

2013

This is an exciting place, and these are challenging times.

Walter E. Carter Jr.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Carter, Walter E. Jr. (2013) "This is an exciting place, and these are challenging times," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 66 : No. 4 , Article 3.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol66/iss4/3>

This President's Forum is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

PRESIDENT'S FORUM



This is an exciting place, and these are challenging times.

IN EARLY JULY OF THIS YEAR I became the fifty-fourth President of the U.S. Naval War College. Out of respect for the tremendous legacy of the naval officers who have preceded me in this position for nearly 130 years, I made a pilgrimage to the nearby grave site of the College's founding President, Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, on the ninety-sixth anniversary of his death. Luce was one of the greatest maritime minds of his generation, and in the 1880s he envisioned a Naval War College that would be "a place of original research on all questions relating to war and to statesmanship connected with war, or the prevention of war." Nearly thirteen decades later I believe that Luce's vision has largely been achieved, but I fear that the College's full potential has yet to be realized by many current and future naval leaders. In the coming months, I plan to use this forum to address some of the factors that have historically limited our Navy from taking full advantage of the capabilities that exist here in Newport while not fully welcoming all designators of our brightest and best officers from achieving the strategic outcomes this College is capable of facilitating. My commitment as President of this venerable institution is to ensure that this College maintain a laser-like focus on educating and developing the enlightened leaders that America, and our allies, must produce if we are to succeed in the face of the formidable and unforeseeable challenges that lie ahead. I am further committed to ensuring that our Navy and our nation receive a full return on the investment they make in the education and research provided here.

I have worn the cloth of the nation, as either a midshipman or a commissioned officer, for more than thirty-five years. Over this period I have frequently heard the Naval War College referred to in almost reverential terms, and when I arrived I thought I knew what the institution was all about. It didn't take me very long

during my turnover briefings, however, to recognize that so much of what the College accomplishes has changed since 9/11. From a national security perspective, a new age, and the new century, began not on New Year's Day of 2000 but instead on that terrible morning in September 2001. From that day onward, the Naval War College has refined and adapted its programs to meet the challenges of what is often called the "post-9/11 world." Today's College is a multifaceted educational and research institution that enhances and enriches the analytical skills, leadership abilities, and strategic and operational expertise of our maritime and joint warriors. Our academic programs are

- *Tightly focused:* Answering fleet demand signals, our faculty has restructured the content of our curricula to meet the differing needs of the midgrade officers enrolled in our Intermediate Service College and the needs of the senior officers attending the Senior Service College program. The three core courses that a student encounters in the College of Naval Command and Staff (CNCS) are now significantly different in content and focus from what students engage in when enrolled in the more senior College of Naval Warfare (CNW). At the macro level, the CNCS curriculum focuses on developing leaders with an operational/theater perspective, while the CNW program addresses issues from a national, strategic, and combatant-commander perspective. For example, the CNCS Joint Maritime Operations course covers all aspects of joint-force operations, with a strong emphasis on maritime operations and joint operations in the maritime environment. The more senior CNW course covers maritime campaigns (past, present, and future) and joint-force operations, emphasizing decision-making and critical analytical skills that equip students for leadership positions on major fleet and joint staffs, as well as for future command positions. Similar focus differentials are found in courses offered by the National Security Affairs (NSA) Department and the Strategy and Policy (S&P) Department. In this manner, the relative seniority of students determines the nature of the curricula they will pursue, creating a better match between their studies and their future needs. The S&P Department at the senior level provides an in-depth examination of sea power and maritime strategy that is not duplicated anywhere else in higher education. At the heart of both curricula is the fundamental goal of helping students learn to think critically about strategic problems, understand the joint world, comprehend the emerging security environment, and deal effectively with surprise.
- *Flexible and agile:* Our world-class faculty, who take understandable pride in their intellectual ownership of the courses they develop and teach, spend a significant portion of their time analyzing the constant changes that occur in the national security environment. In many cases they actively participate

in the strategic dialogues that occur on the national scene. They continually reshape the core curricula and the various elective courses and research programs to reflect the changing domains in which our graduates will operate. Today's NSA course brings a new set of sessions with accomplished practitioners, a renewed focus on force planning, and practical exercises on such subjects as the Combatant Commander's Integrated Priority Lists. In S&P, the traditional case studies of past wars have been joined by detailed case studies on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, keeping the course as current as tomorrow's headlines. In S&P they continue to look back to look forward.

- *Relevant to the needs of future leaders:* In response to the guidance provided by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in his white paper "America's Military: A Profession of Arms" and the direction of the Chief of Naval Operations in his "Navy Education Strategy" and "Language Skills, Regional Expertise and Cultural Awareness Strategy," Naval War College courses now include increased coverage of cyber issues, the interagency process, nuclear strategy, deterrence, economic theory, unmanned systems, civil-military relations, and the ethics of leadership. Our response to the nation's widely reported "rebalancing toward Asia" is evident in exercise scenarios, elective course offerings, and the work of research groups such as the Asia-Pacific Study Group. In reality, however, the College's Asia-Pacific expertise has been steadily growing since 2006, when appropriate hires were made to staff the College's China Maritime Studies Institute and to meet other objectives.

Today's Naval War College is often called the "Navy's Home of Thought," and we strive tirelessly to accomplish our mission of helping to create the strategically minded critical thinkers that our country and our allies will need in the years ahead. While much of what I have said in this column has focused on what we do "inside the schoolhouse," in future issues I will talk about some of the many ways in which the College reaches directly to the fleet through our Distance Education programs; our efforts to assist the Chief of Naval Operations in creating the Navy Leader Development Strategy (which defines the ways, means, and ends of a career-long Leader Development Continuum); and our robust and relevant research and gaming activities. This is an exciting place, and these are challenging times. I look forward to sharing with you—decision makers, opinion leaders, and proven operators—what your Naval War College is doing for you and for America.

TED "SLAPSHOT" CARTER
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College

Rear Admiral Walter E. "Ted" Carter, Jr., became the fifty-fourth President of the U.S. Naval War College on 2 July 2013. A native of Burrillville, Rhode Island, he graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1981, was designated a Naval Flight Officer in 1982, and graduated from Top Gun in 1985.

His career as an aviator includes sea assignments in Fighter Squadron (VF) 161, on board USS Midway (CV 41); in VF-21, the "Freelancers," on board USS Independence (CV 62); in Carrier Air Wing Five (CVW 5); in command of the VF-14 "Tophatters"; and as executive officer of USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), culminating in command of USS Camden (AOE 2) and USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). Subsequent fleet command assignment includes service as Commander, Enterprise Carrier Strike Group (CSG 12).

Carter has served in numerous shore assignments, including VF-124, the "Gunslingers"; in Fighter Wing Pacific; as executive assistant to the Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command; as chief of staff of the Joint Warfighting Center, U.S. Joint Forces Command; as Commander, Joint Enabling Capabilities Command; and as Director, 21st Century Sailor Office (N17).

He has led strategic projects, including the disestablishment of U.S. Joint Forces Command, and most recently, was charged with leading Task Force RESILIENT.

He is the recipient of various personal awards, including the Defense Superior Service Medal (two awards), Legion of Merit (three awards), Distinguished Flying Cross with Combat V, Bronze Star, Air Medal (two with Combat V and five strike/flight), and Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two with Combat V). He was also awarded the Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale Leadership Award and the U.S. Navy League's John Paul Jones Award for Inspirational Leadership and was appointed an Honorary Master Chief by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.

He has accumulated 6,150 flight hours in F-4, F-14, and F-18 aircraft and has made 2,016 carrier-arrested landings, the record among all active and retired U.S. naval aviation designators. He has also flown 125 combat missions in support of joint operations.