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## President's Notes

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## President's Notes

**D**uring the last several years the size of the student body at the Naval War College has increased dramatically. When classes began last August we experienced an increase of 48 United States military students over the previous year, bringing the total complement at our two U.S. courses to 396. With the recent emphasis on jointness within our armed forces, the percentage of officers from our sister services has also grown. Today, only slightly more than half of our students are from the Navy; the remainder come from the other services, including the Coast Guard, as well as from several civilian agencies of our government. Our military faculty is also comprised of representatives of all our armed forces. The student and faculty mix contributes to the strength of the College and ensures that seminar discussions take on a truly joint flavor.

In addition to our two courses for United States students taught at the College of Naval Warfare (for Navy Captains/Commanders and their sister service counterparts) and the College of Naval Command and Staff (Lieutenant

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Admiral Strasser holds a B.S. from the Naval Academy, two master's degrees from The Fletcher School, Tufts University and, from the same school, a Ph.D. in political science. He was graduated from the command and staff course at the Naval War College in 1972. He commanded the USS *O'Callahan* (FF 1051), Destroyer Squadron 35, Cruiser-Destroyer Group 3, and Battle Group Foxtrot. His seven years in Washington include

## 4 Naval War College Review

Commanders and their other service running mates), we have two courses for students from other countries. Officers representing many friendly and allied navies from around the globe come to Newport each year where they both benefit from and contribute to our overall educational program.

The oldest of these international courses is presented at the Naval Command College (NCC), which was inaugurated in 1956 by Admiral Arleigh Burke, the Chief of Naval Operations. Designed for Captains and senior Commanders, this program prepares students for higher command and staff responsibilities in their own navies and familiarizes them with the global strategy and policies of the United States as well as the operations, practices and doctrine of our armed forces.

The Naval Command College academic program parallels that at the College of Naval Warfare, our senior U.S. officer course, during the Strategy and Policy, and National Security Decision Making trimesters and also includes a special International Maritime Operations trimester. The students in the international program are fully integrated into the lectures and seminars with their U.S. counterparts during the first two trimesters; security considerations require a distinct operations program. With their years of operational experience, familiarity with their country and regional issues, and facility with the English language, these students make a substantial contribution to seminar discussions, bringing a perspective that might otherwise be overlooked by their counterparts.

Countries traditionally send only their very finest officers to this course. Since its inception the Naval Command College has graduated a total of 1,082 officers representing the navies of 70 countries. More than half of these graduates have achieved flag rank within their navies, and 98 have been or are now serving as the chief of their service. This is indeed a remarkable record of achievement by a talented and determined group of professionals.

In an attempt to provide a somewhat similar experience for a less senior group of officers, the Naval Staff College (NSC) was begun in 1972. This course enrolls naval officers of the rank of Lieutenant Commander or senior Lieutenant from allied and friendly nations and has as its primary mission the preparation of its students for command afloat and mid-level staff positions. Unlike the two U.S. courses and the more senior international course, which are all ten months in length, the Naval Staff College convenes twice a year for a period of roughly five and a half months.

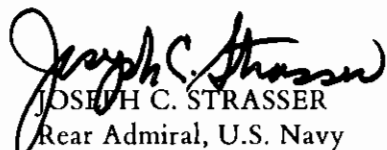
Because of the difference in length, this course covers a portion of the core trimesters taught at the other colleges as well as subjects of special interest to other countries' navies and coast guards. The NSC program focuses on four main areas: Policy and Strategy, Employment of Naval Forces, International Law and Ocean Affairs, and National Security Decision Making. As is the case with the Naval Command College, elective courses are available on a voluntary basis.

From its beginning in 1972, the NSC has been home to 767 officers from 81 separate countries. With Class 38 now in session, the course boasts 40 flag officers and 19 chiefs of service among its graduates. This is all the more impressive considering that alumni of the last dozen or so classes do not yet have the seniority to be considered for flag rank, and several of the countries attending NSC do not have flag officers within their naval service.

Many of the officers from other lands who come to Newport bring their families with them. Families of these students also make major contributions to our understanding of their countries and cultures which is significantly enhanced by a presentation that each NSC student gives on all phases of life in his nation. Our two international courses also make a series of trips throughout the United States to military, business and cultural sites to round out the students' understanding of the United States and our people.

There is no doubt that our friends from abroad benefit from their participation in these two courses. Neither is there doubt that a tremendous advantage accrues to the United States, a benefit that far outweighs the effort required to maintain the excellence of these programs. Long-standing friendships are formed between U.S. students and faculty and our guests that endure the test of time. As these officers return home and advance to positions of great responsibility within their navies and countries, they retain a knowledge of our country, an appreciation of our way of life and an admiration for our military services and our officer corps. All of this increases the opportunity for cooperation and success in operations and dialogue with friendly navies throughout the globe. We see evidence of this constantly as we engage in exercises throughout the world and seldom visit any country where we do not encounter an NCC or NSC graduate. While the numbers will probably never be known, it is likely that literally hundreds of Naval War College alumni from all of our courses were involved in Operation Desert Storm.

Perhaps the warmest friendships are made amongst these students themselves. With officers here from all corners of the globe, the entire world benefits from the camaraderie and associations formed in Newport. Our two courses directly contribute to peace and stability as these relationships help to solve the thorny problems that invariably arise on the international scene. What better investment is there than bringing together future global naval leaders to forge enduring friendships and learn from each other? As has recently been shown and will no doubt be demonstrated again in the future, the dividends are enormous.

  
JOSEPH C. STRASSER  
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President, Naval War College