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## From the Editors

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## FROM THE EDITORS

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The question of command accountability goes to the heart of what it means to be a military professional. Over the last few years, several major tragic accidents involving USN vessels have trained a bright spotlight on this question. In “From Accountability to Punishment,” Michael Junge offers a careful analysis of incidents of naval officers dismissed from the naval service, going back to World War II. He argues that a major change can be discerned in Navy practice from roughly the mid-1980s, when the widely acknowledged “zero defects” culture of today first became dominant. Over these years, the distinctions between *accountability*, *responsibility*, and *culpability* have become fatally blurred, resulting in a higher rate of officer firings than in the past, with debilitating consequences for the naval profession. Captain Michael Junge, USN, is a professor in the College of Leadership and Ethics at the Naval War College.

Since the nineteenth century, war gaming has played an important role in the professional education of military and naval officers in many countries, and it remains one of the key missions of the Naval War College today. The increasing technological sophistication of commercial war games certainly helps to explain their wide popular appeal, but in the context of military education technology has its limitations. John Curry, in “The Utility of Narrative Matrix Games: A Baltic Example,” makes the case for so-called matrix games designed to test human decision-making in relatively open-ended scenarios, with reference specifically to a recent NATO war game with a Baltic scenario. John Curry is a senior lecturer at Bath Spa University, United Kingdom.

The recent decision by the current American administration to change the name of U.S. Pacific Command to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command appears to be a move of some geostrategic consequence, but so far its implications remain quite unclear. It leaves unchanged the western boundary of the command’s area of responsibility—an artificial line extending from the India-Pakistan border—rather than expanding it to include all of the Indian Ocean. It is, therefore, of considerable interest what the Indians themselves make of this. In “The ‘Indo’ in the ‘Indo-Pacific’: An Indian View,” Yogendra Kumar and Probal K. Ghosh provide what seems intended as an authoritative *tour d’horizon* of India’s view of the current state of maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean, as well as various suggestions for how that cooperation can be strengthened. Their

treatment of China is muted, but they indicate that, while China is not presently in a position to undermine the Indian Ocean's current maritime "system," this could change in the future, and they go so far as to suggest that the region's maritime states should consider establishing a regime governing use of the area's ports by "extraregional" powers. Yogendra Kumar, a retired Indian ambassador, and Probal K. Ghosh, a former officer in the Indian Navy, both write extensively on maritime affairs.

As the United States steps up its confrontation with Iran with the targeted killing of Major General Qasem Soleimani in January 2020, it is instructive to revisit our last shooting encounter with Iran, Operation EARNEST WILL, during the last years of the Reagan administration. Little remembered today, these efforts, triggered by the reflagging of Kuwaiti oil tankers by the United States to protect them from Iranian strikes during the final stage of the Iran-Iraq War, constituted the largest American naval engagement since World War II, resulting in the destruction of a large fraction of Iran's navy. In "Operation EARNEST WILL: The U.S. Foreign Policy behind U.S. Naval Operations in the Persian Gulf 1987–89; A Curious Case," Andrew R. Marvin examines the strategic considerations driving the American decision to involve itself in the Iran-Iraq struggle, arguing (contrary to much conventional wisdom) that it had less to do with protecting the flow of Gulf oil than with preventing the Soviet Union from gaining a foothold in the region. Andrew R. Marvin is an analyst in the Department of Homeland Security and a former U.S. Army officer.

In another footnote to the naval history of the Cold War, Bill Streifer and Irek Sabitov, in "'Improbable Allies': The North Korean Downing of a U.S. Navy EC-121 and U.S.-Soviet Cooperation during the Cold War," revisit the April 1969 incident, on the basis of much new material, particularly interviews with Soviet naval personnel directly involved in it. Then as now, the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was named "Kim." Bill Streifer and Irek Sabitov are journalists.

In "Sir John Orde and the Trafalgar Campaign: A Failure of Information Sharing," J. Ross Dancy and Evan Wilson examine a neglected aspect of the situation preceding the famous victory of Nelson at Trafalgar in May 1805: the relationship between Admirals Nelson and Orde. The latter commanded a British squadron off Cádiz, which was effectively, if not technically, within Nelson's area of operations in the Mediterranean. The authors argue that Orde's later reputation is undeserved, and that both he and the Admiralty made unnecessary mistakes in the way they managed command relationships and communication during this critical period. J. Ross Dancy and Evan Wilson are professors in the John B. Hattendorf Center for Maritime Historical Research at the Naval War College.

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