

RECOMMENDED READING

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

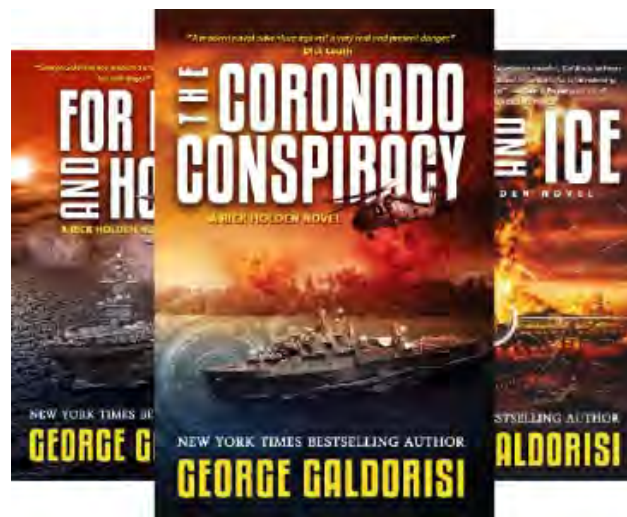
Rick Holden Trilogy: The Coronado Conspiracy, For Duty and Honor and Fire and Ice

BY GEORGE GALDORISI

For most of the last century, national security policymakers were sanguine that the U.S. military had an intact process for envisioning future warfare. Over the last few decades that process has shown stress, and now the Pentagon looks outside the lifelines – often to military fiction – to get a better sense of how wars might evolve and be fought years hence. This process has been institutionalized as a number of U.S. military commands and think tanks now sponsor fiction writing contests to tease out potential future warfighting scenarios.

This has spawned a new genre of military-themed works of fiction. Labeled FICINT – imagining future warfare scenarios based on the realities of high-end combat and real-world intelligence, not fantasy – the U.S. national security community has now embraced this genre as a useful instrument to intuit how tomorrow's wars will be fought. Two well-known books in this genre are P.W. Singer and August Cole's *Ghost Fleet* and Elliot Ackerman and Admiral Jim Stavridis' *2034* (reviewed in the previous issue of *Surface SITREP*).

This brings me to a recent entry in the FICINT genre – actually a trilogy of entries – Captain (USN – retired) George Galdorisi's Rick Holden thrillers, *The Coronado Conspiracy*, *For Duty and Honor* and *Fire and Ice*. Each is a good read by itself, and even better if read in the order presented here. The chief protagonist, Rick Holden, is a former CIA operative, now undercover as a U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer.



In all three thrillers, Galdorisi not only provides us with a picture of future warfare but examines what could go awry with issues like civilian control of the military, near-absolute power in the hands of senior military officers, and the ability of rogue nations to hold allies hostage. I believe you will enjoy this trilogy, and I'm eagerly looking forward to the next Rick Holden thriller.