

1978

## The Battle of the Java Sea

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### Recommended Citation

Dull, Paul S. and van Oosten, F.C. (1978) "The Battle of the Java Sea," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 31 : No. 2 , Article 26.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol31/iss2/26>

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rations. The oil-producing nations' bid for the control of production and prices of their only precious and depletable natural resource and its use as an instrument of foreign policy by the Arab states has *not* been a manifestation of greed or the "exploitation" of the West by the East! Rather, it is politically and economically as well as historically a reflection of the fundamental struggle of these nations to control their own destiny. Also, the Arab-Israeli war, the Arab oil embargo and the explosion of oil prices on the global shift of the balance of power do not receive the serious consideration they deserve. The pre-1973 assessment of the relatively low importance of the Indian Ocean to the United States has been significantly eroded, if not overturned, by the United States' rapid and substantial dependence on Persian Gulf oil and on the vital and vulnerable sealanes of the Indian Ocean.

Thirdly, the study's great power emphasis results in relative disregard of cooperation, as contrasted with conflict, among the regional powers of the Indian Ocean. To be sure, the region is clearly plagued by multifaceted, complicated, and overlapping interstate conflicts and domestic instabilities and civil wars. But recent patterns of conflict avoidance might foretell a significant trend. Numerous jurisdictional and political disputes over territory, boundaries, and the continental shelf have been settled by frequent resort to peaceful means.

All in all, Professor Váli's contribution lies in a description of the regional context of the great power balance and counterbalance, and a realistic appraisal of the central strategic issues between the superpowers as these relate to the politics of the Indian Ocean region. The analytical shortcomings mentioned above are more than compensated for by the strengths of this study as the first bold, broad and imaginative attempt at

synthesizing a vast amount of information in an almost encyclopedic manner within the covers of a single volume.

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van Oosten, F.C. *The Battle of the Java Sea*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1977. 128pp.

This book earns both plus and minus marks. On the plus side, it provides hitherto unpublished data from official Dutch reports and papers. A case in point, in the Battle of Badung Strait, van Oosten corrects Samuel Eliot Morison's Volume 3<sup>\*</sup> statement that the third ABDA (American, British, Dutch, Australian) wave to repulse the Japanese landings at Sanur Roads, Bali, had five MTB's. van Oosten's Dutch records show eight in two waves of four. (The destroyer *Asashio's* Action Report records seeing one of the waves of four.)

The description of the complexities of and the Dutch frustration with ABDA Command affords valuable new insights. The statistical data in 16 of the 17 appendixes (see below *in re* Appendix 14) allows the reader to find necessary material for a comprehensive analysis of the battles to save Java. Many of the 66 photographs, most of which came from the Naval Historical Section of the Navy Staff at the Hague and the Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, have not been published previously. The five diagrams and track charts, to some extent, are based on Japanese records.

To preface the minus side, the difficulties of naval historians in arriving at an absolute common denominator for the actions of all sides in a naval battle must be noted. This reviewer follows the rule that if all the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) ships and very few ABDA

\*Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1947-1962).

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ships survived a battle, the official IJN versions are more likely to be correct and complete. IJN data are in microfilm reels in the U.S. Naval Archives (Washington, D.C. Navy Yard). These are in Japanese handwriting (except one reel translated into English) and contain warships' Tabular Records of Movement and Action Reports, and division, squadron and fleet War Diaries and Detailed Action Reports. The outer Netherlands East Indies and Java operations are in Volume 23 (American library designation) of the war history series produced by the Japan Defense Agency War College. War History Section (Boei Kenshujo Senshishitsu (now Senshibu), *Senshi Sōsho*) For these operations, IJN track charts are in Volume 23, Supplement.

Although van Oosten utilizes some Japanese sources (and the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, *Interrogation of Japanese Officials* which is unreliable), Volume 23 and its Supplement have material which is at times at variance with his *Battle of the Java Sea* narrative. Moreover, his narrative is unaccountably sparse. To give an example of these variances, van Oosten (p. 51) correctly notes that the Royal Navy destroyers *Electra* and *Encounter* peeled off from Admiral Doorman's force to meet a second torpedo attack by two IJN destroyer squadrons (Desrons). Thereafter, van Oosten and the IJN accounts differ somewhat. Desron 2, eight destroyers, led by the light cruiser *Jintsu*, launched torpedoes towards Doorman's columns at 11,000 yards. They then retired to the northwest and the more immediate danger Doorman faced came from the light cruiser *Naka* and her six Desron 4 destroyers (*Yudachi*, *Harukaze*, *Samidare*, *Murasame*, *Minegumo*, *Asagumo*) further south than Desron 2. *Naka* fired torpedoes at 18,500 yards and then retired. Four of her destroyers launched torpedoes at about 10,000 yards and then also reversed course. For some unexplained reason, the

*Minegumo* and *Asagumo* continued their charge making their torpedo launch at 6,500 yards.

It was this Desron 4 attack that *Electra* and *Encounter* tried to thwart. *Minegumo* and *Encounter* ineffectually exchanged fire at 3,000 yards, both going north and then northeast, but the real fire fight was between *Asagumo* and *Electra* at a range of 6,000 yards closing to 5,000 yards. The close-range duel went on for ten minutes. *Asagumo* fired 191 main battery rounds and 136 secondary battery rounds. There was no mention of a second torpedo launch in her Action Report. *Electra* hit *Asagumo*, causing moderate damage and killing four of her crew. (van Oosten says five.) In turn, *Electra* was mortally hit and sank. It is puzzling that van Oosten credits *Exeter* and *Witt de With*, and not *Electra*, for the damage to *Asagumo*. (See *Senshi Sōsho*, Vol. 23, Supplement, Plate 5.)

The Battle of the Java Sea has been variously reported. In the actions cited above, Morison has four U.S. Navy destroyers under Commander Binford making the charge against Desron 4. In reality, the old and slow four-pipers were relatively unengaged in the battle and were detached midway through this destroyer attack. Roskill, in general, follows Morison; Kirby is closest to the Japanese account.\* The more popular David Thomas, *The Battle of the Java Sea*, has rather unfortunately been neglected, yet he follows Kirby rather closely.

It is regrettable that this otherwise well-researched and useful book is marred by careless proofreading. On the track chart on page 50, it should be *Naka*, not *Naki*. On the track chart on page 62, it should be *Abebono*, not

\*Stephen Wentworth Roskill, *The War at Sea, 1939-45* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1954-1960); Stanley Woodburn Kirby, *The War Against Japan* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1957).

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*Akabomo*, but the worst error is in Appendix 14 where the column titles are reversed and thus the data in the columns do not apply to the titles. Moreover, this makes the footnote which states the *Minegumo* did not launch torpedoes at odds with the confused table. It can be inferred (and correctly) that she launched eight.

The bibliography is useful in giving Dutch sources but could include better secondary works in English. The index is rather too short to be comprehensive.

Despite the criticisms, if they are that, noted above, this is a valuable scholarly book and certainly deserves a place in any professional navyman's library. van Oosten has provided valuable Dutch Navy data for future naval historians.

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Yergin, Daniel. *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977. 526pp.

Napoleon once said that "History is agreed upon myth." Contrary to the publicity surrounding the publication of Daniel Yergin's *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State*, the cold war still resists the fashioning of any kind of consensus. Yergin, a Research Fellow at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs and a lecturer at the Harvard Business School, has written a facile, entertaining and well-written account of the early years of the cold war. As the "definitive account of the cold war" it raises more questions than it answers.

Yergin's thesis is that two views of the Soviet Union emerged at the end of World War II. One, called the Riga Axioms, was developed by those men who served at the Latvian listening post in the late 1920's and espoused an anti-Soviet view. The other, the Yalta

Axioms, urged conciliation with the Soviets and was represented by Franklin D. Roosevelt at Yalta. In the confrontation between the two sets of principles, the Riga Axioms triumphed. The winner then advocated establishing a strong military posture, second to none, in order to contain the Russian menace.

I have difficulty with Yergin's basic premise. To say the Riga school developed an anti-Soviet stance and converted the key decisionmakers to this viewpoint during 1945 and 1946 is to ignore reality for the sake of a model. The reality is that by the late 1920's, anti-Russian sentiment was already rampant in the United States. Arno Mayer's *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking, 1918-1919*, Robert K. Murray's *Red Scare* and William Preston's *Aliens and Dissenters* describe the development of this phenomenon. A hatred of Soviet Russia was a legacy of World War I and the Red Scare. I emphasize this because Mr. Yergin intimates that George Kennan, Chip Bohlen, and Loy Henderson all arrived at Riga tabulae rasae and there developed an anti-Soviet position. These men and Harriman, Crew, Acheson, and Truman were products of their times and the climate of the times was decidedly anti-Russian.

The treatment of President Roosevelt and the Yalta Axioms, while perhaps more valid, does not adequately explain why FDR did not support the Riga Axioms. Was he merely trying to keep two disparate nations, whose only bond was a common enemy, together? Or was he, as Yergin would have us believe, deeply committed to a Wilsonian world view? The reader cannot be really sure.

Based on the evidence Yergin presents, it is difficult to accept the second part of his thesis. He believes diplomatic initiatives, which he has illustrated with studies of the personalities of the important policymakers, led to the formation of the national security state. He uses the traditional examples to explain why decisions were made to