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Naval Warfare Today and Tomorrow

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Moineville, Hubert. *Naval Warfare Today and Tomorrow*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1984. 141pp. \$19.95

Rear Adm. Hubert Moineville, French Navy (retired) originally published this book in 1982 under the title *La Guerre Navale: Reflexions sur les affrontements navals et leurs avenir*. In the three years since its first appearance, it has deserved far more attention in the English-speaking world than it has received. The present excellent translation by Comdr. P.R. Compton-Hall, RN, Director of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum at Gosport, Hampshire, now makes the book readily accessible to English readers. Admiral Moineville has added a short postscript to the English edition, written in 1982, on his immediate reaction to the Falklands War.

This book is a short and unpretentious-looking book but, in fact, it is a remarkable and ambitious study. It is a rare work among naval studies that reflects the nature of modern naval warfare and expresses a general concept that is tied neither to some particular naval construction program nor to the blind repetition of age-old naval concepts. It is an experienced naval officer's attempt to analyze logically the current situation, the various possible types of confrontation, the likely aims of participants, and the range of roles for navies as well as changes in technology and their effect on planning naval operations.

Moineville's book is divided into four topical sections: the possibilities

of naval confrontation today; general characteristics and context of naval operations; development of forces and naval strategy; and some thoughts on the conduct of naval action. Each of these sections logically builds upon its predecessor and creates a clear and concise examination of the subject.

The book culminates with some general conclusions on the main features that would characterize a battle between naval forces of the future. First, Moineville notes, the battle will take place against a background of strategic deterrence. Effective means of reconnaissance will allow each side to be well informed about the dispositions and movements of each other's surface units. At the same time, however, knowledge and current intelligence about the capabilities and characteristics of enemy equipment and resources will not be as precise as in the past. When the battle occurs, it will have a very technical character. Indeed, Moineville points out, that with the increasing importance of self-guided missiles, the part played by the expertise of those who are fighting has decreased in relation to those who design and produce the missiles. Additionally, computerized information about the enemy will be crucial. With this in mind, the hit advantage will undoubtedly lie with the one who fires first, since the hit probability of a missile is greater than with ordinary gunnery systems. Structural design and damage control will also be of the utmost importance in order to

ensure that a single missile will not sink a ship.

The site of the battle will be a key factor and it will be important to try to choose a location where land-based aircraft, fixed acoustic arrays and submarines can be directly involved in support of ship and sea-based aircraft. Speed and range will continue to be as important as always, but it will be important to try to create the ideal situation in which an enemy is held outside his own range of weapons but within one's own reach. Moreover, weapons will be used in an environment of electronic warfare and electronic countermeasures.

All of these factors suggest the need of technical compatibility at a variety of levels, from issues of allied interoperability to tactical command within the variety of one's own forces. One is faced by a conundrum in which the development of policy may be impeded by technical factors. Technicians, scientists and designers require policy decisions for further developments, but these decisions are difficult to make until problems in technical compatibility are solved.

Concluding his work, Moineville enumerates three main impressions which come from the multitude of naval developments since 1945: First of all, the range of political purposes which naval operations can serve has widened. Secondly, the range of confrontation that naval support of political objectives can bring about has widened at both ends on the scale of violence. Thirdly, technical developments have also widened and

diversified for navies. "Ultimately, then," Moineville writes, "the naval game remains interrelated with our technological explosions and the political changes that shake our world. It is very complex, highly technical, continually changing and very difficult, but it is also very important."

This is a book for any student of naval affairs. It is simple and straightforward enough for the beginning student, and at the same time, thought provoking for even the most advanced theorist. Moreover, it is the most concise and complete statement of the present state of naval warfare available to the general public.

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Cable, James. *Britain's Naval Future*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1983. 220pp. \$24.95

James Cable retired from a British diplomatic career in 1980. He now writes and lectures on international and naval affairs. He became well-known, in Western naval circles at least, after writing the excellent *Gunboat Diplomacy* (1971), one of the first analyses of the achievement of political ends by the use of limited naval force.

Like his earlier book, *Britain's Naval Future* is elegantly written with wit and logic and a virtually flawless attempt to present impartially all relevant facts and arguments. In his introduction, Cable notes that in the many British defence white papers