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President's Forum

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PRESIDENT'S FORUM



The Naval War College's Twin Missions

THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE plays two coequal roles in preparing the Navy for the challenges of the twenty-first century: educating future leaders and helping to define naval forces and operational concepts through research, analysis, and war gaming.

Although for simplicity I have said the College has two distinct missions, in reality classroom instruction and research, analysis, and war gaming are thoroughly intertwined. In order to graduate, all of our students must participate in at least one large, multiweek war game planned by our Joint Military Operations Department and executed by our War Gaming Department. An increasing number of our top students, now around 25 percent, are involved with focused research, analysis, and war-gaming projects.

Each of the two missions for the Naval War College, education and research, is critical to the other: We cannot achieve our educational objective without research, analysis, and gaming capabilities, nor can we achieve our research objectives for the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and our fleet commanders without our teaching faculty and students.

The complementary relationship of education and research functions is in the process of becoming deeper, stronger, and more necessary to the College as we revise our educational curricula.

- First, we are developing from the ground up an intermediate-level command and staff course of instruction, graduates of which will be Joint Professional Military Education Phase I (JPME I) certified. But more importantly, these officers will be critical thinkers with an operational perspective, planners who are capable of applying operational art in maritime, joint, interagency, and multinational environments and skilled in the joint planning process.

They will *excel* in operational billets on our numbered fleet, joint, interagency, or multinational staffs.

- Second, we are restructuring and elevating our senior-level professional military education program, graduates of which will, for the first time ever at the Naval War College, meet the Joint Chiefs' requirements for JPME Phase II. (JPME I and II certification are required by law for promotion to flag rank.) This curriculum will focus on preparing officers for assignment to key and essential positions on service, joint, interagency, and multinational organizations and on developing competencies necessary at the highest levels of leadership in our nation. Our graduates from the senior course are expected to serve immediately as trusted, sought-after advisers to civilian policy makers or senior military commanders and to contribute directly to the strategic, operational, and resource-planning processes that will shape the future of our nation's security.
- Third, we are establishing a short course for flag officers to develop competencies required to serve as a Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC), the maritime command and control element of the joint force. (This course will stand up this August.) Each of these new courses depends heavily on our faculty, researchers, and war gamers, working together as a tightly coordinated team.

Dialogue with Leadership

I just returned from a ten-day series of visits to Washington, D.C.; Millington, Tennessee (with all our detailers); San Diego; and Hawaii. I visited all of our West Coast type commanders, Commander Third Fleet, and Commander Pacific Fleet. The purpose of the trip was twofold. The first objective was to continue the dialogue with Navy leadership on the range of issues associated with the implementation of a bona fide continuum of professional military education. (As of 2 March 2005, the Naval War College is responsible for establishing the curricula and course content for professional military education for pay grades E1 to O8.) The second objective of the trip was to provide results of ongoing analysis vital to the missions of our operational commanders.

The Navy's head detailer, "Pers 4," accompanied me on this trip to help accomplish my first objective. As head of the office responsible for all enlisted and officer personnel (except flag officers) assignments and for the establishment and management of career development tracks with the Navy's various communities and its manpower policy apparatus, his presence was invaluable. The implications for career development associated with the initiatives outlined in our last "President's Forum"—with the implementation of the *continuum*—are many and significant for our Navy. We will continue this dialogue to ensure that

the College moves forward, with the full support of the Navy's senior leadership, and plays a lead role in the development of the Navy's emerging Human Capital Strategy. Our engagement thus far has been encouraging without exception, particularly as we focus the traditional (and in many cases unique) strengths of the College on those war-fighting and leadership competencies most in demand at the operational and strategic levels of leadership across our armed services.

Also traveling with me were several students currently engaged in one of our Halsey directed-research groups. The recently instituted Halsey Program is focused on quantitative analysis of critical war-fighting challenges facing our operational commanders in their specific theaters. We have stood up different Halsey groups to conduct rigorous research, analysis, and war gaming in the areas of antisubmarine warfare (ASW), maritime air and missile defense, and sea basing. (The logic of these three focus areas becomes clear as one recognizes that sea basing is the distinguishing element of naval forces, and that success against the undersea and air threats enables the Navy's unique contribution to joint warfare.)

The research and analysis being produced and briefed to the highest levels of our service and joint leadership is rapidly gaining a reputation for credibility and relevance. CNO has noted that "once again the Naval War College is at the center of operational thinking in the Navy." Comments from the Navy's ASW Task Force commander that the ASW work being done by Halsey II is "the most useful analysis" he has seen in the ASW mission area typify the feedback we are getting as we brief-out to the fleet. These results should not be surprising.

The last two years have seen a *major shift in distribution of the Navy's most promising line officers into our College*. These officers bring not only a fresh operational perspective but also an expectation to move forward through the ranks to the highest levels of responsibility. The Halsey Program selects the most prominent and brings them into a cadre of world-class researchers and warfare analysts in our Center for Naval Warfare Studies. While the expert cadre remains in place and continues to advance our understanding of particular elements of war fighting, the students actually conduct the analysis, using the cutting-edge war-gaming techniques and facilities the College is famous for.

Payoff for the Fleet

The payoff is huge. First, our *students achieve key academic objectives* while, second, developing a *comprehensive and profound understanding* of real threats, capabilities, and the key tactical- and operational-level issues they will face in follow-on command and staff assignments. Finally, third, each Halsey group yields analysis *directly related to war-fighting challenges in a specific theater of operations*. This process discovers and highlights those tactical imperatives

or capabilities that are potentially linchpins of operational-level courses of action, themselves linked to our national strategic options.

Another set of students—our Mahan Scholars—works at the strategic level. Linking the operational and strategic analyses of the Halsey and Mahan efforts forces a detailed examination of how military conditions established by a commander relate to—and inform—the selection of military strategy and its political ends. With its career-focused, highly motivated, joint/interagency/multinational student body and its world-leading war-gaming and analysis capability, the Naval War College is in a unique position to do this type of comprehensive work.

The College is bringing this unique capability into battery to directly support our fleet commanders not only through the operational analysis driven by our Halsey groups but also through political-military expertise resident in our Strategic Research Department and through war gaming performed by both the War Gaming and Warfare Analysis and Research Departments. The most recent example of this is the College's support of the highly impactful Fifth Fleet "strategic review."

With a wider aperture, the research arm of the Naval War College is also exploring a potentially significant role in an area of increasing importance to the Navy—both national and theater missile defense. The prospect of conducting missile defense at sea to defend the U.S. homeland, American allies, and U.S. surface ships poses a remarkably complex array of challenges to the Navy and our regional commanders. How will we apportion and employ our capabilities to balance the national and theater missions? How are multimission-capable surface ships best used to conduct these missions? How are these platforms best defended, since, presumably, adversaries will assign a high priority to eliminating them? These are just a few of the questions that must be answered as the sea-based capabilities for missile defense continue to evolve against a very real threat.

The Global War on Terror (GWOT) and the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns have challenged the Navy and its fellow military services to develop innovative approaches to defeating the nation's aggressive and highly adaptive enemies. Members of our Strategic Research Department, among others, have been at the forefront of analyzing the Iraqi insurgency and terrorist groups like al-Qa'ida. An international collaborative project on the new Proliferation Security Initiative has placed Newport in the lead for development of the U.S. and international community's latest approaches for halting the transshipment of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their materials. In 2004, the College designed, executed, and analyzed a war game, held in Newport and attended by seventeen nations, to test the capability of a multinational effort to collaborate operationally and legally so as to interdict the movement of WMD and related materials at

sea. Also, as a result of the GWOT and the highly constrained nature of modern warfare more generally, there is a greater appreciation of the importance of international law in shaping military operations. Our International Law Department is fully engaged in exploring the implications of this development, especially ways of effectively disseminating the substance of operational international law to operational commanders.

Whether we are exploring the potential of Sea Power 21 or grappling with the latest terrorist threat, we construe military research and analysis to be a continuum. Any problem has contained in it other problems at all the levels of military operations: strategic, operational, tactical, and technical. As analysis proceeds up and down those levels, different methods and organizations are brought into play. Our comparative advantage is focusing largely, but not exclusively, on the strategic and operational levels of military operations. But, obviously, it is important to be knowledgeable about tactical- and technical-level subjects so as to make higher-level research, analysis, and gaming possible in the first place. We do this by maintaining an outstanding faculty and student body and by partnering with other war-gaming and analysis activities in both the public and private sectors. By reaching out to the fleet, to Joint Forces Command, the U.S. intelligence community, and various other agencies and departments, the Naval War College leverages its own resources in an era defined by joint, interagency, and multinational operations.

Following World War II, Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz wrote, "The war with Japan had been reenacted in the game rooms at the War College by so many people, and in so many different ways, that nothing that happened during the war was a surprise . . . absolutely nothing except the Kamikaze tactics towards the end of the war—we had not visualized these." I have always felt this was a good-news/bad-news story. The good news is that we successfully prepared for waging a deadly war across the Pacific. What our predecessors accomplished in Pringle Hall and Sims Hall hastened victory and saved many lives. The bad news is that something important was missed that slowed the final victory and cost more lives than was necessary.

This is why we maintain a small exhibit dedicated to Fleet Admiral Nimitz, centrally located in McCarty Little Hall, the Navy's state-of-the-art facility where we do our world-renowned research, analysis, and war gaming. We want our people to remember every day as they come to work that thinking carefully about future wars matters enormously. It has real consequences—good and bad. We have to get it right. Our criterion of success is a set of insights into military conflict of such scope, accuracy, and penetration that current and future leaders can voice the same sentiments as those of Fleet Admiral Nimitz, now a half

century ago. And when our students leave, they take with them to the fleet and positions of extraordinary responsibility around the world not only the substance of these insights but the analytic and intellectual skills to create them.

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