

1995

## In My View

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### Recommended Citation

Winton, Harold R.; Libby, Justin H.; and Jacobs, Rick (1995) "In My View," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 48 : No. 4 , Article 9.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol48/iss4/9>

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# IN MY VIEW . . .

## Military Doctrine, Theory, and Practice

Sir:

I found Dr. James J. Tritten's primer on military doctrine in the Spring 1995 edition of the *Naval War College Review* both interesting and stimulating. His assertion that doctrine addresses both how military institutions act and how they think was right on the mark. He also provided a very useful description of the multitudinous factors that influence doctrine and of the ways that doctrine, in turn, affects military forces.

It seems to me, however, that his analysis would have brought the function of doctrine into sharper focus had he characterized it as the conceptual link between military theory and military practice. Military doctrine is, in essence, a medium of transmission in which general ideas about the nature, purpose, and employment of military force are given practical expression peculiar to the time and setting of the military institution promulgating the doctrine of the moment.

If one conceptualizes doctrine as a connecting device between theory and practice, it is clear that there can be as many "levels" of doctrine as there are of military activity. Thus, in accordance with our current paradigm of strategy, operational art, and tactics, it is logical to expect that we would find strategic, operational, and tactical doctrine. The Naval Doctrine Command may, for good and sufficient reason, choose not to involve itself in tactical doctrine, as Dr. Tritten's article implies. This, however, is an institutional choice and does not preclude the existence of tactical doctrine per se. Like all "good" doctrine, tactical doctrine for any service must find the correct balance—being sufficiently

detailed to be useful while also granting enough latitude to those implementing it to avoid becoming dysfunctional.

I have no doubt that Dr. Tritten's useful survey will materially assist the United States Navy in the development of "good" doctrine at whatever levels it chooses to promulgate it.

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### The Conditional Surrender of Japan

Sir:

Permit me one small quibble with the fine essay written by Commander Edward L. Martin, USN, entitled "The Evolving Missions and Forces of the JMSDF" (*Naval War College Review*, Spring 1995).

On page 39 he comments under the subtitle "The History of the JMSDF" that "Japan's unconditional surrender at the end of the Pacific War occasioned calls for its disarmament." Having served in Tactical Operations at Headquarters, 5th Air Force and All United States Forces Japan at Higashi-Fuchu, Japan, from 1959 to 1962, I can attest to the demilitarization of Japan; but my small quibble (how petty can one get?) is with the term "unconditional surrender."

As we know from the historical record, Prime Minister Suzuki Kantaro initially rejected the Potsdam Declaration of July 26, 1945, calling for Japan's unconditional surrender and held a press conference stating that "the government will ignore it." Suzuki continued, "We will press forward resolutely to carry the war to a successful conclusion," which mirrored the opinions of the Imperial General Headquarters Command (IGHQ).

Only on August 15, 1945, did the Emperor issue a statement ending the war and preparing Japan for its first occupation by foreign nationals. Reading an Imperial Rescript, the God Figure of the Crane Throne imparted to his long-suffering people:

To Our good and loyal subjects, after pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual conditions obtaining in Our Empire today, WE have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure.

WE have ordered Our Government to communicate to the Government of the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union that Our Empire accepts the provisions of their joint declaration.

(There were some interesting phrases elsewhere in this message: "The war situation has developed not necessarily to our advantage"; and, "The general trends of the world have all turned against her [Japan's] interests." But for most of the Japanese people that day it was not the words that the Emperor spoke that signaled the end of the war, but that in fact the Emperor had even spoken. Military leaders opposed the acceptance—the bomb had not changed their minds. Minister of War Anami Korechika and Chief of Staff Umezu Yoshijiro desired to continue the war but would not defy the Emperor's decision, even when a plot broke out in Tokyo and spread throughout the Honshu Plain to continue the conflict by killing the Emperor and his misguided advisors. The head of the First Imperial Guard Division, General Mori Takeshi, refused to support the insurgents and was murdered. The plot ended when the Eastern District Army commander, General Tanaka Seiichi, took steps to quell the rebellion. On August 15, General Anami committed suicide, as did General Sugiyama Gen, General Tanaka (who had just put down the rebellion), and General Honjo Shigeru, former commander of the Kwantung Army during the Manchurian Incident of 1931. More than five hundred military and naval personnel were to commit suicide following the Emperor's NHK broadcast.)

The Allies had acknowledged the rejection of the declaration and had used two of the three atomic bombs in the American arsenal on the 6th and 9th of August in the nineteenth year of the Showa Emperor. (Scholars still debate today whether Admiral Suzuki's reply was deliberately insulting—specifically, whether the verb *mokusatsu*, "to ignore," was meant in its possible sense of "to treat with contempt in silence.") The bombs spurred some Japanese fanatics to seek a continuation of the war, but even Tojo Hideki realized the war must be ended at once. With the Soviet Union entering the war through Manchuria, now that Stalin had abrogated the 1941 non-aggression pact signed by Yosoke Matsuoka, the Japanese Imperial Supreme Council met to discuss and evaluate the Potsdam terms. Foreign Minister Togo Shigenori and Mitsumasa Yonai favored accepting the terms with only one proviso—that the Imperial Household must be retained. Minister of War Anami, along with Army Chief of Staff Umezu and Naval Chief of Staff Toyoda Soemu, however, insisted on the following: Japanese homelands were not be occupied; Japanese forces abroad were to be withdrawn and disarmed by Japanese officials; and any war criminals were to be tried by the Japanese government.

With the military intransigent and rumors of plots to kill the Emperor as well as his advisors rife throughout Tokyo, Prime Minister Suzuki, newly converted to peace by advice from Marquis Kido, now pressed the Emperor to end the war. With the proviso that the Imperial Household be maintained but acknowledging that Japan would be subject to the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers, the Imperial Government sent the war-ending response to the Allies.

Although the Allies accepted the Japanese response with some reservations (which some Japanese including Matsumoto Shunichi, the vice-minister of foreign affairs, and Sakomizu Hisatsune, the chief cabinet secretary, thought included not protecting the Imperial Household), Suzuki, Marquis Kido, and Foreign Minister Togo were convinced the allied response was satisfactory. Thus unlike the Nazi surrender and the desire to eradicate all aspects of national socialism from the German soul, the United States and its allies actually accepted a *conditional surrender* of Japan in that they maintained the Emperor and the Imperial Household.

Although using in his 15 August broadcast the Royal "WE" to evoke the collectivity of the Japanese people, the Emperor seemed to be speaking as a father would to his children, for it seemed that what he was telling them was unbelievable . . . that Japan had lost the war and that the war was finally over, but *conditionally*.

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### "A Word of Caution"

Sir:

Admiral Ya'ari raises some valid points regarding littoral warfare ["The Littoral Arena: A Word of Caution," by Rear Admiral Yedidia Ya'ari, IN, *Naval War College Review*, Spring 1995], but his conclusions exaggerate the capabilities of submarines and cruise missiles while underestimating those of the surface forces. The threat to surface units can indeed be high in coastal waters, but this does not mean we should not or cannot operate there to our advantage. The Normandy coast was a hostile environment in 1944, yet the Allies operated there with surface ships quite effectively *after suitable preparation*. The same can be said for Leyte Gulf and a host of other successful amphibious operations. These operations provide the pattern for littoral warfare. The threat must be dealt with before we close the littoral in force, peeling away the enemy's defenses as we advance. We will not wander sheep-like within Exocet range at the commencement of hostilities, as Rear Admiral Ya'ari seems to imply we would. The aircraft carrier battle group (CVBG) will remain over the horizon.

One of the lessons of Royal Navy losses in the Falklands is the need for a sophisticated naval air arm to deal with regional littoral warfare operations. Had Britain possessed a suitable number of CVBGs, Argentine air power would not have operated for long. *Prolonged* suppression of modern defenses is required. The struggle for combat space superiority may be brief, as in Grenada. Or it may

resemble Guadalcanal, a fine example of prolonged operations in a littoral. Our carriers never entered Ironbottom Sound, but over time we established and maintained the superior balance of forces needed for success. A Tomahawk strike is a very convenient opening blow, but “immediately reprogrammable weapons delivery systems,” i.e., Navy and Marine aircraft, surface forces, and Marines, will be needed to win the battle.

The most difficult time for operations is in the transition to war. It is here that Rear Admiral Ya’ari’s points are most cogent. The men aboard *Stark* failed to realize they were in a war until the missile struck. They were deployed to a hostile environment beyond the capacity of their weapons, sensors and psychology. On a grander level, the disaster at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, was a result of a strategy of forward presence. Franklin D. Roosevelt deployed the Pacific Fleet from its regular home port of San Diego to an advanced position in Hawaii to “send a message” to the Japanese. Forward deployment is not a panacea; some caution is required. We would be wise to recall this perspective regarding current deployments in the Adriatic and Macedonia.

The challenges of littoral warfare and forward presence have many precedents. We should not approach operations with the idea that everything is new, but apply the appropriate historical precedents as a guide. The United States Navy must maintain a suitable force structure to carry out the missions properly assigned to us. The CVBG, the amphibious ready group, and the Marine expeditionary force are valuable and necessary weapons for the expeditionary force commander.

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*“A true learned journal can be an important source of information for those who have heavy demands on their time. From my experience, such a journal is no better than its reviews; and institutions are no better than their journals.”*

*Hyman G. Rickover*

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