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Described as the most intellectual flag officer in the U.S. Navy by Admiral King, Admiral Spruance credits the Naval War College as the intellectual stimulant. Spruance, with many other fellow naval contemporaries, prefought the war in the Pacific on Coasters Harbor Island at Newport during the 1920's and 1930's. The war games conducted during this period provided these World War II leaders with the necessary intellectual and psychological fiber to overcome early defeats and lead U.S. forces to victory in the Pacific.

ADMIRAL RAYMOND A. SPRUANCE AND THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE: PART I—PREPARING FOR WORLD WAR II

An article prepared

by

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Raymond Ames Spruance was a professional naval officer whose life in World War II was filled with the savage sounds of war, but he was a quiet man. He shunned personal publicity and avoided newsmen. Anonymous by choice throughout the war, he slipped further into anonymity after the war. Departing from active Government service as Ambassador to the Philippines in 1955, he peacefully lived out his years in a modest home among the pines of the Monterey Peninsula in California, where he passed away 28 years after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.*

Many officers of this generation know little of Spruance. Some may vaguely associate his name with the war in the Pacific, but, for most, only the more famous names come easily to mind—King, Nimitz, Halsey. The war these admirals fought has receded into history, and the contemporary Navy contends with nuclear power, guided missiles, new enemies, and a different world. Some military leaders consider these developments as new and unique, never before faced by their predecessors, and they reason that history is irrelevant. But this view is wrong as the demands of combat and higher command are invariable: the ability to comprehend an entire battle panorama in flux, an understanding of the physical and psychological limitations of his forces, the need for decisions under extreme stress, and a keen perception and continuing appreciation of the objective.

*Ground has recently been broken—behind the existing Luce-Mahan-Pringle complex—at the Naval War College for the first new construction at the college in 36 years. The initial building in the authorized construction is the Professional Education Center, which is to be named Spruance Hall. The DD-963 destroyer class will also be named in his honor.

The study of past military leaders is therefore useful and appropriate, and it is within this general context that this writer wishes to deal with one person in particular. He was chosen because he was found to exemplify those traits expected of a military leader in high command. He was a strategist who planned successful campaigns. He was a tactician who was victorious in all his battles. And he was a compassionate human being who saw the need to control violence.

Spruance refused to write either his memoirs or an autobiography and chose to let his record speak for itself. Whatever was destined to be said about him would have to be said by others. Fleet Adm. Ernest J. King, the brilliant, critical wartime Chief of Naval Operations, believed that Spruance was the most intellectual flag officer in the U.S. Navy.¹ Chester Nimitz, his wartime boss, said that Spruance had an extraordinarily successful naval career and that few Americans had served their country as effectively and at such high levels as did he.² And naval aviator Halsey recommended that Spruance, a "blackshoe" admiral, command two of the American carriers at Midway, culminating years of admiration and appreciation of Spruance despite their totally different styles.

Naval historians have said little, although a Spruance biographer predicted that they would "... strip from him his chosen cloak of anonymity and will record his name among those of the greatest commanders of all time."³ Regrettably, this has not been done, except for some accounts by the eminent Samuel Eliot Morison. In his judgment, "Power of decision and coolness in action were perhaps Spruance's leading characteristics. He envied no one, rivaled no man, won the respect of almost everyone with whom he came in contact, and went ahead in his quiet way, winning victories for his country."⁴

What were those victories? In the

beginning, Spruance's forces won the Battle of Midway. Said Nimitz, "Spruance's rise to fame came in the Battle of Midway where his sound judgment and wise decisions won a stunning victory over greatly superior forces. That victory reversed the long series of enemy successes and was truly the turning point in the war."⁵ In Morison's opinion, Midway

... might have ended differently but for the chance which gave Spruance command over two of the three flattops. Fletcher did well, but Spruance's performance was superb. "Lord of Himself" yet receptive to advice; keeping in mind the picture of widely disparate forces yet boldly seizing every opening—Raymond A. Spruance emerged from this battle one of the greatest fighting and thinking admirals in American naval history.⁶

Other victories followed: The Gilberts, the Marshalls, the Marianas, the Battle of the Philippine Sea, Iwo Jima, Okinawa. He captured islands, raided bases, destroyed planes, sank ships, and killed the enemy. Spruance was in command, and the Spruance forces won.

The United States defeated Japan for many reasons, including superior resources, a resolve to win, and an ability to fight well. But winning wars requires preparation, and the magnitude and complexity of the war against Japan were staggering. It encompassed millions of square miles, over which millions of men and thousands of ships and planes moved and fought. It was a naval war, especially in the Central Pacific, and naval officers were the planners and the leaders. Their achievements are history, but the significance of their achievements is that they had prepared themselves intellectually and psychologically for the war before they fought it.

Foremost in their preparation was

the Naval War College. Chester Nimitz had graduated there in 1923, and years later he sent a letter to the President of the College with this observation.

The enemy of our games was always—Japan—and the courses were so thorough that after the start of WWII—nothing that happened in the Pacific was strange or unexpected. Each student was required to plan logistic support for an advance across the Pacific—and we were well prepared for the fantastic logistic efforts required to support the operations of the war—The need for mobile replenishment at sea was foreseen—and even practiced by me in 1937. . . . I credit the Naval War College for such success I achieved in strategy and tactics both in peace and war.⁷

Spruance expressed a more restrained appraisal to the President of the War College.

My duty at the Naval War College prior to World War II covered six years between 1926 and 1938. . . . the first year taking the Senior Course and, later, two tours of duty on the Staff. I consider that what I learned during those years was of the utmost value to me, in the opportunity it gave me to broaden my knowledge of international affairs and of naval history and strategy.

The Naval Academy course in my time as a midshipman—1903 to 1906—was by no means a liberal education. The courses at the Naval War College in later years, with the fine lectures that we had and the problems in strategy that were given to the student officers to solve, gave us a liberal education. This to me was of the utmost value throughout

the years of World War II in the Pacific, and later after retirement during my three years as Ambassador to the Philippines from 1952 to 1955.⁸

The Naval War College and Spruance. To understand Spruance, one must understand the Naval War College. While it is not intended that this paper be a history of the Naval War College, brief excursions into the past will be necessary. There is no full and accurate record of Spruance's activities as a student at the college, so it will be necessary that he be analyzed within the context of the War College curriculum. Knowing what the War College did, knowing Spruance's character, and knowing what he did after he was a student, one can then extrapolate the influence of the War College on Spruance as a student.

The concept of the Naval War College had begun with Stephen B. Luce in the late 19th century. He believed that naval officers must systematically study the art of naval warfare. For years he had developed his thoughts and reasoning on these lines; he needed only the appropriate forum for a formal proposal to the Navy. On 4 April 1883, that opportunity presented itself, for Luce was scheduled to address the Newport Branch of the Naval Institute, meeting that day in Newport.⁹

He knew that his proposal would be opposed, so he cleverly tailored his address to appeal to an elemental Navy instinct—the traditional Army-Navy rivalry. Titled his address "War Schools," he began with a tongue-in-cheek report on the current Navy trend in postgraduate education. Some 12 ensigns were undertaking studies in the diverse fields of ichthyology, mineralogy, fossil botany, geology, ethnology, and marine invertebrates. Luce observed that they were off to a good start as scientists, but he was silent on their potential as naval officers.

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Meanwhile, the Army had been studying war while the Navy had been studying fossils. He found that "... the need for a more extended course of study than is practicable at the Military Academy, or in the ordinary routine of active service, has long been recognized and in a great measure supplied." Then followed an impressive summary of the Army's advanced warfare training establishments.

The U.S. Artillery School, established in 1867, had a 2-year course of studies and practical training which aimed to qualify officers for any duty they might be called upon to perform, or for any position they might aspire to, however high in rank or command. Luce particularly emphasized its military art and science curriculum, because it supported his thesis that the science of war had to become an essential part of the education of naval officers. Luce then cited the U.S. Infantry and Cavalry School, Fort Leavenworth, Kans., and the Engineer Post and Depot of Willets Point, New York Harbor, as other outstanding examples of the Army's program to teach the science of war. Luce's implication was clear. The Navy had nothing, while the Army was preparing its officers "... for the great business of their lives—the practical operations of war."

Luce's persuasive argument continued. "This is just what we need for the Navy! The naval officer, no less than the army officer, should possess a knowledge of the science and practice of war..." He must study the science of war and then apply the principles to military operations at sea. And a building to teach such things already existed, close by where the assembled group was gathered—Coasters Harbor Island.

With a final appeal for approval of his proposal, he closed by submitting "... the question of establishing a post-graduate course for the study of the Science of War, Ordnance, and International Law, and such cognate branches

of the three grand divisions as may be determined upon."

The Navy response was indifferent and hostile. But Luce prevailed, and the Naval War College was established the following year under his presidency. It had many enemies and few friends. Fortunately, it soon had Alfred Thayer Mahan as its president. He believed in it, and he articulated its mission which would later guide its preparation of military leaders for the Second World War.

Addressing the new class at the opening of the fourth annual session of the college, August 1888, he reviewed the turbulence and terrible difficulties of getting the War College established and accepted. Luce's unfortunate phrase of "postgraduate" had caused opponents to claim the War College would duplicate and compete with the Annapolis postgraduate school. "Not so," said Mahan. The Navy had many hardware experts, but none who were authorities on the art of war. The true aim of the Naval War College was "... to promote, not the *creation* of naval material, but the knowledge how to use that material to the best advantage in the conduct of war." The conduct of war was controlled by general principles, not by cast-iron rules of invariable application. These principles must be studied and understood so that they might be applied by naval leaders. The college would therefore concentrate on strategy, tactics, and logistics. In summary, the mission of the Naval War College would be "... the study and development, in a systematic, orderly manner, of the art of war as applied to the sea, or such parts of the land as can be reached from ships."¹⁰

The Naval War College survived, developed, and matured with a basically unchanging mission. By the 1920's most younger, ambitious naval officers felt that duty at the War College was a prerequisite for higher command. Spruance believed this also, and he applied

for and was selected to attend the 1926-1927 senior course at Newport.¹¹

Spruance the Student. Spruance was a 40-year-old commander with 4½ years in grade, all spent at sea, and he had served on sea duty 13 of his 18 years of commissioned service. At sea he had commanded five destroyers; ashore he had served in technical billets involving electrical engineering, specializing in communications and gunnery fire control. He had traveled extensively, including duty with the Asiatic Fleet and the staff of Commander, Naval Forces Europe. His fitness reports were uniformly outstanding. He had commanded a destroyer in William F. Halsey's division; Halsey drafted a fitness report which aptly describes Spruance as he reported to the War College for duty.

Commander Spruance is one of the best all around officers I have ever served with. He is quiet, efficient, always on the job, and with a clear thinking brain always working. His judgment is excellent, and I invariably seek his opinion on any knotty problems. It is a pleasure having an officer of his caliber in my division.¹²

He was wearing two hats in the summer of 1926, Commander Destroyer Division 27 and Commanding Officer, U.S.S. *Osborne* (DD 295). Orders issued in May 1926 had assigned him to the Bureau of Navigation for duty. He had set sail in *Osborne* for the United States from Europe and arrived in New York on 11 July. To his surprise, new orders met him on arrival, directing that when relieved he was to report to the President of the Naval War College for duty under instruction.¹³

Getting relieved and underway to the War College was a flail. Spruance knew that the course of instruction had begun on 1 July, and he was anxious to miss as little of the course as possible. His relief,

Lt. Comdr. F.G. Reinicke, had met *Osborne* on arrival, and the turnover was swift, taking little more than 3 days. Some administrative matters were understandably overlooked or postponed. For instance, the ration record was not ready for Spruance's signature when it should have been on the 15th, his last day of command and that day he would hurriedly depart *Osborne* for Newport. Preparing that ration record for the captain's signature was the job of the commissary steward, but the day before he had departed for parts unknown, leaving an unfinished report. But these matters were left unattended in the last-minute flurry of changing command.¹⁴ Spruance left New York late that afternoon and arrived at the Naval War College before sunrise the next morning.¹⁵

Spruance's mood as he walked up the steps of Luce Hall, in the pre-dawn darkness of a July Friday morning, is not difficult to imagine. Belated "hurry-up" orders to the War College are not uncommon today, and a naval officer is to be forgiven if he is irritable and flustered by the inevitable inconveniences. Spruance's wife, son, daughter, and household effects were somewhere between Europe and Newport, he had no quarters, his civilian wardrobe was hardly adequate for daily wear at the War College, and his War College classmates had a 2-week head start on him. He was not in the best frame of mind to begin his War College studies. But at least he had arrived in Newport, and that coveted tour of duty could begin.

One of Spruance's first tasks was to become familiar with the War College routine. The working hours were appealing, 0900 to 1530, with Wednesday and Saturday afternoons free. Civilian clothes were the uniform of the day, although rubber-heeled shoes had to be worn to keep the corridors quiet. The library would provide a place to study and a plentiful supply of books for professional and casual reading. The

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Navy medical officer would make house calls, groceries ordered from the commissary would be delivered at the doorstep, and the exchange laundry would make home pickups and deliveries. The War College Secretary had detailed housing information; once Spruance settled his family, War College duty would be very pleasant indeed.¹⁶

Spruance was one of 70 students, 45 in the senior class of captains and commanders and 25 in the junior class. They were mostly Navy line officers, with a sprinkling of staff corps, Marine, and Army officers.¹⁷ As with War College classes immemorial, they represented differing levels of performance and aptitude. Some would work and some would not. Some were there because they wanted to be there, some were there despite their desires. Some were there because the Bureau of Navigation felt they were comers and needed War College training to help them on their way to flag rank. Others were there because they were available for a year for one reason or another, and the War College was a convenient temporary repository. And finally, some were there because the Bureau did not know what else to do with them and hoped that in a year that retirement or the selection board would solve the problem.¹⁸ Five officers were destined for distinguished flag rank service: Raymond A. Spruance, Royal E. Ingersoll, Edward C. Kalbfus, Frank H. Brumby, and a future CNO, Forrest C. Sherman.

The 70 had one thing in common. They were career military officers studying war in a world that was sure there would never again be war. The military profession was at a low ebb. The era of naval disarmament and minuscule military appropriations was upon them. They were immersed in the Roaring Twenties and all for which that decade is remembered. They studied abstract war in the remoteness and solitude of Luce Hall and their own minds and played abstract war games

with miniature ships on a wooden board. They surely wondered if they would ever fight a real war but would wait 15 years for an answer. During that interval their critics would consider them "... as men who retired from logic 'into a dim religious world in which Neptune was God, Mahan his prophet, and the United States Navy the only true church'..."¹⁹

There was a great gap in the age, seniority, and thinking of the two classes. The juniors were considered too young to absorb the deep, profound teaching and wisdom of their seniors. The lieutenants felt in turn that many of the senior officers were fossils unwilling to absorb anything new or different. In some cases both opinions proved correct.²⁰ The classes would rarely mix except for several war games and special studies. Otherwise they would go their own way.²¹

The Naval War College, 1926. The War College was headed by Rear Adm. William V. Pratt, assisted by a staff of 20 officers. Pratt was ambitious, experienced, and extremely competent; the War College presidency was but one step in his successful quest to become the Chief of Naval Operations. Although he had never been a student, he had been on the War College staff from 1911 to 1913. That tour had deeply impressed him and had influenced his future career; indeed, it may have been its turning point.²² Subsequently he had retained a continuing interest in the Naval War College and in preparing naval officers for higher command. He had been President for a year when Spruance arrived. Having experimented and innovated with the organization and curriculum during his first year, Pratt launched the second year of his presidency with the War College molded to his specifications.²³

Pratt felt the War College was, at long last, well established and accepted by the Navy. World War I had justified

the need for War College trained officers, and current Navy policy favored War College graduates for prestigious higher command billets. Junior classes had begun in 1924, and the Correspondence Course, now almost a prerequisite for attending the War College, had been reestablished in 1919. The most recent Navy Department statement of the War College mission was that it furnished a medium whereby naval officers could in peacetime study the conduct of naval warfare and the art of command. Pratt strongly criticized that mission statement as inadequate, narrow, and restrictive. For instance, it failed to mention international relations, joint operations, testing of Navy Department war plans, and cooperation with the fleet in solving the latter's practical problems. He insisted that all these features be incorporated into the work of the Naval War College.

He formed his staff to resemble an operational Navy staff and eliminated the traditional Strategy and Tactics Departments. Despite reluctance from his staff, he reorganized them into four divisions: Logistics; Information; Movement, Communications, and Training; and Policy and Plans. This organization would be jettisoned shortly after Pratt's departure for higher and greater tasks.

Spruance's course of instruction would include the solution and playing of war games, an emphasis on committee studies and a deemphasis on thesis work, a new course in logistics, international law taught by the prestigious George Grafton Wilson of Harvard, lectures by experts in a broad field of subjects, and lots of reading. Nearly every course of instruction would be influenced in one way or another by Pratt. For instance, his influence could be inferred by a staff officer implying to the students that the staff was not responsible for what was being taught, but rather that "higher authority" had dictated what would be said or done. The staff would suggest that the stu-

dents accept the validity of a concept because "higher authority" had approved or originated the concept. In many cases Pratt had simply decreed that a course be established or eliminated. "Much work is crowded into the year, perhaps too much," he reflected. But 11 months allowed little time, so "... the courses have been crowded in order to make the officers themselves realize how many important topics there are, and how many sided is the art of war."²⁴

Pratt had a reputation for rapport with his staff, an ability to communicate with junior officers, a receptiveness to new ideas, and an open and innovative mind.²⁵ However, he was reserved in his personal relations with the students, being apparently either shy or aloof. It was not his nature to have a close association and good communications with everyone.²⁶ Occasionally he would clash with the students during war game critiques. The students felt that they were more familiar with the details of the game, after days of involved planning and playing, than was Pratt. When Pratt would criticize the students' decisions or reasoning, they would often lash back in defense of their actions. Spruance too, although normally quiet and restrained, would stubbornly defend his opinions in opposition to Pratt.²⁷ Thus, in so many ways, the many-faceted influence of Pratt on all the students would be a significant factor in the shaping of their Naval War College education.

The War Games. Pratt had said that much work had been crowded into the year. If the first month typified what was coming, it would be a busy year indeed. Spruance had a lot of catching up to do, for the staff had the students off and running hard from the opening day, 2 weeks before Spruance's belated arrival. They had been deluged with reading books and publications, attending the lecture series, researching

for thesis and international law problems, and grappling with the initial war gaming exercises which were underway. Spruance had to begin somewhere and to establish priorities. The deadlines for the thesis and the international law solution were well into the future, so they could wait. Lectures required little preparation, so it looked like the war games required the most immediate attention. These were the war games that Nimitz said prepared naval officers to win the war with Japan. They were the essence of War College training and were the primary method by which strategy, tactics, and logistics, advocated by Luce and Mahan, were taught by the War College. So it is essential to study both their philosophy and their mechanics to appreciate how they affected and influenced the minds of the future World War II leaders, Spruance in particular. But before considering the war games, it is first necessary to understand Spruance's character. Spruance was famous for his intellect. He could understand and comprehend the complexities of naval warfare. He could think clearly, reason, analyze, and finally solve the most difficult of problems. His decisions were sound, logical, often brilliant, and, most important, usually correct.

His concept of the thinking and fighting naval commander is revealing. Writing some years after his retirement, he said,

From my experience on the Staff of the Naval War College going over the solutions of operations problems, I came to the conclusion that there are a considerable percentage of individuals whose imagination and reasoning power is definitely limited. An officer of this type may be a fine officer on the bridge of a ship, but he is unable to solve satisfactorily intricate problems whose solution is not obvious. These officers have what I like to call the tactical type

of mind, in contradiction to the strategical type. Both types are needed by the Navy. Many people have a good combination of these two extremes. I believe the purely strategical type of mind might have great difficulty making an early decision in a tight situation. The question of a willingness to take responsibility and to fight—a *sine qua non* for command—is something else again.²⁸

Spruance had strong feelings on the education and training of naval officers. The Naval Academy had disappointed him because it had emphasized memorizing the application of principles and neglected the principles themselves. Rather than merely training the memory, he felt that a student should be trained to reason and think for himself.²⁹ The Naval Academy emphasized technical subjects, and his duty before the War College had been either responsibility for a single ship at sea or a technical billet ashore. His first prolonged involvement with the strategy and tactics and decisions of naval warfare began with the Naval War College in 1926. And there he found the intellectual stimulation he had been seeking for so many years. Strategy and tactics fascinated him. Between classes he would meet with his fellow officers and have exciting discussions on these subjects, and when he came home he would be elated. Life in Newport was full of enjoyment, for he was with friends, naval officers who loved these discussions as much as he did. His life and hours as a student were filled with the satisfaction of being at the Naval War College.³⁰

So he became immersed in solving military problems and playing war games and in the constant intercourse of ideas on naval warfare. Later, when the arena changed from Coasters Harbor Island to the Pacific Ocean, it was almost as if nothing had changed. His

later reflections give credence to this feeling. "I believe that making war is a game that requires cold and careful calculation," he said.³¹ And again, "Each operation is different and has to be analyzed and studied in order to prepare the most suitable plans for it. This is what makes the planning of operations in war such an interesting job."³² He did not hate the Japanese, but rather felt that they were the other team, and good fighters at that. He killed them dispassionately, yet he was a compassionate man. He deplored the killing of civilians and destruction of nonmilitary targets.* In the stress of battle he was serene, and his mind worked just as clearly in the clamor of war as it did in the tranquility of the War College.³³

There is an interesting footnote to Spruance's philosophy on war. He has been credited with making many crucial decisions that worked well for him. But he was well aware of the element of luck. He candidly admitted that luck was with him at Midway,³⁴ and he constantly spoke of luck going for or against him in subsequent battles. During the Marianas campaign, a fellow admiral remarked that every commander must be a gambler. Spruance replied that if this were so, he was one

of the professional variety; he wanted all the odds he could get stacked in his favor.³⁵ He said that he was also perhaps a cautious man in that he would examine the probable effect and consequences of acts so as to avoid danger, except that in making war he tried to minimize danger rather than avoiding it.³⁶ War gaming and the Naval War College are synonymous, and these insights into Spruance's character offer a useful framework to examine these games.

In 1926 the students were involved in gaming from the day they stepped aboard until they graduated. War gaming had been a part of the War College almost from the beginning. In 1894 games were introduced to the students as "war problems," that year the game involved an enemy fleet attacking New England. Capt. H.C. Taylor, the War College President, was enthusiastic about them because they excited the naval mind into mental activity, having become dormant after 30 years of peacetime inertia. Hopefully it had turned some of those minds from machinery and material to questions of strategy and tactics. Taylor fervently hoped that the war problems would justify the continuance of the Naval War College, then struggling for survival.³⁷

A marine takes credit for suggesting the famous applicatory system of problem solving. In the fall of 1909, a staff officer, Maj. John H. Russell, had become fascinated with a book on war gaming written by a German military writer. *Letters on Applied Tactics* by Griepenkerl advocated solving military problems on paper, then testing the solutions in a war game. The father of modern naval war gaming, Capt. McCarty Little, caught Russell's enthusiasm for this concept, and it soon became established under Little's sponsorship.³⁸ Griepenkerl's book also introduced the *Estimate of the Situation* and the *Formulation of Orders* the same year.³⁹

*Spruance's humanity was manifest in the following instances. Spruance cautioned Rear Adm. Richard L. Conolly not to indiscriminately bombard Guam in order to avoid killing innocent natives. (Oral History Research Office, *The Reminiscences of Admiral Richard L. Conolly* (New York: Columbia University, 1960), p. 239-240.) He was always very concerned with the health and welfare of men wounded in action, both American and Japanese. (Interview with Charles J. Moore by Thomas B. Buell, Chevy Chase, Md., 6 November 1970.) Recalling his carrier attacks on Japan in 1945, Spruance said, "... I gave Mitscher, as objectives for our aircraft, enemy aircraft, air fields and aircraft factories. We would use our accuracy in bombing to attack military targets. ..." (Letter from Raymond A. Spruance to Professor E.B. Potter, U.S. Naval Academy, 6 May 1960.)

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War gaming progressed and developed. Until 1922 it was used as an analytical tool for devising and testing plans and doctrines. In 1922 the emphasis shifted, and the primary purpose became providing players with decision-making experience. A sophisticated new system for assessing damage was devised, based on actual armaments on actual ships. Called the *War College Fire Effect System*, it was designed to provide a relative strength comparison between actual fleets and to provide accuracy and realism to the games. Colors were assigned to various fleets of the world, and the two fleets that were most often opponents on the War College game boards were BLUE versus ORANGE: the United States versus Japan.⁴⁰

A game would begin with students solving a hypothetical strategic problem, using guidance contained in *The Estimate of the Situation with the Order Form*. A battle plan and an operation order would evolve for each side. Selected solutions would be played using a chart maneuver game; in this type game, ships and fleets would be strategically deployed by the students on individual navigation charts with moves recorded by the umpires on a master chart. When the fleets made contact, the problem would be transferred to a 200 inch by 308 inch wooden board. Miniature ships would then be tactically deployed on the board, and they would battle until the game was ended by the director. A history and critique would follow several days later, and full, frank discussion was invited.⁴¹

The prospective war gaming student first read a great number of Navy publications and War College pamphlets to become familiar with rules, doctrines, and techniques.⁴² Next he individually solved simple scouting and screening problems, then played them as chart maneuvers. Having learned the basic skills, he was ready for more complicated games.⁴³

Spruance missed the opening war game, Strategic Problem 1-27, a chart maneuver in the conduct of search operations. As usual, war existed between BLUE and ORANGE. BLUE had sallied forth with a central Pacific invasion force convoy, and ORANGE had to find and destroy it. The students referred to *The Service of Information and Security* to determine appropriate search methods, and they had to put themselves in the shoes of the ORANGE admiral. Later they would be required time and again to consider Japan as the enemy and to study the Japanese character, how they would fight, and what strategy and tactics they would use against the Americans. One of Spruance's most important principles which he used in World War II was "Know thy Enemy."⁴⁴

The students' impressions of the Japanese as a future enemy would emerge from these BLUE-ORANGE games. The staff warned them not to underestimate the Japanese. The students portrayed the Japanese with high morale and well-developed military skills, well disciplined, and fanatically loyal to a centralized, autocratic government. (The students seemed almost wistful that Americans were not as well disciplined as the Japanese.) They had great patience and would endure great hardships. Their fatalism made them unadaptable to new ideas, and they had less mechanical aptitude than Americans. On the other hand, the students viewed Americans as individualists who would resist going to war, but when war came they would fight well, united by patriotism and the indomitable American spirit and will to win. And finally, the students' study of the Russo-Japanese War provided one great lesson in the Japanese character. Japan would announce hostilities by launching a surprise attack before issuing a formal declaration of war.

The students were given four demonstrative problems that first month,

which impressed them with the concept of the *mission*. Problem #1 was to derive a mission from an operation order. Problem #2 was to derive a mission from a letter of instruction (LOI) issued by the Secretary of the Navy to Commodore David Porter in 1823. It was a classic in ambiguity, and it led to Porter's later court-martial for disobeying the mission implied by the LOI. The lesson learned was that an LOI must be clear and explicit. If one receives an LOI which he does not understand, he should go back to the originator for clarification.

Problem #3 illustrated how a mission may be changed by a change in the situation. The War College solution merits quotation because of its timeless relevance. An ORANGE attack carrier force is suddenly threatening the Canal Zone.

There is no question now what is the duty of every BLUE force that can get at this enemy menace *in time*. It is to prevent at all hazards the launching of an enemy air attack on the CANAL. No force must wait for orders. Every force that can be used must take the initiative. His decision must be instant. There is no time to lose. From this we draw the lesson that a commander must constantly apprehend a change in the situation, must constantly have his mind ready for a surprise from any quarter, must keep in mind always the plan of higher command, must be ready with a quick decision to meet an infinite number of changed situations, must be ready to suit his actions to contribute towards carrying into effect of the plan of higher command.

The effect is startling, for it was a preface to Spruance at Midway. The final demonstrative problem was an

exercise in formal order writing, the decisions and missions having been given.

August was strategic problem solving time. *The Estimate of the Situation with the Order Form* would now be extensively used. The philosophy and methods of the Estimate of the Situation must be understood in order to understand the method and reasoning used by the students to solve military problems. As noted earlier, the Estimate and the Order Form had been introduced in 1910 and had been modified and refined from time to time in the intervening years. Pratt did not like the latest version, put out in 1924 by his predecessor, Rear Adm. C.S. Williams. So he rewrote the entire book, with twice as many pages, combining the order form with the estimate, and this he issued in June 1926 to Spruance and his classmates. Pratt also issued a pamphlet *The Study of Strategy as Conducted at the Naval War College*, his philosophical supplement and amplification to the estimate booklet. Again, the influence of Pratt on the students is apparent.

The estimate booklet described a method of solving problems applicable to the solution of any situation that called for a decision. The method was a logical order of reasoning that, in Pratt's view, had proved appropriate and practical in military affairs by long use in experienced hands. In other words, it would train the mind to think and to solve problems logically, which was so appealing to Spruance.

The solution of a military problem passed through four stages:

(1) The Mission—The task. The purpose. What is to be done and why.

(2) The Decision—The determination. The conclusion. The course of action adopted.

(3) The Plan—The elaboration of the Decision. Operations essential to support the Decision.

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(4) The Order—Directions, putting the operation of the Plan into effect.

The first two stages were purely mental and analytical. The fourth was the action stage. The third included both the mental and action factors.

The War College then transposed the four-stage solution into a seven-part form.

(1) Mission: Derivation and Statement

(2) Opposing Forces: Their Dispositions and Comparative Strengths

(3) Enemy Forces: Probable Intentions

(4) Own Forces: Courses of Action Open to Us

(5) Decision

(6) Plan

(7) Order

Pratt placed great emphasis on Step (1), deriving the mission. A mission was rarely given a commander; rather the commander would be given a task that supported the objective of the supreme commander. He would then have to determine what the present situation was, state what new situation was desired, consider what factors would influence the desired change, and then logically select the appropriate mission. A mission was expressed as a task and the purpose of the task. It had to be very clear and well defined, avoiding such common faults as too vague, too broad, too narrow, too complex, or divided.

Spruance learned this lesson well. At Midway his staff urged him to pursue the wounded Japanese Fleet on the night of 4 June. But he knew his primary mission was to prevent the capture of Midway, so he positioned his force so that he could either strike out at the Japanese or break up an attack at Midway the following morning.⁴⁵ After the Battle of the Philippine Sea he was criticized for not heading westward to seek and destroy the Japanese Fleet. But in his mind his primary mission was to protect the vulnerable amphibious

forces then landing at Saipan, and he refused to leave them undefended.⁴⁶ Halsey's action at Leyte Gulf is the classic contrast. During amphibious assaults it was often unclear whether the carriers' mission was to protect the landing force or to seek out and destroy the Japanese Fleet. Spruance advocated the former mission; the aviators were inclined towards the latter mission.⁴⁷

In contemplating war with an enemy the planner must know the comparative strengths and dispositions of the opposing forces. This comprised Step (2). Pratt emphasized,

By every available means we seek to learn [the enemy's] strength, dispositions and plans in order to arrive at the probabilities and possibilities regarding the points of application, nature, and strength of his impending efforts. Only after this has been done can our activities be directed to best advantage, and unless it be done the most promising plans may be thwarted by some surprise made possible by a neglect fully to consider available information.

(Today the War College calls this aspect "The Threat" when teaching military planning.) Yamamoto's failure to correctly evaluate the threat at Midway contributed to his defeat. Conversely, Spruance had an acute appreciation of the need for information about the Japanese forces that he would face during an impending operation, and he insisted on gathering every available scrap of intelligence to assist his planning. Even then he was sometimes surprised by things he had not anticipated, such as the treacherous volcanic sand at Iwo Jima.

Step (3) of the estimate form was the Enemy's Probable Intentions. The student was given the impossible task of figuring out what the enemy's probable mission was and from that deriving the

enemy's probable intentions. Pratt counseled,

... it would not be safe to select a single one of the enemy's possible courses of action and label it Enemy Decision, lest the word Decision tend to fix or influence our minds too definitely there, to the exclusion or neglect of other enemy effort elsewhere. We have to take into account *all* that the enemy may do and cannot safely stress any one line of action *by him*.

Yet, in reality, the staff and student solutions were predicated upon an assumption of the enemy decision, and their solutions were therefore inflexible. Although Pratt implied that one should consider the enemy's capabilities as well, he failed to elucidate this concept. Fortunately, the need to consider capabilities was later recognized and accepted before World War II began. Spruance relates,

At the Naval War College in our Estimate of the Situation form we used to have: "The enemy, his strength, disposition and probable intentions." Later, "probable intentions" was changed to "capabilities." We found that there had been a tendency to decide what an enemy was *going* to do and to lose sight of what he *could* do. I have seen just this happen in fleet problems at sea, and it is very dangerous. During our war in the Pacific I always tried to figure what the enemy was capable of doing and then guarding against it, if possible.⁴⁸

Next followed Step (4), Courses of Action Open to Us. Based on what is known about the enemy and about our own forces, what can be done to accomplish the mission? Or as a recent Secre-

tary of Defense would say, "What are my options?" The students were taught to think in terms of advantages, disadvantages, and considerations. The actual considerations are familiar: urgency, prospects of success, cost of success or failure, possible gain worth possible cost, and forces. Today the War College tests a proposed Own Course of Action (OCA) for suitability, feasibility, and acceptability. Translated these mean, (a) will the OCA accomplish the mission? (b) have we the resources to do the job? and (c) are the results worth the cost?

Spruance could reduce his OCA's to the simplest possible terms, always with his mission firmly in mind. At Midway on 4 June he could either head west and look for the enemy or he could head east and cover Midway. At the Battle of the Philippine Sea he could head west and look for the Japanese Fleet, he could stay close by Kelly Turner and cover him at the Saipan beaches, or he could interpose himself between the Japanese and Saipan, staying close enough to Turner to guard against a Japanese end run yet closing the distance to the Japanese Fleet.

In Step (5), one made The Decision, to fit two requirements: (1) It must support the mission, and (2) it must be a logical deduction evolved from full, unprejudiced reasoning. It must be clear, definite, and resolute to inspire a vigorous response from those who must execute it. Books and books have been written on decisionmaking, but the Navy has been very succinct about it. Decisions are a way of life; as much thought as time permits should be put into them, but decisions must be made, and the decisionmaker must take responsibility for the consequences of his decisions. Spruance's forte was decision-making. He was so good at it, and his decisions were so important that they merit a separate study and will not be discussed further at this point.

Step (6) was The Plan, or the means by which the decision was to be executed. The college wanted the students' plans to stand the test of the Principle of War. The students used this same Principle of War to study and analyze the Russo-Japanese War and World War I. The college placed great store in this principle, regarded by many as dogma. It was comprised of nine elements, also called principles: Objective, Offensive, Superiority, Cooperation, Simplicity, Economy of Force, Surprise, Movement, and Security. Some students used these principles as a scorecard. If a World War I naval commander had violated more principles than he had observed, then he had done a poor job. Conversely, adherence to these principles won the students' approval. They sometimes lost track of the greater, though less obvious, implications of the battles they were studying. Spruance himself used these principles excessively in his student analysis of the Battle of Tsushima. But by World War II he had developed a *modus operandi* which, although incorporating versions of the 1926 "Principles," was certainly not limited to those principles alone.

The final step was The Order, by which the commander told his subordinates what he wanted done. Pratt and other experienced naval officers knew that many things had gone wrong in past wars because subordinates failed to understand the orders of their superiors, and therefore Pratt wanted orders written as perfectly as possible. Thus the Order Form was a mandatory outline for the drafting of all naval operations orders at the War College, and the outline went into great detail, allowing no variance. If the form was properly used, the reasoning went that a good set of orders would result.

To add authority to the argument for use of the form, Pratt quoted extracts from the person who had thought of the form in the first place, Griepenkerl, in his *Letters on Applied Tactics*.

Every order must be perfectly clear and intelligible. If misunderstandings arise, the chief fault lies with the one who issued the order. . . . Every order must be as short as possible. . . . Every order must be positive; for an uncertain and weak order will be loosely executed. . . . The order must not trespass on the province of the subordinate. . . . The higher the commander addressed the shorter and more general his orders may be.

Pratt thought this justified the Order Form. During World War II nearly all written orders and plans followed the Order Form. In most instances Spruance used this form for his orders, and they were well understood and inspired confidence in his subordinates. Adm. Arthur W. Radford testified that when Spruance was in command you knew precisely what he was going to do, because his orders were clearly written, promptly delivered, and would be changed only if necessary.⁴⁹ Much credit must go to Spruance's staff, for they did the actual order writing after Spruance had made the basic decisions.

But Spruance would discard the Order Form when necessary. In the Battle of the Philippine Sea he wanted to be absolutely certain his principal subordinates understood what he wanted done. To this end he personally drafted messages in lieu of structured orders, telling them in his own way so there would be no misunderstandings. In any event he would let his subordinates alone so they could get the job done and was loath to interfere unless absolutely necessary. "They know what I want done," he would say. "I will not interfere with them."⁵⁰

Spruance issued what was probably the shortest major battle order of the Pacific War. The Japanese battleship *Yamato*, in company with screening ships, was closing Okinawa during the

American amphibious assault on that island. Spruance had hoped to engage them with his own battleships, but Mitscher's planes found *Yamato* first. "Will you take them or shall I?" asked Mitscher. "You take them," Spruance replied. Without another word from Spruance, Mitscher's planes sank *Yamato*.*

But at the War College in 1926, Spruance and his classmates would rigidly adhere to the format and procedures of *The Estimate of the Situation with the Order Form* when solving military problems. These procedures, repeated again and again during his years at the War College, provided a common ground for all War College graduates to discuss military operations in later years. In the Pacific War, however, Spruance did not consciously follow the Estimate of the Situation format he had been taught. Rather, he used it unconsciously as a way of thinking, as did his chief of staff and alter ego, Carl Moore.⁵¹

Using these methods to solve military problems, the students addressed Strategic Problem B. It was a BLUE-ORANGE war from the ORANGE viewpoint. It also demonstrated the prevailing strategy for a future American-Japanese war. The United States would strive to blockade and isolate Japan into submission without invading the home islands. Japan, in turn, would fight a war of attrition, attacking the Americans' greatly extended lines of communication across the Pacific. Hopefully the Americans would become exhausted and the war stalemated. The American need for logistic support was recognized, as well as the need for island bases to support offensive operations. In particular, the physical characteristics

and strategic importance of every major Central Pacific island were thoroughly analyzed. Truk, for instance, was nearly always used as a forward base for westward operations. What superb training for a future Pacific naval commander! Here also, Spruance was introduced to the strategic concept of strangling Japan rather than invading her. All through 1944 and 1945 he would argue strongly for the invasion of the Chinese mainland and the encirclement of Japan. He was appalled at the thought of American losses if the home islands were invaded. However, he was overruled, and the invasion of Japan was scheduled for November 1945.⁵²

The students' conception of a BLUE-ORANGE war resembled the 19th century French invasion of Russia. The invader (BLUE) would plunge deeper and deeper into enemy territory, becoming progressively extended and weakened, the defender meanwhile harassing, withdrawing slowly, and consolidating his strength. The (ORANGE) students liked this strategy, and they decided to let BLUE come to ORANGE, counterattacking in great strength when BLUE was weakest.

Strategic Problem C, also solved in August, was another portent of things to come. A deteriorating international situation exists between BLUE and ORANGE. The BLUE Fleet is concentrated in the Canal Zone, with light forces in Pearl Harbor. ORANGE has begun unusual military activity, and hostilities are expected. Where will ORANGE strike? One thing is certain. ORANGE acts will precede words. Reports of hostile and vigorous operations will be the first news that war is on.

Pearl Harbor is a likely target. It is an inadequately defended yet vital American base. ORANGE will have excellent intelligence, being amply supplied with individuals who may be secret agents in positions of responsibility. BLUE, however, will have little intelligence on ORANGE military movements. The

*Forrestel, p. 204-205. Throughout the war Spruance apparently yearned for a major surface engagement, for which he had practiced so often at the Naval War College. One never materialized.

normally foul January northern Pacific weather would shield an ORANGE fleet transit to Hawaii.

The words of the staff solution are chilling.

We have explained that effective action without warning is to be expected on the part of ORANGE . . . such a bold conception as is involved in an expedition against OAHU is not in conformity with their previous history, but in view of the great advantage that would accrue to them from an attempt even partly successful in the initial phase of the war and of the great harm the destruction of our dock and other facilities at PEARL HARBOR would do to us we are bound to assume that some attempt against OAHU will be made.

A raid by surface forces is not probable. However, an air raid launched by an ORANGE carrier at a distance from OAHU is to be expected. The carrier " . . . could, after reaching a position 150 miles from OAHU, conduct a surprise air attack on the vulnerable parts of the base with a reasonable chance of crippling it for a considerable time." The carrier would approach from the northwest.

The BLUE solution included sending out search planes to find the carrier before it could launch an attack.

The first complex war game started with Chart Maneuver I-27. The students were given the operation order by the staff, in order to compare them with earlier classes who had used the same order. The game would also prepare them for the next war game in which they would have to develop solutions. Once more, it was BLUE versus ORANGE, this time the latter planning to attack a BLUE convoy; BLUE must intercept and engage the ORANGE raiding force.

The BLUE convoy proceeded generally westward, and the BLUE commander stationed his screening forces to the north, paralleling the convoy track. Rather than seeking out the ORANGE raiding force, he was going to let them come to him. The BLUE mission was offensive, yet BLUE operated defensively. By the end of Move 3, the game director urged BLUE to be more aggressive in finding ORANGE. By Move 7 BLUE still had not found anyone, and the director was unhappy. He criticized BLUE for other tactics also, such as sending out all his aircraft to scout and leaving none in reserve for contingencies. Said the director, "It is believed that the unanimous opinion of the officers attending the [1925] discussion and critique of this maneuver was that the BLUE offensive Screen had been exceedingly well handled and that insofar as was in their power had nullified the enemy search on the northern flank of the enemy." The 1926 BLUE force did not fare well in the eyes of the staff.

The ORANGE commander was not immune to criticism. Pratt had upgraded and emphasized the role of communications in naval warfare. ORANGE's communications were poorly written and caused confusion, errors, and missed opportunities. "Simplicity in plan and in transmission is to be sought," said the director in the critique. Spruance had acted as BLUE communication umpire and had recorded BLUE transmissions on the logsheet with a neat, firm hand using a well-sharpened pencil. Another lesson in communicating with subordinates had been learned.

The last war game before Christmas was Operations Problem I-27. It was issued on 12 October, and the students turned in their solutions on the 25th. The game began 29 October and would last almost a month. It would be a wearisome, protracted, and often boring experience.

The situation was almost identical to the just completed Tactical Problem

I-27, except that this time the students had worked out solutions in advance. BLUE had to move a convoy from Guam to Malampaya Sound. ORANGE had to find it, track it, and finally to destroy it. The problem required a study of screening a base before a convoy sortie, followed by the movement and protection of a convoy through hostile waters. The BLUE and ORANGE commanders were determined not to repeat the mistakes of Tactical Problem I-27. Spruance's assignment was of a division of BLUE destroyers.

ORANGE knew the need for intelligence; he had to know what BLUE was doing in Guam. He used a simple solution; he put a ring of ships around Guam to see who was coming and going. Then he flew in patrol planes to see what was happening in Guam itself.

Once BLUE got his convoy underway, he too used a simple tactic. He surrounded the convoy with a three-circle concentric screen. He did not want to be surprised from any direction. ORANGE did a good job of surveying BLUE's activity around Guam and knew when the convoy and escort had left. ORANGE then groped toward BLUE until contact was finally made on 8 November. The game has dragged on for days.

With contact finally made, the game would have normally become a board maneuver, with the forces locked in combat. But the ORANGE commander had other ideas. He wanted a night attack, so he maneuvered just out of range of BLUE's forces until nightfall. Then, under cover of darkness, ORANGE attacked with destroyers and submarines and emerged the apparent winner. Night engagements were played under rules that restricted freedom of movement and the use of weapons; a daylight engagement with its more exciting tactical games never materialized.

The students were frustrated, fatigued, and unhappy. It had been a long war game yielding little sense of accomplishment or satisfaction. The game time from first contact until game end was 7 hours, 45 minutes. There had been 155 3-minute moves. They had played the game morning and afternoon for a total of 15 hours, covering 12 days. They had been pushed hard because the critique had to be held on Saturday, the 20th, allowing them to be free to begin the International Law Study starting the 22d.

But what irritated the students more than anything else was the concept of the best solution. Each had worked long hours on individual solutions, which were turned in, promptly ignored, and the staff solution was selected to be played as the chart maneuver. The staff solution did not even represent the combined wisdom of the staff! Rather it was the work of a single staff officer, and there was no reason why his solution should be considered superior to the 45 students who were at least his equal in age, rank, seniority, and, presumably, intelligence. As Captain Snyder of the staff put it, the students were therefore not impressed with the shortcomings of their own estimates.

It is traditional at the War College that there is no "school solution" to a

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Lt. Comdr. Thomas B. Buell is a 1958 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and graduated from the Naval Postgraduate School in 1964 with the degree of Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering. He has served four operational tours in destroyers, most recently as Executive Officer, U.S.S. *John King* (DDG 3). Lieutenant Commander Buell is currently a student at the Naval War College, School of Naval Command and Staff.

problem nor any "right answer." The ground rules had been laid down along these lines for Spruance's class. "It is certain that decisions and criticisms of the director of the maneuver will not be acquiesced in by everybody. It is proper and desirable that such disagreement be expressed freely. It is better that such feeling be voiced than it be kept repressed." This class did not repress anything! As for staff solutions, "The members of the Staff are not infallible. The only difference between the Staff and the students is that the former, having presumably spent more time in the study of the subjects concerned, are, other things being equal, merely more apt to be correct in their reasoning and attitude."⁵³

The students clearly and pointedly disagreed. Captain Snyder, facing a student rebellion, decided that in the future the best student solution would be selected and played. If a staff solution were to be used, it would be the best opinion of the entire staff and would carry the authority of the head of the department.

The 1926 war games had been long and wearisome. Spruance had been doing other things too, such as preparing two theses and starting his Logistics and International Law studies, the

latter two in early December. He would study in the library during the day and would read for pleasure in the evening at home. He particularly enjoyed histories and biographies and would read them omnivorously.⁵⁴

The other students had come to know Spruance and to size up his character and personality. He was quiet, reserved, and serious but not unfriendly. Indeed he had a pleasant greeting for everyone, and he would join his class-mates in the usual noontime softball game. Those were Prohibition days, but the staff and students would have cocktail parties nevertheless. Spruance would never attend them; he did not socialize or engage in frivolous conversation. But he would become animated when naval warfare was the subject, and he had developed a reputation for intelligence, profound and logical thinking, and an impressive professional expertise.⁵⁵ He could regard his career to this point with great satisfaction and could foresee a promising and optimistic future. The Christmas holidays provided a chance to relax and to enjoy family and friends before starting the second half of the War College year.

The blow fell shortly after New Year's when Spruance received a letter from the Secretary of the Navy.

NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

28 December 1926

From: The Secretary of the Navy
To: Commander Raymond A. Spruance, U.S. Navy
Via: President, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.
Subj: Reprimand

1. A Board of Investigation which recently inquired into the conditions existing in the general mess of the U.S.S. *Osborne* while under your command found that various regulations and instructions governing the administration of the commissary department were not carried out. It appears that the commissary steward was allowed to take charge of the commissary files contrary to Navy Regulations, that certain important papers were removed therefrom by some unknown person without authority, that commissary stores when received aboard were frequently not inspected by an officer as required by regulations, that at

various times during the spring of 1926 stores were removed from the ship without authority by a dishonest commissary steward, that no ration records were made up, nor returns submitted as required by regulations the date you were relieved as commanding officer, and that during the above mentioned period the Osborne over-expended her ration allowance about \$3900.00.

2. The Department considers that your lack of supervision over this important branch of your command was a decidedly material contributory cause of this over-issue and that a reasonable supervision on your part over the observance of pertinent regulations would have resulted in a more timely discovery and probable prevention of this over-issue. Your personal responsibility as commanding officer is clearly placed under Article 1411 U.S. Navy Regulations 1920.

3. For your failures as above set forth you are reprimanded. The Department expects that in the future you will more zealously supervise the important details of your command so that inefficiency, neglect or dishonesty of your subordinates will be more promptly detected and corrected, or eliminated.

4. You are directed to acknowledge receipt of this letter, a copy of which is being filed with your official record in the Department.

/s/ Curtis D. Wilbur

TO BE CONTINUED

[This paper will be concluded in next month's Naval War College *Review*. It will relate Spruance's reaction to the letter of reprimand, his last 6 months as a War College student, and a brief study of his duty on the War College Staff.]

FOOTNOTES

1. Ernest J. King and Walter M. Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King, a Naval Record* (New York: Norton, 1952), p. 491.

2. E.P. Forrestel, *Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, USN, a Study in Command* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1966), Foreword.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

4. Samuel E. Morison, *History of U.S. Naval Operations in World War II, New Guinea and the Marianas March 1944-August 1944* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953), v. VIII, p. 235-236.

5. Forrestel, Foreword.

6. Morison, v. III, p. 158.

7. Letter from Chester W. Nimitz to President, Naval War College, 24 September 1965, Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.

8. Letter from Raymond A. Spruance to President, Naval War College, 3 November 1965, Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.

9. Stephen B. Luce, "War Schools," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. IX, no. 5, 1883, p. 633-657. All subsequent references to Luce are contained in this source.

10. Alfred T. Mahan, "The Necessity and Objects of a Naval War College: Address of Captain A.T. Mahan, U.S. Navy at the Opening of the Fourth Annual Session of the College, August 6, 1888," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. XIV, no. 4, p. 621-639.

11. Forrestel, p. 11.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 3-9.

13. "Bureau of Navigation orders Nov-31-11C dated 18 June 1926 to Commander Raymond A. Spruance, USN," Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.

14. Letter from Raymond A. Spruance to the Secretary of the Navy, 8 February 1927, Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.

15. Endorsements on 18 June 1926 BUNAV orders.

16. Naval War College, *Information for Student Officers* (Newport, R.I.: 24 January 1927), p. 3-10.

17. Naval War College, *Register of Officers 1884-1968* (Newport, R.I.: 26 June 1968).
18. This is the author's opinion, based upon the writings and correspondence of numerous War College graduates.
19. Thaddeus V. Tuleja, *Statesmen and Admirals* (New York: Norton, 1963), p. 46.
20. Letter from Rear Adm. Maurice E. Browder, USN (Ret.), to the author, 13 October 1970.
21. Letter from Rear Adm. John G. Moyer, USN (Ret.), to the author, 9 October 1970.
22. Gerald E. Wheeler, "William Veazie Pratt, U.S. Navy: a Silhouette of an Admiral," *Naval War College Review*, May 1969, p. 39.
23. Pratt's program for the War College is contained in William V. Pratt, "The Naval War College," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, September 1927, p. 937-947.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Wheeler, p. 60-61.
26. Letter from Adm. Royal E. Ingersoll, USN (Ret.), to the author, 29 October 1970.
27. Letter from Comdr. Raymond A. McClellan, USN (Ret.), to the author, 31 October 1970.
28. Letter from Raymond A. Spruance to E.B. Potter, Professor of History, U.S. Naval Academy, 4 February 1959.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Letter from Mrs. Raymond A. Spruance to the author, 31 October 1970.
31. Letter from Raymond A. Spruance to E.B. Potter, Professor of History, U.S. Naval Academy, 3 January 1959.
32. Letter from Raymond A. Spruance to E.B. Potter, Professor of History, U.S. Naval Academy, 28 March 1960.
33. Interview with Rear Adm. Charles J. Moore, USN (Ret.), by the author, Chevy Chase, Md., 6 November 1970. "Carl" Moore was Spruance's wartime chief of staff and closest friend, and he had known Spruance since they first served together in U.S.S. *Bainbridge* in 1913. He agreed with the author that Spruance fought the Pacific war in the same intellectual frame of mind that he had fought war games at the Naval War College. The author had also interviewed Spruance at the Spruance home in Pebble Beach in 1963. Spruance said then that the responsibility of wartime command had never bothered him. The only time he was ever worried was at night on 5 June 1942 while recovering aircraft during the Battle of Midway. The pilots were untrained for night flight operations, and he feared for their safety.
34. Forrester, p. 56.
35. Letter, Spruance to Potter, 3 January 1959.
36. Letter from Raymond A. Spruance to E.B. Potter, Professor of History, U.S. Naval Academy, 21 February 1959.
37. "The Naval War College," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. XX, no. 4, 1894, p. 795-802.
38. John H. Russell, "A Fragment of Naval War College History," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, August 1932, p. 1164-1165.
39. John Stapler, "The Naval War College: a Brief History," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, August 1932, p. 1162.
40. For a detailed history of Naval War College war gaming, see Francis J. McHugh, "Gaming at the Naval War College," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, March 1964, p. 48-55, and *Fundamentals of War Gaming* (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College, 1966).
41. Naval War College, *The Chart and Board Maneuvers*, Naval War College pamphlet (Newport, R.I.: July 1926). This publication, in conjunction with a "War Game Outfit MK II," containing all the paraphernalia needed for board maneuvers, was available to and apparently used by forces afloat. It is therefore likely that Spruance and his classmates were familiar with war gaming techniques before reporting to the War College.
42. The standard Navy publications used were *War Instructions 1924*; *General Tactical Instructions 1924*; *Formations and Maneuvers of the Battle Line 1922*; *General Signal Book 1925*; and *The Service of Information and Security*. The latter contained doctrine for searches, patrols, scouting, and screens. The basic War College publications were *The Estimate of the Situation with the Order Form*, *The Study of Strategy*, *The Chart and Board Maneuvers* (containing war gaming instructions), and *Maneuver Rules*, 161 p., containing hundreds of unbelievably complex, detailed war gaming rules.
43. The remainder of this paper will deal primarily with the problem solving and war games conducted at the War College during the latter half of 1926. The primary source used by the author is contained in numerous manuscript documents used by the 1926 staff and students such as statements of the problem, staff and student solutions, memos, and individual war games

histories and critiques. Footnotes to cite specific documents will not be used to avoid cluttering the paper and distracting the reader.

44. Letter from Capt. Gerald S. Bogart, USN (Ret.), to the author, 29 November 1970. Spruance once told his son-in-law (Captain Bogart) that valid strategic and military objectives cannot be formulated unless you know your enemy and can place yourself in his shoes. Spruance had learned all he could about the Japanese while serving in the Asiatic Fleet, by cultivating friendships with Japanese naval officers while serving with the Office of Naval Intelligence, and through his studies during his pre-World War II War College assignments.

45. Forrester, p. 50-51.

46. *Ibid.*, chap. 12.

47. For detailed discussions on this subject, see Samuel E. Morison, *History of U.S. Naval Operations in World War II*, v. XII; Edwin P. Hoyt, *How They Won the War in the Pacific* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1970), chap. 23; and the Columbia University oral histories of Adms. Richard L. Conolly (p. 255-257) and Thomas C. Kinkaid (p. 331-335).

48. Letter, Spruance to Potter, 24 February 1959.

49. Hoyt, p. 489; see also E.B. Potter, "The Command Personality," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 1969, p. 25.

50. Moore interview.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Forrester, p. 209-210.

53. Naval War College, "Outline History of the United States War College 1884 to Date." Unpublished compilation of Naval War College records, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.: 1937, p. 195.

54. Letter, Mrs. Spruance to author.

55. Letter from Comdr. Raymond A. McClellan, USN (Ret.), to the author, 23 October 1970. This opinion was substantiated by other War College classmates of Spruance in letters to the author.



It cannot be too often repeated that in modern war, and especially in modern naval war, the chief factor in achieving triumph is what has been done in the way of thorough preparation and training before the beginning of war.

*Theodore Roosevelt: Graduation address,
U.S. Naval Academy, June 1902*