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" . . . [I]n any profession real independence of thinking is always rare . . . [b]ut the military profession provides some of the most barren soil of all for its nurture." The accuracy of this view is measured by examining the U.S. Navy's most widely read professional journal.

AN EXAMINATION OF PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS OF NAVAL OFFICERS AS REFLECTED IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL

by

Captain I.F. Brooks, U.S. Navy

Introduction. This article investigates the collective professional concerns of naval officers as reflected in their professional journal during a 5-year period in the late 1960s, a period when the Navy's present leaders were in mid-career. The research arose from a desire to test several interrelated preconceptions. The most significant of these is that the Navy has, as one author notes, "proven fundamentally incapable of conceptualizing the value of naval forces in terms that carry conviction within the administration or even in the public."¹ A second preconception is that this inability to present a reasoned definition of the role of the Navy in national defense is in part the result of an absence of serious thinking about naval missions and strategy within the profession. The final preconception is that a disproportionate amount of what thinking does exist is being done by nonmilitary men. This is coupled with the perception that the present state of

affairs contrasts unfavorably with a legendary golden age of Mahanian thought some time in the past, an age when naval officers did consider and debate their role in the nation's defense. The basic premise underlying this study is that some insight into the validity of these preconceptions can be gained from an examination of the subjects that naval officers chose to write about and to read about.

Two theoretical assumptions are significant. The first is that Huntington's concept of the military profession as "a special type of vocation" distinguished by its "expertise, responsibility and corporateness" is a valid one.² As a result the profession as a whole is assumed, by virtue of its corporateness, to be capable of formulating an agreed vision of its role in national defense. Another way of expressing this concept is to assert that the notion of a "Navy point of view," in the sense of a generally shared professional

outlook, is a meaningful description of reality. The second assumption is that professional journals represent in some manner the collective perceptions of a profession and, in turn, help to shape this collective self-image. Thus what individuals voluntarily elect to submit to their peers reflects what these individuals think the profession considers important. One author suggests that in regulated professions, professional journals supply a form of organized control as they are edited under the supervision of senior members of the profession.³ He further suggests that "professionals are expected to read their journals . . . to be informed as to what it is important to think about."⁴

If the concept of examining professional journals to ascertain collective professional perceptions has validity, it should apply especially strongly to the renowned professional journal, the United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*. The Naval Institute is a private, nonprofit organization of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard officers devoted to increasing professional knowledge of naval and maritime affairs and of seapower generally. While it has no formal ties with the Department of the Navy, the organization is headed by—and *Proceedings* published under the supervision of—a Board of Control composed primarily of senior active-duty officers and traditionally under the presidency of the incumbent Chief of Naval Operations. During the period of this study the typical Board of Control included the Chief of Naval Operations, three other admirals, a Marine Corps general, two Navy captains and one Coast Guard captain (all on active duty) plus the Secretary-Treasurer, a retired commander. Despite the disclaimer in each issue of *Proceedings* that "opinions or assertions in the articles are the personal ones of the authors and are not to be construed as official,"⁵ the makeup of the Board of Control and the fact that *Proceedings* is the most widely

read U.S. Navy professional magazine make it plausible that, at least in the aggregate, subjects discussed in *Proceedings* represent a professional consensus of what the important issues are. It should be stressed that this theoretical approach does *not* depend on an article supporting or refuting some specific policy. Thus, for example, one frequently debated issue is the use of nuclear power for surface ships. What is relevant for this study is not whether articles on this subject are pro or anti-nuclear power, but rather that they indicate that this is an issue the profession collectively considers worthy of serious debate.

The principal portion of this study consists of an examination of all issues of *Proceedings* from January 1964 to December 1968. This period was chosen because by the end of it the senior flag officer now on active duty had not yet been promoted to his present rank while the junior flag officer now on active duty was already well into his second decade of naval service. This period should, therefore, represent that time when today's flag officers were in mid-career, solidifying their professional outlook and viewpoints.

During the period examined *Proceedings* included the following types of material:

1. Articles—generally longer pieces, sometimes descriptive but more often analytical, interpretive or argumentative.
2. Professional notes—shorter pieces, generally descriptive.
3. Comment and discussion—in effect, "letters to the editor" (although a nominal payment was made upon publication). These were almost invariably comments on recently published articles.
4. Book reviews, short reprints of current naval news and pictorial essays.

This study examines the subjects, in broad terms, of the 467 articles, 252 notes and 629 comment and discussion

48. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

items published during the 5-year period. Book reviews and comments thereon were excluded. Although initially tabulated separately, professional notes and articles were combined for purposes of analysis. Each item was categorized by subject (using a subject breakdown described below) and by status of author (civilian, Navy, other U.S. military, foreign). Regular and reserve officers were considered together. With certain exceptions retired officers were included with active-duty officers in tabulating results. This was done partly for reasons of expediency but also reflects the conviction that those retired officers who contribute to *Proceedings* help to form the corporate self-image and in a real sense continue to be members of the profession in terms of shaping and reflecting professional thought. Navy officers were broken down by rank. For purposes of this paper the data has been aggregated into three groups: junior officers (lieutenant commander and below), commanders and captains, and flag officers. Seventeen items written by Navy enlisted men (primarily comments on leadership and personnel) have been included within the junior officer totals. Although the Naval Institute purports to be equally a professional journal for the Marine Corps and Coast Guard, authors from these services were lumped with all other non-Navy military authors. This reflects the overwhelming thrust of *Proceedings* toward the Navy and not toward the other sea services.

In addition to the basic analysis, a separate analysis was conducted of prize essays. Annually the Naval Institute selects a prize essay and (normally) two essays for honorable mention. Because these essays are judged and selections made personally by the Board of Control (without knowledge of the names of the authors) they should be particularly valid indications of what issues senior members of the profession regard as important.

In constructing a scheme for categorizing articles by subject it was first necessary to identify those areas that are or should be of interest to the professional naval officer. To assist in this identification an "ideal" naval professional was postulated. This ideal professional officer is interested in the history, nature and ethics of his profession. He is interested in improving it internally and in increasing his knowledge of all internal branches of the profession. As a seafarer he is interested in nonmilitary uses of the sea while as a military man he is interested in other military services, foreign as well as American. He is interested in those areas of the world in which he may have to operate and in the Soviet Union as his most probable adversary. Finally he is interested in the mission of the Navy, in the utility of force and in those various aspects of the application of naval power we collectively term strategy. This description of the "ideal" professional resulted in the following breakdown of topics used in this study:

Naval and Military History

Professionalism

- Leadership, discipline, retention
- Professional ethics, civil-military relations

Internal Functioning of the Navy

- Seamanship
- Tactics
- Naval hardware and systems
- Personnel, training, readiness
- Administration, organization, management

Nonmilitary Aspects of the Sea

- Oceanography
- Merchant marine
- Law of the sea

Other Military Forces

- U.S. forces, national security organization
- Foreign military forces (less U.S.S.R.)

The World

- The Soviet Union (including military forces)
- Other areas

Naval and National Strategy

Subcategories are indicated by the topics listed under the main headings. Naval and national strategy were not broken down into subcategories; instead an analysis of each article was undertaken.

The foregoing typology is, obviously, not the only one that could be constructed and the following rationale is presented for some of the less obvious aspects of this particular scheme of categorization:

1. Naval History might well be included with Professionalism as it fosters a sense of the historical continuity of the profession. This was the original intent of the study. However it was discovered that naval history accounted for such a large percentage of the articles (about one-fifth) that its removal to a separate category was necessary to avoid an excessive interpretation of the interest in history as an interest in the nature of the profession. This appeared especially necessary as civilians were significantly overrepresented as authors of historical articles (48 percent of historical articles and 54 percent of comments on such articles are by civilians; in contrast only 27 percent of all articles and 28 percent of all comments are civilian authored during the period covered by this study).

2. Retention and Discipline were included with Leadership because in many articles these topics were inseparable and any distinction would be wholly arbitrary. In contrast, the subcategory of Personnel was used for articles concerned with training, assignments, career patterns and promotions. In general if the focus of an article was on the leader it was assigned to the Leadership category; if its focus was on

subordinates as a group it was assigned to the Personnel category. This division, although clearly the most arbitrary one in this study, is considered significant. In a profession such as officership where leadership is the fundamental reason for existence, the self-image of the officer as a leader must be part of any reasonable definition of professionalism. At the same time, most personnel matters are equally clearly matters of internal efficiency within the Navy. The ambiguity of this division is acknowledged; at a minimum the author claims consistency in the assignment of articles to the two categories.

3. The category of Management contains articles on military budgets and systems analysis. Articles whose thrust was on the techniques of systems analysis or of management were also included here. Articles calling for more military input and less civilian systems analyst input into defense decision-making were included under Civil-Military Relations.⁶

4. Articles on interservice matters and national security organization were included with articles on other U.S. armed forces since there were too few interservice articles to justify a separate category.⁷

Data Analysis and Results. The results of the analysis are displayed in Table I. Articles and professional notes have been aggregated in this table. Examination of the data reveals that:

1. A significant number of both articles and comments are originated by other than naval officers. Forty-three percent of the articles and 38 percent of the comments came from civilians, other military officers and foreign officers. The majority of these (both articles and comments) were generated by civilians.

2. By an overwhelming margin, articles and comments dealing with internal Navy matters were the most common. Forty-three percent of all

50 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

TABLE I—BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY AND STATUS OF AUTHOR OF *PROCEEDINGS* ARTICLES AND COMMENTS
1964-68

Category		Civilian	Other U.S. Military	Foreign	Junior Officer	Commander/ Captain	Flag	Total
Naval and Military History	A	60	10	8	11	30	4	123 (17%)
	C	62	11	7	7	17	10	114 (18%)
Professionalism (totals)	A	3	5	3	11	18	1	41 (6%)
	C	15	3	1	34	25	6	84 (13%)
Leadership, discipline, retention	A	1	2	--	8	9	1	21 (3%)
	C	8	1	--	25	20	4	58 (8%)
Professional ethics, civil- military relations	A	2	3	3	3	9	--	20 (3%)
	C	7	2	1	9	5	2	26 (4%)
Internal Functioning	A	40	25	6	105	117	16	309 (43%)
of Navy (totals)	C	32	13	6	118	90	12	272 (43%)
Seamanship	A	10	7	1	10	15	2	45 (6%)
	C	5	--	2	5	10	2	24 (4%)
Tactics	A	1	4	1	8	6	--	20 (3%)
	C	--	--	--	1	2	--	3 (**)
Naval hardware and systems	A	22	12	2	41	47	5	129 (18%)
	C	18	4	3	37	26	3	91 (14%)
Personnel, training, readiness	A	7	2	2	32	28	6	77 (11%)
	C	6	7	--	61	41	4	119 (19%)
Administration, organiza- tion, management	A	--	--	--	14	21	3	38 (5%)
	C	3	2	1	15	11	3	35 (6%)
Nonmilitary Aspects of the Sea (totals)	A	25	5	1	9	15	1	55 (8%)
	C	24	1	1	3	12	4	45 (7%)
Oceanography	A	8	--	--	6	5	--	19 (3%)
	C	3	--	--	1	--	--	4 (**)
Merchant marine	A	11	3	1	2	4	--	21 (3%)
	C	16	--	--	2	8	4	30 (5%)
Law of the Sea	A	6	2	--	1	6	1	16 (2%)
	C	5	1	1	--	4	--	11 (2%)
Other Military Forces (totals)	A	17	10	20	7	14	1	69 (10%)
	C	2	4	4	3	3	--	16 (3%)
U.S. Forces, national security organization	A	2	5	--	1	3	--	11 (2%)
	C	1	2	--	1	2	--	6 (1%)
Foreign military (less U.S.S.R.)	A	15	5	20	6	11	1	58 (8%)
	C	1	2	4	2	1	--	10 (2%)
World (totals)	A	28	5	7	4	12	--	56 (8%)
	C	28	--	4	2	12	--	44 (7%)
Soviet Union (including military)	A	10	2	--	4	7	--	23 (3%)
	C	16	--	--	--	6	--	21 (3%)
Other areas	A	18	3	7	--	5	--	33 (5%)
	C	11	--	4	2	6	--	23 (4%)
Naval and National Strategy	A	14	10	3	4	20	2	53 (7%)
	C	19	1	2	4	19	4	49 (8%)
Miscellaneous (##)	A	2	1	--	4	5	--	12 (2%)
	C	--	--	1	3	1	--	5 (**)
Totals (figures in parentheses equal percentage total of all articles/comments authored by each group)	A	189 (28%)	70 (10%)	48 (7%)	156 (22%)	231 (32%)	25 (3%)	719 (100%)
	C	180 (29%)	33 (5%)	26 (4%)	174 (28%)	180 (29%)	36 (6%)	629 (100%)

(##) Miscellaneous articles include several on small boat sailing, three on effective speaking or writing, and individual articles on the Applied Physics Laboratory, "human factors," labor relations, Cuban refugees and bullfighting.

Notes: (1) "A" indicates articles (including professional notes); "C" indicates comments.

(2) Figures in parentheses under "Totals" are percentages of the total number of articles or comments falling into that category. Less than 1% is indicated by (**).

PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS 51

articles and comments concerned internal matters. The next highest category had only 17 percent of the articles and 18 percent of the comments. Within the internal category the two largest subcategories were the one involving systems and hardware and the one dealing with personnel, training and readiness. Articles on systems were either purely descriptive (covering new ships or equipment) or were arguments for or against aircraft carriers, existing antisubmarine warfare platforms or nuclear power for surface ships. The relatively lower percentage of comments on systems (the subcategory accounts for 18 percent of the articles but only 14 percent of the comments) appears to reflect the fact that most of the purely descriptive articles drew few comments. Articles on personnel, training and readiness covered a wide variety of topics and no obvious pattern was discerned. The predominance of internal concerns revealed by this analysis was particularly marked for naval officers. Table II shows the percentage of the total number of articles and comments devoted to internal matters written by authors from each of the three classes of officer. Data are also shown for the systems and personnel subcategories. It is to be expected that younger officers would be interested primarily in internal matters and it is thus not surprising that

two-thirds of the effort of such officers is devoted to internal concerns. It is somewhat more surprising that articles by flag officers should also be predominantly inward looking.

3. Naval history was the second most commonly written about area. Here the trend shown in internal matters was reversed and articles by civilians predominated. One-third of all civilian written articles during the 5-year period examined were on historical subjects. In contrast only 11 percent of the articles written by naval officers and 9 percent of the comments submitted by them dealt with this area. Historical articles, whether written by military or civilian authors, were primarily descriptive and did not attempt to apply lessons from history to the modern Navy.

4. Comments on leadership and professional ethics also came disproportionately from professional naval officers. Because of the somewhat arbitrary nature of the categories used this may also be a form of looking inward. The relatively high number of comments that came from junior officers supports this interpretation.

5. The broad area of strategy was the subject of only seven percent of the articles and eight percent of the comments. In addition, two percent of the articles covered discrete areas of the world (Indian Ocean, for example);

TABLE II—PERCENTAGE OF INTERNAL MATTERS ARTICLES AND COMMENTS BY NAVAL OFFICERS

		Junior Officer	Commander/ Captain	Flag Officer
Total percentage covering internal matters	A	67	51	64
	C	68	50	33
Systems and hardware	A	26	20	20
	C	24	14	9
Personnel, readiness, training	A	20	12	24
	C	39	23	10

52 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

some of these were discussed in terms of their strategic importance. Naval officers were slightly less likely to write on strategy than on other subjects. For example 57 percent of all articles but only 49 percent of the articles on strategy were written by naval officers. Most of the officers who did write on this subject were on active duty. They were joined by a higher percentage of officers from other U.S. military services who wrote on strategic subjects (often principles of war or the strategic importance of Vietnam).

Because one of the purposes of this investigation was to examine the degree of serious thinking on the proper role of the Navy and on naval strategy, an analysis was conducted of the 53 articles published on strategy. The results, in terms of topics covered, are presented in Table III. In addition, there was one article each on naval missions, mining in limited war, the Cuban blockade and contingency planning. It will be noted that almost half of these articles are not directly related to naval power and that only the strategic deterrence mission has been the subject of significant discussion or debate. These results suggest that if the present leadership of the Navy is finding it difficult to articulate a concept of what the general-purpose forces of the Navy are to be used for, it may be in part the result of the lack of any writing—and perhaps any thinking—about the subject when the present flag officers were in midcareer. This is not to suggest that the profession as a whole in the late 1960s was unconcerned with seapower. It is equally likely that naval officers a decade ago considered the value of seapower to be so obvious as not to require discussion. But unexamined premises can become dogma, unsupported by any true conceptual foundation. Thus when individuals and groups external to the Navy ask for a rationale for conventional military forces, the failure of the profession to have an answer may be the inevitable result of its previous failure to seriously

consider the subject and examine the validity of its assumptions concerning the military use of the sea.

TABLE III—BREAKDOWN BY TOPIC
OF STRATEGY-RELATED ARTICLES
1964-1968

Strategic Importance of Vietnam	12
Strategic Nuclear Deterrence	11
Maritime Power/Economic Aspects of Seapower	6
Antisubmarine Warfare	5
NATO Strategy	5
Theory and Principles of War	5
Peacetime Presence	3
Naval Strategy	2

A separate examination was conducted of the 15 essays singled out by the Board of Control either as prize essays or for honorable mention. Three of these essays were written by civilians, two by Army officers and the remaining ten by Navy officers (two of whom were retired). The subjects of these 15 essays are shown in Table IV. That 10 of these essays fall in the area previously defined as strategy may imply that the senior leadership of the Naval Institute (and by implication of the Navy) considers the subject of strategy to be of more importance than does the profession at large.

TABLE IV—SUBJECTS OF PRIZE ESSAYS/
HONORABLE MENTION ESSAYS
1964-1968

Professional Ethics/Civil-Military Relations	— 4
Vietnam	— 2
Strategic Deterrence/Nuclear Weapons	— 2
NATO Strategy	— 2
Ocean Strategy (includes economic importance of maritime power)	— 2
Submarine and Antisubmarine Warfare	— 2
Tropical Ocean Areas	— 1

Alternative Forums. That relatively little material on strategy was published in *Proceedings* may mean merely that publication and debate was taking place elsewhere. The most obvious alternative

vehicle for such a debate is the *Naval War College Review*. The *Review* is an official publication designed to extend the advantages of a war college education to nonresident officers. Despite its official status it is in some ways less useful for examining professional attitudes in the aggregate (at least under the theoretical concepts used in this study) as it is less widely read and relatively free of supervision by senior members of the profession. In addition, during the period examined, the *Review* did not publish reader comments on its articles and thus was less suitable for debate. Still, the *Review* provides the only significant alternative forum for professional debate to the more widely read *Proceedings*. A brief examination was therefore made of the 146 articles published in the *Review* during the period covered by this study. No content analysis in detail was attempted; rather articles were classified based on title alone. The results are shown in Table V. With the exception of a new

category, International Relations, categories are identical to those used above. The category of International Relations includes international law, diplomacy and general theories of international relations and was required because of the large numbers of such articles.

Examination of Table V reveals the following differences between articles in *Proceedings* and those in the *Review*:

1. A higher percentage (44 percent versus 26 percent) of *Review* articles were authored by civilians.

2. The internal preoccupation and interest in history seen in *Proceedings* were replaced in the *Review* with a great interest in both international relations generally and specific areas of the world. The two categories, World Environment and International Relations (both of which have obvious strategic implications), accounted for 55 percent of the *Review* articles.

3. Twelve percent of *Review* articles (in contrast to eight percent of *Proceedings* articles during the same period)

TABLE V—BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY AND STATUS OF AUTHOR OF REVIEW ARTICLES 1964-1968

Category	Civilian	Other U.S. Military	Foreign	Junior Officer	Commander/Captain	Flag	Total
Naval History	2			1	6	1	10
Professionalism	1			2	3		6
Internal Functioning of Navy	7			3	8	3	21
Nonmilitary Aspects of the Sea	2				1		3
Other Military Forces		1					1
World (totals)	22	10	5	2	13		52
U.S.S.R.	(11)	(1)		(1)	(4)		(17)
Other Areas	(11)	(9)	(5)	(1)	(9)		(35)
International Relations	20	2		1	5	1	29
Strategy	6	2		7	1	1	17
Miscellaneous (##)	4			3			7
Totals	64	15	5	19	37	6	146
(Percent)	(44)	(10)	(3)	(13)	(25)	(4)	(100)

(##) Miscellaneous included articles on comparative economics, world population (2), world food supply, technology, democratic theory and news reporting in Southeast Asia.

54 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

were classified as directly related to strategy. Table VI shows a breakdown, generally similar to the breakdown in Table III, by topic of those articles above. Once again only a minute amount of the published writing dealt directly with fundamental issues of naval strategy and the use of naval forces in pursuit of national goals.

TABLE VI—BREAKDOWN BY TOPIC OF STRATEGY RELATED ARTICLES (NWC REVIEW) 1964-68

Vietnam/Insurgency	— 5
Theory and Principles of War	— 5
Economic Aspects of Seapower	— 2
Blockade	— 2
Nuclear Weapons, National Strategy, Naval Strategy	— 1 each

Historical Perspective. The foregoing examination tends to support the premise that relatively little conceptual strategic thought (outside the area of strategic nuclear deterrence) was being undertaken within the profession, at least during the time covered by this examination. The investigation also reveals that a significant amount of what thinking was being done (to the extent that such thinking is represented by

publication in *Proceedings*) was done by civilians. To investigate the related concept that this state of affairs contrasts unfavorably with earlier periods an examination was made of the years 1939-1940 and 1916-1917. These years were selected as representing times of tension in the world when naval war was imminent and contemplation of such a war might be expected to have been in the forefront of professional thought. Only titled articles were examined in each 2-year period; no attempt was made to analyze the comment and discussion section of *Proceedings*. The results of this brief historical examination are given in Table VII.

Examination of Table VII reveals that in each 2-year period only five percent of the published articles were directly concerned with strategy. Thus the assumption that strategic issues were extensively debated in earlier years appears invalid. It is also of interest that the 1939-40 breakdown between civilian and military authors is virtually identical to the 1964-68 breakdown.⁸

As a matter of historical curiosity the first issue of the *Proceedings* of the U.S. Naval Institute, published in 1874, was examined. Of the eight papers published in that issue four dealt with systems and

TABLE VII—BREAKDOWN BY AUTHOR OF ALL ARTICLES AND OF ARTICLES ON STRATEGY 1939-40/1916-17

	Civilian	Other U.S. Military	Foreign	Junior Officer	Commander/Captain	Flag	Total
1939-40							
All subjects	69	8	5	98	39	9	228
(percentages)	(30%)	(4%)	(2%)	(43%)	(17%)	(4%)	
Strategy	4	—	—	3	3	2	12
1916-17							
All subjects	29	8	9	79	20	24	169
(percentages)	(17%)	(5%)	(5%)	(47%)	(12%)	(14%)	
Strategy	—	1	1	1	3	2	8

Note: Junior officer figures for 1916-17 include several ranks such as purser, surgeon and engineer that are now integrated into the Navy line. It is possible that some of these individuals would be considered as senior officers under the present system.

PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS 55

hardware, one with personnel, one with naval history, one with the importance of a specific geographic area and one with the future role of the Navy. While it is obvious that no statistically valid conclusions can be drawn, it is intriguing that this distribution corresponds quite well to that found over 90 years later.

Summary and Conclusions. The picture developed in this article is of a Navy primarily concerned with the immediate day-to-day problems of operations, that is to say with its sailors and its ships. It suggests a professional journal shared between naval historians, often civilians, and naval officers looking primarily inward at their own Navy, secondarily at the rest of the world and only intermittently seeking to refine or redefine the mission of the Navy itself. That an examination of over 700 articles yields only a dozen directly concerned with examining, in a conceptual way, the use of general-purpose forces implies that the profession as a whole regards questions concerning these forces to be so firmly settled that no discussion is required. Such may or may not have been the case in the 1960s; it is clearly not the case today. The brief historical examination conducted as a part of this research suggests that naval indifference to expanding and refining naval and military strategy is not a postwar aberration but is consistent with historical tradition. One should not forget that Mahan was not a hero within the service; his fame rested on his reception outside the Navy based on a writing career during what one authority calls "an essentially civilian pursuit as a faculty member of the new U.S. Naval War College."⁹

Certain caveats should be noted before accepting the results of this research. The most obvious is that merely because concepts are not articulated in the pages of *Proceedings* there is no thinking taking place. The common

tendency to regard most serious discussion of naval matters as classified, for example, places obvious limits on what individuals will seek to publish in an unclassified journal. The most obvious instance of this is the exceptionally small number of articles on tactics in the pages of *Proceedings*, but classification may also inhibit at least some naval officers from examining strategy as well.¹⁰ In addition some officers, although competent in a particular area of the profession, may choose, for various reasons, not to write about it. One officer recently surveyed 50 years of *Proceedings* looking for articles on leadership by recognized leaders and concluded that "great leaders didn't write about leadership; they exercised it."¹¹ A second caveat is that the actual influence of *Proceedings* on the thinking of future naval leaders is uncertain. The foregoing quotation suggests that at least one officer is not disposed to seek wisdom from the journal. At least one recent Chief of Naval Operations first joined the Naval Institute the year in which he was elected its president. This suggests that at least some of the Navy's leaders are unaffected by *Proceedings* and the debates, or absence thereof, that it contains.

Despite these reservations *Proceedings* remains a principal vehicle for an exchange of views within the profession and for molding collective professional outlooks. It serves as the major forum in which officers can express their opinions on issues facing the Navy. The principal alternative, the *Naval War College Review*, is less widely read, makes less use of reader comments as a forum for debate and, at least during the period of this investigation, was only marginally more likely to serve as a springboard for discussion of issues of naval and military strategy. If the reservations expressed above suggest that there may be thinking going on elsewhere, it remains true that there is no mechanism equal to *Proceedings* for

56 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

transforming such thinking into a generally accepted Navy viewpoint.

A recent article called for the Navy to "take the lead in reviving the theory of sea power, in rediscovering its legacy for our time."¹² This study suggests that, if the past is a guide, such an event, however desirable, is not likely to happen. Bernard Brodie, often called the dean of American civilian strategists, has observed that "in any profession real independence of thinking is always rare. . . . But the military profession provides some of the most barren soil of all for its nurture. . . ."¹³ Such a conclusion is an uncomfortable one for career military professionals to accept. The research reported here, however, suggests that Brodie's observation may have validity. If so, then the rethinking of the role and function of the Navy demanded today will not be done by

naval officers any more than most of the basic thinking on strategic deterrence was done by military officers. Instead the basic conceptual thinking about naval strategy will be done by others or, more frighteningly, will not be done at all.

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Captain Linton Brooks, a nuclear submariner, was educated at Duke University and the University of Maryland. He has served in several nuclear submarines and in the Polaris Poseidon Plans and Programs office of OPNAV, commanded U.S.S. *Whale* (SSN 638), and was a student in the College of Naval Warfare, Naval War College in 1978-79. He is now serving in the office of the Secretary of Defense (AE).

NOTES

1. Thomas H. Etzold, "Sea Power: Our Tarnished Treasure," *The Washington Post*, 18 September 1978.
2. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 8.
3. Maurey D. Feld, "The Military Self-Image in a Technological Environment," Morris Janowitz, ed., *The New Military* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1964), p. 175.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
5. See the title page of any issue of United States Naval Institute *Proceedings* (hereafter cited as *USNIP*).
6. For an example of this sorting see William T. Ropp, "What Price Sea Power," *USNIP*, July 1966. This article argues against excess reliance on systems analysis by Secretary of Defense MacNamara and has been assigned to the civil-military category.
7. As a matter of interest there were more articles on dolphins and sea turtles than on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Joint Staff or any other aspect of unification.
8. The relatively higher percentage of articles by junior officers in Table V reflects the longer promotion times and relatively smaller number of senior officers in prewar years.
9. Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), p. 437.
10. It should be noted that such an attitude, if in fact it inhibits writing, is in error. The present author has had extensive access to classified materials on strategic nuclear deterrence and considers that the fundamental issues can be (and have been) discussed in the open literature. The same thing can certainly be said of strategic theory for conventional forces.
11. A.F. Campbell, comment in *USNIP*, December 1978, p. 96.
12. Etzold.
13. Brodie, p. 458.

