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## Challenge

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## CHALLENGE !

The success of naval operations in support of national objectives—whatever the intensity or degree of the conflict—requires that the planning and execution of those operations be carried out by officers who have a full understanding of the many considerations involved. During a normal career, officers acquire experience in naval science from progressive operational and staff experience and from technical studies. Attainment of competence for higher levels of responsibility requires that this experience be supplemented by advanced professional education, education by which they acquire a broad appreciation of the many elements affecting national policy.

Such professional education is provided by our resident schools here at the Naval War College. However, the resident courses here and at other service colleges simply cannot accommodate all the officers in the grades of lieutenant commander and above who should, ideally, receive service college education. Thus, for the benefit of those many officers—both Regular and Reserve—who, for one reason or other, cannot attend a resident school, the Naval War College correspondence course program provides an excellent and challenging means for ambitious officers to fulfill their professional educational needs.

The educational philosophy supporting the correspondence program is the same as that of the resident courses. No official dogma or fixed set of rules is advocated. Student solutions are carefully reviewed by members of the school faculty. Of primary interest to the reviewing officer is the demonstrated application of sound principles,



logical analysis, and good judgment; for it is the successful application of these elements which characterizes the competent naval planner and policymaker.

The personal attention to each student's work and the emphasis on academic freedom are hallmarks of Naval War College education, and I find this a most inspiring feature of this extension effort. Controversial subjects and views are encouraged and accepted. As an example of a subject on which controversy exists and dialog is welcomed, I call your attention to the article "Russia, China, and Insurgency" which appears in this issue. This thought-provoking piece was submitted as a solution by a student in the correspondence course of Counterinsurgency.

There are currently over 1,200 students directly enrolled in the Naval War College correspondence course program or in Naval War College courses offered through the Naval Reserve Officers Schools. Numerous officers have completed the composite course that grants a diploma for graduation from the Correspondence Course of Naval Command and Staff. Others have completed all of the Naval War College correspondence courses and have earned the diploma for the Correspondence Course of Naval Warfare. Completion of the composite program of the Naval Command and Staff course is an excellent preparation for either resident or correspondence pursuit of the senior course.

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In fact, participation in any of the Naval War College's correspondence courses prior to attending either a command and staff school or a senior service college makes the resident course much more meaningful and rewarding. (A complete listing and description of available courses are posted in this issue.)

The cross section of officers who have devoted much off-duty time to the pursuit of excellence is indeed quite broad. Some regular correspondence course students have been enrolled in successive single courses throughout four and five successive tours of duty. Some have retaken courses, after revision, just to assure themselves of staying abreast of developments. Some have taken the correspondence courses even after graduation from one of the resident service colleges. Among the graduates of the composite course are three rear admirals, at least 20 Navy captains, and five colonels. And even the President of the United States, while serving as Vice President, completed our International Law course as a Naval Reserve officer.

All of the armed services are represented among the students in the Naval War College's correspondence courses. Active and inactive-duty officers are participating, as well as Foreign Service officers of the State Department and civilians from other Federal agencies. Naval Reserve Officers Schools conduct classes in five of the Naval War College subjects which are seminar adaptations of the correspondence courses.

Since the founding of the Correspondence School in 1914 under Lt. William S. Pye, later Vice Admiral Pye, the initial course of Strategy and Tactics became the steppingstone for today's comprehensive coverage of the college's resident core studies. Many distinguished officers figured in the development of the college's correspondence courses, one of the most notable being Adm. Raymond A. Spruance. As a captain, he served as Director of the

Correspondence School from 1931 to 1933, and under his presidency following World War II all courses, both resident and correspondence, were modernized.

A more recent innovation in our extension program is the Interim Command and Staff course—a program in which selected active-duty officers spend 1 month in the resident Command and Staff program studying military planning and naval operations and then return to their commands to complete the course by correspondence. This road is personally and professionally challenging, and those officers who see it through will find it most self-satisfying and professionally rewarding.

At present, consideration is being given to varying the content and length of the correspondence courses to satisfy several disparate goals. There are students who wish to study a single subject in depth and are not interested in pursuing the program toward a Naval War College diploma. There are others who aspire to earn a diploma of the Correspondence Course of Naval Command and Staff, possibly to be followed by the one for Naval Warfare. Variations of existing Naval War College correspondence courses are currently under study with the objective of a realignment of subject matter and scope in order to be more responsive to the professional needs of our officer corps.

Ours is a society which recognizes achievement. At the same time, we appreciate the value and worth of education, achievement's prerequisite. Our national emphasis on education is reflected in the high caliber of young officers who are entering and remaining in the Navy today. This trend is going to continue, especially with our Navy's stress on quality—both material and personnel. Competition for promotion and choice assignment is keen, and it will become keener in the near future. A man's record is examined from all

dimensions, including his educational background, and especially with regard to his potential for higher responsibility.

But there is more to education than making another entry in one's service jacket. There is the very real need for our Navy to produce men who are not only able to perform at sea but, of particular importance in this stage of our national history, to perform at the policymaking level. In previous Challenges I have addressed the Nixon Doctrine and the effects of this new foreign policy perspective on the Armed Forces and, especially, the greater role portended for the Navy.

The challenge for our service and to us as its officers has never been greater nor more clear. But for us to meet that challenge will require using all our resources, not the least of which is education. And in this regard, I stress the higher professional education of the kind provided by our correspondence program.



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President, Naval War College

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