

2011

President's Forum

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PRESIDENT'S FORUM



This is the last President's Forum I will have the privilege of writing.

IN MY PREVIOUS COLUMNS IN THIS JOURNAL I have made clear my view that the need for this school has never been greater. That has not changed; if anything, it has increased in this time of significant budget pressure. The earthquake and tsunami in Japan and the upheaval throughout North Africa and the Middle East tell us that the rapid pace of change in the world has not and will not subside in the near term, making what we are doing in Newport all the more important. I really believe this. Chester Nimitz, in a lecture here in 1960, stated that the war plans he inherited at the beginning of World War II had indicated an intention to shutter the Naval War College.* He, on the contrary, felt that it needed to be expanded, since he would need to increase the size of the officer corps fifteen times—which is what he proceeded to do.

During a recent meeting, as we looked at the day's "press pull," we noticed that the Naval War College had some connection with each of the top stories, either through research we had in progress, gaming we were doing, or books and articles that faculty or, in some cases, students were publishing. In this edition of the *Naval War College Review* we look at People's Liberation Army doctrine, carriers in world navies, the U.S. Navy and alternative energy, the history of naval aviation, the law of the sea, and war gaming.

Here are some simple highlights of accomplishments I've been privileged to witness—most of them involving significant support from the Naval War College Foundation:

- Receipt of funds to endow the first of six regional-studies chairs, the John A. van Beuren Chair of Asia-Pacific Studies, and selection of Professor Toshi Yoshihara as its first chair holder

* Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, "An Address" (lecture, Naval War College, Newport, R.I., 10 October 1960), CD-ROM in MP3 format, recording VR 2290, Naval War College Library.

- Refurbishment of the historic Mahan Reading Room
- Technological upgrade and major renovation of Spruance Auditorium
- Development of a major maritime history prize (for a major contribution to the advancement of the study of maritime history)—the Hattendorf Prize, awarded to Dr. N. A. M. Rodger, All Souls College, Oxford; the inaugural prize and check is to be awarded in the fall, later this year
- Deployment of faculty to Afghanistan to help U.S. Marine Corps generals in their analysis of operations
- Establishment of a Board of Advisors, with leading citizens and academics.

With the Foundation's help, the Evening Lecture Series has seen some very interesting speakers, such as Lewis Simon, George Will, Robert Kaplan, Sylvia Earle, and Dr. Robert Ballard.* The Naval War College has certainly felt the impact of the Foundation's first-ever year of million-dollar support. The edge that the Foundation provides has never been sharper.

All in all, the Naval War College has certainly benefited from the support not only from the Naval War College Foundation and Navy leadership but also from the staff and faculty of the College. You all have my lasting thanks.

This is the last President's Forum I will have the privilege of writing. It will be prepared for press just as I leave the Naval War College; by the time you read it, I will be in Washington, D.C. I will sorely miss the fine friends and stimulating experiences I have gained at the Naval War College. I look forward to a continuing association with the College and with all of you.

JAMES P. WISECUP

*Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College*

* George Will's evening lecture is available on the College's website, at www.usnwc.edu/Events/Evening-Lectures/Evening-Lecture---George-Will---The-Political-Argume.aspx. A C-SPAN2 video of Robert Kaplan's lecture is available at www.booktv.org/Watch/12050/Monsoon+The+Indian+Ocean+and+the+Future+of+American+Power.aspx.