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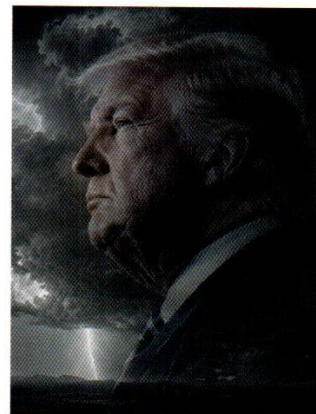
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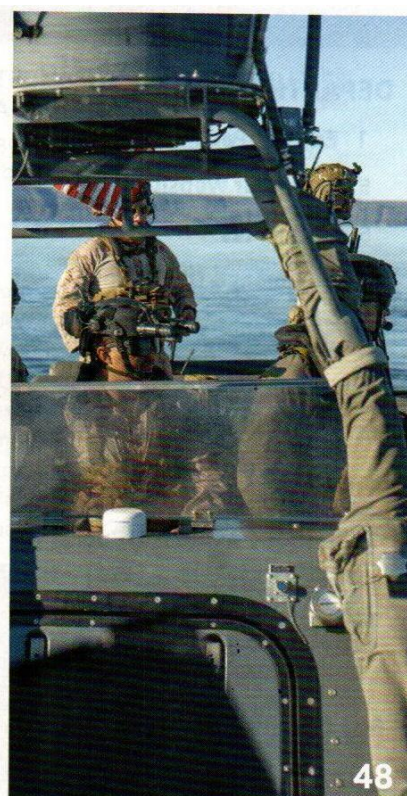
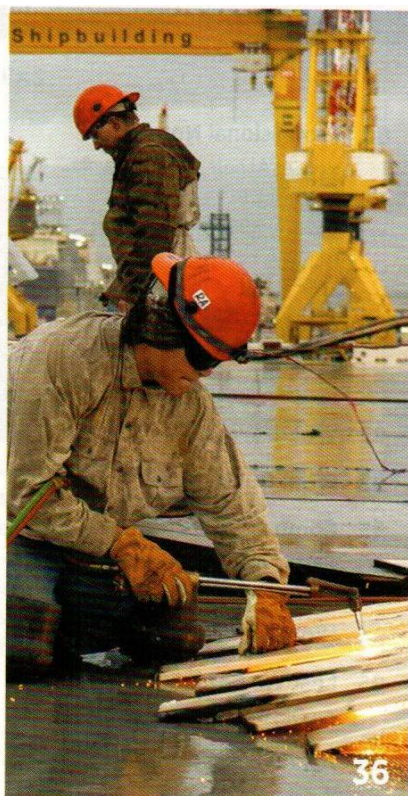
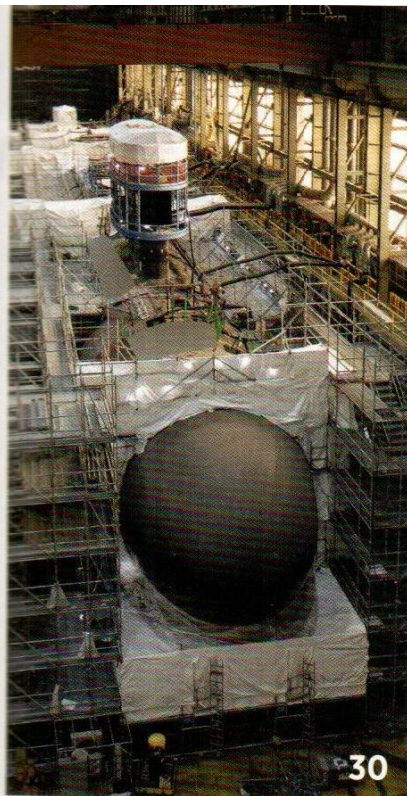
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U.S. Navy (Aaron Haro Gonzalez)

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THE WASHINGTON QUARTERLY

5 PROVOCATIONS

7 Reshaping Strategic Flexibility in the ROK-US Alliance

■ *Taehwa Hong*

Strategic flexibility—the idea that US troops stationed in South Korea could be redeployed beyond the Korean peninsula—could become one of the most contentious issues in the alliance, eclipsing cost-sharing. A sustainable approach requires a multi-layered strategy, including four components a South Korean foreign policy advisor proposes here, that rebalances the alliance for the twenty-first century.

25 Africa's Wars on Women

■ *Ron Matthews and Asimwe Mercy*

Sexual violence—used intentionally to terrorize communities and humiliate enemies by demonstrating their inability to protect women—seems to have become the norm in Africa. There is an urgent need both to fund support for victims, with aid having been slashed in recent years, and to address the institutional neglect contributing to a sense of perpetrator impunity.

45 NUCLEAR ALLIES?

47 Friendly Proliferation and the Future of the Japan-US Alliance

■ *Evan Braden Montgomery and Toshi Yoshihara*

The US appears to be on the verge of a new grand strategy debate: whether to encourage (or at least allow) friendly proliferation. Yet, as can be seen in the case of Japan, the case for friendly proliferation is extremely weak as it is unlikely to

reduce extended deterrence burdens, and could actually increase them if Washington tries to help allies go nuclear.

69 French Nuclear Ambiguity at a Crossroads

■ *Florian Galleri*

President Macron's March 2026 nuclear address continued the central mechanism of French nuclear governance—a form of constructive ambiguity, formalizing the “Europeanization” of security horizons while simultaneously hardening the sovereign nuclear reservations at its core. But now, that French ambiguity stands at a crossroads: should it continue, or recede so European nuclear declaratory policy converges with nuclear practice?

83 Germany's Nuclear Aspirations and Strategic Compromise

■ *Marina E. Henke and Dino Kolonić*

During the Cold War, successive West German governments considered access to nuclear weapons but instead reached a series of strategic compromises. Now, those options are no longer available. Although the March 2026 French nuclear proposal is not enough for Berlin, it may be a step toward a new German strategic compromise to address its most urgent anxieties.

97 Thinking the Unthinkable: South Korea as a US Nuclear Ally?

■ *Min-hyung Kim*

A widespread belief that an independently nuclear-armed South Korea would weaken or terminate the US-ROK alliance is not empirically supported. On the contrary, after assessing the costs and benefits of South Korean nuclearization to both the US and ROK, the author concludes that although proliferation should be limited to South Korea, the alliance would likely be strengthened and evolve into a nuclear partnership.

REEVALUATING CHINA

117 Reconceptualizing Spheres of Influence with China

■ *Lyle J. Goldstein*

Embracing a spheres of influence-based concept could offer the most realistic pathway to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific. Despite deeply embedded skepticism, Beijing is likely to be reasonably attracted to the idea to construct a “new type of great power relations.” But spheres are not necessarily geographic, and there are at least four historical and cultural reasons why South Korea and Japan would not fall in a Chinese sphere.

135 The Cassandra Trap: How Beijing Could Come to Doubt Its Own Digital Oracles

■ *Philip B.K. Potter*

The Chinese Communist Party has fully embraced artificial intelligence as the foundation of its strategies for governance and social control. Beijing’s gamble is that AI can substitute for trust, but because AI models can never be fully transparent, trust in their outputs is vulnerable to collapse; therein lies the trap. This “Cassandra trap” may one day prove its undoing—a system built to provide omniscience instead risks producing doubt and paralysis.

149 Race to the Bottom: The Growing Contest for Subsea Territory and Resources

■ *Geoffrey F. Gresh and Hayoun Ryou-Ellison*

Despite China’s rare earths dominance, one frontier still exists: the deep sea. But a larger competition to map and name under-sea features, which could help a country pursue new areas for rare earth elements extraction, is underway. As the US now enters the race at a significant disadvantage, it has a valuable opportunity to use its alliance with Japan to advance mutual interests.

	Name of Journals	Web Address
1	African Security Review	http://www.tandfonline.com/
2	AGNI	http://fsss.in/agni-volume.htm
3	Armed Forces and Society	http://afs.sagepub.com/
4	Asian Affairs	www.tandfonline.com
5	Asian Security	http://www.informaworld.com
6	Asian Survey	as.ucpress.edu/
7	Australian Journal of International Affairs	www.tandfonline.com
8	British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies	https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cbjm20
9	China Journal	www.journals.uchicago.edu/toc/tcj/current
10	China Report	http://www.sagepub.com
11	Civil Wars	http://www.informaworld.com
12	Contemporary Levant	https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ycol20
13	Contemporary Security Policy	http://www.informaworld.com
14	Contemporary South Asia	www.tandfonline.com/loi/ccsa20
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21	Global Governance	https://www.jstor.org/journal/globgove
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23	International Affairs (Moscow)	http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/
24	International Affairs (London)	http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/
25	International Spectator	www.tandfonline.com
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