

# Editorial

It has been a celebratory period for us in the last 3 months—we commemorated SAF Day on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014 and our nation's independence on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2014. Unfortunately, we also cannot forget that World War I (WWI) commenced on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1914 and that World War II (WWII) began on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939 with Germany's invasion of Poland and the subsequent declarations of war against Germany by France and Great Britain. So, while some of our articles in this issue cover contemporary topics like new media, deterrence strategies and SAF's networked capabilities, we have also included articles with a historical perspective—one discussing the successes and failures of the German Armed Forces and the Imperial Japanese Forces in WWII, another on the Battle of the Atlantic and the third on the NATO Air Campaign over Kosovo which took place in 1999.

In the article, *"The Viability of Deterrence Strategies By Non-Nuclear States,"* MAJ Wee Eng Peow explores the issue of deterrence by non-nuclear states. He states that deterrence has always been a subject of concern for countries. In the event of a war, the military prowess of a small state might not be able to defend itself against a stronger opponent. The introduction of nuclear weapons could serve to protect a smaller state but the consequences it can bring to the nation and their aggressors are irreversible. MAJ Wee explains how Singapore as a non-nuclear state can achieve deterrence through conventional strategies and managing diplomatic relationships while ensuring that her sovereignty is not compromised.

The article, *"Overcoming the Support Challenges in Network Centric Warfare—An Engineering and Logistical Perspective"* is by ME5 Koh Boon Yeow. In this article, ME5 Koh discusses the benefits of a high-tech network-centric system that would better position the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF)

to develop, enable and sustain capabilities required for its transformation journey to a 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation Force. The article highlights the key challenges in the management of a Networked System of Systems (NwSoS), as well as a framework to overcome these challenges. According to ME5 Koh, the NwSoS will empower warfighters and commanders with greater communications capabilities but, he emphasises that this would only be successful in translating these aims into reality if engineers maintain and manage the system's capabilities well, and if the organisation sharpens its work processes to develop its overall and human capabilities in the operation of the system.

In *"The 'CNN Effect' and the 'New Media'—Its Value and Challenges to Governments and Its Military in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations,"* MAJ Edwin Ong Eng Kuan takes a critical look at the 'CNN Effect' and the 'New Media' and discusses its tremendous impact not just on an organisation but even on the peace and security of a nation. MAJ Ong highlights that the advent of consumer mobile devices such as smart phones and portable tablets, and the technological advances in image and video capturing capabilities and internet connectivity have magnified the 'CNN Effect.' However, MAJ Ong feels that a clearly communicated positioning and policy by the military and its government will be able to negate this impact. He concludes that so long as there is a clear positioning of strategic policies and professional conduct of the military in operation, the media impact will remain limited.

MAJ Ho Wan Huo's article, *"The NATO Air Campaign Over Kosovo—A Study of Coercive Diplomacy"* examines the theoretical promises of airpower, provides a background to the crisis in Kosovo and explains that airpower was crucial but not singular in leading to the capitulation of Slobodan Milosevic, then President of the Federal

Republic of Yugoslavia. In his article, MAJ Ho states that the breaking of Milosevic's will and the moment of his capitulation will be taken as the definition of success. MAJ Ho also adds that as Operation Allied Force—which was what the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) air campaign over Kosovo was called—was an application of coercive airpower, he will address the efficacy of airpower in this context of coercive diplomacy and not within the realm of conventional war.

The fifth article, "Success and Defeat in the Second World War" is by MAJ Dzul Fazil. During WWII, many nations from all over the world were divided into two major alliances — Germany, Japan and Italy forming the Axis Powers and the Allied forces led by the 'Big Three,' i.e. Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States. In this article, MAJ Dzul firstly, analyses the strategic failure of the Wehrmacht, i.e. the German Armed Forces and the Imperial Japanese forces in WWII. Secondly, he examines the importance of having both tactical and strategic success as crucial factors to winning a war. Lastly, he explores the factors that allowed the Wehrmacht and the Imperial Japanese forces to succeed in their early conquest and the reasons why they failed at the very end.

In the article "*Strategy In The Battle For the Atlantic*," LTC Rinson Chua Hon Liat critically examines whether it was the success of the battle of the Atlantic which ultimately led to the decisive victory of the Allied Powers in WWII. In his article,

LTC Chua addresses why the Battle for the Atlantic offered opportunities for the Allies to implement strategies and invade Europe successfully. He also highlights both the Allies and the Germans' strategies, which would become the decisive factor for the Allies to win the war. He points out that victory in the Atlantic could only determine the survival of Britain, but could not assure an Allied victory in Europe. LTC Chua concludes that it was the disjoint between strategy and resource allocations on the part of Germany that ultimately led to her defeat in the battle and contributed to the outcome of WWII in Europe.

*POINTER* would like to bid farewell to two key members of the *POINTER* Editorial Board. We wish to thank COL Yong Wui Chiang and CWO Joseph Koa for their full support. *POINTER* has benefitted from their insightful observations on a wide variety of military subjects. *POINTER* would also like to extend its warmest welcome to ME7 Shue Pei Soon and CWO Tang Peck Oon as they join the *POINTER* Editorial Board. We would also like to welcome Bille Tan who joins *POINTER* as its new Assistant Editor. Welcome, Bille!

We also bid a fond farewell to PTE Alvin Ng. We thank him for all his contributions and wish him the very best in his future endeavours.

**The *POINTER* Editorial Team**