



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND 02841

26 April 1984

Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr., USN(ret.)
3594 Ray Gillis Road
Fayetteville, North Carolina 28301

Dear Admiral Zumwalt,

At the moment, I am in the very final stages of completing a history of the Naval War College which the College will publish in a few months. I am under a great deal of pressure to finish up the project so that it can go to the printer within the next two weeks. Before it goes, however, I want to check the accuracy of a few points. One of those relates to some of your ideas and the way they touched the Naval War College during the time you were Chief of Naval Operations.

In writing the section on this period, I have used the College's archives as well as the papers of Admiral Colbert as well as oral histories and information provided by VADM B.J. Semmes and ADM Stansfield Turner. In addition, I have consulted your book, ON WATCH, and the article by Norman Friedman in Bob Love's book, The Chief of Naval Operations. Thus, everything I attribute to you is second hand and I would like to be certain that I have not misinterpreted anything in regard to your policies, as I have always been one of your great admirers.

I would be most grateful to you if you would read through the pages which I have enclosed and mark them up with any corrections which you think are necessary. If I have omitted any key aspect of your policy which you think would be appropriate to a War College history, please let me know. If you prefer to telephone me with your comments, I can be easily reached at



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The enclosed copy incorporates all of the changes which Admiral Turner suggested to me on the telephone last week, but he questions in particular the statement which I took from Friedmann that you believed that the War College had strayed from its role when it began to stress management. Turner thought that an odd view from someone who had been a systems analyst. I think that it should be mentioned, however, if you believed it and if it had anything to do with your view of the job that War Colleges should do.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "JB Hattendorf". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and "B".

John B. Hattendorf, D.Phil.
Professor of Naval History

The Naval Academy had an active alumni association as well as the Naval Academy Foundation, both nonprofit organizations contributing significantly to the projects that the Superintendent believes necessary. Rear Admiral Richard W. Bates, an eminent naval scholar who had been closely associated with the college since World War II, along with several important civilian attendees at global strategy sessions were enthusiastic about such an idea. In 1969, the Secretary of the Navy approved organizing a Naval War College Foundation, and it was chartered as a nonprofit organization under the laws of the state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. John Nicholas Brown, former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for air and a prominent Rhode Island philanthropist, became the first Foundation president, with Rear Admiral Bates as executive director. With more than 100 founding members, including corporation heads and many Rhode Island citizens, the Foundation was off to a good start. By its charter, support could be provided for activities and projects which the War College president wished to carry out that would benefit the institution but could not be funded officially.

The War College and the Era of "Z-Grams"

Two years after Colbert's arrival in Newport, Secretary of the Navy Chafee selected Vice Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Commander, Naval Forces, Vietnam, as Chief of Naval Operations, succeeding Admiral Moorer, who had been picked to be the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It was a continuation of Chafee's "youth movement." Zumwalt, fourteen years junior to Moorer, became the youngest CNO to date. He had graduated from the command and staff

course at Newport in 1953, the same year his predecessor had graduated from the senior strategy and tactics course.

The new Chief of Naval Operations assumed his post on July 1, 1970 and lost no time in instigating a number of radical changes in traditional personnel policies, based on his experiences as naval commander in Vietnam. He wanted to ensure that modern youth would be attracted to serve in the navy and was willing to change time-honored rules and traditions to do so. Within a few weeks, the navy was receiving serially numbered "Navops" popularly known as "Z-grams" in the fleet, which covered a wide range of personnel policies. Some officers, particularly senior officers and senior enlisted men, viewed the Z-grams with suspicion and sometimes with downright hostility. As the 1970-1971 academic year progressed at Newport, the Z-grams received close scrutiny. Officers returning to command and executive billets realized that changes were being made within the navy, which, for better or worse, would affect their work afloat or ashore in the immediate future. In seminars and student offices the new directives were discussed and debated in detail.

Colbert had continued the tradition of President's Hour, started under Admiral Austin in 1962. Periodically, the president met with students and responded to any questions or comments they might have. At a President's Hour with the command and staff students, one officer suggested that middle-grade officers be given a chance to express opinions on the entire Z-gram effort directly to Admiral Zumwalt.

After Colbert passed this suggestion on to him, Zumwalt issued Z-gram 62: Pursuant to this order, a forum was set up in both classes at the War College to discuss means to improve the Navy. The results of twelve students summarized the results of the forum and made a 25-minute briefing to the Secretary of the Navy, Zumwalt, and other flag officers in February 1971. The presentation stressed the importance and the need for personnel stability to increase the combat readiness of the fleet.³⁰

Another 1971 Z-gram (Z-41) instituted an academic chair in Surface Strike Warfare to be filled by a commander or captain with a record of outstanding performance in command. In the same Z-gram, Zumwalt established a command excellence forum at the Naval War College "to identify, discuss, and promulgate the ideas and command leadership qualities of our most successful commanding officers and thus enhance overall common excellence."³¹ The Forum met during the period 26-30 April 1971 led by Captain J. E. McQueston, the first holder of the military chair of surface strike warfare. One of the sixteen participants, Captain C. S. Christensen, Jr., summed up the forum succinctly:

The quintessence of the Forum to this participant at least, was the conviction that bureaucratic practices are eviscerating Navy management effectiveness. In a bureaucratic Navy, it is hard to attract and keep the best men in the fleet once they discover that the real "action" is in the bureaucracy ashore. We found this frightening, because when the chips are down, naval battles are won or lost at sea.³²

Vice Admiral Semmes Takes The War College Helm

In April 1971, largely through Colbert's efforts and contacts at the Norfolk Virginia headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, (SACLANT), forty-two naval warfare students

made a three-day field trip to the United Kingdom, hosted by the Royal Navy. Each National War College class made a longer field trip, with sections going to different areas. Budget considerations precluded the naval warfare trip from becoming a regular part of each curriculum, as Colbert had hoped.

Soon thereafter, Secretary Chafee announced that Colbert, after three years at the college, would become Chief of Staff to SACLANT, Admiral Charles K. Duncan. The new college president would be Vice Admiral Benedict J. Semmes, then serving on Admiral Zumwalt's staff as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations (Op-03).

The new president, "B.J." as he was known throughout the fleet, was in his thirteenth year as a flag officer at the age of fifty-eight. A National War College graduate his career afloat had been primarily with cruisers and destroyers. Ashore, he had emphasized personnel planning and administration. He was no stranger to the Naval War College with almost five years of fleet duty in Newport. He had been Chief of Staff to the Commander, Destroyer Force, when Colbert had led the first naval command class in 1956 and 1957, providing from the force staff lecturers and other assistance for the foreign officers. In 1963 and 1964, he had commanded the Cruiser-Destroyer Force at Newport, had lectured to naval warfare and command and staff, and as senior officer afloat had worked closely with Vice Admiral Austin, the college president at that time. His duty in the Bureau of Personnel, first as a detail officer, then as deputy for plans, and finally four years as Chief of Naval Personnel had given him a

continuing view of problems of student and faculty qualifications and student loading at Newport. In his last tour afloat as Commander, Second Fleet, and Commander, NATO Striking Fleet, Atlantic, he was well known by our allies with forces committed to the Atlantic area.

When Semmes arrived at the college the curriculum for the coming academic year was set. Still, he saw that one of his tasks was to preside over some degree of shift in its emphasis, away from foreign and international affairs to management concepts--which would be more in keeping with the prevailing notions in Washington.

A few months after Semmes arrived, a second seapower symposium was held at the college. Vice Admiral Colbert, who was largely responsible for the extensive organization and plans for this gathering, returned to the college to attend it. At the conference, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Zumwalt, in an informal conversation with Admiral Sudomo, head of the Indonesian Navy, made a commitment to help the Indonesians in their transition from Soviet to Western advisors. As a result of this commitment, Semmes and Captain Walter B. Woodson, director of the College of Naval Command and Staff, went to Indonesia in early 1972 to advise the Indonesians on instituting professional education in the Indonesian Navy. Semmes and Woodson were excellent choices for what was essentially a diplomatic mission.

Planning for the Naval Staff Course

During the 1971-1972 academic year, final plans were put together for a new course at the college, setting a convening date

for the first class in mid-July. At the first International Seapower Symposium, interest in a junior course, complementing the naval command course, had been expressed. Such a course would parallel much of the regular command and staff curriculum. In order to accommodate more students and curb individual student expenses, the course would last for five months, as did the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk. There would be two classes each year for officers in the grade of lieutenant commander and lieutenant. It would include junior officers of navies already represented in the naval command classes and officers from smaller navies of Third World countries friendly to the United States. Semmes picked Captain Jack Quinn, an experienced naval aviator in the 1972 naval warfare class, to organize and head the first naval staff course. Quinn faced many of the problems that Colbert had faced sixteen years earlier with the command course, but as a talented and innovative officer, Quinn established a strong beginning for the course and the first students quickly created an enviable spirit of their own. Quinn remained the head of the naval staff course for eight years. At the time of his retirement in 1980, he had led sixteen groups through the five-month curriculum complementing the Naval Command Course.

Changes at Top and at the College.

In late 1970, the office of Naval Education and Training was established in Pensacola, Florida, to coordinate educational policy and planning within the Navy. Its first chief, Vice Admiral Malcolm Cagle, was also the Director of Naval Education and Training on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations (OP-099).

With the establishment of this office, the administrative chain of command for the War College was altered and the president of the Naval War College reported directly to the Chief of Naval Education and Training along with superintendents the Naval Postgraduate School and the Naval Academy.

While this administrative change was being made, names and faces were changing in high positions. At the beginning of President Nixon's second term in 1972, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird resigned and, in May, Secretary of the Navy John Chafee resigned to reenter politics in his native state of Rhode Island. Chaffee's successor, Under Secretary of the Navy John Warner of Virginia, was already indoctrinated in the ways of the Department and had a reputation for disagreeing with Zumwalt, Chaffee and Laird over Zumwalt's personnel policies.

Shortly after Semmes returned from Indonesia, he announced that he would retire at the end of June. Both Semmes and the college staff had been surprised to learn that he would not be allowed to continue to fill out two years at the college. Under Semmes' guidance, the faculty and staff had already prepared plans for the forthcoming academic year, but the announcement of Semmes' retirement was a clear sign that major changes were in store for the Naval War Colleges. Semmes, the senior Vice Admiral in the Navy, retired after 38 years of naval service, on 30 June 1972. In the ceremony which marked this occasion in Pringle Hall, Semmes was relieved by Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner.

There had been significant gains at the college since 1966. The curriculum had been improved, firm plans had been laid to

Chapter XI

STANSFIELD TURNER AND THE BEGINNING OF A NEW CURRICULUM, 1972-1977

Admiral Elmo Zumwalt had reached the mid-point in his four-year term of office as Chief of Naval Operations before his fundamental policy changes for the Navy had a direct and substantive effect on the Naval War College. Throughout his tenure, Zumwalt stressed radical and forceful change, rather than the gradual evolution, as the best means to change underlying trends in naval policy and thought.¹ The changes which occurred at the Naval War College in 1972-74 were no exception.

Zumwalt's policies were based on his perception that he had become CNO at a time of great military and naval crisis for the United States. While a large proportion of the defense budget was being spent on the Vietnam war, he believed that the United States was not matching the growth of Soviet military power. In particular, he pointed to the rapid increase in the size and sophistication of the Soviet Navy at a time when the U.S. Navy was simultaneously shrinking as its large number of World War II era ships became obsolescent. Zumwalt saw that as the Soviet Union approached parity in nuclear weapons, the United States was spending more on its nuclear arsenal at the same time that the U.S. Navy's conventional forces were dwindling. But for Zumwalt, it was the conventional forces which were most important to protect American interests in peacetime and in limited wars.

Conventional Soviet naval power had grown so rapidly that it, could support in client states having anti-ship mines, bent on

denying the United States Navy access to many of the world's coastal waters during peacetime crises. While opposition of this kind could be dealt with directly during a general war, the limitations on the Navy in crises short of war made this a critical challenge. This, he believed, would have a devastating effect on American foreign policy, at a time when there was an increasing emphasis on American seaborne forces to support foreign policy. In dealing with this problem, Zumwalt felt increasingly frustrated by the general failure of naval officers to break away from their orientation toward a particular type of naval activity, surface, submarine, or air, and to understand clearly the Navy's overall mission.³

In order to establish a clear and more general understanding of the Navy's broad mission, Zumwalt took several steps. He established the Navy Net Assessment Group to create a gauge by which the U.S. Navy could measure its likely effectiveness against the Soviets; he sponsored Project 2000 to give a new long-range review of policy beyond the five-year planning cycles established by Secretary McNamara, and he sought to broaden naval thinking by revising the curriculum at the Naval War College. Although Zumwalt had considerable experience as a systems analyst, he believed that the college had strayed from its proper role in studying tactics and strategy by allowing too much emphasis on defense management. A 1953 graduate of the Naval War College and also a 1962 graduate of the National War College, he believed that the Naval War College course of instruction was neither rigorous nor challenging. As he looked back over his career, Zumwalt's war

college days in Washington had been far more important than those in Newport.⁴

To carry out that part of his broad vision which applied to the Naval War College, Zumwalt chose Stansfield Turner, then a relatively junior rear admiral, to be the college's president, a position which for the previous 20 years had been usually held by the service's senior vice admiral. Turner wanted very much to be involved in naval education and Zumwalt had planned to appoint him Superintendent of the Naval Academy. When opposition arose to his appointment there, Zumwalt suggested to him that he go to the Naval War College for a year prior to taking command of the Sixth Fleet. With the thought that he would have a year to make changes at Newport, Turner had to act quickly.⁵

Promoted to vice admiral upon taking up the Naval War College presidency, Turner was given full freedom to devise a new curriculum and to make whatever changes he saw fit at the college. Turner proceeded with Zumwalt's full support and with no policy guidance other than the CNO's express desire that the college accomplish two things:

(1) broaden officers who are often preoccupied with their area of specialty

(2) help officers to learn to analyze problems⁶

Turner's Concept for the Naval War College

In order to achieve these two basic goals, Turner wanted immediate results, not gradual evolution. Like Zumwalt, Turner believed that radical and dramatic change was essential to focus attention on his goals and to sharpen the difference between his

approach and previous practice but also shake free from the restrictions on intellectual development which he perceived at the Naval War College.

A Rhodes scholar at Oxford University, Turner had not attended any war college course. In the early 1960s, as a commander, he had been selected to attend the Naval War College. When he heard the news of his selection, he recalled, his only thought had been "How can I get out of it?"⁷ Instead of attending what he believed to be a poor institution, Turner wanted a more valuable experience. Avoiding the Naval War College, he went to the Harvard Business School and later became involved in systems analysis work in the office of the Secretary of Defense.

A firm believer in preparing for his next assignment before taking over, Turner wanted to have a concept and a general plan before he came to Newport. Turner did not want to interfere with the College's operations before taking command, and he made a particular point of avoiding contact with officers currently at the college, because he thought they would represent the "vested interests" at the college. Instead, he sought articulate people who knew the college and would be willing to give him their frank, unbiased judgement. Representative of those who answered Turner's requirement was Commander James A. Barber, then commanding USS Schofield (DEG-3), but who had been plans officer at the college and later, Stephen B. Luce Professor of Naval Science, 1968-71. In addition, Turner asked Captain Hugh G. Nott of his Washington staff to go to Newport and to discuss the current college curriculum. Although unaware of the reforms which had been

made since 1966, Turner knew the character of the curriculum in use. Biased against it by the College's service reputation, Turner decided that he would examine independently, what the purpose and focus of the college should be, then proceed to use the resources at Newport as appropriate to his newly developed concepts.⁸

Starting in late January and February 1972, while still Director of the System Analysis Division in OPNAV (OP-96), Turner's ideas began to take form. He started discussions on the new directions for the college with members of his Washington staff, three of whom would later come with him to Newport: Captain Nott, Lieutenant Commander David G. Clark, and Robert D. (Rusty) Williams. At the Center for Naval Analyses in Rosslyn, Virginia, Turner convened a formal conference in March 1972 which brought together some twenty selected War College graduates, businessmen, senior officers, academics and defense analysts including among others Commander Barber, Professors Philip A. Cowl of the University of Nebraska, Robert Osgood of Johns Hopkins, Robert Bowie of Harvard, Alfred Kiel of The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dr. William R. Emerson of the National Endowment of the Humanities, Thomas Phillips of Raytheon, and Bud Ackermann of Newport News Shipbuilding. ~~Admiral Zumwalt attended part of the meeting, making a short address.~~ The consensus of this meeting suggested to Turner that the academic needs of naval officers were wide, too wide in fact to be met in a single year's course of study. What was important in education, the conference suggested, was not an accumulation of facts, but to learn the process by which one can best go about one's profession.⁹ As Turner