

SUMMARIES IN ENGLISH



The gold mine of Estonian naval thought

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The magazine *Merendus* (*Maritime Affairs*), published from 1933–40, is the only naval magazine ever published in Estonia and in the Estonian language.

It was issued by the (Estonian) Naval Officers Association (*Mereväe Ohvitseride Kogu*), which was the official body for officers in the Navy. The Naval Officers Association, as well as other similar organisations in the Estonian Defence Forces, aimed to encourage a patriotic mentality among its members and to ensure the development and maintenance of officers' professional and social skills. The Officers Association also provided economic and financial support to its members, and associations were allowed to establish their own commercial enterprises. The naval magazine *Merendus* was an example of such a commercial enterprise.

The establishment of a naval magazine was mentioned for the first time in October 1932, and the decision to publish was made in November 1932 by the general assembly. The objective for the new magazine was to support the establishment of a comprehensive approach to naval defence, and to act as a connecting element between the naval and maritime communities in the country. The magazine also worked to broaden its readers' horizons on issues regarding naval warfare and maritime affairs in general. The Association of Naval Officers was closed down by Soviet authorities on 31 August 1940.

Merendus was published from 1933–40 and six editions were published annually. The first edition of *Merendus* was published in March 1933, and the last on 21 June 1940. Altogether 45 issues of the magazine were published, the total number of published articles, and other materials was approximately 750. Published materials were categorized by the editors into the following divisions: 1) general affairs; 2) naval affairs and warfare; 3) naval history; 4) merchant navy; 5) technical; 6) maritime sports.

At this point, it must be stressed that the other Estonian military magazines, *Sõdur* (*The Soldier*; 1919–40), *Sõduri Lisa* (1921–23), and *Sõjateadlane* (*The Military Scientist*; 1925, 1938–40), were all issued by the General

Staff and, compared to *Merendus*, were not commercial enterprises. Although materials regarding naval affairs and warfare were published in *Sõdur* and *Sõduri Lisa*, the total number of such materials was limited. The Estonian Defence League, a volunteer based defence organisation, issued its own magazine *Kaitse Kodu!* (*Defend Your Home!*; 1924–40). A rather limited number of materials regarding maritime and naval affairs were also published in *Kaitse Kodu!*.

The relationship between *Merendus* and other military magazines was not strong. However, there was a connection with the maritime magazine, *Laevandus* (*Shipping*; 1920–40). *Merendus* made at least two proposals to *Laevandus* to join their magazines. Both proposals were rejected, as *Laevandus* was not interested in publishing materials regarding warfare and national defence.

One of the most popular topics in *Merendus* was the need to renew the existing fleet. Most of the materials regarding this topic were published from 1933–36. Estonia ordered two submarines from Great Britain, and the successful procurement of those underwater warfare weapon systems were the most remarkable change in the fleet renewal process. It was decided to further expand the fleet with motor torpedo boats in 1933, but this decision was not fulfilled until the loss of independence in 1940.

Most of the authors of *Merendus* were officers from the Military Academy's Naval Officers class of 1928. Only a minority of the authors based their argumentation on naval theory, lessons learnt from naval history, foreign naval writings and experience. The exceptions were Lieutenant Commander Johannes Santpank (former name *Sandbank*), and Lieutenants Senior Grade Johannes Ivalo, Richard Kokk, Alfred Pääbus, and Rudolf Rosimannus. Ivalo, Santpank and Kokk were the three most prolific authors, with about half of the writings published in *Merendus* about naval issues being credited to them.

Although the authors had different views and arguments, it is possible to highlight a number of common positions:

- 1) The Mission of the Estonian Navy was to secure use of the sea lines of communications.
- 2) The Estonian fleet consisted of vessels, which were procured randomly during the War of Independence and could not be efficiently used in naval defence.
- 3) The most important argument for renewal of the fleet was the financial ability of the country to make defence procurements.
- 4) The Estonian fleet should consist of light forces.

- 5) Importance of joint forces (coordinated use of all required components and branches of the defence forces) in coastal defence.

Most of the authors agreed that the main warfare concept for the navy should be sea denial not sea control.

Johannes Santpank's writings expanded upon a great number of themes from international security affairs, naval policy, and naval strategy to tactics. In one of his writings, Santpank substantiated the *raison d'être* for Estonian submarines, of which deterrence was the most important factor. Santpank also wrote a number of articles about what the mission and tasks of the navy should be. Santpank and Captain (Navy) Valev Mere (former name *Vassili Martson*) were the spokespersons for total defence, and they promoted the establishment of a more effective maritime defence organisation of the country, in which the navy should play a leading role.

Richard Kokk closely followed international politics and naval policy, and wrote frequently about how changes in the balance of power between great naval powers could affect Estonia. Kokk predicted, already in 1933, that the probability of aggression against Estonian neutrality was much higher from the sea than from land. This was exactly the case in 1939 when the Soviet Union used provocative situations at sea to press Estonia to abandon its neutrality policy. Kokk also wrote about the importance of active naval defence.

Estonia did not have a specified naval policy. The decision made in 1933 at the highest political level to renew the fleet with light forces, which actually defined the warfighting capabilities for the Navy in the future, was the single act that could be named as the closest approach to a naval policy. When the general security situation in Europe became worse in the second half of the 1930's, and when the possibility for an upcoming war became more real and dangerous, the leading officers of the Navy began to write more about the need to use total defence principles (use of all kinds of vessels for defence purposes; joining all governmental maritime agencies under one umbrella led by the Navy; etc.), also in the naval part of national defence.

The majority of those officers who wrote about naval warfare actually used the framework of coastal defence, but only a few of them used sound and solid argumentation for their ideas expressed in the naval magazine. The officer, who used the most conceptual approach in his writings, was Johannes Ivalo. Based on his early writings (from 1935–36), it is possible to construct a *concept of small war*. The basis of this concept was the idea that a

small and weak fleet could resist a much stronger adversary, and could even be successful in its actions against the stronger one.

To be successful against a much stronger adversary, the weaker fleet had to be thoroughly prepared. Preparation for war meant, first and foremost, an abandonment of standard solutions and focusing on a particular selected warfighting area or method. And thereafter, only by conscious development of knowledge and skills regarding this selected method, could one gain the advantage in naval tactical actions against the adversary.

Alfred Pääbus was convinced that, due to a weak fleet, the coastal defence should have been based on a 'coastal defence force' (*rannakaitsekoondis*), which was a mobile motorized enhanced battalion size unit, armed primarily with light artillery. Pääbus was also the only author who stated that the fleet must use the concept of fleet-in-being.

Most of the authors did agree that the role of the fleet in coastal defence was to support the coastal fortresses. Only a few authors – Johannes Ivalo and Rudolf Rosimannus – expressed a different opinion. According to them, the coastal fortresses should support the fleet, and not vice versa. According to Rosimannus, the mission of the fleet was to secure the free use of the sea lines of communication. Rosimannus was the first author who stressed the importance of an organic naval air arm for the Navy.

The naval magazine *Merendus* is the most important source for Estonian naval theory during the 1930's. A close study of the naval theory not only maps the developments and activities from that era, but it also provides historical background and a foundation for essential conceptual groundwork for national defence in the maritime domain in modern Estonia.

An analysis of the functions of Estonian maritime forces and related ship types

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Since regaining its independence in 1991, Estonia has had three state-owned fleets: Defence Forces (i.e. navy), Police and Border Guard Boards (i.e. coast guard) and Maritime Authorities. The main problem in the first two categories has been the low priority given by its parent organisation and a lack of resources. All three fleets have developed independently as missions and tasks have been derived from the jurisdictions of governing ministries, which have not considered the maritime environment as a whole. Secondly, the current approach to maritime affairs in Estonia is very land-centric, and therefore one cannot find any naval defence issues in defence and security policy documents, which do not correspond to Estonia's geographical position.

Since the creation of all three state-owned fleets, there has been talk of consolidating Estonian maritime forces, but all attempts to bring any clarity to the issue have ended unsuccessfully. The main reason has been a lack of common understanding about what tasks the state has to fulfil in its territorial waters (TTW), exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and internationally. Therefore, the main objective of this article is to find the answer to the following question: why should Estonia have one unified state-owned maritime force for naval and maritime security missions grounded in solid naval and maritime security theory? The first chapter examines Estonia's maritime interests through an analysis of the components of sea power and finds that Estonia is a maritime country in geographical position only. However, the state has maritime interests despite common maritime blindness.

The second chapter examines the roles of Estonian maritime forces based on a trinity of functions – military, policing and diplomatic, unified by the idea of *using the sea* – the ship, which can contribute to all roles concurrently. The military role of Estonia's maritime forces includes protection of sea lines of communication (i.e. restricted sea control) and coastal defence (i.e. sea denial). In their maritime security role, maritime forces have to deal with all dimensions of maritime security despite the relatively good order on the Baltic Sea. The baseline for both naval and maritime security tasks is maritime situational awareness (MSA). International operations are vital for a small nation in NATO and the EU. Warships are, by their nature, the

best assets for international engagement. In short, the functions of the maritime forces of coastal states include the management of EEZ, protection of sovereignty, defence of territory in cooperation with the army, air force and allies, and participating in international operations.

Suitable platforms for these missions are offshore patrol ships for EEZ tasks and internationally and inshore patrol ships mainly for TTW tasks. The keyword for building up the fleet is mission modularity across all ship classes. Both platforms with baseline sensor and weapon suites should be capable of MSA duties. Mission modules include anti-surface warfare, mine warfare, and pollution control and hydrography. All mission modules require further capability analysis.

The main conclusion is that Estonia requires only one fleet for naval and maritime security missions. The current situation, where MSA is a mission of the Police and Border Guard Board, is one of the reasons for the absence of naval defence.

This paper is the first attempt known to the author to examine the tasks of Estonian maritime forces as a whole. The author hopes to contribute to the understanding of maritime and naval affairs in general and to lead the way for including naval defence and maritime security issues in future defence planning.