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## In My View

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# IN MY VIEW . . .

## Antiship Missiles

Sir:

I read with great interest Lieutenant Commander Asen Kojukharov's essay "In Retrospect: The Employment of Anti-Ship Missiles" (*Naval War College Review*, Autumn 1997). His assessment of the bitter experiences of the Israeli navy in dealing with the emergent anti-ship missile threat is a fair one that throws new light on the problems of the period. He is, however, incorrect to state (page 123) that "the 1967 attack [on the *Eilat*] was to be the only successful ambush conducted by warships carrying antiship missiles against large men-of-war in the last thirty years."

During the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1971, the ex-British Battle-class destroyer *Khaibar* was sunk by two Styx missiles fired by the Indian Osa-class missile boat *Nirghat*. Although the attack was conducted at night off the Pakistani port of Karachi with both target and firing vessels under way, there were several parallels to the *Eilat* incident. The Pakistani destroyer was not equipped for electronic passive detection or decoy of the missiles, and she was slow to realise the nature of the threat; it took only two hits, at three-minute intervals, to ensure the destruction of the ship. The lack of appreciation of the missile threat contributed to the loss of the minesweeper *Muhafiz* when she closed to assist *Khaibar*. Her well-meant effort resulted in *Muhafiz*'s near obliteration by a single Styx from the *Nirghat*'s sister-ship *Veer*.

There were few new lessons for other navies in these encounters, but they did constitute an uncomfortable reminder that the loss of the *Eilat* was not a

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flash in the pan. Anti-ship missile defence became and remains to this day one of the fundamental problems for naval planners, particularly in navies which do not have the benefit of organic air early warning.

James Goldrick  
Commander, Royal Australian Navy

*Commander Kojukharov replies:*

In my opinion, neither the first strike on the Pakistani naval base at Karachi on 5 December 1971 (when the destroyer *Khaibar* and probably the mine-sweeper *Muhafiz* were sunk) nor the second one on 9 December 1971 are rightly considered ambushes by Indian light forces. They may be classed as the first engagements in history to employ cruise missiles; generally, however, engagements do not involve ambush as a method of naval operations. If we refer to N. Novichkov's and B. Rodionov's *Cruise Missiles in the Naval Engagement* [title translated on page 124, note 12, of the Autumn 1997 issue as *Cruise Missiles in Naval Warfare*] and the publication [cited in note 6] of Captain Dotsenko (a professor of naval history at the Kuznetsov Naval Academy at St. Petersburg), as well as Bozhenko's work on naval operations in the Indo-Pakistani conflict of 1971, it would be incorrect to conclude that the *Khaibar*, *Muhafiz*, and ships sunk in the roads of Karachi were destroyed by an ambush. In my view, this was a typical foray, with missile boats at a speed of twelve knots trying to pass for fishing vessels in order to take the enemy by tactical surprise. Ambush aims at surprise attack; however, having attained that prerequisite is not necessarily equal to conducting an ambush.

The *Eilat* was sunk in defense of its own territorial waters, that is, in a prepared position at the head of Tina Bay. I suppose that the difference in the opinions between Commander Goldrick and myself results from the different terminologies employed.

Asen Kojukharov  
Lt. Cdr., Bulgarian Navy  
Naval Academy, Varna

### OMFTS Logistics

Sir:

We have read with interest Lt. Mark Beddoes's article "Logistical Implications of Operational Maneuver from the Sea" [*Naval War College Review*, Autumn

1997], and we have a number of comments to make from the viewpoint of members of the logistics (G-4) staff of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific.

In general, our view is that in the context of the Marine Corps' warfighting philosophy—maneuver warfare—and the Navy's Naval Expeditionary Force concept, the maneuver and overall operational capability of the Navy/Marine Corps will be enhanced as a result of OMFTS. Maneuver warfare focuses on the enemy and not terrain. Per our Commandant's Planning Guidance and his subsequent Frag Order, operations and logistics require the ability to anticipate, adapt, improvise, and innovate. This, which is the *art* of war, is lost in the Jominian formulas contained in the article. OMFTS fuses a proven history of amphibious (from the sea) warfare with emergent technologies. Amphibious operations are not Marine operations, they are the time-proven product of joint Navy–Marine operations—operations in which each service has taken calculated and valiant risks in support of one another and toward overall mission success. Key to the sustainment equation is the fielding of the MV-22 and the AAV, used in conjunction with the CH-53 and LCAC. Further, Lieutenant Beddoes assumes that all sustainment will be from the sea and that all inland troop movement will be accomplished by air. Nowhere in OMFTS is that stipulated.

Additionally, there are some matters of organization and equipment. First, the Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable (MEU(SOC)), is not the smallest Marine Air–Ground Task Force (MAGTF); smaller MAGTFs can be task-organized and tailored to meet specific mission requirements. Its command element comprises *detachments* of the units Lieutenant Beddoes lists, vice the entire entities. Also, Lieutenant Beddoes does not mention the combat service support (CSS) capabilities of the MEU Service Support Group (MSSG). The MSSG is the MAGTF's principal provider of CSS, either from afloat or ashore, depending on the situation. Finally, by the 2010–2015 time frame, on which the article is based, the M198 howitzer will have been replaced by a lightweight 155 mm weapon. The new howitzer will offer the landing force more mobile artillery and reduce current lift requirements.

Finally, the author attempts in this article to capture and quantify the art of logistics using mathematical equations. First, not all the variables, such as the MSSG mentioned above, and unmanned aerial delivery systems tried and proven during the recent Advanced Warfighting Experiment, were accounted for. More importantly, Sun Tzu called it the “Art of War”; Clausewitz addresses the uncertainty and chaos—we must never assume that war can be reduced exclusively to scientific formulas. While mathematical calculations provide a good planning foundation, war is, and in the uncertain 21st century will continue to be, an art.

R.M. Wint  
Major, U.S. Marine Corps

J. Ascunce  
Major, U.S. Marine Corps

## U.S. Bases in Japan

Sir:

“Host Nation Support, Responsibility Sharing, and Alternative Approaches to U.S. Bases in Japan” [by Paul S. Giarra, *Naval War College Review*, Autumn 1997] is a well researched, clear, concise, and logically organized article of considerable interest to the Commander, Marine Forces Pacific staff (where I am head of the Policy and Future Plans Branch). I have several concerns, however, that might merit the author’s consideration.

First, the comments (page 63) concerning the movement of Marine artillery training to Korea are somewhat shortsighted. Mr. Giarra fails to consider the reaction of North Korea or China, or the likelihood of Korean reunification during the next five to ten years. Additionally, there is no mention of the increased cost associated with this proposal. Even with the current “relocation” fix, with Japan picking up the cost of moving our artillery training off Okinawa, there are “hidden” costs (such as the days required to prepare for and recover from deployment, and then redeploy) that we have not really come to terms with. Of course, most believe the increased training benefits of this arrangement outweigh any such incidentals.

I disagree with the author’s conclusion (page 64) that “previously rotating units would become available for other essential missions, such as crisis response and Standing Joint Task Force duties.” There is no increase in the number of Marine units, and this view discounts shortfalls in strategic lift.

I also question the call for “a better screening process” for U.S. service members assigned to Okinawa. The Marine Corps cannot and should not attempt to select only a certain caliber of Marine to go to Okinawa. We have a sizable force on Okinawa, and the requirement for “quality” Marines is no greater there than elsewhere. Additionally, such an effort would disrupt unit cohesiveness and negatively impact morale Corps-wide. The solution to Mr. Giarra’s concerns lies in the Corps’ continuing efforts to recruit, train, and retain a force of top-quality individuals who adhere to our core values of honor, courage, and commitment.

Lastly, the author fails to substantiate his call for a “Marine general officer to concentrate exclusively on community relations” (page 64). The current commanders and their staffs are capable of handling this function (assuming that the III Marine Expeditionary Force’s billets for the Special Action Committee on Okinawa [SACO] are staffed). The addition of a general officer would not ensure that community issues are better addressed. We would be better off providing needed resources (which I am sure can be readily identified by base and camp commanders) than setting up a figurehead to appease external perceptions of a lack of command attention.

On the other hand, the concept of “shared access” at Kadena, Futenma, and Naha Military Port (page 62) is an interesting one. Also, I certainly agree with Mr. Giarra about the benefits of forward-deployed units, using theater (vice strategic) lift to respond to crises. The III MEF Air Contingency MAGTF (Marine Air–Ground Task Force) and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit can respond to many contingencies (small-scale contingencies in particular) within the Asian–Pacific Area of Responsibility more readily than can units in the continental United States.

M. Bulawka  
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps

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