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President's Forum

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Rear Admiral Jacob L. Shuford was commissioned in 1974 from the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of South Carolina. His initial assignment was to USS Blakely (FF 1072). In 1979, following a tour as Operations and Plans Officer for Commander, Naval Forces Korea, he was selected as an Olmsted Scholar and studied two years in France at the Paris Institute of Political Science. He also holds master's degrees in public administration (finance) from Harvard and in national security studies and strategy from the Naval War College, where he graduated with highest distinction.

After completing department head tours in USS Deyo (DD 989) and in USS Mahan (DDG 42), he commanded USS Aries (PHM 5). His first tour in Washington included assignments to the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations and to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy, as speechwriter, special assistant, and personal aide to the Secretary.

Rear Admiral Shuford returned to sea in 1992 to command USS Rodney M. Davis (FFG 60). He assumed command of USS Gettysburg (CG 64) in January 1998, deploying ten months later to Fifth and Sixth Fleet operating areas as Air Warfare Commander (AWC) for the USS Enterprise Strike Group. The ship was awarded the Battle Efficiency "E" for Cruiser Destroyer Group 12.

Returning to the Pentagon and the Navy Staff, he directed the Surface Combatant Force Level Study. Following this task, he was assigned to the Plans and Policy Division as chief of staff of the Navy's Roles and Missions Organization. He finished his most recent Pentagon tour as a division chief in J8—the Force Structure, Resources and Assessments Directorate of the Joint Staff—primarily in the theater air and missile defense mission area. His most recent Washington assignment was to the Office of Legislative Affairs as Director of Senate Liaison.

In October 2001 he assumed duties as Assistant Commander, Navy Personnel Command for Distribution. Rear Admiral Shuford assumed command of the Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group in August 2003. He became the fifty-first President of the Naval War College on 12 August 2004.

PRESIDENT'S FORUM



Toward a Coherent Education Strategy in the Navy

Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate and end by producing a kind of friction. . . . This tremendous friction . . . is everywhere in contact with chance, and brings about effects that cannot be measured. . . . Moreover, every war is rich in unique episodes.

CARL VON CLAUSEWITZ, *On War*

THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER of attempts over the past decade to create a coherent and comprehensive education policy for the Navy and a strategy to implement it. Efforts over the past year have been very encouraging, and it appears that we may well be moving toward realizing this objective. In his Guidance for 2007, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) has advanced the primary objective of completing and *executing* a Navy Education Strategy that emphasizes “critical thinking, leadership, cultural awareness, jointness, innovation, and adaptability.” One certain thing that this strategy must do is to ensure an inventory of leaders who are capable of burning through Clausewitz’s “fog and friction” and accomplishing those things that are “simple yet profoundly difficult.” There is a scale of difficulty across the constituent continuum of war and diplomacy.

Tactics are simple, operational command and control more difficult, and a grasp of the strategic more difficult still. It is in the realm of strategy, Clausewitz contends in his chapter on military genius, that the greatest demand war places on its practitioners is to be found—“the region dominated by the powers of intellect.” This realm is so challenging and vexing because it deals with the limits of knowledge, the unknown, and the unknowable. While we cannot know specifics about the future, we can know the past and how it is likely to shape the future. And certainly we must know our profession, but as importantly at the strategic level, we must know how effectively to convey critical perspectives of our profession to those outside of it: a strategic leader must be able to think about a problem in terms beyond his or her own personal and limited training and experience. Education gives a leader the tools to do that.

Our education institutions, from the Naval Academy to the Naval Postgraduate School, Naval War College, and Senior Enlisted Academy, each individually provides the most sought-after learning programs among the services. They produce a small cadre of enlisted and officer warriors capable of leading at the operational and strategic levels. But the Navy's senior leadership recognizes that it needs more leaders who bring more fully developed competencies to these complex tasks. This demand occurs at the same time the Navy is tailoring its Total Force and putting fewer people on each ship, in each squadron, and in each headquarters staff. All this—in an era where image, information, and influence move with instantaneity and without regard to borders—places an absolute premium on a *comprehensively* educated force. It is an era where any tactical action can have strategic effects. Any soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine could well find himself or herself at a strategic inflection point, where the next word or motion, thought, or action could either significantly advance—or undermine—a national objective.

Our nation's military leadership has recognized that the current force and how we deploy and employ it must be transformed to respond to this new security environment—and we have worked on this hard for most of the past decade. We have moved away from the models of Sir Frederick Lanchester—that is, of attrition warfare, where large aggregations of forces moved in concert, where training and rigid doctrinal response were absolutely paramount to success, and where a few broadly educated leaders at the very top, connected to a hierarchical information, command, and control system, were sufficient to generate and, very deliberately, move mass. Reliance on these approaches is no longer adequate. Increasingly military force will be employed in integrated strategic concert with national and international diplomatic, informational, and economic levers to achieve specific political *effects*. It will be strategically dispersed, more effectively engaged, and increasingly reliant upon sustained relationships, enabled by a more comprehensive understanding of partners as well as competitors. Command and control of these forces will flatten, and responsibilities and authorities will devolve accordingly, placing a premium on individual awareness, initiative, creative thinking, and good judgment. This force, I contend, will be characterized by strategic-mindedness—and must be *very well educated*. This must be recognized as a key precept to our strategy.

An education strategy must be accompanied by strategic governance. As long as the key education institutions and numerous programs, from accessions through executive levels, remain independent and plan, program, and execute in relative isolation, the Navy's education investment will not be fully leveraged against tomorrow's opportunities and challenges. The good news is that most of the pieces are in place. The Naval War College, the Naval Postgraduate School, the Naval Service Training Command, the Senior Enlisted Academy, and the Naval

Academy have begun collaborating more routinely to produce the multiple elements required for success. Previous "President's Forums" have detailed the management mechanisms and policy objectives constituting the Professional Military Education (PME) Continuum, the policies defining the Path to Jointness, the Navy's initiative to establish a coherent Leadership Continuum reflected by its development of the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC) courses, the College's complete restructuring of the Intermediate and Senior War College courses, and its aggressive investment to make its educational products easily accessible to the waterfront and around the world through a distance-learning model that sets a standard for the nation. These initiatives are enabled by a broad and complex set of activities. They are different from complementary training activities in terms of concept, processes, execution, and outcomes. The system of governance our strategy demands must take this fundamental fact into account.

In terms of ultimate outcomes, I believe our educational strategy should directly contribute to a Navy that:

- Possesses sufficient intellectual capacity to meet unforeseen challenges in an increasingly complex and uncertain global environment, and sufficient to overcome any challenge to our nation's maritime security.
- Attracts and retains men and women imbued with a commitment to selfless service and capable of becoming critical thinkers and experts in the profession of arms.
- Values and develops people who are of strong moral character and integrity, possess an absolute sense of personal honor, exhibit physical and moral courage, and act ethically as a matter of instinct.
- Is inherently joint.
- Manages education as a strategic investment in its future.
- Is "branded" as a force of broadly educated professionals doing intellectually challenging work.
- Is innovative and bold but able to calculate risk versus reward.
- Is able to sustain and advance our technological advantage.

Furthermore, this strategy should also be guided by several key principles. First, education is used to develop leaders to their full potential, with the professional qualifications and competencies needed in the maritime and joint environments. In this regard, a key corporate objective should be to develop the largest possible body of fully qualified and inherently joint leaders—officers,

enlisted, and civilians alike—suitable for service, joint, multinational, and inter-agency command and staff positions.

Leadership development—expanded to include confidence to operate in chaotic environments and mastery of dynamic, networked political and command-and-control systems—is a unifying objective of professional military education.

Professional military education is continuous across a career, and the Navy should systematically identify, at every level of this continuum, those individuals who are most likely to benefit from specific additional educational investments as they progress toward leadership at the highest levels of responsibility in Navy, joint, multinational, and interagency assignments.

Diversity of thought and perspective is critical to an effective Navy. It is a product of multiple educational and experiential pathways and of engagement in extended interaction with peers in academic, business, and government circles worldwide.

Service education is the foundation of joint military education. While Naval Professional Military Education is the principal armature of career development, the Navy's, Defense Department's, and American educational system's undergraduate, graduate, certificate, and nondegree programs should also continue to be critical components of a broadly educated force.

Joint education is the critical enabler to affect joint warfighting capability: "The future of national and international security lies in interoperability and cooperation among the Services, the interagency, international partners and non-governmental organizations. . . . But we are only as good as the contribution we make to the overall effort" (*CNO Guidance*, 2006). Education of leaders must be accomplished within this context, developing concurrently both service and joint competencies, throughout the learning continuum.

Language, regional expertise, and cultural awareness are required for the global mission that falls particularly to our sailors. The Navy should develop a Total Force that possesses foundational and graduated regional expertise and cultural awareness, viewed as "critical warfighting skills," complemented by specialists who possess foreign language expertise and profound understanding of specific regimes and cultures.

Technological advantage must be at the core of our education strategy. An enduring strength of the Navy has been its ability to develop and exploit new technologies. Sustaining and extending this relative advantage demand continued focus on technical education, balanced by the equal demands for breadth and perspectives yielded by liberal-arts curricula. Achieving this balance is a key element of diversity.

A Continuum of Learning is necessary to develop fully the potential of the Total Force, and mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that learning occurs throughout a career, as leaders develop over time, acquiring and performing

progressively more complex and demanding skills and responsibilities. Five distinct levels of education constitute the learning continuum: introductory, primary, intermediate, senior, and executive. Multiple learning pathways must be provided and individual experience or self-development credited for formal education whenever equivalent outcomes have been achieved and demonstrated.

Active learning is more effective than passive learning. To this end, the Navy should employ the full range of educational opportunities, from the traditional classroom to distance learning via either a virtual group or individual, self-paced, or computer-based education. Educational outcomes should be assessed on the basis of what has been learned, instead of simply read or remembered.

Self-development is the critical enabler in producing a partnership between the Navy and the individual sailor in education. The Navy must emphasize the necessity of an individual to prepare for greater responsibilities and authorities through self-directed activity and study. The framework for success in self-development is built on the commanding officer's and command master chief's leadership and involvement, specifically the commander's creation of an environment where self-development is both prized and expected.

Flagship educational institutions need to be the engine that ensures the core competencies are taught, learned, and assessed. The importance of institutional integrity of the Navy's flagship institutions—the Naval Academy, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the Naval War College—must be recognized, preserved, and enhanced.

Finally, the term “military genius” permeates the entirety of Clausewitz's seminal treatise *On War*. He carefully noted that it is in fact the product of rich experience and applicable training. But he also stated, “The knowledge needed by a senior commander is distinguished by the fact that it can only be attained by a special talent, through the medium of reflection, study and thought: an intellectual instinct which extracts the essence from the phenomena of life, as a bee sucks honey from a flower.” A Navy education strategy and governance that not only acknowledges this but embraces it and makes it the foundation of an inventory of leaders for whom operational and strategic leadership is a core competency is an approach that will deliver joint warfighting capabilities across the spectrum, from the simple to the difficult, in advance of the uncertainties of the future.



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