



### **Editorial Note**

#### **For Want of a Shoal: Yamamoto and Midway**

Richard C. Thornton

#### **FDR's New World Order: A Chimerical Vision**

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#### **Truman and the Pacific War End Game**

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#### ***Uncertain Empire: Blaming America First***

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Abstract: A key factor in Japanese defeat at the Battle of Midway was the failure of pre-battle reconnaissance. Japanese long-range float planes could, if used as planned, have detected American carriers en route to their ambush positions north of Midway.	
<b>FDR's New World Order: A Chimerical Vision</b> Richard C. Thornton	<b>14</b>
Abstract: At Cairo, Tehran and Quebec, Roosevelt made mutually contradictory promises to the British, the Chinese, and the Soviets. At Yalta, FDR decided to satisfy Stalin's strategic designs at the expense of Churchill and Chiang Kai-Shek, in hopes of creating a lasting peace based on a U.S.-Soviet partnership. This was a chimerical vision.	
<b>Truman and the Pacific War End Game</b> Richard C. Thornton	<b>46</b>
Abstract: President Truman did not seek to keep the Russians out of the Pacific War, which was impossible. Instead, he used the atomic bomb to prod them into it prematurely, and by bringing the war to an early end, limit their conquests. Truman acted decisively to prevent a Soviet invasion of Japan proper.	
<b><i>Uncertain Empire: Blaming America First</i></b> James D. Perry	<b>74</b>
Abstract: This article critiques <i>Uncertain Empire</i> , a collection of essays that represent America as the instigator of the Cold War, with the Soviet Union, China, and the Third World as passive victims who merely reacted to American aggression.	
<b>Guadalcanal, Torch, and the Second Front</b> James D. Perry	<b>100</b>
Abstract: In the summer of 1942, American decisions to fight in the Solomons and North Africa contradicted the official strategy of "Germany First." Rather than invade France in 1943, Roosevelt decided to defer the Second Front until 1944 because he had not yet reached agreement with Stalin on postwar U.S.-Soviet cooperation.	

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

This premier issue of the *Journal of Strategy and Politics* focuses on the Second World War. The articles are derived from presentations the authors made at academic conferences at the United States Naval Academy, the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, and other venues.

Richard Thornton's *For Want of a Shoal* examines the genesis of Japan's Midway plan, and the baffling question of Yamamoto's failure to conduct proper pre-battle reconnaissance. The Japanese intended to reconnoiter using long-range float planes refueled at French Frigate Shoals, but the presence of American vessels prevented the use of these shoals as a refueling point. But why did the Japanese not refuel at one of the many other shoals within range of Hawaii? The Americans could not guard them all.

*FDR's New World Order: A Chimerical Vision* observes that President Roosevelt made incompatible promises to Churchill, Stalin, and Chiang at the wartime conferences. Ultimately, FDR decided to renege on his promises to support Britain and China against the USSR, and instead to satisfy Stalin's territorial ambitions in the hope that this would permit postwar U.S.-Soviet cooperation. Roosevelt's zeal to destroy German and Japanese militarism and British and French colonialism opened the door to the emergence of Soviet imperialism.

*Truman and the Pacific War End Game* notes that President Truman, on taking office, decided that Roosevelt had offered the Soviets too much in exchange for entering the Pacific War. Accordingly, Truman decided to revise the end-game strategy. He would adhere to the agreements FDR had made in writing, but not the unwritten ones. In particular, Truman determined to limit the Soviet advance in Korea, and to prevent the Soviet occupation of Japan. The atomic bombings served to bring the Soviets into the war before they were fully ready, and then to end the war before the Soviets advanced too far into China or landed in Japan proper.

James Perry's *Uncertain Empire: Blame America First* reviews a collection of essays about the Cold War published in 2012. The essays reflect a "postmodernist" approach to history, in which the

political positions of the author supersede the search for objective truth. Generally speaking, the authors regard America as the root of all evil, and the Soviet Union and various Third World nations as the innocent victims of American aggression.

*Guadalcanal, Torch, and the Second Front* investigates American strategy in 1942. In 1941 and early 1942, the British and Americans agreed to concentrate their forces in Britain for an invasion of France in 1943. Yet the Americans almost immediately diverged from this strategy, sending large forces to the Southwest Pacific and launching an offensive in the Solomons. Later, Roosevelt insisted on an invasion of French North Africa. The net effect of these decisions was to postpone an invasion of France from 1943 to 1944. These decisions are commonly blamed on the British and on the need to respond to the “emergency of the moment.” However, this article argues that the postponement of the Second Front until 1944, and the diversion of forces into secondary theaters, resulted from Roosevelt’s failure to meet with Stalin in 1942 and establish a satisfactory basis for postwar world order.

We look forward to publishing additional articles on strategy and military history in future issues.

— Dr. James D. Perry  
Editor  
*The Journal of Strategy and Politics*