

## Letters . . .

**To the Editor**—In his article, “Nuclear Proliferation on the Indian Subcontinent,” Kenneth Totty (*JFQ*, Spring 00) offers some insightful comments. But sadly he perpetuates a myth promulgated by supporters of Pakistan in claiming that: “Islamabad favors conducting a plebiscite administered by the United Nations that was originally provided for in a resolution passed during the late 1940s, and that New Delhi agreed to but never honored.” However this is far from the truth. The ruler of Kashmir, Maharajah Hari Singh, on learning that Pakistani-backed forces were invading his state, made an appeal to India for help. But New Delhi indicated that it would only intervene if Kashmir was considered part of its national territory.

When Pakistanis got within shooting range of the capital, Srinagar, the Maharajah agreed to Indian conditions for assistance. Indian troops intervened and drove the invaders back, though not entirely out of the state. Later the congress of Kashmir approved the accession to India. To avoid further bloodshed, India agreed with Pakistan to send the dispute to the United Nations.

The U.N. response declared that to reach any decision on Kashmir, the state must return to normalcy, which required that Pakistani troops would withdraw, Pakistani nationals and tribal groups not resident in Kashmir would leave, Indian troops would depart only after a complete withdrawal of nonresidents although some would stay to maintain law and order, and a plebiscite would only be raised once the above requirements were met.

I would expect this to set the record straight.

—Rahul T. Pandit  
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**To the Editor**—In “The People’s Liberation Army Looks to the Future,” which appeared in your recent forum on transformation (*JFQ*, Summer 00), Charles Hawkins provides an interesting view of Chinese military modernization and its relationship to the revolution in military affairs (RMA). However, he makes one claim that is open to challenge: “With the exception of the United States, China has analyzed the implications of RMA more than any other nation.” Hawkins continues by noting the Soviet origins of the term RMA and its application in the 1980s to the transformation of conventional warfare as associated with precision fires and strikes, the advent of automated control systems, and the transformation of radio-electronic combat. The reader is left with an impression that once the Soviet empire collapsed, interest in RMA waned in Russia. This is incorrect. Interest increased while the country fell into a deep and protracted crisis. Those connected to the General Staff urged an

“unblinking eye on the future” to exercise foresight as political leaders discounted military modernization absent any apparent strategic threat.

The last decade has been difficult for the Russian military as Chechnya demonstrated. Still, RMA has remained a major theme of military theory and thought. It has competed for attention in the radical transformation of domestic politics, national economy, and a new security environment. Economic decline has made military procurement troublesome, but interest in RMA has not lagged. As in China, the Persian Gulf War served as a catalyst for an intensive debate about technological change by transforming the military art and recasting organization and force structure. There is no shortage of capable thinkers to examine RMA and adapt the force to its requirements.

Finding industrial warfare and nuclear conflict unlikely, Russian theorists began to look at the problem of local armed conflicts and regional wars. Like their Chinese counterparts, they saw Desert Storm as a manifestation of RMA in practice but warned that the genuine implications of this transformation were incomplete. General Makhmut Gareev addressed the technological, political, and economic trends that would shape conflict over the next 15 years in *If War Comes Tomorrow: The Contours of Future Armed Conflicts*. He refused to identify any particular weapon as defining the current RMA and stressed the strategic environment, which will promote an “indirect approach” to warfare. Other works have addressed specific aspects of RMA. V.D. Ryabchuk led specialists from the Frunze Military Academy in a systems approach to the evolution of military art under the impact of the current revolution. They presented military systemology as a new and distinct way of applying a theory of complex systems to tactics and operational art. Vladimir Slipchenko wrote of sixth generation warfare where precision, automated control systems, radio-electronic combat, and information operations replaced deterrence with a paradigm of “no-contact warfare.” Russian theorists have developed a distinct approach to information conflict and operations.

Up to the end of the Yeltsin administration, one key obstacle stood in the way of a coherent response to RMA: identification of the probable main opponent. After the NATO campaign against Serbia, pronouncements by the Ministry of Defense left no doubt that the United States and NATO had assumed that capital role. Couched in terms of a

struggle against monopolism, draft doctrine also identified the United States and NATO as the opponent. There is continuing tension between that larger but remote threat and imminent dangers that the Ministry of Defense and General Staff face within and beyond Russian borders. But progress in adapting to RMA is apparent. Moscow radically transformed force structure, eliminating branches and consolidating forces. It reduced the number of military districts. Moreover, there is a debate on the role of the General Staff in defense decisionmaking. A new military-industrial complex is emerging, and foreign military sales sustain research and development, delaying procurement but ensuring modernization. Russia also moved from a model of mass industrial warfare and the premise of conventional superiority to the realm of limited conventional capabilities and a declaratory policy of first use. The military mounted its first large-scale exercise in a decade in 1999, which featured the first use of nuclear weapons in a local war that assumed external (Western) intervention, weak advanced conventional weapons systems, and the requirement to prevent or counter [de-escalate] such a threat. There is a current debate in the military on nonstrategic nuclear weapons in response to deep-strike precision attack. Analysts study foreign military combat developments, especially those involving NATO and U.S. forces.

The revolution in military affairs knows no nationality and doesn’t favor any particular power. Its definition depends on individual state perceptions of the international security system, the degree and imminence of threats, and interests that it promotes and defends. It exists because of accelerating scientific-technical change, which the military has dealt with ever since the industrial revolution. Hawkins should be commended for his research on the direction of RMA in China, particularly his assessment of its long-term implications for regional security. Getting it right may depend very much on internal and external factors that condition national responses to a revolution. The theater and threat may prove more important in defining RMA in any state than technological determinism. It may prove useful to promote comparative studies of national responses to RMA.

—Jacob W. Kipp  
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