

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

of Japan's potential nuclear capacity.

The new findings also call into question the arguments of historians who contend that dropping a second bomb on Nagasaki in August 1945 was unnecessary. In their view, the earlier Hiroshima bomb had broken the Japanese will to fight. But, according to Shapley, after the Hiroshima bomb was exploded, physicist Nishina was summoned to Tokyo and asked first whether the bomb had been atomic, then "whether Japan could have one in six months."

Back to Basics

"The Navy's Clouded Amphibious Mission" by Vice Adm. Robert S. Salzer (Ret.), in *Proceedings* (Feb. 1978), U.S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, Md. 21402.

During World War II and the Korean conflict, the U.S. Navy repeatedly carried out major Marine amphibious landings against stiff opposition ashore. This capability has all but disappeared; instead, the Navy has deployed small "amphibious ready groups" (four to five ships, 2,000 Marines) in the Far East and the Mediterranean to show the flag and deter would-be troublemakers.

However, writes Salzer, the deterrent value of such small "gunboat diplomacy" units is now questionable. Even Third World nations have jets, antihelicopter and antiship missiles, and well-armed ground forces. The Navy's 30,000-man total amphibious force is costly and its few big helicopter-carrying assault ships, like the *Tarawa*, are highly sophisticated; but the fleet cannot now provide enough sealift and supporting gunpower to duplicate, say, the Marines' famed Inchon landing of 1950.

Back to basics is Salzer's plea—with reliance on the merchant marine, and enough sealift for a Marine division (of 20,000 men) in each ocean. The Navy, he says, still needs to be able to "hold, occupy, or if need be wrest from unfriendly hands the bases from which critical ocean areas could be dominated."

Will the MX Missile Fly?

"U.S. Strategic Deterrence at the Crossroads" by Edgar Ulsamer, in *Air Force* (Dec. 1977), 1750 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

The Carter administration's record on defense issues—including reportedly "lopsided" concessions at SALT and cancellation or deferral of several strategic weapons systems—has created confusion and uncertainty in U.S. strategic planning, argues Ulsamer, an *Air Force* senior editor.

The "zigzag" decision to cancel funding for the manned B-1 bomber, Ulsamer writes, has renewed congressional doubts about the wisdom of recent Carter administration changes in U.S. defenses. The administration contends that deployment of the low-altitude, air-launched "cruise" missile will be sufficient to uphold the "air power" leg of the