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## President's Notes

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## President's Notes

**T**his year the Naval War College is 100 years old. It is appropriate to reflect on the role and effect of the college as we begin our second century of service to the Navy—where it has been, where it is today and where it is headed. In the hundred years since its founding, the perceived relevance of the War College to current maritime problems and thought has varied considerably, but one theme has been constant. Admiral Luce, in founding an institution wherein naval officers could “research all matters concerning war,” established a broad charter. It was one which left no doubt that this should be the preeminent institution in the development of maritime strategy. Though the need for such an institution is self-evident to us, in hindsight, this was not true in the 1880s when Luce’s best persuasive powers were necessary to overcome the widespread conviction that the best school for sailors was at sea—there and nowhere else.

The success of Luce’s efforts in establishing the college on a sound intellectual foundation has clearly paid great dividends to this nation and the Navy over the last hundred years. We know that the studies and war games conducted here over the decades have aided the Navy’s leadership recurrently and immeasurably in both crisis and in war, paying many times over the nation’s investment.

It took years before the permanence of the Naval War College as an institution could be taken for granted. It took even longer for it to be considered a prime requirement for officers reaching the highest ranks. And even then, its preeminent place in the career pattern in the 1930s became endangered by many post-World War II developments, including the intense operational demands placed upon the fleet after the Korean War. It is highly

satisfactory to be able to record the revitalizing effect on the Naval War College which has come about because of the efforts of the present and immediate past CNO. It comes at an excellent time when the need for a well thought-out and relevant US maritime strategy is clear, when the need for profound and informed thinking on these matters has never been greater. The War College presently finds itself deeply involved in formulating and articulating our present maritime strategy and what it must be tomorrow if we are to persevere and prevail in either deterrent or war fighting terms. This renewed vitality shows itself in many ways:

- First in the renewed commitment to send our very best officers to Newport; and to mold career patterns which include a year of "graduate study" in classic military arts.

- In the spirit and vitality of a faculty which finds that the new found responsiveness to its thinking is the best possible stimulus to even greater contributions.

- In the sense of purpose and enthusiasm of our students who are increasingly pursuing difficult issues with new found energy and direction.

- In the strong intellectual repute of the college which attracts the best minds in the country to its faculty.

- In the willingness of important decision makers to visit the War College and contribute to the intellectual environment.

- In the enthusiasm of the Naval War College Foundation to support and enhance the intellectual life of the campus.

- In the renewed vitality of the Naval War Gaming Center which now designs, plans and executes games for the highest decision making levels, civilian and military, in the government.

- In the advanced research of the Strategic Studies Group (now in its third year) in concentrating the efforts of a talented group of officers on areas of special concern to the CNO.

- In the increasing number of command experienced officers seeking entry to the college.

- In the fact that Admiral Watkins has chosen NWC as the site for a recurring CinCs Conference and has used the facilities in unique ways to probe deeply into maritime strategic issues.

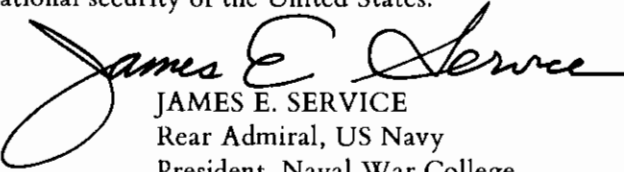
- And lastly, in the remarkably improved participation and contribution of our off-campus and correspondence course students.

This is indeed a lengthy litany of indicators of the vitality of the Naval War College. If you share with me this sense of the quickened pulse of the campus then you will understand the importance of the renaissance of thought and activity which is occurring here now. It is very difficult to overestimate the potential contribution of these intellectual efforts to the Navy and our nation. Indeed, in some ways we hope we shall never find out. However, if pressed, we will know that those entrusted with developing and carrying out

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a successful maritime strategy will, like those officers of the past, be able in retrospect to see that their success might never have occurred if the Naval War College had not prepared them for the challenges which lay ahead. These are my thoughts as we enter the second century of the War College's existence. They also reflect my view of its purpose. As this centennial year unfolds, I am sure you will find many interesting articles in this and other publications about this outstanding institution.

Here is to a second century of service. May the Naval War College rise to even greater efforts, reach more profound perceptions, and make even greater contributions to the national security of the United States.



JAMES E. SERVICE  
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