with each chapter centering on a different aspect of the issue. Beyond the common theme, however, I found that there is little that ties it all together. It would have been helpful if the editors had given the reader an idea of when each chapter was written and if it was written specifically for this book or for a conference. Although the chapters are thematically related, I found them to be of uneven quality, more so than the Ramet-Ingebritsen book. For example, I found the chapter by Tomas Valasek well written and thoughtful (perhaps because I agree with him for the most part); however, I did not have the same reaction to some of the other chapters, which I found laden with sweeping generalizations that could not be substantiated and that undermined some of the important and interesting ideas. In short, this book offers the reader an introduction to many issues surrounding NATO enlargement, as seen through the eyes of a range of experts in the field, although not necessarily all academics. Given the caveats noted, anyone interested in this particular topic will find at least parts of the book to be of interest.

*NATO Enlargement 2000–2015* was written by Thomas Szayna and published by RAND specifically for decision makers. It “develops and applies an analytical framework to evaluate potential members’ relative readiness for and likelihood of admission to NATO.” While documenting approaches to enlargement, Szayna also notes, “The pace of enlargement would change . . . if the security environment deteriorated rapidly and a military threat arose. Under such circumstances military, rather than political, imperatives would become the important drivers of the process.” This is an important point, not only after 9/11 but also because of the war in Iraq and the pressure it has placed on the alliance. Because of the book’s publication date, it is unfortunate that the implications of the war,
especially in light of the above statement, could not be explored further. Szayna, however, does offer a number of guidelines to help us draw our own conclusions about NATO subsequent to recent events, such as Iraq. This is not an academic piece, nor does it purport to be. Nonetheless, this small book offers an interesting and well documented approach to understanding NATO enlargement and what the next round might mean for the alliance.

Despite the apparent differences between these books, they all arrive at some common conclusions, such as the importance of politics—both domestic and international—and how it influenced the first round of NATO enlargement and will no doubt affect the next round. They also suggest (either explicitly or implicitly) that only academics or researchers who study the topic have given much thought to questions about what an enlarged NATO will mean. John Newhouse raises the question in his essay in Growing Pains, asking “what the benefits of enlarging NATO again might be.” Another point made in all three books is that there is no single “European position”—or any single Europe, for that matter. The United States in particular must be reminded that Europe is made up of many different countries and cultures and that each looks differently at the broad questions regarding their relationship with the United States and with one another. Another common theme deals with the relationship between the countries of the West and Russia, especially under President Vladimir Putin. While Russia’s grudging acceptance of Round One of NATO enlargement has been well documented, its reaction to the next round and its relations with the United States are far less certain.

In the wake of the war with Iraq and the attendant issues surrounding the decision to go to war, I have found most interesting how many of the assumptions made by the United States about security and defense have changed since 9/11 and the subsequent war on terror. Each book reviewed here offers different ways to look at these important concepts as they pertain to relations between the United States and Europe.
IN MY VIEW

IRAQ: THE MONTHS AFTER

Madame:

Dr. Phebe Marr’s “Iraq ‘the Day After’” (Winter 2003, pp. 12–29) was presumably written before the Bush administration’s much promoted, rationalized, and precipitously made-inevitable “preemptive” war of Iraqi freedom. Yet at this writing in late June 2003—some nine weeks into the actual “day after”—it is clear that the paper had correctly predicted: “Replacing Saddam’s regime . . . may prove costly, and it may require a long-term American presence,” and that there will be “the policy dilemma” of working with problematically complex dynamics among three main ethnic and sectarian “communities” and the associated “inside [and] outside options” for potential leadership replacement.

It is interesting to note that Marr’s paper is premised on the precept of Saddam Husayn [sic] being “unseated” by whatever “means” it may take, and moreover on “regime replacement” to be undertaken by the “U.S. administration”—though “[it] will be one of the most difficult decisions facing the . . . administration.” Ironically, this precept has turned out—and still is as the debate rages on “hyped” and/or “failed” intelligence—to be in fact the Bush administration’s “most difficult decision.”

One would expect studies by those with direct knowledge of Iraq, like Dr. Marr, to be beneficially exploited in preparing America’s political infrastructure, armed services mission objectives, and societal psyche and support for going to war. It would be useful indeed to examine all possible means of effecting the regime change in Iraq. Such an academic—that is, unemotional and rigorous—exercise might help to understand better the precise natures of issues and difficulties that the United States and the world face in so determined a regime change; more importantly, it might help in shaping astute strategies and postures for dealing individually with all nations of the world—well beyond the Iraqi war, in confrontations with other emerging threats to the civilized world.
But it seems obvious that no such pragmatic, let alone in-depth, deliberation was made “before” or on the “day after” by the hard-core handful of war-policy makers of the administration, the president and Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and Vice President Cheney—“the Bush people,” as they have been referred to by Sir Jeremy Richards, Britain’s ambassador to the UN (on PBS’s Charlie Rose, 18 June 2003). The Bush people chose a simpler approach of justifying the war on weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as the “clear and present danger” to homeland America. More serious is their “conviction” that every “non-Saddam” Iraqi would welcome the American “liberators” with open arms. The current daily reports of serious attacks on U.S. and “coalition” troops by Iraqi militants shouting “Americans, go home,” in more than isolated sectors, prove that this conviction was uninformed and ill conceived. Is it really fear of the (June 2003) yet-to-be-taken-out Saddam that is driving this fierce opposition? Do the “Iraqis,” with their multi-ethnic, multireligious, and multipolitical background—Shi’ah and Sunnis, Kurds and Arabs—have a common base for classic nationalism against foreign occupying forces? The often referred to post–World War II unopposed occupation of Germany and Japan—each a unicultural society—may not be a viable model. Curiously, both theaters in that war had begun in historical-benchmark “preemptive” attacks that—proving the attacking nation’s miscalculation of the enemy’s will to resist—resulted in all-out wars and the defeat of the preemters.

A unilateral, and sure to be judged imprudent, employment of the de facto superpower should have been weighed carefully against the potential loss—in a proverbial “quagmire”—of critical credibility and prestige. An extra-astute diplomacy is needed in a world that regards U.S. actions and postures from many varied perspectives, from nationalism-centric resentment to legitimate disagreement. The administration’s doctrine of “preemptive” defense against terrorism—some have called it the “militarization of foreign policy,” others even a “flawed” policy—has unnecessarily caused strained global and cross-cultural public sentiments, if not total divisiveness in international relationships.

The military and economic superpower status of the United States presents an unprecedented opportunity to lead the world toward universal democracy. But that task will take an ever more intellectually disciplined leadership in Washington.

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COMMONSENSE, ITERATIVE PROGRESS

Madame:

True to the Naval War College’s “rational decision making” teachings, Professors Dombrowski and Ross (“Transforming the Navy: Punching a Feather Bed?” Summer 2003, pp. 107–31) assess fairly and candidly the Navy’s progress with transformation. Their determination to call it as they see it is laudable and needed, as PowerPoint concepts and plans require as many checks and balances as the law. One hopes their audience is broad and attentive. Their observations, challenges, and conclusions, however, are useful to the Army and the Air Force as well as the Navy.

In the late 1990s, the backbone of Army digitization was the “transformational” Army Battle Command System (ABCS). Field elements would communicate information of all kinds to a network of ABCS processors, each tailored to a specific functional area but sufficiently cross-linked via common message formats and protocols to work in digital and operational harmony with all the others. Each system had been developed separately within its own functional stovepipe. Bringing the systems together after the fact proved remarkably difficult, expensive, and frustrating. After five years of tweaks and major digital surgeries, further ABCS development has been effectively terminated. Bringing together sensors, processors, and users in a common digital environment, horizontally and vertically, remains no easier today. Our ability to describe what we want far exceeds our practical ability to implement what we envision. We set the bar too high, spend a small fortune struggling to reach it, and then spend another small fortune to accomplish individually achievable things that an iterative approach would have had us do anyway.

The list of accomplishments in the transformational arena is manifold, but it contains nothing revolutionary or remarkable outside the realm of the iterative, evolutionary application of technology to military problems and systems. We harness improving technologies and miniaturization as best we can to improve information transfer and knowledge. It is one thing to set the bar higher, but one must actually clear the bar as one goes. History says we do that iteratively, one design at a time, regardless of complexity. Engineers cannot remain permanently in the concept-development and preliminary-design modes if they are to deliver anything.

Technology applications that make a difference today, and will tomorrow, tend to be applied to specific problem sets having manageable numbers of variables. Only then are we able to decide, program, implement, and judge their usefulness effectively. In applying the Global Positioning System to “dumb” bombs,
for example, we make a clear and present difference. We do not do nearly so well with higher-order concepts, like network-centric operations and the Global Information Grid. We know what we want in general terms. We are inundated with visions and proclamations of knowledge-based this and that, horizontal information flow, and optimized sensor-shooter combinations in near real time. Where we consistently go astray is in believing we can have it all now, or within a few years, without taking the time to design and engineer practical, realizable solutions that must apply today’s technologies with only a limited eye on tomorrow’s. We aim instead at the elusive “revolution,” rarely allowing time to deal with the devils in the details—the organization’s ability to employ the proposed changes, and the tough technical issues of exponentially growing bandwidth, memory, processing speed. Schedules are too tight and wishful, assuming that some technological “big bang” will make the concepts real—but as Dombrowski and Ross remind us, the big bang never occurs.

Compounding the problem of transformation is the breadth and diversity of customers. Our typical “integrated process team” style forms committees on top of subcommittees on top of working groups on top of focus groups to ensure that everyone’s requirements are identified and their interests covered. Transformation, then, is as much affected by turf as by technology. Perhaps the Navy of the 1950s had a better way; while many today would reject the autocratic methods of Admiral Hyman Rickover, one wonders how transformation is to be achieved without a czar who knows systems engineering.

I agree that though we are not achieving transformations of the magnitude advertised, we are doing great work, selectively applying modern technologies to improve what we have and what we are. Certainly our organizational responses lag, but they will catch up. There is a strong argument for better balance, for capabilities, organizations, and doctrines that are more complementary than they now are. There is no magic here; we will be best served if the resources spent on transformational glitz are applied to commonsense, iterative progress. At the end of the day, our process will turn out to have been iterative anyway, because engineering is simply that way. And we will all, somehow, still be relevant.

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NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Madame:

Dr. Jonathan D. Pollack’s article “The United States, North Korea, and the End of the Agreed Framework” (Summer 2003) was well researched and well written. The author has obviously studied his material and understands his subject. Yet the entire article read as little more than a long apology for the actions of the North Korean government in seeking to acquire nuclear weapons, something that it had supposedly forsworn in 1985 through the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and more specifically through the adoption of the 1992 Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

I will leave it to persons more familiar with the problem than I am to defend the actions of the Bush administration in reacting to the revelations that North Korea had begun the enrichment of uranium in light of the 1994 Agreed Framework. My sole purpose is to use that uranium enrichment program as an example of the incomplete consideration of an issue leading to a questionable conclusion of benign intentions on the part of North Korea. Dr. Pollack seeks to explain away the uranium enrichment program as having “an entirely legitimate civilian purpose—[enrichment facilities] provide the means for fabricating the low-enriched uranium . . . to power light-water reactors.” Dr. Pollack then goes on to analyze in considerable detail whether the uranium enrichment capability was sufficient to produce one or a number of uranium-fueled weapons and concludes that it was unlikely to do so. Dr. Pollack mentions, but seems to attach no importance to, the fact that the Pakistani nuclear weapons program tested a uranium-fueled weapon and that Pakistan may have provided assistance to the North Korean program.

Despite the considerable doubt cast by Dr. Pollack on the capability of North Korea’s enrichment program to produce fuel for a weapon, there is no analysis whatsoever of whether the North Korean uranium enrichment program would ever produce light-water reactor fuel in meaningful quantities. A more complete consideration would have contained such an analysis, and I do not know what conclusions it would have reached. One thing is certain. In light of the incredibly low prices of enriched uranium on the world market, developing a capacity to enrich uranium for electricity production makes all the economic sense of a capacity to produce seawater. The U.S. Department of Energy would probably agree to give North Korea light water reactor fuel, since it is presently “blending down” highly enriched uranium from the Russian weapons stockpile to make such fuel.
The article’s overall tone is one of moral equivalence between the United States and North Korea. For example, in what sense can North Korea be said to have “reacted” to U.S. intelligence findings about its program? As if the North Korean leadership didn’t know what it was doing before U.S. officials told them? A more accurate approach might phrase it as a North Korean reaction to having been caught doing what it sought to keep secret.

The situation with North Korea reflects a serious dilemma for policy makers, but one that the article leaves unexplored, in light of its clear endorsement of the 1994 Agreed Framework. The United States seeks to prevent North Korea from developing or acquiring nuclear weapons. North Korea wants to acquire nuclear weapons, probably for purposes of blackmail, but possibly for sale to terrorist groups. Negotiations are undertaken and an agreement reached in which North Korea appears to have agreed not to develop or acquire nuclear weapons and is compensated for not doing so. North Korea then begins secret activities probably intended to develop nuclear weapons. What should the appropriate U.S. response be? Dr. Pollack’s response, as best I can divine it, is to engage in further negotiations and (presumably) further compensate North Korea to forgo activities that the United States believed North Korea had already agreed not to undertake. Yet Dr. Pollack notes that one of North Korea’s objectives is to be treated as an “equal” of the United States, something it certainly achieved in the context of his article. Since equality in negotiations is one of North Korea’s objectives, it has every incentive to breach existing agreements so that it can provoke further negotiations demonstrating its equality with the United States. It is not terribly difficult to predict how this process will end. North Korea will have its “feeling” of equality with the United States, nuclear weapons, and compensation throughout the process. The only conceivable gain in such an arrangement is delay, and it is not clear whether delay favors the United States or North Korea.

Many commentators on the difference between Anglo-American and Asian business practices and legal systems remark that the different cultures view contracts in a different light. The Anglo-American view is that they are relatively final arrangements, meant to be respected and referred to in governing the subsequent conduct of the parties. The Asian view is that they are simply way stations in an ongoing relationship and subject to wide interpretation and renegotiation when the situation changes, even if the change is the desire of one party not to adhere to the agreement. If that is the case, the entire notion of the United States reaching agreements meant to be respected with North Korea is probably fundamentally flawed. Making North Korea a regional issue (which I believe to be the present policy of the Bush administration) is probably the better option. It denies the North Koreans their objective of equality with the United States in negotiations. It places the problem in the hands of regional
actors (South Korea, Japan, the People’s Republic of China, and Russia), who
will be threatened sooner by North Korean nuclear weapons than will the
United States. It will involve negotiations and agreements between cultures that
share a similar attitude toward their obligations. Finally, it will demonstrate to
that portion of the world that cares that the United States does not seek to be the
final arbiter of all international relations. It does raise the specter that North Ko-
rea will develop nuclear weapons and seek to sell them to terrorists, or otherwise
threaten the United States directly. But U.S. intervention at that stage, to protect
itself from terrorist attack or other nuclear threat, however bloody and destruc-
tive, will be as a result of the failure of those states with the most influence over
North Korea and those states most directly impacted by war.

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PITY THE POOR PLA NAVY

Madame:

Justin Bernier and Stuart Gold’s article “China’s Closing Window” (Summer
2003) has it precisely right. China has been busy trying to develop a military that
can isolate Taiwan and, if necessary, hold the United States at bay. The problem
for the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is that as fast as it is able to move
in modernizing its interdiction forces, U.S. military advancements, particularly
by the U.S. Navy, will negate any gains it may hope to achieve.

The PLAN’s one hope for success in a campaign against Taiwan is that it can
successfully blockade the island and limit or even negate a U.S. response by chal-
lenging the American naval presence in the waters to the east of Taiwan. The tar-
get of choice, naturally, is a U.S. aircraft carrier.

Attacking a U.S. aircraft carrier, particularly one steaming in harm’s way, is
one of the most difficult tasks that can confront any hostile power. The
Lexington Institute recently published a study on this subject. In Aircraft Carrier
(In)vulnerability, Dr. Loren Thompson concludes that U.S. aircraft carriers are
extremely difficult to find and target, but that even were it possible for an adversary to do so, the defensive firepower available in the carrier battle group and the inherent resilience of the platform itself would make it highly unlikely that the aircraft carrier could be attacked successfully.

The substantial defensive capability that the Navy enjoys with its current assets will be further augmented by a number of programs currently under way. The nearest-term advance in defensive capabilities will come with the deployment of the advanced E-2C Hawkeye based on the Radar Modernization Program (RMP). Providing enhanced airborne command and control as well as an expanded surveillance umbrella, the Hawkeye will act as an airborne node for the Cooperative Engagement Capability, supporting complex air defense missions and leveraging the RMP’s electronically steered, ultra-high-frequency radar system. The Aegis weapon system currently aboard both Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) destroyers and Ticonderoga-class (CG 47) cruisers can deal with most air-breathing threats. In addition, the U.S. Navy and the Missile Defense Agency are working hard to develop the Area Missile Defense System and the Theaterwide Missile Defense System to counter ballistic missile threats at various ranges. Finally, the extended-range active missile will be deployed on Aegis-capable ships to address advanced cruise missile and aircraft threats.

On the offensive side, extended air defense will be enabled by the deployment of the F/A-18 E/F and F-35 JSF. With its enhanced radar, large payload, increased range, and networked data sharing, the F/A-18 E/F will allow the carrier battle group to operate at a greater distance from the enemy while delivering a more powerful punch. The addition of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter at the end of the decade will further enhance the ability of carrier-based aviation to conduct both offensive and defensive missions.

An observer might pity the poor PLA Navy planners. They have focused their attention almost solely on the aircraft carrier threat when an equally great danger to their plans will be lurking below the surface. The United States is converting four Trident ballistic missile submarines to carry up to 154 cruise missiles each. These boats will be able to operate independently in otherwise denied waters and to strike suddenly and with devastating effect. The first SSGN is scheduled to enter the fleet in 2007.

Perhaps most significantly, the U.S. Navy is developing FORCEnet, an information architecture that networks sensors, weapons, command and control, databases, and platforms. Integrating ground, air, space, and sea-based capabilities, FORCEnet will serve as the structure for acquiring, processing, and distributing a vast amount of information that will improve battle space awareness for both offensive and defensive operations.
The Chinese can buy ships and missiles, but no one is selling network-centric capabilities. This alone is likely to tip the scales in favor of the U.S. Navy in terms of overall combat capability in the region. As Bernier and Gold note, China’s current intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities do not, as yet, allow the PLAN even to see over the horizon. In the race to dominate the seas, don’t bet on China. As fast as the PLAN tries to go, as much as it drives itself, the U.S. Navy’s transformation plan will only widen the gap.

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A PARADIGM SHIFT


During the late 1970s and early 1980s, a cacophony of voices arose (mostly from the conservative wing of the Republican Party) asserting that the United States was in danger of being eclipsed by the Soviet Union. In short, the argument was "the sky is falling." President Reagan used the issue to great advantage during the 1980 presidential campaign, setting the stage for a massive increase in defense expenditures and the launching of the ambitious "Star Wars" program, the forerunner of the Clinton and Bush administrations' attempt to build a national missile defense system. It turned out that Soviet power had been exaggerated and that our own political, intellectual, and ideological predispositions had blinded us to signs of the impending implosion of the Soviet system. Interestingly, it could be argued that however misguided the Reagan defense buildup might have been vis-à-vis its principal objective, programs launched during that era set us on the path that today has resulted in an unprecedented global conventional military superiority that we see manifested today in battlefields around the world.

Today, there are new arguments that the sky is falling, that the global security environment has undergone profound and even revolutionary change, and that the United States remains woefully unprepared to deal with the threats posed by a new caste of diabolical adversaries boasting new and dangerous capabilities. Roger Barnett's Asymmetrical Warfare could be regarded as a bible for those interested in exploring the implications of such a thesis. Like proponents of arguments advanced in the early 1980s, Barnett, professor emeritus at the Naval War College, believes that the United States has never been more vulnerable and must take drastic steps to avert an impending catastrophe. Today's security environment, aptly and eloquently described in the Bush administration's National Security Strategy of the United States of America, is characterized by undeterred rogue states and transnational terrorist organizations with access to new weapons that can inflict mass casualties on an unprecedented scale. Barnett argues that the new environment represents a fundamental departure, or paradigm shift, in that there are no longer any
behavioral constraints on those seeking to attack the United States. In short, the international order stands at the precipice, if it has not already descended into the Hobbesian state of nature.

Barnett argues that a series of mutually supporting, and damaging, constraints—moral, political, organizational, legal, and operational—developed over the second half of the twentieth century and are now conspiring to subvert the ability of the United States to use force as a tool to manage the new security environment. He argues that the United States is fundamentally in a strategically defensive posture, thereby ceding the initiative to its adversaries and making it vulnerable to the kinds of surprise attacks that happened on 9/11. This means that “the United States has, without malice and forethought, backed unwittingly into the situation where it resembles the mighty Gulliver, cinched down by Lilliputian strings.”

Barnett believes that these limitations on using force have effectively created a “breeding ground” for asymmetrical actions by adversaries under no moral or political limits, who in fact perceive these constraints as signs of weakness. Throughout the history of warfare, participants have always sought to exploit an opponent’s weaknesses, but Barnett posits that asymmetric warfare today constitutes something new and different—war and conflict without limits. In other words, we are not talking about adversaries advancing creative ideas on asymmetric warfare like those developed during the 1930s by the Billy Mitchells and Heinz Guderians of the world, which eventually revolutionized conventional military warfare. Today’s adversaries are bent on mass destruction using any means at their disposal—nuclear, chemical, biological, and cyberspace.

Barnett’s description of the international environment seems apt enough, if a bit dire, and his discussion of the various constraints is interesting and contains some good and useful points. He is right to point out that moral and legal constraints have assumed great importance in the conduct of military operations. Such issues as collateral damage, the idea of proportionality in using force, and the perpetration of the myth that the American people have an aversion to taking casualties have all affected the decision-making process on when and if the country should use force. As for the country’s decision making on using force, Barnett rightly criticizes the haphazard series of interactions between various governmental bureaucracies and the executive and legislative branches as a discombobulated process that can be manipulated and exploited by sophisticated adversaries. He is also right to point out that the United Nations has proven to be only marginally successful in managing new threats to security in the international environment and that the successive surrendering of authority to the international body under various treaties has constrained some capabilities that could conceivably be useful for deterrence and operational use. Barnett’s prescription to address the problem is useful, suggesting that the United States undertake a systematic review of circumstances under which the nation will use force and be prepared to declare war, and make these circumstances widely known to its adversaries.

However, like those who declared that the sky was falling in the 1980s, one cannot help feeling that Barnett has
overdramatized the situation. While the 9/11 attacks created a cottage industry of sorts describing a supposedly new and dangerous security environment, the toppling of the World Trade Center towers needs to be seen in the context of a pattern of increasingly bold attacks on the United States that arguably stretch back to the 1980s, when the first hostages were taken in Lebanon. One of the surprising things about the attacks was that they were a surprise at all. After all, Ramzi Youssef came closer than is generally appreciated to bringing down the towers in 1995; the Khobar Towers attack in 1996 resulted in a dramatic change in U.S. security posture in the Persian Gulf; and the United States had already returned fire with al-Qaeda following the August 1988 embassy attacks. Over this twenty-odd-year period, America adjusted and took a variety of steps, mostly at the operational and organizational levels, that helped create the special operations capabilities that are now being deployed around the world in the so-called global war on terrorism. Homeland defense is now a priority, seeing the creation of a new cabinet secretary and department to coordinate efforts at the federal, state, and local levels.

While Barnett decries the irrelevance of the United Nations in the new environment, the global war on terror is in fact taking place within an internationally sanctioned legal framework that requires all states to take necessary steps to combat terrorism, including the use of force. While the United Nations has proven less successful in addressing threats posed by rogue states, UN Security Council Resolution 1368 (passed after 9/11) provides a useful and interesting template that requires global cooperation against the very threat Barnett argues is a principal source of evil in the international system. It is hard to see that it is anything other than a useful tool for marshaling a global cooperative effort against terrorism.

Moreover, while it is true that the United States operates under a number of constraints when using force, today’s global military deployments around the world simply belie Barnett’s contention that the United States remains hamstrung in using force as a tool to manage the international environment. If anything, it would appear that efforts over the last twenty years have positioned America quite well to go after its adversaries in all four corners of the globe, and that the attacks of 9/11 created the political environment for decision makers to use force aggressively to address perceived threats. While Barnett asserts the necessity of a more systematic and commonsensical process for deciding when to use force, events indicate that we are not doing too badly on that front. As for a new declaratory policy spelling out when the country will use force, any adversary could read the Bush administration’s national security strategy report and get a good idea of the nation’s intolerance for directly threatening the United States.

On a stylistic note, Asymmetrical Warfare at times reads like a legal brief, and it gives the impression that the author simply searched for arguments supporting his thesis and consciously ignored any contradictory evidence or points of view. Some parts of the text simply consist of a series of long, strung-together quotes by other authors, making for heavy going. The extent to which the author...
repeats his arguments in successive chapters is also somewhat irritating. These criticisms notwithstanding, the book provides an extremely interesting and thought-provoking argument that is cogently expressed in a well organized work. Barnett has produced a useful and positive contribution to the ongoing revitalization of the field of strategy and to the associated debate surrounding the use of force in the international environment. Students and professors interested in security strategy in the new century should add this work to their libraries.

JAMES A. RUSSELL
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Stanik, Joseph T. El Dorado Canyon: Reagan’s Undeclared War with Qaddafi. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2002. 360pp. $34.95

This well researched and clearly written study of U.S. combat with Libya in the 1980s has important echoes for today’s policy makers. It begins with a quick look at America’s first war with a Muslim state—in the nineteenth century, when the U.S. Navy fought viciously with the Barbary pirates off the coast of North Africa. It then traces the rise of one of the Barbary pirates’ direct descendants—the well known late-twentieth-century practitioner of state terrorism Muammar Qaddafi of Libya. Throughout the book Joseph Stanik, professor of history and retired naval officer, provides detailed accounts of the 1980 key attacks and a well reasoned analysis of their political impact. There is, of course, particularly well documented material covering the key air strike of 15 April 1986, which was a devastating blow against Qaddafi’s regime and changed his approach profoundly.

For those of us on active service in the 1980s, the battles with Libya seemed a bit of a sideshow when compared to the main dance of the Cold War. Yet this relatively short, bitter conflict was actually a harbinger of things to come. Much as today’s terrorists seek to influence global events through individual attacks, Qaddafi sought to drive the course of world activity through bombings and state-sponsored terrorism. The Reagan administration at first responded with rhetoric, but it eventually became clear that more forceful action would be needed.

It is interesting, in this time of “global war on terrorism,” to look back to the 1980s and realize that this is a war that began long before 9/11. President Reagan was elected in no small measure in response to the state-condoned terrorism of Iran, where radical students had held American diplomats hostage for 444 days before Reagan’s election, releasing them just after his inauguration. Over the next five years, a series of dramatic terrorist incidents followed—bombings and killings in Lebanon, including the horrific truck-bomb attack on the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, killing over two hundred Marines in a single moment; the murder of Marine embassy guards in El Salvador; the hijacking of major airliners and the killing of hostages, including a U.S. Navy SEAL, Robert Stethem; airport killings in Rome and Vienna; and the dramatic disco bombing in Berlin. Clearly, the United States had to respond, so in the spring of 1986, Operation EL DORADO CANYON sent a clear and dramatic message to Muammar Qaddafi, with telling results.
Beginning in the 1970s with territorial claims that the Gulf of Sidra was actually within Libyan internal waters, Qaddafi had plotted a collision course with the United States. For over two decades he attempted to use Libya’s oil wealth to undermine moderate governments in the Middle East and Africa, sought weapons of mass destruction, and developed a national foreign policy that incorporated the use of terrorism to achieve his objectives.

This is a story painted on a global canvas, from the 1986 La Belle Disco bombing in West Berlin, which killed U.S. servicemen, to the ghastly destruction of a global war on terrorism.

*El Dorado Canyon* is a fine case study in combating terrorism and deserves a place on the shelf of anyone interested in America’s current conflict, as well as the history of U.S. Navy involvement in combat.

JAMES STAVRIDIS
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This work examines the development of space systems and its implications for naval warfare in the twenty-first century by focusing on the argument that “access to space systems makes possible a new style of warfare.” It addresses the “linked revolution of long-range missiles and their space-based supporting systems.” Furthermore, Friedman seeks to understand how the development of space-based systems (notably rockets and satellites) has radically influenced how naval forces conduct navigation, communication, reconnaissance, and targeting. The reality is that modern military forces depend almost entirely on platforms in space to know where they are and to communicate with friendly forces, as well as to know the location of enemy forces and use that information to destroy them. This “revolution in military affairs” is now having an effect on a global scale.

None of these observations, however, is particularly new, and in fact all have been widely discussed within the defense establishment since the Persian Gulf War, when it became evident that U.S. military forces depend to a unique and unparalleled degree on constellations of satellites. Such technologies as the Global Positioning System (GPS) became familiar in the public debate about national security in the early 1990s with reports that U.S. soldiers used commercially purchased GPS receivers to navigate across Iraq’s featureless desert. In addition, the images broadcast globally of Scud missiles landing in Saudi Arabia and Israel reinforced the reliance on space-based systems to warn of impending attacks. Nor have we forgotten the failure of coalition forces during the Persian Gulf War to find Iraqi Scud missiles in what were called “Scud hunts.”

What is interesting and noteworthy about Friedman’s work is its focus on the fact that the development of these space systems has profound implications for the nature and conduct of maritime operations. In 2004, naval forces can know exactly where they are in the middle of vast oceans; communicate with their counterparts anywhere on the globe; scan entire oceans or land masses for targets in relatively short order;
and use precision-guided munitions, such as Tomahawk cruise missiles, to destroy them. Not surprisingly, the combination of space-based systems has significantly improved U.S. maritime as well as military capabilities.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Friedman’s work is the sheer volume of data that it contains. The reader is led through discussions of the development of space launchers, including detailed reviews of the U.S. and Soviet programs. Friedman is quite comfortable discussing the development of these technologies and thus easily examines how the United States has integrated space technologies into everyday military operations. This descriptive material is quite useful for those not familiar with many of the technologies and capabilities that exist under the rubric of space systems. The central value of *Seapower and Space* is to help the reader understand the technological and operational forces that have changed how the U.S. defense establishment, most notably its naval component, goes about its business.

All told, Friedman’s work is useful because of its breadth and depth. Yet in many chapters the analytic foundations of the work are obscured by the exceptionally detailed discussions of the evolution of, for example, rocket programs, communications systems, satellite programs, and cruise missile programs, to name a few. For readers who are more interested in how space systems support maritime operations, these details prove somewhat distracting.

How, then, should we judge the value of Friedman’s work? The overall quality of the research and writing speaks for itself. The chapters are tightly organized and lucid, which reaffirms that the author is knowledgeable about naval matters. This is a useful work that by contributing to the literature on the relationship between space and naval operations exposes the reader to a wide range of systems and technologies that are fundamental to the capabilities possessed by modern navies and military forces. As a history of space and maritime systems, it contributes new and useful particulars, background, and insights into how space systems help the naval commanders. My only wish is that he could have focused less on programmatic details. That being said, Friedman’s work represents an important step toward analyzing how space represents the next set of technologies that will revolutionize naval operations in the future.

WILLIAM C. MARTEL
Naval War College


One of the most intriguing questions about the People’s Republic of China (PRC) today is whether its communist government does or does not have the “ambition” to acquire a *blue-water* navy. If building an oceangoing fleet is among Beijing’s long-term goals, then China may one day become a dangerous peer competitor of the United States. If so, a future Sino-U.S. maritime conflict is possible; if not, Washington’s primarily maritime power and Beijing’s primarily continental power need never meet in battle.
The two books discussed here focus on different aspects of China and so answer this question in radically different ways. Robyn Lim examines Far Eastern geopolitics and history to address the issue of Sino-U.S. conflict. Focusing on the numerous twentieth-century wars fought among the East Asian quadrilateral—the United States, China, Japan, and Russia—Lim concludes that a new “great-power war” is “thinkable” and that such a conflict would probably be maritime in nature: “If China, a rising continental power, is indeed seeking domination over East Asia and its contiguous waters, this pattern of conflict is set to continue—because the United States, with its own maritime security at stake, is bound to stand in China’s way.”

The underlying reason for a possible future Sino-U.S. conflict, says Lim, is Japan’s defeat in World War II, coupled with the Soviet Union’s collapse in 1991. Not only has Russia’s precipitous decline given China “strategic latitude unprecedented in modern times,” but the waning security threat along the Sino-Russian border has allowed Beijing to point “east and south strategically, pressing on the vital straits that connect the Indian and Pacific Oceans.” In light of Russia’s decision to sell massive amounts of military equipment—dominated by ships, planes, and naval weaponry—to China, possible Sino-U.S. flashpoints include a PRC invasion or blockade of Taiwan, international conflict on the Korean Peninsula, maritime tensions with Japan over the Senkaku (in Chinese, Diaoyutai) Islands, and Southeast Asian resistance to China’s self-proclaimed sovereignty over the South China Sea.

To offset such a conflict, Washington must ally itself even more closely with Tokyo, be prepared to stop a PRC attack on Taiwan, dampen the rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and redirect future Chinese maritime expansion into more peaceful directions. Lim cautions that too strident a policy might push China into a corner, leading to irrational decisions on Beijing’s part—much as Washington’s 1941 failure to deter Tokyo resulted in the miscalculated decision to attack Pearl Harbor. However, Lim concludes that in the coming years a certain degree of great-power conflict will probably be unavoidable, since “when China started to demonstrate blue water ambition, it was certain to collide with America’s interest as the global ‘offshore balancer.’”

Thomas Kane examines the future of China’s navy in *Chinese Grand Strategy and Maritime Power*. Studying the history of Chinese grand strategy, which has most recently included calls for the creation of a “[new order]” among the world’s great states, Kane concludes that “if China wishes to claim a leading role in international politics, it must become a seapower,” which means, in turn, that “maritime development is one of the most prominent and most challenging goals of the PRC’s [grand] strategy.”

To support his point, Kane argues that for thousands of years the Chinese were among the world’s great practitioners of seapower. From the sixteenth to the mid-twentieth century, however, China’s navy stagnated, only to be born anew during the 1950s, when Mao proclaimed that China should develop a strong fleet. In 1979, Deng Xiaoping helped to make Mao’s dream a reality, redirecting an ever larger share of the defense budget to the People’s
Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). Not only was a strong navy necessary to exploit maritime resources in the surrounding seas, including enormous reserves of fish, oil, and natural gas, but “until the Chinese have an ocean-going navy, their freedom to trade will depend upon the goodwill of others. China’s leaders understand this fact, and are determined to remedy it.”

During the twenty-first century, the Chinese navy is bound to grow. It is no match for the U.S. Navy, but Kane cautions that just because “China’s navy remains materially weak does not mean that it is strategically useless.” In fact, the PLAN is clearly “designed to serve a purpose in war,” and if “one reflects upon how China’s navy measures up to the tasks Beijing is putting it to, and combines those reflections with a consideration of how the Chinese fleet may develop over time, the PLAN begins to seem more adequate.”

China’s primary strategic goals include coastal defense, intimidation of Taiwan, and the gradual expansion of Chinese power southward into the South China Sea. In recent years, the PLAN has begun to acquire the naval equipment necessary to achieve these limited goals. In particular, Kane notes the rapid increase in China’s mine warfare capability: “As of the year 2000, almost 90 percent of the major ships in China’s fleet could carry mines as part of their standard armament.” In addition, all newly purchased naval equipment from Russia, including the Kilo-class submarines and the Sovremenny-class destroyers, “have integral minelaying capabilities.” Such capabilities may soon grow beyond the point where the U.S. Navy and its Asian allies can easily counter them.

Although the Chinese navy still exhibits serious vulnerabilities, especially in air defenses, air forces, and electronic systems, concerted efforts are under way to correct these problems. In addition, should Beijing ever focus its land and sea forces either on mainland Asia or any of the thousand offshore islands, the “PLA’s assault forces could also prove overwhelming in battles for islands in the South China Sea, and perhaps for attacks on more distant islands as well. China, in other words, is well equipped to use land forces as part of a joint maritime strategy.”

Lim and Kane have approached this question from different angles—one from the field of geopolitics and the other from strategy—but they agree that the PRC’s future ambitions most likely include the construction of a blue-water navy. Until that navy is complete, China cannot hope to fight and win a war at sea, especially against a force as large and sophisticated as the U.S. Navy. However, as Kane aptly suggests, a naval victory may not be part of China’s grand strategy, since Beijing “has reason to hope that it has found limits to Washington’s willingness to intervene.” So long as China keeps its strategic goals small, it may succeed in making incremental gains unopposed. It is perhaps because of this threat of incremental gains that Lim warns, “The need to establish a stable power equilibrium in East Asia is an imperative of international security that the United States cannot afford to ignore.”

BRUCE ELLEMAN
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After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, U.S. policy makers focused heavily on Central Asian states as venues for basing troops and equipment for the war on terrorism. Although that war initially focused on Afghanistan, the effects of militant Islam have also affected various states in the Central Asian region to the north. In this book, Rashid provides the reader with a journalist’s account of what has led to the rise of militant Islam in Central Asia. This book had just gone into editing when the attacks on the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon occurred, and it underwent revision shortly before publication.

Rashid served as the chief correspondent for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia at the *Far Eastern Economic Review* and the *Daily Telegraph* for several years. His books and articles have made him one of the most respected observers of events in the region. His previous book, *Taliban*, won him worldwide acclaim and became a best-seller after 9/11 for its explanation of the rise of the Taliban.

Rashid begins by providing historical background. He points out that due to its geographic location, Central Asia has historically been the setting of numerous conquests, great-power struggles, significant economic activity, literary and artistic developments, and discussions about Islamic philosophy. Some of these themes still resonate today.

The struggle between Russia and Great Britain in the late nineteenth century saw major Central Asian khanates (territories), such as Bukhara, Samarkand, and Tashkent, fall under Russian influence. This influence continued into the Soviet era despite attempts by Central Asian territories to forge autonomy. By appealing to Islam in various combinations with nationalism, ethnic identity, and ideology, Muslim intellectuals and clerics in Central Asia initially tried to find common ground with the Bolshevik government. Unfortunately, all overt symbols of Islam were ultimately suppressed, and the religion went underground during Soviet times.

After the Soviet Union’s collapse, Islam underwent a rebirth in Central Asia, according to Rashid. However, most of the region’s new leaders were former Communist Party officials turned nationalists who were mainly concerned about maintaining order and preventing the infiltration of militant Islamists. The civil war in Afghanistan, the rise of the Taliban, and the presence of al-Qa’ida fed these objectives. Furthermore, the new Central Asian rulers have been unable to improve the economic condition of the people. Rashid observes that among other factors, a combination of abject poverty, authoritarian rule, and the skepticism of Central Asian leaders about even peaceful manifestations of Islam have led to the rise of militant groups throughout the region.

The author uses three examples to illustrate his points: the Islamic Renaissance Party in Tajikistan, the Hizb-ut-Tahrir in several Central Asian states, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Each of these, although in itself unique, owes its prominence to the reasons outlined above. Rashid also discusses the situation of great-power rivalry among the
United States, China, and Russia as it relates to oil pipelines and regional stability. He also goes into detail regarding neighboring states, such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey, and their respective agendas toward the region. These chapters round out a complete picture of all the factors affecting Central Asia’s stability.

The author ends with a chapter that highlights the issues contributing to Central Asia’s woeful situation and offers some thoughts about forging stability there. This latter portion is disappointingly short; Rashid devotes only nine pages to discussing possible solutions to alleviating Central Asia’s plight. A more developed discussion would have been beneficial.

Aside from this flaw, Jihad provides an excellent overview of the reasons for the rise of militant elements in Central Asia. The book gives an understanding of the stakes involved in Central Asia’s security and how the region applies to U.S. interests. Central Asia has become significant for U.S. interests not only because of the prospects for oil but also for its potential as a haven for terrorist bases.

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Michael Klare argues that most wars of the future, like many of those of the past and present, will be caused by conflicts over natural resources, especially oil and water. As a consequence, he suggests that American national security policy focus “on oil field protection, the defense of maritime trade routes, and other aspects of resource security.” This position represents a reaffirmation of the industrial and economic dimensions of U.S. national security. In effect, if Klare is right, we are witnessing a resurgence of a materialist strand of American strategic thought that has been prominent at least since Alfred Thayer Mahan. For strategists, neither the clash of civilizations, the tragedies of identity politics, nor the long-buried animosities of religion or ethnicity are sufficient motivations for the major sources of conflict in the modern world. Rather, conflicts and national security policies are about the struggle for natural resources.

Lest anyone think that this is a purely American phenomenon, Klare suggests that the “economization” of international security affairs holds not just for the United States but also for most countries, including China, Japan, and Russia. Insatiable consumption coupled with finite, poorly distributed resources, as well as with a propensity to use armed force, leads to a conflict-ridden future. Much of Klare’s argument reads as if it were inspired by the tumultuous events of the 1970s, specifically after the first global oil shock helped to alert the world to upcoming neo-Malthusian dilemmas. The 1973–74 oil crisis, among other events, forced the United States and the world to face the reality that petroleum supplies are finite, poorly distributed across the globe, and vulnerable to rogue states. Academics and policy entrepreneurs then spent much of the decade cataloguing the vast number of critically important natural resources that were in short supply or projected to be, given consumption trends and
demographic growth. Klare continues to assume that resource shortages lie in wait for humanity as a whole and for specific societies in particular. Unfortunately, Klare barely pauses to consider the possibility that diplomatic, economic, and political developments might ease potential resource conflicts before they escalate into armed conflicts. After all, countries fighting over access to water or oil could simply negotiate arrangements or allow market forces to dictate outcomes; the author himself notes examples and cases where diplomatic solutions have succeeded in the past. In fact, the absence of economic reasoning in this book is startling. After all, economists from cranks to countless mainstream professionals have demonstrated how market forces can help manage the worst aspects of resource shortages. Thus energy shortages that lead to price increases in turn encourage consumers to conserve; consumption is reduced, as well as overall dependence. Hence, despite tremendous economic growth, Western Europe, Japan, and even the United States have become much more energy efficient since the oil shock of the 1970s. Substitution effects are also possible, although perhaps not for a resource as fundamental and elemental as water.

This book is less than persuasive on the topic of politics. In its final section, which describes alternatives to war, Klare sets up a straw man, arguing that “it seems reasonable to ask whether a resource-acquisition strategy based on global cooperation rather than recurring conflict might not prove more effective than guaranteeing access to critical supply over the long run.” He then answers his own question by claiming that “such a strategy would call for the equitable distribution of the world’s existing resource stockpiles in times of acute scarcity.” In short, Klare suggests a utopian solution to a deeply practical set of problems. It is more likely that many, if not most, of the various potential resource “wars” outlined here will be settled short of war (or at least of a major war) by various methods of muddling through. Grand bargains over potentially equitable distributions of various resources seem unlikely given the present state of international politics. Even if one accepts Klare’s dire assumptions about the possibility of shortages and conflicts, his list is very traditional. Oil and water conflicts are old news. He does not mention the possibility of new competitions, for resources like satellite “parking spaces” or access to ocean fisheries, that might lead to clashes among great powers. Nor does he explore in great detail demographic realities that underlie competition for water and energy. For many of the water conflicts, for example, the key variable is tremendous population growth, which makes old agreements obsolete and intensifies bargaining over future resources.

Criticisms aside, Resource Wars offers readers a great deal. Klare provides thumbnail summaries of numerous conflicts great and small, from the South China Sea to the headwaters of the Nile. He represents each case with grace and economy. He reminds us of the oft-forgotten histories and details of geography that matter greatly in resource wars. More importantly, Klare provides a useful corrective to the ideational, historical, and political explanations of international behavior so popular today. Even the Arab-Israeli conflict is linked to competition for
land and water in ways that some who focus on the religious conflicts, the shadow of the past, and the various weaknesses of the Israeli-Palestinian and other Arab authority structures forget. In short, academics, policy makers, and military officers should pay close attention to those regions that have the greatest potential for armed conflict based on the relative scarce supplies of critical resources.

PETER DOMBROWSKI
Naval War College


Were you to begin with the last chapter of this book, “A World of Terror,” you would note that radical Islamists do not have an exclusive hold on terror as a strategic weapon. In fact, you might be well advised to consider reading this chapter first, to understand that extremist adherents of Christianity as well as other faiths also have employed sacred terror as a tool in the pursuit of their aims. If, on the other hand, you choose to begin with chapter 1, you will receive a good overview of the terrorist events of the past ten to twelve years, with a focus on those of Islamic origin.

Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, senior staff members of the Clinton administration’s National Security Council, paint a coherent picture of the genesis of sacred terror, the response to it, and prospects for the future. The time frame also includes the end and the beginning of the two Bush administrations. Benjamin and Simon’s conclusion points out the long-term nature of the issue and recommends that the West engage it with a view to the postconflict possibilities. The book’s purpose may include an attempt to influence history’s interpretation of the data, particularly with regard to the years of the authors’ involvement, but that hardly negates its significance.

Benjamin and Simon offer three particularly valuable discussions. First, they carefully tease three threads from the history of radical Islamism. Second, they give an airing to the workings of government—probably always less than transparent. In this, they do not hesitate to parcel out responsibility for good and for ill. Finally, they offer a strategic reflection that goes beyond radical Islamism.

That Islam was, and can be, a religion of the sword should come as no surprise. After Muhammad (d. 632), Taqi al-Din ibn Taymiyya, born in 1269, an accomplished Islamic jurist at age twenty, established the intellectual underpinning of today’s radical Islamism. Ibn Taymiyya did more than anyone to erect jihad—actual warfare—as a pillar of Islam. From him descended in the subsequent centuries serious intellectuals, hard men ready to commit violence, messianic figures whose zeal seems most foreign to twenty-first-century realities. Together, “they feed into the eruption of jihadist Islamism that has confronted the West, America in particular, over the last decade.”

Now, the warrior prince Usama bin Laden carries jihadism into the new millennium.

“Exactly when the name Usama bin Laden began appearing in American intelligence reports and FBI investigative materials is something we are unlikely to ever learn.” This observation,
coupled with the truism that we judge the unknown to be unlikely, points out how it was that we only gradually gave shape and definition to the terrorist threat. When one considers that the United States was riding the laurels of the 1990–91 Persian Gulf War and that its economy was steaming comfortably, it seems almost understandable that no one put all the pieces together earlier. Nevertheless, Benjamin and Simon take turns putting agencies and leaders in the pillory. Interagency collaboration is mostly a game of “I've got a secret.” Alley politics overshadow intelligent analysis and policy making as the White House and Capitol Hill threw punches at each other; a president lacked personal credibility; and the news media, aware of the public’s low interest for international news, failed to pursue stories aggressively.

Before 9/11, “America was the prisoner of an old paradigm for thinking about terrorism, and it could be released only through a revolutionary act of violence.” Herein lies a tragic blessing. As its long-range response, the administration created a new cabinet-level department for homeland security. Other measures were also taken, and others need to be taken once the technology measures up. Additionally, citizens and governments alike must become much more attuned to the various currents that have been shaped by the past and that will shape the future. Developing a sustainable strategy depends on it, lest the tragedy become pathos.

The book concludes with a riveting chapter on terrorism under the cloak of other religions. Jewish messianism, the quasi-Buddhist cult Aum Shinrikyo, and Christian apocalyptic literature and movements all point to more terrorism. The Age of Sacred Terror will enlighten leaders and citizens alike, and it should be a must-read for midlevel officers, especially those aspiring to senior leadership. It challenges the way we plan and train, and it certainly provides grist for the mill of doctrine development—while pointing out, yet again, that this is not the foe our parents and grandparents faced. If we learn no other lesson, this book will have served us well.

S. DOUGLAS SMITH
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Solving the puzzle of the destruction of Yugoslavia is one of the dominant historical and political questions of our time. Prominent scholars, high-ranking military officers, and noted politicians all seem to be asking how an advanced confederation could fail so quickly and with such disastrous consequences. Kemel Kurspahic, the award-winning editor of the Sarajevo wartime daily newspaper Oslobodjenje, provides some important answers to this question with his firsthand account of media in the former Yugoslavia.

This book provides chilling, first-person insight into the decline of the Yugoslav media into nationalism and into its contribution to the destruction of the Yugoslav federation. Kurspahic, a Bosnian Muslim, paints a picture of the disintegration of the former republic that, like many horror stories, is at once riveting, revolting, and compelling. This is a work that is riveting in its
honesty, revolting in its facts, and ultimately compelling in its insight. The author’s journalistic style easily dissolves the complexity of politics and personality, offering the reader a valuable glimpse into a political arena rarely seen, much less understood, by Westerners unfamiliar with the Balkans.

The first chapter’s treatise on the author’s thoughts and beliefs concerning journalism during Josip Broz Tito’s socialist revolution evokes an optimism shared by many Yugoslavs during the days of the “Balkan miracle.” This optimism offers a starting point for the reader’s compassion for the people of the former Yugoslavia and their lost dream. Many readers will find here an illuminating perspective on the lost opportunities during Tito’s regime—a time of great hope for unity but ultimate belief in nationalism, ethnicity, and culture.

The importance of ethnicity became excruciatingly clear during the early 1990s, when, as the author describes, the nationalist parties and leaders in Croatia, Bosnia, and Serbia managed to capture the press. Playing on themes and seams between cultures that had been glossed over by Tito’s press, journalists began an easy decline into uncontested nationalist rhetoric. According to Kurspahic, “the Yugoslav public . . . still had only one ruling party and its ideology. What was once a Communist controlled media became a nationalist-controlled media. Milosevic simply renamed his party—from Communist to Socialist—and switched . . . from ‘brotherhood and unity’ to ‘hatred toward neighbors.’” These divisions provided stronger focal points for the parties and easier writing for the media, and they reinforced the nationalist bias of the people.

Not limiting his comments to Serbia, Kurspahic thoroughly examines the slide of Croatian and Bosnian media into nationalist propaganda as well. He paints a consistent theme of one-party rule and its ability to control and focus the press. The press, responding to the call of nationalism, simply followed the path it always had—support of the party in power.

This point leads to an exceptionally compelling aspect of the narrative, the rise and suppression of the opposition media. Kurspahic exhaustively categorizes attempts in each republic to combat the rampant nationalism. Most of the attempts by a critical press to establish itself, regardless of location, met disastrous ends. The work’s firsthand accounts of resistance to nationalism and its effects offer remarkable insights into journalistic ethics and the strength they offer editors and reporters, even at the threat of their own lives. The decisions made to crush the opposition press provide more chilling evidence of the strength of nationalism as a political tool of control.

However, the work’s concern is not the pathos of the opposition and its attempt at critique but its inability to alter the ethnic momentum of the warring republics. Kurspahic’s contribution to an understanding of the war is his argument regarding the willingness of the people to accept the crimes of its leaders as a natural part of the progression to statehood. This was the true media disaster in the former Yugoslavia. In the eyes of the author, the media’s crime was its unchallenged, biased, and willing complicity with nationalist rhetoric.
The author’s attempt to weave a straight course through the warfare of three ethnicities suffers from a few shortcomings. As the author seeks to produce history, there is a great deal of personal recollection. If the author is attempting an autobiography, there is a great deal of history. Some might say his own ethnic identity prevents a balanced account of Serb or Croatian media. Kurspahic understands this; his damning indictment of his own country’s media and how Bosnian nationalism translated into violence speaks for itself. Nevertheless, the author also accepts the necessity to play the ethnic card and laments that Oslobodjenje’s “selected editing” in Sarajevo was necessary for its survival.

Concluding with the current changes in the Balkan media and a list of future policy options to prevent media nationalism, Kurspahic returns to the optimistic tone of the beginning of the work. Reviewing the policy recommendations of the last chapter, Kurspahic yearns for a free and independent press, one worthy of, and desiring, outside critique. The author would also welcome a press that challenges the government. This optimism, though warranted, may be premature. It remains to be seen if international media-watchdog groups can bring about any of these changes.

Prime Time Crime commands an important place on the bookshelf of anyone studying the former Yugoslavia. Kemal Kurspahic trains an unblinking eye on the nationalist Balkan press and its contribution to the war. In particular, the first chapter and the appendices should be required reading for any officer posted to duty in this troubled region. Although addressing just one small piece of the puzzle that was the fall of Yugoslavia, Kurspahic’s narrative of the rise of a nationalist press answers many questions about the society of former Yugoslavia, its destruction, and its ability to prosecute such a horrendous conflict. In a much broader sense, Prime Time Crime reveals what may happen when any government, political leader, or nationalist ideal captures or co-opts the media.

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This collection of ten essays is largely historical. Only three deal with current military education, and none focuses substantially on the future. Six examine European institutions, while three address military education in the United States and one recent change in Canada. The editors and authors are seasoned historians; some teach at civilian institutions, some at military schools. The essays report the continuing tension between academic officer-preparation and hands-on experience, and the contrast of both approaches with the military’s more usual method of preparation—training. All agree that technology and its continued development mean education is required. History is agreed to be crucial to military education, but there are critiques here of how it is used and of its tendency to direct attention to the past rather than to consider the past’s meaning for the future.

T. G. Otte discusses the influence of the French Revolution and German
philosophy on von Clausewitz’s discussion of the development and value of leaders with “genius.” Dennis E. Showalter describes the evolution of Prussian military education in the direction of merit criteria for officer selection and the resulting increase in the number of officers who were commoners. Lori Bogle of the U.S. Naval Academy then addresses how Prussian lessons were applied at the Military Academy at West Point by Sylvanus Thayer, superintendent from 1817 to 1833. She describes his emphasis on moral education, which included religious revivals and rigorous mental and physical discipline. Equality, honor, competition, and formal training in ethics were all part of Thayer’s efforts to tame what Bogle calls “boy culture” and its individualistic definition of personal honor—characteristic of the antebellum American South—in terms that entailed military obedience.

Several essays consider British military education. Andrew Lambert notes that militaries believe experience is crucial, but in fact many officers do not actually have experience, so academics are important. Academics, he says, should stimulate real thinking, but too often that comes only after military defeat. Further, the “edge” provided by critical thinking is too often of short duration. Lambert argues that selection for intellectual prowess and assignments to posts that use prowess is all-important and that poor leadership leads to setbacks. One example of poor leadership, he says, was that of First Lord Winston Churchill, “who would not listen to advice.” David French discusses officer training in the regular British army between the two world wars. A not entirely successful effort was made to broaden the social class of officers, broaden their education, expand their view beyond that of the regiment, recruit officers with university degrees, and promote by examination as opposed to primarily by seniority. A weakness of officer education that appeared in the early years of World War II was its lack of training in “all-arms cooperation.”

Mark R. Grandstaff gets to tell the story of the founding of the U.S. Air War College in the heady days of the newly created service after World War II. Its motto? “Unhampered by Tradition”; its education was to be “pewar not post-war.” One goal was to develop military strategists, but from the beginning there were also some who argued that the purpose was to develop “air statesmen” who could “stand up to the politicos” and gain a “full share in the formulation of national policies.” Grandstaff credits the Air War College with excellent methodology but finds the value of its educational content variable. He does not consider how method, in fact, affects content.

The one important change in U.S. military education since Vietnam has been the emphasis given to joint education. This shift was imposed by Congress. Thomas A. Keany details the implementation of the Goldwater-Nichols Act’s requirements, noting an assumption that education on jointness can occur only in a joint environment and arguing that emphasis on campaigns diminishes the attention given to the many other ways in which the services should be cooperating. Ronald G. Haycock explores another example of civilian intervention, recounting Canadian changes since its military’s “Last Traumatic Experience.” (Canadian troops murdered a Somali...
The National Defense College was closed, officers were required to get college degrees, the content of their education was greatly expanded, and the publication of a new college journal was ordered. Haycock’s essay on the changes and their potential should be required reading as Canada endeavors to find its way out of the “colonial cringe” through emphasized tactics and technology.

In his overview of current European military education, Peter Foot describes three types that exist today: “Jena” schools, which look to professional, in-house education; “Falkland” schools, which “bolt on” new material; and “Kosovo” schools, which address complexity and ambiguity and seek external, civilian accreditation. Foot notes a trend toward commonality, including more joint and combined training and advanced distance learning. He gives particular attention to military training in Eastern Europe, noting in particular developments in Bulgaria and in the Baltic republics’ tristate institution.

In all, this is a collection worth reading, especially to remind us of the impediments to change and the perpetual tension between training and education (within its critical thinking), between tradition and innovation, and between technology and strategy. The debate over military education began as early as Plato, and it will not end with Kennedy or Neilson.

JUDITH STIEHM
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There are so many books about the Vietnam War and the Vietnam experience that the message of one more risks being lost amidst a vast ocean of tragic tales told with great pain. However, Hackworth and England have provided something more than a reminiscence of an Army combat unit in the post–Tet Offensive world of Vietnam; they have presented readers with a tactical reform primer for infantry. All the information is there in stark GI English, beginning with the first sentence of chapter 1 (not repeated here out of delicacy), and finishing up with the last sentences of the last chapter: “We now need to fight smart as much as we need to get even. There is no other choice. We do it right or we lose. We win—or we die.”

Hackworth and England are referring to the new war against terrorism in the post-9/11 world. The quotation applies to the current day, and it applied to Hackworth’s nightmare battalion in the Mekong Delta in 1969.

His unit was the 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 9th Infantry Division. The troops making up the battalion were, as the authors state, citizen draftee soldiers, not the volunteers that had filled the first combat units that went into Vietnam back in 1965. These soldiers did not want to be in Vietnam. They had come from a country where protests against the war had become large-scale performance art, widely publicized by news media and, most importantly, were supported by a large portion of the population. These reluctant warriors were doubly cursed, for they were part of an army the leadership of which had started to unravel in the face of the stubborn refusal of an enemy to admit defeat, an enemy who still could attack U.S. soldiers with skill,
speed, and lethality. Hackworth and England are unsparing in their depictions of the martinets and incompetents who made up a fair portion of the officer and noncommissioned officers’ corps that led soldiers into the Delta swamps and rice paddies—beginning with the battalion commander who places his unit’s main base in the middle of a Viet Cong minefield, through a commanding general more focused on maximizing body counts for his own career than on effectively fighting an elusive enemy.

Despite determined opposition both from the enemy and higher headquarters, Hackworth achieved an organizational transformation of his hard-luck battalion. The 4/39th became a skilled, deadly foe of the Viet Cong in the Delta, a unit that took the fight to the enemy, taking away his initiative. Hackworth did this through reimplementation of a strict but fair discipline, introduction of and training in proven and successful fieldcraft, and leadership from the front. There are no magic bullets or technological fixes for this kind of transformation, just simple success on the battlefield—the enemy dies or goes away. In the beginning of his command, Hackworth’s disciplinarian approach earned him a contract on his head from his own soldiers. By the time he left, one of these same soldiers would write, “The most terrible thing happened today. Colonel Hackworth left. You remember the one everyone hated, and wanted shot? Now there’s another bounty out for him—to anyone who can get him back.”

Steel My Soldiers’ Hearts contains the collected practical wisdom of this successful battalion commander. Curiously, however, the wisdom that keeps soldiers alive on the battlefield does not necessarily contribute to the end of battles or wars. Hackworth and England acknowledge as much in an account of a conversation between Hackworth and John Paul Vann. Hackworth and Vann were compatriots and friends; Vann had been Hackworth’s company commander in Korea. Vann, now a civilian advisor to the South Vietnamese regime, told Hackworth that while his battalion was improving the security of the area, they were killing too many civilians. Vann added, “Once the 9th’s out of here, I reckon that eighty to ninety percent of the Delta’s population will come to our side. You guys have been the VC’s biggest recruiter. You kill a boy’s mama, which side do you reckon he’ll join?”

Therein lies the major lesson of this frank, valuable book. A nation’s armed forces can be exceptionally well trained, exceptionally lethal, and full of esprit de corps. They can win all the battles. They can maximize the body count. But if the end of the battle or war is flawed—or worse, uncertain—no amount of courage, steel, or personal battlefield leadership will have obtained victory.

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That the United States has conducted a program of high-altitude and space-borne photographic reconnaissance since the mid-1950s is hardly a secret.
With the public release of many previously classified source documents and project histories, the time is right for Philip Taubman’s history of the strategic issues, politics, personalities, and technologies that drove the development of America’s extraordinary space reconnaissance capability.

Taubman has reported on national security and intelligence matters for the New York Times for more than twenty years. He is clearly a thorough researcher; his list of consulted sources, documents, and technical reports runs to eighteen pages of small print. Much of it is material new to the public domain.

Strange as it may seem today, when the United States is rich in strategic intelligence, in the early 1950s it had no reliable estimate of the numbers of strategic bombers, missiles, or nuclear warheads in the Soviet Union. As Winston Churchill said, the USSR was “a riddle wrapped in an enigma.” Bison bombers flew circles around Moscow to inflate the estimates of Western air attachés of their numbers; Nikita Khrushchev rattled rockets to add to the noise.

In this murky but threatening environment, the Eisenhower administration was struggling to develop a balanced defense policy, one that would offer effective defense against an opponent whose capabilities and intentions were imperfectly known, but one that would not break the nation’s economy. Hard strategic intelligence—reconnaissance-based counts of strategic things—was key. However, the Soviet Union was then what was picturesquely called “a denied area.” RB-47s and similar aircraft probed the borders but could not see deeply into the Soviet Union, and their reconnaissance flights often ended in political embarrassment for the government and tragedy for the crews.

At this point, a collection of remarkable men entered the game: Edwin Land of Polaroid, a politically well connected systems engineer; Kelly Johnson, head of Lockheed’s fabled “Skunk Works” and builder of extraordinary aircraft; James Baker of Harvard, a most creative camera-system designer; and Arthur Lundhal of the CIA, a gifted photographic interpreter. Richard Bissell, the CIA’s legendary manager of high-risk projects, assumed the leadership of this gang and with it brought the fabled U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft and later the first photographic reconnaissance satellites, Corona, to operational fulfillment.

Taubman paints these men unreservedly as patriots, putting their considerable technical skills and imagination at their country’s service. That they were. More importantly, they grasped the need for hard strategic intelligence and had the perspective to see the promise of new technologies and their application to the problem of strategic reconnaissance.

The author does a splendid job of interpreting the significance of the technical problems encountered and the brilliant ingenuity of the solutions. Aircraft had never operated at the combination of altitude (over seventy thousand feet) and range (beyond three thousand miles) that strategic overflight of the Soviet Union would require. The solution from Johnson’s Skunk Works was the U-2, a sort of jet-powered glider with the climb characteristics of a homesick angel. Baker designed cameras with long focal lengths that folded into tight fuselage and satellite spaces; Kodak developed films that could...
survive the temperature extremes encountered at reconnaissance altitudes; Lundhal organized a photographic interpretation activity to receive and analyze the pictures.

When satellite-borne cameras replaced the U-2, new and even more demanding technical problems arose. Just getting a satellite launched and into orbit was no mean trick. Choosing between relaying television pictures from space or returning exposed film was a subtle and demanding technical choice. Recovery of the exposed film was selected and became the coolest trick of all: film capsules, ejected from the satellite, reentered the atmosphere and parachuted down to where a specially equipped C-130 snagged them out of the air.

All this seems quite ordinary today, but in the 1950s these were innovative technical accomplishments. Too often strategic histories treat critical technical accomplishments lightly and gloss over their significance to strategic and policy choices. To Taubman’s credit, he is attuned to the importance of the enabling technologies and brings their role and impact to the reader’s understanding.

After getting the cameras aloft, Taubman turns his attention to the consequences of the pictures they returned. The first flights captured staggering numbers of detailed pictures covering vast sweeps of the hidden interior of the Soviet Union. The pictures revealed that Soviet Bison bombers were as rare as the animal is today in Montana and that Soviet intercontinental missiles, while large and ugly, were few and in a low state of readiness.

This did not end the Cold War or put America completely at ease, but it did bring some balance and scope to defense planning for the late 1950s. In 1960 a presidential candidate who should be remembered for better things rode to victory partly on claims that the Eisenhower administration had allowed a dangerous missile gap to grow. The pictures from these satellites and aircraft put paid to that.

Taubman’s book is twice valuable—first, for its historical development of the value and impact of strategic intelligence, and second, for its insight into the role of technology and technologists in shaping strategic policy.

In his final pages, Taubman raises important questions about America’s current reliance on technical intelligence collection methods. He notes that little about al-Qa’ida’s activities or capabilities is being revealed or forecast by satellite reconnaissance and that human intelligence sources and the collection of intelligence must play a central role in the twenty-first-century war against terrorism.

FRANK C. MAHINCKE
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When we look back on great historical events, we often ascribe an inevitability to things that were, in fact, anything but. In this lucid and comprehensive study of the formulation and enactment of the Marshall Plan, John Bonds recounts how this great pillar of American post–World War II policy was anything but inevitable. Bonds, a retired captain of the U.S. Navy and professor of history at the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina,
concludes his penultimate chapter on the final legislative approval of what was to be Public Law 793 with the words: “So it was finally done. The country had made a significant commitment to Europe and to internationalism in general, consciously and with conviction, despite some difficult holdouts like Mr. John Taber, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee. But to the last the issue had been in doubt.” On that last sentence (emphasis added) hangs the tale of this study.

The Republicans controlled Congress, the president was seen as weak and was opposed by prominent members of his own party, and the Republicans smelled a White House victory in 1948, for the first time since 1928. On partisan grounds alone, then, 1947–48 did not seem a propitious time for a major bipartisan initiative. Beyond considerations of party, however, there were large substantive policy issues that divided the nation: how best to deal with the erstwhile ally, the Soviet Union; fear of inflation and the ultimate cost of European recovery; concern for balancing the budget; and how to meet the public desire for “normalcy” after years of depression and war.

Bonds gives an impressive account of the extraordinary skill of the Truman administration and the rightly celebrated Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in mobilizing business, labor, intellectuals, and public opinion in support of what many correctly perceived as a decisive break with traditional American foreign policy. In this mobilization of external opinion and lobbying of congressional support (at a time when such lobbying was seen as improper), there were mutually countervailing pressures tending to minimize President Truman’s public engagement, which was seen as raising partisan hackles, but also to maximize the president’s public role, the better to position him for the 1948 election. Bonds correctly concludes, however, that such considerations and skills were insufficient to account for the final enactment.

A fundamental change of perspective was required, and skillful alliance building and sales strategies were inadequate. Indeed, the administration understood this and sought to justify the shift in American peacetime engagement by the need to restore the European balance of power and the international trading system, ravaged by depression and war. At the same time, there was a desire to establish for the first time in American history a program of universal military training. In the mind of the president, Secretary of State George C. Marshall, and Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal, the European Recovery Program and a new foundation for national defense were inextricably linked.

In the event, none of these arguments, or the general campaign to weld an alliance of business, labor, academia, and the public in support of America’s new role, generated sufficient votes in Congress to pass the Marshall Plan. Soviet actions in Finland, Czechoslovakia, and Berlin did.

All of this is particularly remarkable in view of the fact that the administration had consciously sought to downplay the Soviet menace as the motive for its initiative. More abstract discussions of the balance of power and international commerce were consistently favored. This stemmed from the desire neither to slam the door on some renewed
understanding with the Soviet Union (a position favored by some influential opinions in the United States) nor to create trouble for the French government, seemingly both dependent on and threatened by the French Communist Party.

The Soviet-menace card was played on several occasions in the unfolding debate, but in general it was subordinated to more abstract arguments of enlightened self-interest. Moreover, it was clear to many in the administration that too great an emphasis on the imminence of war with Russia would scuttle both the recovery program and universal military training in favor of a general wartime mobilization. In effect, although Soviet pressures certainly provided the needed ingredient for legislative success, they also had the potential to divert the country from the recovery program itself. Later events would ultimately modify the balance between economic assistance and military mobilization—but that is another story, beyond the scope of this fine book.

Finally, it should be noted that Bonds has the ability to tell a story clearly, at times even breezily, and analyze without cumbersome jargon. For clarity and sophistication, this is likely to be a standard reference for some time to come.

ROBERT S. WOOD
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Patrick Maynard Stuart Blackett was a key member of the international circle of scientists who led the Allied defense research efforts of World War II, and he was the heart and soul of the Cold War military-academic-industrial complex. In this book, sixteen authors attempt to shed light on Blackett’s role in that story. The collection includes papers presented at a 1998 conference commemorating Blackett at Cambridge University, as well as other recent writings about him.

Not surprisingly, the compendium offers a range of perspectives on events and issues with which Blackett was associated, rather than a comprehensive examination of his life and work. The articles are arranged in roughly chronological order, but there is otherwise little integration among them—a characteristic only exacerbated by Blackett’s wide-ranging interests and expertise. However, it is clear that an integrated whole was not the editor’s goal. Instead, Hore’s intent was to augment the inadequate body of literature on Blackett by encouraging new research on him and publishing the results.

After an opening overview of Blackett’s youth, compiled from Blackett’s own autobiographical notes, the book covers his education in the Royal Navy’s preparatory school system, his service as a naval officer during World War I, and his post-secondary and graduate education in physics at Cambridge University under the tutelage of Sir Ernest Rutherford. After a summary of Blackett’s contribution to Britain’s war preparation efforts during the 1930s, several chapters are devoted to his wartime work on defense science, technology, and policy. This material addresses his widely acknowledged leadership in the field of operational research and the ways in which that research contributed to high-level disputes over convoying strategy and strategic-bombing policy.
The final chapters examine the postwar public controversy sparked by Blackett’s vocal opposition to nuclear weapons, his long association with Indian political leaders and scientists, a summary of his Nobel-winning career as a physicist, and his role in the first administration of England’s prime minister Harold Wilson during the late 1960s.

Hore accomplishes his goal of facilitating and gathering new research on Blackett. Rather than introduce brazen, new concepts, the book’s primary contribution to academic research will be as a resource for those endeavoring to examine elements of Blackett’s life in the larger context. This is for the most part a function of the biographical nature of this work, the very practical personality of the subject, and the large number of contributors, each with a particular perspective. Several of the authors, however, have focused too intently on specific, detailed narratives, passing up the larger questions. In some cases the focus is so narrow that the book’s main subject—Blackett—is conspicuous by his absence. In fact, arguably, this is the general weakness of the book; there is so much emphasis on Blackett’s work that little attention is paid to Blackett himself.

The two chapters on operational research are useful examples. Jock Gardner’s brief contribution, “Blackett and the Black Arts,” analyzes wartime reports from the British signals intelligence and operational research departments to determine the extent that the two groups issued reports based on one another’s data. The chapter by Richard Ormerod is an institutional history of operational research as a field of study, focusing on the vagaries of the field’s attempts to define itself. Blackett himself is rarely mentioned in these chapters. Given Blackett’s central role in the history of operational research, this would have been the perfect opportunity to learn more about his contributions and to understand the influence of operational research during and after World War II.

Fortunately, several of the contributors chose broader topics. For example, Peter Hore’s own chapter offers a thoughtful look at Blackett’s experiences as a sailor during World War I, using a variety of sources to place that story within the wider circumstances of the war and to consider how Blackett weathered the ordeal. Mary Jo Nye’s contribution, “A Physicist in the Corridors of Power,” must also be singled out for praise. Following Blackett throughout his entire career, Nye describes the ebb and flow of Blackett’s influence on both national policy and science, demonstrating how Blackett’s career expressed his character and political beliefs. It is contributions like these that make this work a valuable and enjoyable book.

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Since the onset of the industrial revolution, navies have continuously struggled with the challenges posed by technological change. In *Navies of Europe*, Lawrence Sondhaus examines this problem from a European perspective. Sondhaus chronicles the fortunes of
both great and minor powers beginning in 1815, at a time when the navies of Europe still dominated the globe, up to the present day.

Compressing nearly two hundred years of naval history into a single volume is a difficult task, but this work is a solid introduction to the subject for the general reader. The book provides a clear overview of the major technological developments of the modern era, including such important events as the transition from sail to steam, the advent of the armored warship, the dreadnought revolution, and the rise of naval aviation. It also offers a lucid account of naval operations during these two centuries. As might be expected, the two world wars receive the most detailed treatment, but the author is equally adept at recounting, and explaining the importance of, numerous lesser-known naval operations.

One of the book’s greatest strengths is its attention to the navies of minor European powers, which are usually overlooked entirely in surveys of this period. These small states were seldom on the cutting edge of naval innovation, but their fleets were still significant from a national or regional perspective. Minor powers could and did possess navies for purposes that were often unrelated to those of their larger or more powerful neighbors. Sondhaus never lets these lesser navies dominate the narrative—their inclusion sometimes reads like an afterthought—but he consistently strikes a fair balance between Europe’s different states.

Europe may no longer be able to dominate the world’s sea-lanes as it once did, but this book provides a useful reminder that European naval forces, though overshadowed by the United States in both resources and capabilities, remain at the forefront of technology and innovation, and continue to be capable of performing a wide variety of missions on relatively short notice.

Technology and Naval Combat in the Twentieth Century and Beyond examines some of these same navies in greater depth but also includes chapters on two non-European powers, the United States and Japan. The title, however, is somewhat misleading. The fifteen articles in this collection actually pay very little attention to naval combat during the twentieth century—nearly all the chapters focus on peacetime naval policy, warship construction, and technology.

It is also worth noting that not all the states examined receive equal treatment. Italy and France drop out of the volume after their entry into the First World War, while Germany and Japan disappear with the outbreak of World War II. The United States, however, does not appear until 1919, and the Soviet Union is included only in the section on the Cold War. Britain’s navy is the only one to appear in all sections of the book, and the period before World War I is only partially covered with a previously published article by Nicholas Lambert on Admiral Sir John Fisher and the concept of flotilla defense in 1904–1909.

None of this is meant as criticism, however, as the volume was clearly not intended to serve as a comprehensive naval history of the twentieth century. Both the general reader and the specialist will find much of interest here. Leading scholars in the field have written the individual chapters, and the overall quality of the contributions is
high. The book’s highlights include insightful overviews of the U.S. and British navies during the Cold War era by George W. Baer and Eric Grove, and a piece on the current and future direction of the Royal Navy by Geoffrey Till. Because the authors are able to examine specific navies and periods in some detail, this volume illustrates more effectively than *Navies of Europe* the full range of political, economic, and technological factors that typically shape a state’s naval policy.

**CHRISTOPHER BELL**
Dalhousie University

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The path of America’s rise to global dominance has always attracted the attention of distinguished historians and political scientists, ranging from Henry Adams to Walter LaFeber to Stephen E. Ambrose. Warren Zimmermann, a thirty-three-year veteran of the Foreign Service, joins the fray with *First Great Triumph*, a provocative analysis of the “fathers of American imperialism” at the onset of the twentieth century.

Zimmermann examines how President Theodore Roosevelt, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan, Secretary of State John Hay, and Secretary of War Elihu Root engineered American imperial expansion in the decade from 1898 to 1908.

Why these five men? Zimmermann claims not only that they were influential in establishing the United States as a global power but that their characters and beliefs helped determine how that power would be used. In essence, this book is about imperialism by “Roosevelt and his friends.” Zimmermann also gives due credit for constructing the first overseas empire to Admiral George Dewey, Leonard Wood, Philippine colonial governor William H. Taft, and President William McKinley. Regrettably, he downplays the contributions of Admiral Stephen B. Luce and Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy, both of whom influenced Mahan in the development of his naval theories.

Graduates of the Naval War College will find Zimmermann’s analysis of Mahan’s career particularly interesting. Zimmermann’s Mahan is the preeminent American strategist of his generation, a “pen and ink sailor” who in midcareer found himself “out of sorts with the navy which accurately considered him a misfit and a complainer.” At home in Newport, Rhode Island, Mahan articulated a doctrine of seapower as the controlling factor to national greatness. Like George Kennan, who authored the containment doctrine a half-century later, Mahan inspired American foreign policy with his insightful analysis of America’s position among nations.

The centerpiece of this work, however, is undoubtedly Roosevelt. Roosevelt constructed the first true imperial presidency and ushered in the “American Century.” Fresh from his heroics during the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt was catapulted to the White House upon the assassination of William McKinley. By the time he departed eight years later, the United States was the dominant force in the Caribbean and a major presence in Asia. On the strength of his marshaling of public
opinion and judicious use of America’s economic and military power, Roosevelt, not Woodrow Wilson, emerges as the true “father of American diplomacy.” During the Roosevelt administration, American foreign policy combined national power with what Zimmermann terms “high purpose.”

Zimmermann offers equally compelling character sketches of the other members of Roosevelt’s team. Lodge emerges as a political manipulator who guides imperialist policies through Congress. Hay contributes to American hegemony in the Western Hemisphere by developing closer ties with Great Britain, while Root creates the first American colonial administration, in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War. Their combined efforts made their country a power to be reckoned with on the international scene.

However, Zimmermann’s crystal ball looks far bleaker as the United States enters the twenty-first century. Here Zimmermann’s interpretation is based on too much conjecture and too little fact. Despite the massing of American military might in the Middle East in the aftermath of 11 September, Zimmermann opines, this country faces an erosion of its power due to a weakening of the U.S. presidency and the reemergence of congressional dominance in foreign policy. Additionally, he sees a current trend toward nonmilitary involvement and an unwillingness to commit military forces in support of foreign policy. Lastly, Zimmermann posits that international terrorism has produced a backlash against U.S. policies as well as the cultural, ideological, and economic principles that guide the United States.

In summary, Zimmermann offers a provocative interpretation about American imperialism during the last century and a chilling prognostication for the current one. The reader is more likely to concur with his thesis that the expansion of the United States to an international power was not an aberration but a culmination of forces that had dominated the political and economic scene since its birth, than with the decline in the power of the presidency, which is more a function of personality than of the reemergence of legislative authority.

COLE C. KINGSEED
Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired
New Windsor, New York
BOOKS RECEIVED


International History of the Twentieth Century, by Antony Best et al. New York: Routledge, 2004. 531pp. $29.95


Resurrection: Salvaging the Battle Fleet at Pearl Harbor, by Daniel Madsen. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2003. 241pp. $36.95

FROM THE EDITORS

ELLER PRIZE FOR NAVAL HISTORY
The editors are delighted to learn that the U.S. Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C., has awarded honorable mention in its annual Eller Prize in Naval History competition to Edmund Morris’s “‘A Matter of Extreme Urgency’: Theodore Roosevelt, Wilhelm II, and the Venezuela Crisis of 1902,” which appeared in our Spring 2002 issue. “This article,” commented Dr. Edward Marolda of NHC, “presents an interpretation that is especially thought provoking and instructive for naval officers and other readers interested in the connection between diplomacy and sea power.”

NEWPORT PAPER 18: TRANSFORMATION AND INDUSTRY
Yet another title in our rapidly growing Newport Paper series is available, in print and online: Military Transformation and the Defense Industry after Next: The Defense Industrial Implications of Network-centric Warfare, by Peter J. Dombrowski, Eugene Gholz, and Andrew L. Ross. As our editor, Dr. Catherine McArdle Kelleher, observes in a foreword, the authors “offer groundbreaking answers” to the challenge of “how, in a sea of new technologies, to craft a defense industrial base that both supports a transformed military and adapts to the dominant political and economic realities.”

To obtain copies of this Newport Paper or to subscribe (without charge) to the series, contact the associate editor. It is also available online (Adobe Reader required) at www.nwc.navy.mil/press/npapers/np18/np18.pdf.

ARTICLE AND ESSAY INDEX
An index of all articles and essays from 1948 to the last completed publishing year is available on compact disc from the editorial office, by mail (Naval War College Review, Code 32S, 686 Cushing Road, Newport, RI, 02841-1207); by telephone at (401) 841-2236 or by fax at (401) 841-1071, DSN exchange 948; or by e-mail at press@nwc.navy.mil. Articles published in the Autumn 1996 issue or later are available on the World Wide Web at www.nwc.navy.mil/press. Offprints can be requested from the editorial office or, for recent issues, printed (Adobe Reader required) directly from the website.
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Pelham G. Boyer, Managing Editor
AN ONLINE GUIDE TO U.S. NAVAL HISTORY

Ever wonder what government office has a destroyer’s cruise book from its 1968 deployment to Vietnam? how to conduct research on the design of World War II fighter planes? where to find museums displaying an array of Navy guns, uniforms, swords, and ship models? how to find art depicting the dramatic atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll? what major historical programs are supported by the Navy? Find the answers at the Naval Historical Center’s website, www.history.navy.mil—the recently posted Guide to Naval History Organizations, Programs, and Resources, compiled by Senior Historian Dr. Edward J. Marolda.

The guide provides detailed information on the composition, mission, functions, and major artifact and documentary holdings of government institutions dedicated to preserving the Navy’s past—the Naval Historical Center, the Marine Corps Historical Center, Navy Department historical offices, and the USS Constitution, as well as the twelve official Navy museums, including the U.S. Navy Museum in Washington, D.C., the National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola, Florida, and the Naval Undersea Museum in Bremerton, Washington. In addition, the guide lists and describes governmental and nongovernmental organizations—such as the Navy Cultural Resources Program, Naval Historical Foundation, Historic Naval Ships Association, and U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation—that promote naval historical programs. Finally, the guide identifies institutions that maintain sizable collections of naval historical materials, including the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the Naval War College. Hours of operation, contact data, and other pertinent information accompany short descriptions of all these institutions nationwide.
INDEX OF VOLUME LVI

Articles and Essays

AUTHOR


Hattendorf, John B. The Uses of Maritime History in and for the Navy. Spring 2003:13–38


Johnson-Freese, Joan. China’s Manned Space Program: Sun Tzu or Apollo Redux? Summer 2003:51–71

Kolenda, Christopher D. Transforming How We Fight: A Conceptual Approach. Spring 2003:100–21


Myers, Richard B. Shift to a Global Perspective. Autumn 2003:9–17


SUBJECT

Alliances and Treaties
Buell, Thomas B.

Canada

Center of Gravity

China
Johnson-Freese, Joan. China’s Manned Space Program: Sun Tzu or Apollo Redux? Summer 2003:51–71


Clausewitz, Karl von

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK).
See North Korea

Europe

"Feral Cities"


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Germany

Globalization

History—General
Hattendorf, John B. The Uses of Maritime History in and for the Navy. Spring 2003:13–38

History—Naval and Maritime

International Relations

Iran

Iraq

Joint Forces Air Component Commander

Kosovo

Law of Armed Conflict

Military Art/Science/Theory

National Interests

NATO. See North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Natural Resources

Network-centric Warfare

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

North Korea

Nuclear Security

Nuclear Weapons

Persian Gulf
**Political Science**

**Regional Commanders**
Myers, Richard B. Shift to a Global Perspective. Autumn 2003:9–17

**Resource Conflicts**

**Royal Navy (British).** See United Kingdom

**Scenarios and Prediction**

**Russia**

**Seapower**

**Space**
Johnson-Freese, Joan. China’s Manned Space Program: Sun Tzu or Apollo Redux? Summer 2003:51–71

**Strategy**

**Taiwan**

**Terrorism**

**Transformation**

Kolenda, Christopher D. Transforming How We Fight: A Conceptual Approach. Spring 2003:100–21

**Unified Command Plan**
Myers, Richard B. Shift to a Global Perspective. Autumn 2003:9–17

**United Kingdom**

**United States—Armed Forces**
Myers, Richard B. Shift to a Global Perspective. Autumn 2003:9–17

**United States—Foreign Policy**

**United States—Security Policy**

**U.S. Navy**