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President's Forum

J.R Stark

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*“What one finds on the pages of the **Review** is a glimpse of the intellectual vitality of the College: critical issues being carefully examined and freely debated by well qualified individuals from many backgrounds.”*

President's Notes

THIS ISSUE MARKS THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the *Naval War College Review*. Soon after the Second World War, Admiral Raymond Spruance, who was then President of the College, responded to a suggestion from the Chief of Naval Personnel and initiated the *Information Service for Officers*. Published each month during the College's academic year, these small journals contained three or four lectures which had been given at the College, so that officers who were not in Newport might benefit from the activities conducted here.

Today that is still the principal purpose of our journal, which was retitled the *Naval War College Review* in 1952. But our journal has changed dramatically

Rear Admiral Stark was commissioned in 1965 at the U.S. Naval Academy, studied at the University of Vienna as a Fulbright Scholar, and earned a doctorate in political science at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. He has served on the Navy Staff, the National Security Council Staff, and as Executive Director of the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel. His sea service has included command of USS *Julius A. Furer* (FFG 6), USS *Leahy* (CG 16), and, from 1994 to 1995, the Nato Standing Naval Force Atlantic, deployed in the Adriatic Sea. He assumed the duties of President of the Naval War College in June 1995.

over the decades, and it has become one of the premier scholarly publications of the United States Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Today, nearly ten thousand copies of the *Review* are sent to readers of many ranks, services, professions, and nationalities. Throughout the world, afloat and ashore, in government offices, university libraries, and private homes, with each new season comes the best writing of authors with something important to say about the professional matters of the sea services.

In agreeing to publish serious studies in areas such as national strategy, maritime operations, defense organization, naval history, and international law, Admiral Spruance stipulated that the President of the College would decide what should appear. So it has remained, to the great benefit of the Navy. The academic freedom which allows the College to explore any relevant topic in the classroom and to examine any substantial issue in its war games enables the *Naval War College Review* to present the individual ideas of a wide variety of officers, statesmen, scholars, and other professionals, regardless of whether those views uphold or challenge official policy. What one finds on the pages of the *Review* is a glimpse of the intellectual vitality of the College: critical issues being carefully examined and freely debated by well qualified individuals from many backgrounds.

To celebrate our journal's first fifty years, we thought readers would welcome a second opportunity to read some of the highlight articles. With recommendations from the *Review's* advisory board and former editors, sixteen standouts have been selected from the more than twelve hundred articles that have appeared on these pages. Naturally, the decision process was difficult, and many superb articles had to be set aside—some due to their length, others because they were rewarding only in their day, a few to achieve variety in topics. And since most subscribers have been reading the *Review* for many years, "recent" articles were excluded. Each of those selected met the most crucial test—is this article worth reading today?

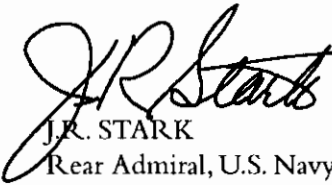
I hope you will enjoy as well as benefit from this look back. Virtually all of the authors are well known to readers of this journal: decorated senior officers (including two former presidents of the College), renowned scholars, and distinguished officials. It should not be surprising that such powerful thinkers appear in our journal again, even though the *Review* prides itself on publishing international perspectives and first-time authors (often our students); we are concerned with serious matters, and these authors lived up to their reputations.

For me, the most remarkable lesson of these great teachers is that our situation today—as complex as it may seem—is not unique, our predicament is not without precedent, and our problems are not altogether new. We who are about to enter the next millennium should draw upon the wisdom of men and women who conquered challenges no less daunting than our own.

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Nevertheless, any selection is likely to disappoint longtime readers whose favorite articles were not chosen. We expect to reprint several more standout *Review* articles over the coming year, and I encourage your inputs on which ones we ought to include, as well as your comments on this issue's articles.

For all of us in the military services, the past few years have witnessed enormous change in our environment, in our technology, and in our operational concepts. The sea services are moving ahead smartly as we address the problems of the next century, and we at the Naval War College are happy to be part of that process. We see these efforts every day in our curriculum, our war games, and our research. We should also expect these changes to be reflected in the *Naval War College Review*. I hope that you, our readers, will give us your ideas and suggestions to help us ensure that we remain at the forefront of naval thought as we approach the twenty-first century.


J.R. STARK
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College



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