

1996

Sea Soliders in the Cold War: Amphibious Warfare, 1945-1991

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Recommended Citation

Johanson, Walter J. (1996) "Sea Soliders in the Cold War: Amphibious Warfare, 1945-1991," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 49 : No. 1 , Article 22.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol49/iss1/22>

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Where substance is addressed, the culture of intelligence encourages warnings of possible danger rather than predictions of stability. Bathurst also offers cautions about the American bias for technology, which ignores the human and especially the emotional elements of intelligence. The danger is that one day the U.S. may demonstrate its technological prowess against an unsophisticated foe who simply will not be impressed.

Although *Intelligence and Mirror* is not an easy read, it is worth the effort and the attention of the serious scholar who shares Bathurst's vision for peace.

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Alexander, Joseph H. and Barnett, Merrill L. *Sea Soldiers in the Cold War: Amphibious Warfare 1945-1991*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1995. 292pp. \$32.95

Amphibious warfare experienced a "golden age" during the Second World War when the ability to project ground forces along an enemy coastline at a point of one's choosing realized one of the greatest advantages of seapower. As Liddell Hart observed, it was allied amphibious power that compelled Hitler to remove forces from the Eastern Front and disperse them from Norway to Greece. The European theater showed that the centuries-old British practice against militarily stronger continental enemies (the "British way in warfare") was still of value in an era of air and mechanized forces.

The authors demonstrate that although in the Cold War the "golden age" was over and the period provided few examples of amphibious operations on the scale of World War II, it was not necessarily a time of stagnation. Indeed, as stated in the Navy and Marine Corps white paper ". . . From the Sea," emphasis on conducting littoral warfare in the post-Cold War era rests on the strong foundation of Cold War amphibious operations. Operational maneuver from the sea, the most recent concept development in amphibious warfare, is based upon technical and doctrinal developments that preceded the fall of communism, and cannot be understood without reference to those antecedents. The model of operational maneuver from the sea is, for the Marines, not a World War II invasion but, in fact, the Seoul-Inchon campaign of 1950.

This book was written by two Marine Corps officers who offer an informative account of amphibious operations, primarily by the U.S. but also by its allies, opponents, and others, between its "golden age" and the "new age." (It includes an excellent seventeen-page bibliography.) Alexander and Barnett demonstrate that progress has been uneven, due in large part to block obsolescence of World War II-era ships, and that obstacles now considered threats to amphibious operations, such as missiles, mines, and weapons of mass destruction, actually have been of major concern since 1945. Indeed, they attribute General Omar Bradley's 1949 statement that future amphibious operations were unlikely to the realization that an armada like that which was anchored off

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Normandy would be a very tempting target for an atomic bomb.

However, Bradley's statement was overtaken by too many trends of the Cold War. First, no major Cold War amphibious operation was undertaken against an opponent armed with weapons of mass destruction, and second, amphibious planners strove to develop systems and tactics to reduce vulnerability to such weapons. The search for an "over the horizon" capability began even before Inchon. Operation theory and execution experienced incremental but continuous changes, so that the amphibious operation of 1991 had small resemblance to those of 1945. On the other hand, since the governing joint doctrinal publication on amphibious operations (Joint Publication 3-02) is mostly based on experiences of World War II, the impression persists that little is new since then.

There are some minor errors which detract from the overall value of the book. For instance, between 1945 and 1950 the World War II amphibious fleet was not gutted by sales of surplus ships to "Third World allies"—Third World allies did not exist at that time. Also, the LCVP is not a "Peter" but a "Papa" boat; the *Paul Revere*-class LPAs were converted *Mariner*-class breakbulk ships, not converted container ships; a helicopter is described as having a design speed of "one hundred knots per hour"; and there were not two U.S. divisions in the Korean battle line by the end of June 1950—Task Force Smith, an understrength 24th Infantry Division battalion with some artillery, did not enter combat until 5 July 1950. Further, it is stated that Major General Ned

Almond and the Army planners of "Chromite" (the Inchon invasion) casually dismissed the Marines' protests for the bridge equipment they would need to cross the Han to take Seoul; since the Marines did cross the Han and take Seoul, the reader is left wondering how they did it. Also, one reads that Chief of Naval Operations Forrest Sherman "shifted his support against the [Inchon] operation to the argument in favor of MacArthur's bold stroke." Better editing would have Sherman "shifting his opposition to support of" Chromite.

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Marolda, Edward, J. *By Sea, Air, and Land: An Illustrated History of the U.S. Navy and the War in Southeast Asia.* Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1994. 416pp. \$43

In recent years, the Naval Historical Center has made a conscientious effort to produce historical volumes with greater popular appeal than the specialized monographs and document collections that have always been its forte. *By Sea, Air, and Land* is the epitome of this approach and, by all standards of evaluation, a great success. Combining a richly illustrated, "keep on top of the coffee table" look with solid, well written history, this book is a proud and worthy tribute to the Navy veterans of the Vietnam conflict.

Armed with over five hundred black-and-white and color photographs and useful maps and charts, this work follows the Navy involvement in