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President's Notes: Challenge!

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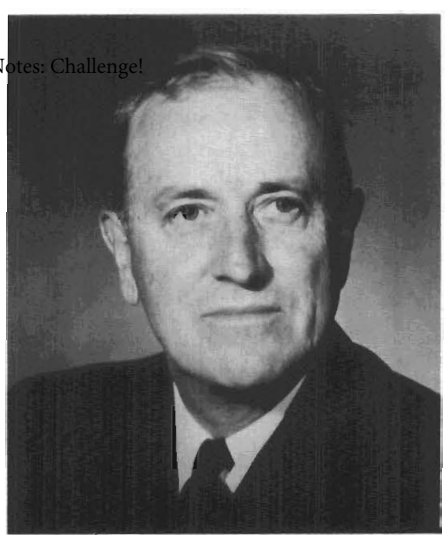
CHALLENGE !

Since its establishment in 1884, the U.S. Naval War College has provided advanced education in the science of naval warfare and related subjects to hundreds of senior naval officers, enhancing their professional competence for higher command responsibilities. Over the years new teaching techniques and innovations in curricula have kept pace with the increasingly complex demands thrust on today's naval professional. Perhaps the greatest of these innovations have come in the field of war gaming.

Since 1894 when the first serious war games were conducted in Newport, the Naval War College has been in the forefront of devising ever-more valuable war gaming exercises. In 1934 when the initial war games were conducted on the newly constructed deck of what is now the Pringle Hall coffee mess, those simple facilities were described as the most advanced in the world. In the decade before the Second World War, the games played on that deck led to the development of tactical innovations, including the first circular formations used by our task forces. Operating aircraft carriers in the exercises gave future task group commanders the unique opportunity of gaining experience in the deployment of carrier task groups before the ships which they would later command even existed.

In 1958 the War College began operating the Navy Electronic Warfare Simulator (NEWS)—at that time the most modern and complete war gaming facility in the world. Since then the NEWS equipment has been steadily updated.

The NEWS facilities, located in the Naval War College's Center for War Gaming, are staffed by officers, enlisted personnel, and civilians under the command of Capt. Frank N. Quinn, USN.



The individuals who operate and maintain NEWS possess skills encompassing all aspects of naval warfare and computer technology. The War College has also recently established a faculty Chair for Gaming and Research Techniques to be filled at a later date.

The gaming facilities of the Naval War College are regularly utilized for a variety of one- and two-sided games in support of and complementary to the respective curricula of the resident colleges. These include Political-Military, Fleet Planning, and War-at-Sea games for the College of Naval Warfare; and Escort-of-Convoy, and Joint and Combined Operations games for the Naval Command College. The students and staff of the College of Naval Command and Staff have participated in Carrier Striking Force, Joint Amphibious Operations, and Antisubmarine games. The NEWS has also been used to present demonstrations of such historical naval battles as Midway, as well as dynamically illustrating the modern aspects of anti-air, antisubmarine, amphibious, and mine warfare. Additionally, the Center for War Gaming fills the recognized need of maintaining and improving the mobilization readiness of the Naval Reserve by conducting ten 2-week courses annually in war gaming for reservists. During the past 2 years, over 1,000 Reserve officers have attended.

In late 1968 I was privileged to participate in "Establish Contact I," a NATO oriented war gaming exercise designed to test the contingency plans of NATO's Striking Fleet Atlantic. I was impressed by the unique opportunity provided by NEWS to test all of the plans then on the shelf for the Atlantic Fleet and Allied Command Atlantic. That initial utilization of the NEWS by NATO has developed into a regular annual exercise, the most recent of which was held in December 1971, entitled "Establish Contact IV."

As in the past, we seek to continue to expand the scope of gaming, improve its techniques, and update its facilities. Perhaps the most significant new improvement is the phased installation over the next few years of digital computers to replace the older, larger, and less efficient analog computers. The digital computer system will allow the games to proceed at a faster pace, particularly with regard to damage assessment. The new computer system will also make possible a greater utilization of the war gaming facilities since the time required to reset the machinery and prepare for an exercise will be

significantly reduced. With the analog computer system, each variable has to be reset by hand; the digital system will allow this to be done by magnetic tape almost instantaneously. The digital system is also capable of more realistically reproducing the effects of the sea environment itself. Some of the factors which determine the outcome of a battle, including the condition of the sea, visibility, weather, and other intangibles, can now be taken into account.

These new war gaming facilities have a new title: Warfare Analysis and Research System (WARS), and their final installation will guarantee that the Naval War College houses the most modern and complete war gaming facilities in the coming years.



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