

1983

President's Notes

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Recommended Citation

Service, James E. (1983) "President's Notes," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 36 : No. 3 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol36/iss3/1>

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President's Notes

Someone asked me recently if I missed the Battle Force job in the Mediterranean. The truthful answer is that the pace and the excitement in Newport haven't given me much opportunity to dwell on what I might be missing elsewhere. The Naval War College is the center of important new Navy initiatives and there is a lot going on. It began with former CNO Admiral Tom

Hayward establishing our Strategic Studies Group in July 1981. It continues with the formal designation of our War Gaming Center as the prime Navy gaming facility. It has reached a crescendo with Admiral Jim Watkins' decision to cut back the Navy training pipeline *in order to free* additional, highly qualified officers for duty as students at the Naval War College.

This is my first "President's Notes," partly because of all this activity, partly because I have been away talking to large and small groups of naval officers both on East Coast and West Coast trips, perhaps twelve hundred or so officers in all. In every case I have been telling them the story of what is going on at Newport and how it affects them professionally. I have been explaining Admiral Watkins' plans for this institution.

Those ideas have been promulgated in two Alnavs, one of 22 September 1982 and the other of 15 November 1982. Translated from goals into concrete plans, they resulted in the input of officers into the program in February 1983, for the first "post-command short course" of six weeks duration. This "short course" was specifically designed to get us off to a fast start. Three more such six-week courses are planned for the rest of this calendar year. Meanwhile, inputs into the full, 10-month course of post-commanders are being increased systematically.

The students being sent to the short course, as the name suggests, are officers who have just completed a successful tour in a command position. They are given an intensive course which focuses on naval operations with some admixture of strategy and defense decision-making. Within the naval operations portion, heavy stress is put on war gaming, the practical application phase.

A subset of the full academic year, the senior naval operations course, which the successful post-commanders will take in increasing numbers, has been carefully overhauled to do two things: to increase its emphasis on viewing operational problems consistently from a four-star or joint or

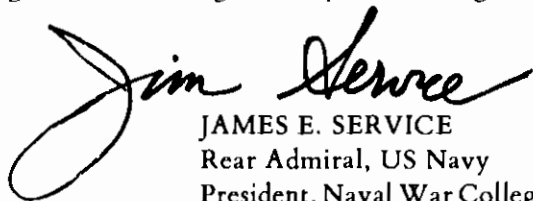
theater point of view, and to ensure a sequential exposure to war gaming problems. These game problems build in three increments from a crisis action game through a theater game to the total complexity of worldwide war.

I want to emphasize that we are no longer talking only about plans and goals but what is in fact happening right now. A few numbers will tell the concrete story. In calendar 1983 alone we will have run four six-week short courses, with a student input of 14, 22, 20, and 16—or 72 in all. In addition, another 18 students are taking the three-month regular-length naval operations course. Meanwhile, in our in-house, 10-month senior course, the number of students coming to us after having completed a successful command tour has already increased almost fourfold since October 1982. The goal for August 1983 is 35. We anticipate up to 75 students in this category in the regular year course beginning in August 1984.

Turning to another area, according to student feedback, the Naval War College Foundation-sponsored Military-Media Conference in April was a much appreciated contribution to the curriculum. Louis Harris, the widely respected public opinion researcher and analyst, was the main conference speaker. Other speakers for the two-day event were drawn from the working press, academia and government public affairs. Because of the influence of the media on military image, recruiting and budgets, an expanded Military-Media Program is being considered to bring more media experts to the college. Plans are underway to offer a mass communication elective, and add mass media seminars and case studies to the curriculum.

Another very good illustration of recent events at the Naval War College is the holding of a CinCs conference here in October 1982—the first such occasion in many years. At the conference, the plans for the first post-commanders short course were briefed to CNO for his approval. As a follow-up, on 10 March 1983, Admiral Watkins was debriefed at a breakfast meeting where he discussed the course with all the students who had taken part in it. Future plans, as discussed above, were briefed at the CinCs conference in Washington on 5 April 1983. There Admiral Watkins made it clear that he intended to continue both increased inputs to the 10-month course and more NWC short courses to ensure reaching the maximum feasible number of officers.

To sum it up, Newport is an “exciting” place to be and we’re well on our way to fulfilling the CNO’s goals of educating our very best and fighting smarter.



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