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The strength of the U.S. Navy depends directly upon appropriations received from Congress and upon public support for those appropriations. In recent years public and congressional opinion has demanded a closer scrutiny of defense contracts and a reduction in their size. It is thus increasingly important that civilian organizations such as the Navy League continue to publicize the need for a strong U.S. Navy and maritime establishment.

OBJECTIVES AND INFLUENCE OF THE NAVY LEAGUE

A lecture delivered at the Naval War College

by

Mr. Morgan L. Fitch, Jr.

During the past few years, there has been an increasing tendency on the part of Congress and the American people to scrutinize defense expenditures closely and reduce them in size. Many criticisms of the military and defense contractors have been aired. The military in general and the U.S. Navy in particular have not replied effectively to these criticisms. This has been due partly to Government constraint and partly to the Navy's traditional apolitical stance in public affairs.

In this situation the role of civilian organizations oriented toward the Navy which seek to present the Navy's case to the public is becoming increasingly important. The U.S. Navy is in greater need today of such civilian organizations than it was a few years ago, and unless the Navy can convince the public of the need for an adequate naval force, that force will deteriorate. In elucidat-

ing this proposition, I will elaborate some functions of such civilian organizations and indicate how a navy can make its mission understood.

The public, catalyzed by the students, is asserting a greater direct effect upon the policies of Government. The students are focusing more directly on the problems of society and are actively doing something about it. A news commentator has epitomized the situation in noting that what the students *oppose* is right, but what they *propose* is wrong. The public is bringing greater pressure upon the legislators and the administrators in respect to specific issues. However, it should be understood that the arsenal of public recalcitrance has not even begun to be tapped. Indeed, the current hue and cry of the students, militants, and media are minor compared to the avalanche of an aroused public.

The university situation is particularly disturbing. A year ago the students were focusing their attention on the draft, recruiting on campus by defense industries and the military services, and the Vietnam conflict. While the campus has continued to focus on Vietnam, and now Cambodia, greater emphasis has been directed against military officer training programs on the university campus and against university involvement in defense contracts. It is to be noted that the draft is being changed, military officer training programs are being emasculated from college curricula, and defense contracts with universities are being reevaluated by both universities and the Defense Establishment.

Public doubt has caused the Congress to revolt against traditional practices of providing defense appropriations, and Congress is requiring considerably increased justification for defense spending. Considerable notice has been given the so-called military-industrial complex, and the foibles of this arrangement are in issue. Authorization for anti-ballistic missiles installations almost was defeated by the Congress, and currently the Congress is debating circumscribing present military actions in the field. Presently, some Congressmen are asserting equal control over military deployment to that of the President. Of more immediate importance to the U.S. Navy is a public debate over its force levels, including the numbers of carriers and nuclear submarines. The Congress attempted this year to further circumscribe the public information capability of the Navy, as well as the other military services, and this was but a further manifestation of a trend toward restriction upon information out of the military services.

The administration has initiated and received a report on an all-volunteer military service. The price tag is substantial, and questions are being raised in the civilian community as to the desirability of a wholly professional

Military Establishment. The administration has placed the Navy and other services into the field of sociology in compelling them to accept a large number of enlistees who are below its qualification standards. As a result, recruit training is involved in literacy training and is faced with a large number of disciplinary problems from this substandard group. It has been suggested that the Naval Reserve engage in teaching courses in remedial reading in the communities and that naval training centers be used in local neighborhood problems wholly unconnected to any naval mission. These are undertakings being imposed for the believed good of the people in this country but are generally foreign to traditional missions of a navy. However, in the Vietnam conflict the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps have been involved in pacification, Vietnamization, medical care, and rebuilding of villages and quarters, and many of these are, at least, unusual Navy and Marine Corps missions.

These various forms of public involvement are mentioned to show the significant impact which the people are having upon the Military Establishment generally, including the U.S. Navy. This involvement has seriously reduced the force level of the Navy, eroded its manpower, and affected its sources of personnel. At the same time, the capability of the Navy to defend itself has been sapped. Accordingly, the Navy's need for Navy-oriented civilian organizations is probably more acute now than it has ever been, assuming, of course, that this Nation is to defend itself and support its allies. A ship can hardly exist without a keel, and a navy cannot long remain in being without the support and understanding of the people.

Before becoming more specific, three aspects of the present situation should be noted. First, you should not confuse the day-to-day reporting in the media with the feelings of the American people. This reporting is becoming

increasingly misleading and inaccurate, and this fact is being documented. It is a combination of a play upon the emotions of the public and a crass attempt to sell papers or obtain ratings. Second, the student confrontations on various issues should not be considered to reflect the attitude of the American people. We find that the student positions are largely based upon emotion and cannot be sustained, if for no other reason, because the group is being largely replaced year by year without leaving any effective continuing structure. In actual confrontation, I have found that the student positions are generally not based upon logic or reason, and, while simplistic solutions are offered, they have not been meaningful alternatives. This does not deny the effectiveness of the students in catalyzing action by the people and Government. Third, the longer range effect of the present situation upon the below-college group and the integration of the present college students into the establishment is indeterminate at the present time. Briefly, the present situation is very confusing, and its future impact remains to be seen. However, there is an immediate need for a greater understanding by the people.

Accordingly, a navy must find effective communication with the public. Several choices are open to it.

1. It can use its own public information capability. However, as indicated, this has been consistently restricted to the U.S. Navy.

2. It can rely upon the legislators to understand its problems by presenting its information to the legislators. As indicated, this support by the U.S. Congress has been eroding.

3. It can place its destiny in the hands of an administration, but this has resulted in consistent reduction in Navy capability in the United States as well as imposition of nonnaval missions.

4. It can foster a strong Reserve force which can bridge the Navy with

the civilian segment. However, this force has been consistently shrunk in the United States to a point where its continuance is now in question.

5. It can promote an industry relationship, but the "military-industry complex" is currently under attack in the civilian sector.

6. It can seek public understanding on a much broader base through appropriate liaison with the people. This is what Navy-oriented civilian organizations are all about.

In the United States we have a plethora of civilian organizations which are already in being. These include the political parties, service groups, business and labor groups, veterans groups, educational groups like the Navy League, military groups, and youth groups.

Almost all of these organizations have regular meetings and parochial publications. The most cost-effective way of achieving public understanding is to utilize the existing structures of these organizations. This can be done by providing information, speakers, and assistance to these various groups. However, this will not happen automatically, and this relationship can be catalyzed by the Navy League or another military service-oriented group. Joint meetings of the Navy League with other civilian groups is quite effective.

There is always a tendency for one to talk to one's friends, and it is much easier for a naval officer to talk to a favorable group than to an unfavorable group. It is necessary to assess the utilization of naval personnel, which is in short supply, to see that enough of them are exploring new horizons. The effectiveness of a Navy-oriented civilian group can be measured by the number of outside contacts which are provided to the Navy. The Navy League of the United States endeavors to provide speaking platforms and foster opportunities for publication of the seapower story.

In having the opportunities to talk to

various groups and people, the personnel should gain the opportunity of assessing the feelings of the people. Too often, the speaker flies in, makes a speech, and flies back to his home base. He has said his piece, but he has missed the opportunity to learn something. Here, the Navy League can provide and has provided meaningful opportunity for dialog.

Because of the difficulties in determining the status of a navy with the public, which is referred to as its "image," the navy needs to measure its image on a realistic basis and then implement the findings. The U.S. Navy did this some years ago with a professional survey which resulted in the Harris report. It is now out-of-date. The Navy League of the United States has, in cooperation with the Commandant of the Ninth Naval District and a Naval Reserve Public Relations Company, conducted a new survey and is in the process of constructing a program around the results of the survey. This effort, if continued on a cooperative basis and if viewed objectively, portends an extremely meaningful undertaking and should lead to improved recognition and retention.

While fostering the relations with the public is extremely important, the long-range future of the U.S. Navy is bot-tomed on the youth of this country and its ultimate interest in a navy. A current debate is being waged, however, as to the extent of involvement of the U.S. Navy with youth. It is argued, on the one hand, that it is the duty of youth groups to deliver up Navy-oriented young people, and, therefore, the U.S. Navy should not be concerned with young people under enlistment age. On the other hand, it is argued that there is tremendous competition for young people in the United States, and if the Navy is to gain qualified and properly motivated young people it is going to have to become more involved in the youth of this country.

Presently, the U.S. Navy has a rather disorganized and somewhat sporadic liaison with youth. It contacts youth through its recruiting program, which is directly geared to immediate personnel requirements. By law, it maintains a NJROTC program in high schools, and there are now 78 units established with 20 to be formed in the next year. This program includes course work in oceanography, meteorology, celestial navigation, and naval orientation. However, various States have banned military courses in the high schools, and the attacks on the college campuses upon ROTC programs indicate a possible threat to this program.

The U.S. Navy provides limited support to the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps which numbers some 7,000 cadets. This corps is like the Sea Cadets in many of your countries and trains on the Naval Reserve curricula for enlisted men. The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps is not part of the Navy and is not trained by the Navy. It is a Federal corporation, and its

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



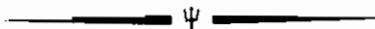
Mr. Morgan L. Fitch, Jr., received a B.S. in chemical engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1943 and following World War II entered the University of Michigan where he earned a doctor of law degree (J.D.). He served in World War II as a naval officer, experiencing many of the actions in the Western Pacific aboard aircraft carriers. Mr. Fitch has had a long association with the Navy League, serving as National President from April 1965 until May 1967. During his affiliation with the Navy League, he directed considerable effort to promoting the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Program and the Navy League's Shipmate Program. He was twice awarded the Distinguished Public Service Award of the Secretary of the Navy in 1960 and 1965. Mr. Fitch is a partner of Anderson, Luedeka, Fitch, Even and Tabin of Chicago, Illinois.

officers are volunteers serving without pay. The Navy League of the United States has provided substantial financial support and leadership for the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps. Its growth is largely limited by limitations upon support by the U.S. Navy.

The Boy Scouts of America has a Sea Explorer program numbering some 20,000 young people. This program ranges from sailing to scuba diving, from oceanography to seamanship, and is broadly divided between sea discovery and yachting skills. The Navy provides practically no support at the national level, which is to be distinguished from the substantial Air Force and Army support to scouting. Nevertheless, the U.S. Navy is a substantial beneficiary of Sea Exploring.

The U.S. Navy, through its Office of Naval Research, lends support to a Science Cruiser program for high school students and, through the Naval Air Training Command, is a sponsor of a model airplane competition.

The current limited undertakings of the Navy Department with youth, even assuming that it is doing all that it can do, may cost it dearly in the future. It is today's youth which become the college students of tomorrow and the public of the future. If enough of the youth are not oriented to the sea today, then you can expect a very limited navy in the future. This is especially true for the reasons outlined in the beginning, namely the increasing control of the public over the destinies of the U.S. Navy.



The Navy of the United States is the right arm of the United States and is emphatically the peacemaker.

Theodore Roosevelt, 1858-1919