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From the Editors

Carnes Lord

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FROM THE EDITORS

On 8 July 2014, Rear Admiral Walter “Ted” Carter, USN, was relieved as President, Naval War College by Rear Admiral P. Gardner Howe III, USN, in a traditional ceremony in Spruance Auditorium on the College’s campus in Newport. Although Admiral Carter’s term as President was quite brief, the College has made considerable progress on his watch in expanding and strengthening its educational programs in support of the fleet. Writing together with Professor John Jackson, in “Navy Nexus,” this issue’s lead article, Admiral Carter provides readers of this journal a comprehensive and authoritative overview of the full range of the College’s activities today. At this writing Admiral Carter is due to receive his third star and appointment as Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy. We wish him fair winds and following seas, as we welcome Admiral Howe, who has the distinction of being the first Navy SEAL to serve in his position.

The current administration’s commitment to “rebalance” its overseas military presence in the Asia-Pacific region has had the effect, among other things, of putting a spotlight on the long-standing U.S.-Australian security relationship. Peter J. Dean, in “Amphibious Operations and the Evolution of Australian Defense Policy,” offers a wide-ranging account of the history of Australia’s strategic outlook and relationship with other friendly powers, primarily Britain and the United States. He notes the central paradox of Australian strategic culture—a continentalist mind-set yet a history of distant “expeditionary” commitments in support of alliance partners. He argues that Australia’s recent awakening to the importance of a more robust amphibious capability in its near seas may signal a more fundamental shift on the nation’s part toward a more maritime strategic outlook. Peter Dean is Director of Studies at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University.

American policy makers continue to digest the implications of Russia’s recent seizure of Ukrainian Crimea and, at least equally worrisome, China’s increasingly aggressive efforts to assert its sovereignty over disputed islands in the South and East China Seas. In “Consequences,” Nicholas Rostow assesses these developments, together with the looming end of a Western military presence in Afghanistan, as posing a potentially existential threat to the international legal and political order that the United States has played a key part in establishing and sustaining ever since the end of World War II. Professor Rostow is Senior

Director of the Center for Strategic Research at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C.

In “Keep a Weather Eye on the Horizon: A Navy Officer Retention Study,” Commander Guy M. Snodgrass, USN, argues that Navy leadership has been slow to grasp and acknowledge an emerging crisis in officer retention at all levels, including postcommand. Basing his work on extensive research and personal interviews over a number of years, Snodgrass makes a compelling case that while no single factor appears to account for the phenomenon, a converging of quality-of-life issues, lack of trust in senior leadership, the “zero defects” mentality, overcentralized decision making, and escalating administrative distractions, among other factors, seems to be responsible for this state of affairs. It should be noted that this article, although in print here for the first time, has had an extensive circulation on the Internet since January 2014; the original version has been revised by the author to take account of the comments received from many readers. Commander Snodgrass also cautions that some of his detailed recommendations for change have since been acted on or are in the process of being addressed by the Navy. His study is an important contribution to the dialogue on military professionalism that is currently taking place both within the Navy and in the joint world.

Finally, under the rubric of naval history, we offer Milan Vego’s “The Allied Landings at Anzio-Nettuno, 22 January–4 March 1944,” a further installment in this prolific author’s ongoing study of major naval operations during World War II. Vego incorporates much new material from archival sources in his account of this closely run—indeed, nearly disastrous—U.S.-British amphibious assault against German forces in central Italy just seventy years ago. Milan Vego is a professor of Joint Military Operations at the Naval War College. His study *Major Fleet-versus-Fleet Operations in the Pacific War, 1941–1945* will be published shortly by the Naval War College Press as Historical Monograph 22.

IF YOU VISIT US

Our editorial offices are now located in Sims Hall, in the Naval War College Coasters Harbor Island complex, on the third floor, west wing (rooms W334, 335, 309). For building-security reasons, it would be necessary to meet you at the main entrance and escort you to our suite—give us a call ahead of time (841-2236).