

1974

President's Notes: Challenge!

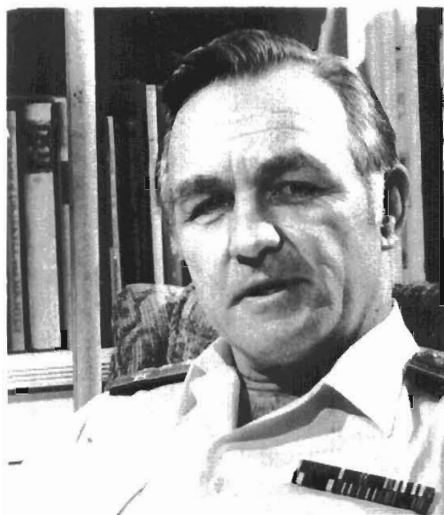
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CHALLENGE!

It would seem only natural that with the greater emphasis we have placed on research and writing, there would develop both a need for recognition of publishable works and a requirement for their publication. Recently, two steps have been taken to meet these obligations. First, the Naval War College Foundation generously has established the Admiral Richard G. Colbert Memorial Prize of \$1,000 for an extra-curricular student essay deemed to be the most professionally and ably written. Second, to meet the growing demand for increased number of publishable works developed at the college—as well as to provide better internal management—we have established a Naval War College Press. This press will publish the *Naval War College Review* as well as such monographs, textbook series, and historical works that have significant value to the college and its friends. In this way, we will be able to make selective distribution of work done at or for the college, thereby sharing these products with others and affording our students, faculty, and research associates an opportunity to have their work distributed to interested parties.

In this issue we have the privilege of publishing the 1974 Admiral Colbert Memorial prize essay by Lt. Comdr.

Kenneth McGruther along with one of the other three essays awarded honorable mention, this one by Comdr. Jim McNulty. I commend them to your reading.

Both essays deal with the subtle mission that we call Naval Presence. It is an essential and growing element in today's naval strategy and one which simply has not received the full measure of thoughtful investigation that it deserves. In the words of Ken McGruther, "... the Presence mission has tended to be asserted rather than analyzed." In my opinion, the work done by these two authors deserves the full consideration of policymakers. Neither essay provides decisive conclusions, but both stimulate creative discussion in this field.

Perception is the essence of the Presence mission: perception of capability, intent, and determination. The McGruther article shows that the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war included not only a battle of force between the belligerents, but a more subtle, psychological battle of perception between the superpowers as well. Victory, if one can be found in such a setting, is not only dependent upon the capabilities of the actual forces deployed, but also on the ability to make the other actors perceive your level of commitment to specific goals.

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Jim McNulty perceives this as applying the most ancient of strategic wisdom—to subdue the enemy without fighting.

In the hierarchy of strategies we might well ask ourselves, What is the priority of U.S. Navy Missions? If, as some strategists argue, the well-being of mankind rests on our ability to deter open conflict, then Presence most certainly ranks just behind Nuclear Deterrence. Such a rationale would demand a maximum commitment by our naval leadership to Naval Presence. Certainly the Naval War College should continue to make a contribution to this vital intellectual exercise and attempt to follow through and determine the impact of its application to resource allocation and force planning.

This will be the last Challenge that I shall have the privilege of writing. It goes to the printers just as I leave the War College. By the time you read it I shall have taken command of the 2d Fleet. As much as I shall enjoy returning to sea duty, I shall sorely miss the fine friends and stimulating experiences I have gained at the Naval War College. I look forward to a continuing association with the college and with all of you.



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