

# Executive Summary

*Within the United States, public awareness of the role and contribution of the Navy is cursory at best. The maritime strategy and our continuing effort to get out and talk about it have been very worthwhile.*

—Admiral Gary Roughead  
Chief of Naval Operations

With this 50<sup>th</sup> issue, *Joint Force Quarterly* celebrates its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. While much has changed since 1993, the interoperability problems and resistance to greater synergy that inspired General Colin Powell to establish *JFQ* are strikingly resilient. On April 21, 2008, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in speeches at the U.S. Military Academy and the Air War College asserted that the Armed Forces were adapting too slowly to new enemies and that military leaders were “stuck in old ways of doing business.” Two days later, Admiral Michael Mullen addressed the students of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the National War College as part of the National Defense University’s Distinguished Lecturer Program. He noted that the combined student bodies included a great many combat-experienced leaders and urged them to think differently about the nature of war and to consider new approaches to national security challenges. The Chairman recommended *JFQ* as an effective vehicle for professionals to air ideas and outline innovative concepts for securing national security objectives. In this issue, *JFQ* supports this mandate by examining elements of naval power and some contemporary challenges that make a strong U.S. Navy as important as ever.

A spirit of cooperation and innovative thinking is undeniably reflected in the scope and manner in which the new U.S. maritime strategy was developed and coordinated between the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security. Before finalizing the selection of manuscripts for this Forum, *JFQ* sat down with the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead, in his Pentagon office. He spoke to the importance of the new maritime strategy and the manner in which it was socialized both within and without the three sea Services. Before reading our Forum articles, readers may wish to skip ahead to the last article in this issue (Recall), which addresses the effort to engage the public on naval power and U.S. maritime security. As



U.S. Navy (Tiffini M. Jones)

Chief of Naval Operations ADM Gary Roughead speaks during a "Conversation with the Country" in Denver, Colorado

with aviation assets, naval vessels are decreasing in number and increasing in unit price, forcing difficult choices in the face of modernization and utilization demands. Despite the reality that the Army, Navy, and Air Force own and operate shipping, the naval power debate bears no resemblance to the ongoing airpower dispute presented in the last issue of *JFQ*. This is not to say that the issues are less contentious in the realm of naval power; rather, the friction is largely confined to the sea Services and far less exposed to inter-Service or public scrutiny.

Before one can assess the present state of naval power, it is important to define terms, and for this task, *JFQ* turns to one of its most prolific contributors and reviewers, the Naval War College's Dr. Milan Vego. Professor Vego begins his survey of contemporary naval power by disabusing readers of the notion that naval power and seapower are synonymous. He then presents the myriad roles of naval power across the spectrum of conflict and Service core competencies. While some may assume that technological advances in airpower have supplanted traditional Navy roles, Dr. Vego makes a convincing case for the persistence and scalability of naval power and how multidimensional military operations place adversaries on the horns of serial dilemmas. He concludes with an assessment of the continuing importance of naval power in realms that include homeland security and deterring the outbreak of large-scale hostilities abroad. This assessment is reinforced in the fifth and sixth Forum articles.

Our second Forum entry addresses the unfortunate state of contemporary U.S. seapower and warns that the Navy's large and growing share of the domestic maritime industry does not benefit America's future as a sea power. Lieutenant Douglas Tastad begins with a historical survey of U.S. commercial shipping, then compares this with its present state and proposes solutions to arrest and reverse the industry's decline. The author argues that domestic seapower's current vector prompts questions concerning the Navy's operational legitimacy and sustainability. In presenting his remedies, Lieutenant Tastad asserts that the Government must overcome its state of denial concerning these problems. He proposes capital investment and owner incentives, new maritime technology research, legislation addressing oversight, and terror insurance. Lieutenant Tastad concludes that "the commercial maritime sector no

longer underpins the Navy, rather the Navy is the victim of what industry remains."

In our third and fourth installments, *JFQ* again draws upon Naval War College expertise to provide context for the importance of modernizing the U.S. fleet. In addressing the People's Republic of China's (PRC's) urgent modernization of its navy, Drs. Andrew Erickson and Michael Chase observe that the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) focus is primarily on a possible conflict with Taiwan. This said, the PLAN is also concerned with a wider range of missions that include nuclear deterrence and protection of maritime resources. The importance of information in today's strategic environment, combined with the PRC's tradition of centralized command, has inspired great emphasis upon command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems. PLAN publications connect this technical modernization with the growing importance of joint operations, for which they have little experience and numerous impediments. The authors are unsure whether technological improvements in command and control will lead to the empowerment of junior commanders or if it will simply lead to greater centralization.

The fourth article in the Forum complements the previous one by assessing the implications of PRC naval power modernization for strategy. The Justice Department has noted that technology-focused Chinese espionage is "among the most aggressive" in the United States, as China's government attempts to secure by theft what an inefficient command economy cannot produce independently. Despite the influential school of thought that predicts the PRC will soon put to sea a ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) fleet that approaches the quality and quantity of the U.S. Navy, Drs. Toshi Yoshihara and James Holmes posit that PLAN technological improvements will reinforce, not undermine, Beijing's commitment to minimum deterrence. Their article examines the history of China's SSBN development and attempts to project the size of, and deployment patterns for, its SSBN fleet. The authors expect that technological obstacles and philosophical principles will inspire the PLAN to maintain its minimalist posture well into the next decade, but outline factors that could challenge this logic.

The ballistic missile threat is not a future concern; it is a clear and present danger for

which the United States is preparing with a sense of urgency. Our fifth essay outlines the proven and accelerating efforts of the U.S. Navy and its strategic partners to address the proliferation of these weapons and their potential for terrorist use. Admiral Alan Hicks asserts that there is an urgent need for a ballistic missile defense capability and begins his analysis with a review of the emerging threat, noting that a maximum of 30 minutes spans the detection, decision, and action window between launch and impact. For many readers, this will be a first introduction to the Missile Defense Agency and its integration of all missile defense programs and technologies into one Ballistic Missile Defense System. This agency, with significant contributions from U.S. Navy Aegis systems, is joining an allied coalition to form the foundation of international cooperation to deter and defeat this critical transnational threat.

The final article in the Forum is an argument for joint seabasing to compensate for a dramatic reduction in overseas basing rights, secure ports, and airfields. The term *seabasing* is misunderstood even in the joint military community, referring neither to floating bases nor to an exclusively logistic concept to support a major regional conflict. In brief, joint seabasing is the rapid deployment, assembly, command projection, reconstitution, and reemployment of joint combat power from the sea. Douglas King and John Berry observe that seabasing must be viewed as an interdependent and interconnected system of systems—everything from major combatants to inshore patrol craft, from surface and aerial connectors to cargo handling gear, and from command suites to medical centers. The authors contend that joint seabasing must be pursued as a means of deploying and employing sustained joint, interagency, and multinational capabilities from the sea.

In the next issue of *Joint Force Quarterly*, the Forum will focus on weapons of mass destruction, and the January 2009 edition will focus on land power, completing our review of the traditional approaches to military power through the lens of the operating media: air, sea, and land. The deadline for submissions on innovations in land warfare at the operational to strategic level is September 1, 2008. **JFQ**

—D.H. Gurney