

1967

## Challenge

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### Recommended Citation

Hayward, John T. (1967) "Challenge," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 20 : No. 8 , Article 1.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol20/iss8/1>

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## **CHALLENGE!**

One hundred and eighty-nine years ago, in July 1778, 12 ships-of-the-line and 4 frigates under the command of French Admiral Count D'Estaing were sighted off Rhode Island. They anchored off Newport in a formation which completely closed the harbor.

On 6 August, 11 tall French ships approached single file up the channel and under heavy cannonading sailed past the British batteries at Newport. All the British ships which remained in Narragansett Bay were sunk or burned to prevent capture.

Project the tiny territory of Rhode Island, surrounded by water, to these United States surrounded by the oceans of the world. Look closely at the

French fleet massed in support of struggling Colonials. The impact of sea-power becomes starkly clear. The stern necessity for an adequate naval force to protect the national domain has been forcefully portrayed since the days of the Revolution. Today this need is even greater.

Although people have not changed in two centuries—to the individual a properly placed musket ball is just as final as the mightiest nuclear blast—the world has changed. Today our fighting men are spread all over the earth and our weaponry is inconceivable in its sophistication. The commitments of the United States have multiplied, the strategic horizons have been

immensely broadened, the involvement in international affairs has become worldwide.

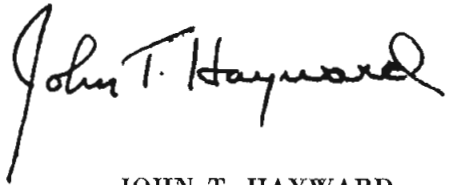
Yet, our proud traditions have not changed; our need for national security has not diminished; an adequate naval force is still an absolute requirement for our military arsenal.

It is important that the meaning of these things be recognized as we observe Navy Day 1967. The modern day Fleet embodies the same fighting spirit that launched the colonists in their struggle for freedom almost two centuries ago. The influence and utility of seapower set forth by Admiral Mahan has not diminished. Our Navy

carries out its assigned tasks on a wider scale and with ever more powerful weapons, but its purpose and its values remain the same as always. It is our job to see that this continues.

To each of us in the Navy and to all America, our late President Kennedy has set forth, in eloquence, a blueprint and a challenge: "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and success of liberty!"

Let us make this our standard as we observe Navy Day 1967.



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