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From the Editor

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From the Editor

In This Issue . . .

As this issue goes to press, the United States and Coalition forces are consolidating their hold on Iraq. It's a victorious conclusion at what many would consider a rather small price in the annals of modern warfare—although certainly a price not unnoticed by the families and loved ones of the 157 Coalition soldiers killed and 495 others who may, or may not, recover from their wounds. But will this victory ensure the peace and tranquility promised? Regardless of whether or not Iraq blossoms into a pro-US democracy, America continues its preparation for the myriad of threats to its national well-being. In this issue our authors present a wide range of thoughts on the challenges facing the nation and its military in this era of uncertainty.

General Montgomery C. Meigs (USA Ret.) provides the first entry in our thematic feature “Preparing for a New Way of War.” His “Unorthodox Thoughts about Asymmetric Warfare,” analyzes the combination of asymmetry and the ability of terrorists to devise “idiosyncratic” means for unorthodox approaches to warfare. The author uses history to demonstrate the distinction between asymmetric and idiosyncratic attack and the resulting impact on the current operational and strategic environments. He concludes that although the concept of asymmetry is important, it is operational idiosyncrasy and its potential that hold the greatest threat to national and military security. As Director of the Army Physical Fitness Research Institute at the US Army War College, Thomas J. Williams is well aware of the criticism leveled against today's senior military leaders for being too cautious, devoid of creativity, and lacking in the ability to engage in “out-of-the-box” thinking. Williams build his thesis on the premise that the leadership skills, traits, and attributes of today's senior leaders are being redefined by asymmetric warfare. The author contrasts the leadership skills and attributes required of “conventional warriors” throughout history with those facing asymmetric threats. He then provides a list of selective attributes and competencies required to promote the mental readiness and strategic agility required of today's senior leaders. Terrence Kelly examines two priorities for America's Army in his “Transformation and Homeland Security: Dual Challenges for the US Army.” Kelly utilizes the template of Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF) to analyze the strategic interaction between transformation and homeland security. His analysis provides observations and conclusions, organized along the DOTMLPF categories, calling for a more holistic approach by the Army to the demands of transformation and homeland security.

As we conclude our second war with Iraq, Douglas A. Borer reminds us that there is much to be learned from the period leading up to our first incursion into the Middle East, 12 years ago. The author reexamines the fundamental assumptions associated with the foreign policy doctrine of engagement that guided US actions in Iraq prior to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Borer's analysis of the policy that supported the Reagan and first Bush Administrations' practice of granting non-coercive, positive trade incentives to the Iraqis, even when presented with

proof of their misdeeds, provides enlightening insight as to why the United States failed to exercise its significant economic and political powers. Borer adroitly determines that an economically powerful and yet politically sensitive nation like the United States can be manipulated by an economically vulnerable but politically resilient autocracy (like Iraq), if the autocracy is clever enough to utilize a strategy of “inverse engagement.”

As a result of “embedded” reporters and local news coverage of deploying units and individuals, Americans believe, as never before, they understand and support the ethos of the American soldier. The reasons why citizens choose to serve their nation provides the thesis for Barry Strauss’s “Reflections on the Citizen-Soldier.” In his captivating personal account of one American family’s military experience, Strauss chooses not to dwell on the patriotism and professionalism of those who have served, but rather to target for analysis why individuals have not. He provides a series of thoughts and recommendations as to how and why Americans might serve the republic. Strauss concludes with a vignette involving the Vietnam Veterans Memorial that captures the essence of citizen service and the spirit of the citizen-soldier.

Our recurring feature “Regional Perspectives” presents three diverse and insightful articles related to geopolitics, alliances, and national security. Doug Bandow argues for the termination of America’s “most consistently dangerous commitment since the end of World War II,” our alliance with the Republic of Korea (ROK). His examination of the evolving geopolitical environment on the Korean peninsula offers an explanation as to why many (both in the ROK and the United States) are calling for American troops to go home. Bandow makes an excellent case that the American commitment to the ROK has little to do with vital US interests, but rather is a reflection of a lingering Cold War strategy. Michael Rühle examines the future of NATO following its most recent expansion and the events of 9/11. Noting the difficulties the Alliance was experiencing in dealing with the future of the transatlantic security relationship, Rühle details how the events of 9/11 placed the relationship in an entirely new and all-too-clear perspective. He concludes his article with the determination that the Prague Summit was a highly significant event that strengthened the relationship between the United States and members of NATO. Rommel C. Banlaoi closes our regional perspectives with a candid assessment of the Southeast Asian relationship with China following the events of 11 September 2001. He contrasts the fears of most Western nations related to the rapid rise in world-stature of China with the Southeast Asian view that such a rise is in their economic best interest. Banlaoi concludes that Southeast Asian nations sincerely believe China’s intentions are benign; in fact, they view the rise of China more as an opportunity with concomitant challenges rather than a threat.

Our final article is Dr. Aaron Belkin’s review of America’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. Belkin, the Director of the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military, provides a balanced, logical analysis of whether lifting the ban on known gay and lesbian soldiers would undermine military performance. The author uses numerous studies and historical examples to postulate that there is overwhelming evidence to refute those who contend that the performance of American military forces would be degraded if the ban on gays and lesbians serving openly were lifted. — RHT □