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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

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30 November 1993

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.
1500 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Admiral:

Just a note to thank you for forwarding Ambassador Colby's response to President Lawless's invitation to join our Council. I am certain Doug Pike's will not be long in coming in also.

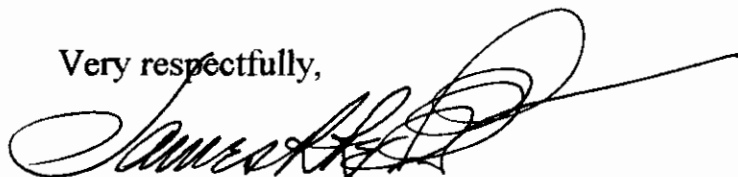
We have a scheduled meeting of the Vietnam Center Advisory Board this Thursday, 2 December. I will let you know what comes from that. In essence, I think we will examine an analysis of our funding & expenditures for the recent conference, then consider funding proposals.

Doug Pike should be back from Vietnam now, so we are planning a conference call with him today to discuss arrangements for getting his papers to Texas Tech. I also will see whether he had any luck with finding North Vietnamese generals for our 1996 conference. In the meantime, though, I have written to Brigadier General Harry Aderholt, who was much involved, particularly with Laos, during the war. Apparently he has established contact with one of the generals in charge of infiltration into South Vietnam. No response from him to date.

I am enclosing a copy of an article, "Theodore Roosevelt and His Navy," which I submitted yesterday to the *Naval War College Review* for consideration for publication. Possibly you may find it entertaining.

Again, Admiral, thank you for all of your continuing help.

Very respectfully,



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"Theodore Roosevelt and His Navy"

James R. Reckner¹

"Our Father, who art in Washington, Teddy Roosevelt be thy name. Thy will be done on the U.S.F.S. *Minneapolis*, as on all other ships. Give us this day our daily ration, consisting of sow belly, beans and hash, but deliver us from 'canned willie.' Lead us from Port Royal and all other God-forsaken places. Make us all Special 1st Class [Libertymen] and give us all the liberty you can. Keep us from all contagious diseases and war. Amen."²

Perhaps no other American president has exerted such intimate influence upon the Navy as Theodore Roosevelt. But it is equally true that his influence was not quite as pervasive as the prayer implies, nor were all its effects positive. In this specific case, it was Upton Sinclair and his muckraking book, *The Jungle*, which exposed the horrors of the meatpacking industry, that saved our sailors from canned willie, and not Theodore Roosevelt. The President did initiate steps, though, to protect the enlisted men from tainted fresh meat following the Navy's bad meat scandals during the summer of 1906.³

TR's interest in the Navy and in enlisted men was remarkable, and that interest was returned a hundredfold. Can you imagine a sailor of today, for example, even thinking, "Our Father, who art in Washington, Bill Clinton be they name"? Or Jimmy Carter? Or even Ronald Reagan? Not likely. Or the crew of a ship chipping together to buy Bill and Hillary Clinton an ornate silver loving cup, as did the crew of the battleship *Louisiana* for Edith and Theodore Roosevelt after TR's 1906 trip to Panama? Again, not likely.

One aspect of the Navy that never failed to command the President's attention was pomp and ceremony. Albert Gleaves, in his memoirs, recounts an interesting incident of that, relating to ceremonies in connection with the unveiling of the Rochambeau statue in Lafayette Square, Washington, in May, 1902. Following the unveiling, the President and

his party travelled to Annapolis, where a visiting French squadron and the North Atlantic Squadron were anchored. The President had lunch aboard the French flagship *Gaulois*, and on departing was offered the full pageantry of a presidential visit: all ships were full-dressed and the rails were manned as the President went over the side.

As the presidential yacht *Dolphin's* "handsome 14-oared, silver-trimmed barge" reserved for the President pulled clear of the French battleship, all ships began a 21-gun salute. Gleaves noted that a puff of spring breeze wafted the smoke from the salute of more than 100 guns right over the presidential barge. As the smoke wreathed the President, Roosevelt flashed his characteristic grin, reached over and squeezed the French ambassador's knee [you could do that then], and said, "They say this is a relic of barbarism, *but I love it!*"⁴

Love it he did, and so the Navy during the Roosevelt years participated in a wide range of naval parades and reviews, including two staged by the entire North Atlantic Fleet right in front of the President's home at Oyster Bay, Long Island, in 1903 and 1906.⁵ The Navy also played a central role in the Jamestown Tercentennial in 1907, and the famous world cruise of the Great White Fleet was the quintessential naval parade of the era.

The period of TR's influence was a time of rapid and sometimes radical evolution of the Navy. Virtually every aspect of the Navy, from the way drinking water was served to the crew to the way war plans were developed and tested, changed. Yet, despite this there has been little academic study of TR's navy as an institution, or of its many social aspects.

How did the organization *actually* work? What influence did the President have upon it? Why, given his obvious love of the Navy, did he not do better by it when it came to appointing Secretaries of the Navy? What impact had the Progressive Movement upon the Navy? How did the many intermarriages in the officer corps affect the way things worked? As we approach the twenty-first century, we still know little about what went on

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in our Navy at the beginning of the twentieth, during that important transition from an emerging modern navy to one that had "arrived."

During the Theodore Roosevelt presidency, the affairs of the Navy were managed by six secretaries of the navy;⁶ they were assisted by four assistant secretaries and five chiefs of the Bureau of Navigation. Only the General Board, with Admiral of the Navy George Dewey's steady, though eminently uninspired, hand upon the helm, provided any continuity; the remainder of the highest echelon of the naval bureaucracy was in a continuous state of flux throughout the period.

TR's Secretaries of the Navy

John D. Long	6 March 1897 to	30 April 1902
William H. Moody	1 May 1902 to	30 June 1904
Paul Morton	1 July 1904 to	30 June 1905
Charles J. Bonaparte	1 July 1905 to	16 December 1906
Victor H. Metcalf	17 Dec. 1906 to	30 November 1908
Truman H. Newberry	1 Dec. 1908 to	5 March 1909

While the departure of McKinley's secretary, John D. Long, under whom TR had served as assistant secretary in 1897 and 1898, is easily understood, the toll of the others is worth noting. Two secretaries departed unexpectedly: Paul Morton became an embarrassment and resigned when his name was linked with a rebates scandal stemming from his service as a vice president of the Atcheson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad;⁷ and Victor H. Metcalf of California suffered ill-health, probably a mental breakdown.⁸ But two others, Congressman William H. Moody of Massachusetts, and lawyer Charles Jerome Bonaparte of Baltimore, agreed to assume the post with the understanding that they would hold it only temporarily, awaiting anticipated vacancies in the Attorney Generalship. Moody was Roosevelt's first appointment as Secretary of the Navy;⁹ thus, from the beginning the President seems to have treated the position like a "holding pen" for future appointments.

Given TR's love of the Navy, why did he seemingly encourage this instability at the top in the Navy Department? The most apparent answer seems to be that he felt, as he advised Paul Morton on his taking the office, that "any honest, fairly able man" could handle the routine affairs of the Department.¹⁰ It was the operational plans that most concerned Roosevelt when Morton took over from Moody in 1904. And in these critical matters, the President felt, and undoubtedly was, better qualified to decide than were any of his Navy secretaries. But he, perhaps, should have been more concerned about the function of the bureaucracy itself -- those routine affairs of the Department. As the *Army & Navy Register* commented in 1905, while each of the men appointed was "of eminent ability, it would [have been] much better for the service if a certain amount of permanency were assured in the office of secretary."¹¹

At the next echelon, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, the situation was but a little less bleak. McKinley's first assistant secretary, Theodore Roosevelt, resigned the office to follow his path to glory in Cuba in 1898. Roosevelt's successor, Charles H. Allen, was appointed first governor of Puerto Rico, leaving this key position once again open. His successor, Frank Hackett, resigned in December, 1901, to return to private practice of the law.¹²

Hackett's replacement was an intimate friend of Senator Redfield Proctor of Vermont, Charles H. Darling.¹³ It was he who, according to the *Army & Navy Register*, distinguished himself "when the naval establishment was threatened with the visitation of a general staff." Darling, according to the *Register*, was confronted with a Secretary (Moody) "who cared very little for anything which pertained to the Navy." In that situation Darling "came forward and in an hour's testimony before the House naval committee destroyed the last lingering semblance of a general staff."¹⁴ And, it might be added, set the Navy's search for modernity in its organization back several years.

Claiming that he spent more money than he earned just to maintain his social position as assistant secretary, Darling sought relief and was appointed to a more lucrative

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customs position in Vermont.¹⁵ Darling's successor was Truman H. Newberry, of Michigan, president of Detroit Steel and Spring Company, a naval militia officer and veteran of the war with Spain.¹⁶ He relieved Victor H. Metcalf as Secretary of the Navy in the final months of the Roosevelt presidency, opening the assistant secretaryship for one final appointment, Herbert Satterlee, a prominent Republican, an early member of the Navy League of the United States and also the son-in-law of J. Pierpont Morgan.¹⁷

TR's Chiefs of the Bureau of Navigation

Arent Schuyler Crowninshield	8 April 1897	to	28 April 1902
Henry Clay Taylor	28 April 1902	to	26 July 1904
George Albert Converse	1 August 1904	to	18 May 1907
Willard Herbert Brownson	19 May 1907	to	24 Dec. 1907
John Elliott Pillsbury	14 Jan. 1908	to	23 June 1909

The position of Chief of the Bureau of Navigation went through a similar series of musical chairs, but for different reasons. Rear Admiral Crowninshield was sent to sea in command of the Mediterranean Squadron to make way for Rear Admiral Taylor, who was then widely hailed as the Navy's greatest thinker, though, in retrospect, many of his conclusions proved erroneous. An opponent of the ever increasing speed and size of battleships at least since 1894, Taylor's judgements barely outlived him. "Poor Harry Taylor with all his splendid ideas was...ever on the wrong side on both these issues," Captain Nathan Sargent wrote to Admiral Dewey following the Battle of Tsushima in 1905.¹⁸ But Taylor died while in office (before Tsushima), creating a vacancy for Converse who was shifted there from the Bureau of Ordnance. Converse stayed on a year past retirement, then gave way to Brownson, who was much favored by the President. But Brownson, who assumed the post on the eve of his retirement and headed the bureau as a retired officer on active duty, resigned rather than sign orders, as directed by the President,

assigning a surgeon to command the hospital ship *Relief*. This created the final vacancy, which was filled by Rear Admiral Pillsbury, or "Pills," as Sims often privately called him.

As the chief of the Bureau of Navigation was the senior line officer position within the bureaucracy, and the officer who provided most of the direct military advice to the secretary, it was the practice to appoint a senior line officer. But this practice, however commendable in principle, contributed to the rapid turnover because outdated promotion practices granted seniority only to the elderly, regardless of ability. Younger officers were not particularly reticent in their condemnation of the system. In a letter to the editor of the *New York Sun*, an understandably anonymous naval officer referred to one of the elderly gentlemen of senior rank as having "gray hairs that [were] but a kind of fungus springing from a disused brain."¹⁹ Doubtless, the long years at lower ranks ill prepared the senior officers for their short terms as flag officers before retirement. Even Willard Brownson, who was promoted when nearing his sixtieth birthday and subsequently commanded the armored cruiser squadron and the Asiatic fleet, decried the late promotion, and observed, "I cannot do today what I could have done had I commanded a fleet ten years ago."²⁰

The other bureau chiefs, by way of comparison, were often appointed from much more junior ranks. One chief of the Bureau of Steam Engineering, Hutch I. Cone, when appointed in 1909, had only been promoted to lieutenant commander in 1908. When he took over the bureau, he assumed the rank of rear admiral, thereby progressing from lieutenant to rear admiral in little over one year! And Chief Constructor Washington L. Capps was appointed to head the Bureau of Construction & Repair at the absolutely youthful age of 39. A line officer of that age, with nearly twenty years of service, could anticipate eleven years more as a relatively junior officer before promotion to the rank of commander.

One predictable result of the continual change at the top of the Navy Department was that a number of anonymous men at the middle echelon garnished considerable

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influence and power. Although the activities of these men are difficult to quantify, at least one incident is fairly well documented.

The Secretary of the Navy had a confidential secretary, a college graduate and a man of some substance. To gain access to the Secretary, serving officers had to arrange an appointment through this confidential secretary, Mr. Henry Gauss. At one point during the Bonaparte secretaryship, the deputy Paymaster General (PMG), when seeking an appointment to see the Secretary, was approached by Gauss to grant an assistant paymaster commission to one of his friends. In itself this was not unusual; most staff officer commissions were by appointment, and political connections were an important consideration when granting them. But in this case, Deputy PMG Samuel McGowan, refused, as the individual had already failed in his qualifying tests.²¹

Shortly after this incident, Secretary Bonaparte received a letter from New York, laid on his desk by the same confidential secretary, in which the correspondent, identifying himself as a relative of Paymaster McGowan, reported that McGowan had told him that the commandant of the New York Navy Yard was making unauthorized use of government horses and carriages for his personal pleasure.²² Giving a civilian such information about a brother officer would have been a gross violation of the strict service etiquette of the day. That the report allegedly originated from a staff officer and questioned the integrity of a senior line officer would have had significant implications in the ongoing line-staff controversy. In this situation, the Secretary chose to privately show McGowan the letter; McGowan, having no relatives in New York, had the letter analyzed by the Secret Service and three separate handwriting experts. The experts independently concluded that Gauss had written it!²³ Over several weeks a bizarre confidential correspondence passed between Bonaparte and McGowan, initially from the Secretary's summer residence. But because of Gauss's position, when Bonaparte returned to Washington, he found it necessary to travel to his law office in Baltimore to mail his letters to McGowan, whose office was in the same building as Bonaparte's in Washington.²⁴

Ultimately, Bonaparte simply refused to believe that Gauss would betray his trust, and chose to continue to employ him.²⁵

But for Paymaster General H.T.B. Harris and his deputy, the seeds of distrust had been sown, and when, almost concurrently with McGowan's investigation of Gauss, a scandal developed over tainted meat delivered to the New York and Norfolk Navy Yards, the PMG was quick to see in the unwanted publicity and the nature of the information leaked to the press, presumably from within the Department, the hand of Mr. Gauss once again on the attack.²⁶ Harris wrote directly to Acting Secretary of the Navy Truman H. Newberry reporting that the cause of the continuing sensation was leaks by two clerks in the Secretary's office.²⁷ Within three days Harris had concluded that a "band of maligning conspirators" in the Secretary's office were making "brazen...efforts" to oust him as Paymaster General, and so advised President Roosevelt's personal secretary, William Loeb.²⁸

That a general air of distrust also existed in the Navy Department between the several bureau chiefs and between the chiefs and the secretary, is clearly evident. Secretary Long referred to it in his memoirs,²⁹ and Secretary Bonaparte addressed it directly in a letter to the President.

In this remarkable confidential letter, also written from his law office in Baltimore to ensure confidentiality from the naval bureaucracy, Bonaparte reported that he had requested of the several bureau chiefs a detailed account of specifically how much of a single lump-sum appropriation had been spent on each of the projects for which the money had been appropriated. The request brought replies from each of the bureaus that they could not determine what they had spent on each of the items, unless the PMG could furnish the data, and the PMG reported that his bureau could not tell either, without going through all of the vouchers written by the Navy Department for the entire year. To Roosevelt, Bonaparte confided: "I have a strong suspicion that in some of the Bureaus records are, in fact, kept from which this information could be obtained." However, he

concluded, the chiefs involved did not "see the necessity for Congress, or even the Secretary, to know just how [they had] disposed of the money included in this lump appropriation."³⁰

Bonaparte, who considered himself a short-term secretary waiting for former Secretary Moody to vacate the Attorney Generalship for the Supreme Court, reported, "It undoubtedly requires a man who is interested in his work and has some force of character to keep these autonomous Bureaus in due subordination and, in fact, to retain control of the Department's work."³¹ But how could the President expect to keep a man of "some force of character" as Secretary of the Navy, when he insisted upon interfering at every level, "micromanaging" the Navy, to use a more modern term? This micromanagement extended even to the point of personally reviewing records of individual midshipmen at the Naval Academy who for one reason or another were in danger of dismissal!

Roosevelt also fell into the habit of accepting correspondence directly from a few junior officers; correspondence which often suggested courses of action in direct opposition to the desires of the Secretary. William S. Sims was the most famous of these correspondents; his manipulation of the President during the battleship design conference at Newport in the summer of 1908 has been well documented.³² But the President's support of the younger officers was at best ambivalent. At the end of the Newport Conference, for example, although he generally agreed with the arguments put forward by Sims and his friends, when the majority of the conferees sided with the bureaucrats in opposition to Sims's new battleship plans, he went along with the majority. But at the same time he administered a stinging rebuke to the senior officers, stating that had they been more receptive, the dreadnought battleships *Utah* and *Florida* would be "much more formidable vessels....But the officials responsible for these ships seem to have limited themselves to the desire not to lag far behind other nations instead of doing what they of course ought to have done; that is, tried to lead the other nations." That, Roosevelt wrote, was not "to their credit."³³

In a less well known memorandum from Sims, who in many ways functioned as Teddy's "Ollie," the lieutenant commander reported directly to the President [with no copy to the Secretary of the Navy] the C-in-C Atlantic Fleet's continuing poor health and his failure to carry out General Board directives to test a new battle plan, and suggested that the C-in-C, Rear Admiral Robley D. ["Fighting Bob"] Evans, should be relieved. He further suggested that Rear Admiral Charles H. Davis, the second-in-command, was too near retirement to take the helm, and that the remaining admirals with the fleet, Charles M. Thomas and William H. Emory, were "in no way fitted to take up the work of training our battle fleet...in battle tactics."³⁴

Roosevelt, unfortunately, did not follow this bit of advice. But it was not the advice itself, but the fact that it could be given without sanction that reflects the state of the naval bureaucracy of the day. And in that respect, Roosevelt was completely responsible. "No one is to blame for this but the President, who, also, in the end is the chief sufferer," *Army & Navy Register* reported.³⁵ In this atmosphere, the senior officers in their private correspondence regularly railed against Teddy's "insane penchant" for "pushing young men to the front."³⁶ On the other hand, the "youngsters," themselves men in their fifties, but held back for decades by the antiquated promotion system, which dictated promotion solely by seniority, felt equally dissatisfied.

"My cry," wrote Commander Albert L. Key to Sims in April, 1908, "is to give the 'young' officers --the misguided youths under 55, a chance, and down with the senile incompetent old grafters on the retired list, or about to retire, who must devote the whole of their time to a hopeless defense of their errors of administration while of the active list."³⁷

Today we are accustomed to a Navy in which promotion and assignment to increasingly responsible positions are based solely upon performance and competence. Such was not the case throughout the Roosevelt years, although in fairness, it must be added that this situation was not the *result* of Roosevelt policies, but rather, long-standing

practices within the Navy Department which continued during his presidency. By 1908, average age for promotion to rear admiral was 61; mandatory retirement occurred on all officers' 62nd birthday. The result was a dizzying cycle of command at sea for flag officers and a careful jockeying on the part of senior captains to ensure they were completing shore duty assignments shortly before promotion to flag rank in order to increase the possibility of flying their flag at sea before retirement.

The Bureau System, that organization of eight co-equal bureaus, has been much discussed. Each had its own budget line items; each had direct control over a department in each navy yard; and, as Rear Admiral P.F. Harrington wrote in 1904, the bureaus "work their own sweet will in many directions, regardless of the general health of the whole machine."³⁸ Each bureau chief became a rule unto himself; rarely did one leave office, revert to his original rank, and continue a normal career. Appointment to a bureau chiefship was not just a military decision; it always carried with it political connotations. Within the Navy it was generally known which politicians "controlled" the various bureau chiefs; such speculation even appears in the pages of the service journals.

The unfortunate fact is that influence, or "pull," was very important to the naval officers of the day. While it didn't alter the glacial rate of promotion, except in appointments to bureau chiefships, it "not infrequently played a prominent role in securing for a number of officers, the detail to some desired duty."³⁹ In 1902, Commander Charles S. Sperry noted, "It is melancholy but true that without some friend at court your record good or bad is waste paper. If you have friends it is equally waste paper for good or bad makes no difference."⁴⁰

Those officers lacking wealth and connections could only hope for an extraordinary opportunity, such as prominent actions in the war with Spain, to gain recognition. In peacetime, such recognition was difficult to acquire: "I wish I had a few discreet newspaper friends to place my merits before the public," Sperry, who had missed the action in 1898, wrote four years after the war. "The pies are few and the pieces small and I long for one

good big slice before I die."⁴¹ Sperry ultimately received his big slice: he became Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet for the last half of its round the world cruise.

More fortunate officers had strong political connections. The patrician Rear Admiral Charles H. Davis was a brother-in-law of Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, one of Roosevelt's closest associates; he enjoyed an uncommonly long, comfortable tour as superintendent of the Naval Observatory, then command of a new battleship, followed by battleship division and squadron commands before retirement. Rear Admiral William S. Cowles married Theodore Roosevelt's elder sister; he served as personal aide for the President, 1901-1909, while simultaneously filling first an assistant bureau chiefship, then command of the battleship *Missouri*, before appointment as chief of the Bureau of Equipment. Surgeon General Presley M. Rixey had a brother on the House Naval Affairs Committee and was McKinley's, and later TR's, personal physician. He actively used the latter relationship to further his plans for the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

And, of course, intermarriage was rife amongst Navy families. This practice created relationships that would cause any Ozark Mountain community to blush. Perhaps the closest such connection was the simultaneous announcement in 1904 of the engagement of the son and daughter of Captain [later Rear Admiral] William Swift to the daughter and son of Civil Engineer Asserson, USN.⁴² Similarly, Lieutenant William D. Leahy and Lieutenant Commander Albert Niblack married sisters within days of each other in 1905, thus creating a lifelong relationship which extended even to adjacent burial plots in Arlington National Cemetery. The eldest son of Lieutenant General Arthur MacArthur was a Navy lieutenant in the TR years, and one of the Navy's early submariners. Socially more prominent than his younger brother, Douglas, in this period, Lieutenant Arthur MacArthur married one of Rear Admiral Bowman H. McCalla's daughters and established a noteworthy Navy-Army relationship. Another McCalla daughter married future naval historian Commodore Dudley Knox. Today, the McCallas, MacArthurs (less Douglas) and Knoxes rest together forever in Arlington in what is virtually the McCalla family plot.

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During the TR presidency there were so many sons and namesakes of senior officers serving that the Navy Department, somewhat embarrassed by the public perception of the hereditary nature of commissions, forbade the use of the title "Jr." with an officer's name. The William F. Halsey of World War II fame was one of the many juniors ordered to drop the title at this time; it was argued that whether senior or junior would be clear by the rank of the individual, and therefore the title was not necessary.

Yet another important intermarriage aspect was that when Naval Academy classmates married each other's sisters, alliances were forged that bore fruit thirty years or more after graduation. The marriage connection of Robley D. Evans and Henry C. Taylor is perhaps most significant. By 1903, both were admirals; Taylor as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation; Evans as C-in-C of the Asiatic Fleet. Together they hatched a plan for Evans to relieve Taylor at the end of their tours, with Taylor then to assume command of the North Atlantic Fleet.⁴³ Unfortunately for them the "Taylor-Evans family-combination scheme"⁴⁴ was interrupted by Taylor's untimely death in July of 1904. But, not surprisingly given his plans for the future, as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, Taylor had advocated establishment of the rank of vice admiral, with the rank to be given only to officers who had held the command-in-chief of either the Asiatic or the North Atlantic fleets! Thus, the brothers-in-law would have helped each other to three-star rank.

Family connections also proved useful for the younger generation. Many sons, sons-in-law and nephews served on their parent/uncle's personal staff, or found benefits denied less well placed junior officers. All three admirals on Asiatic Station in 1904 brought their younger generation with them. Lieutenant Victor Blue was aide to his father-in-law, Rear Admiral Philip H. Cooper. Yates Stirling, Jr., served on his father's staff, and later defended such assignments.⁴⁵ The young Stirling's ears would surely have burned had he read Captain Nathan Sargent's confidential report to Admiral Dewey and the General Board about his role in stirring animosity between his father and his father's successor as Commander-in-Chief, Asiatic Fleet, Rear Admiral William Foiger.⁴⁶ Rear

Admiral Robley D. Evans's son, Franck Taylor Evans, the third of the young heirs apparent on Asiatic Station, inherited his father's absolutely vile temper, but added to it an unrestrained intemperance. The young Evans received eight formal disciplinary actions *before* promotion to lieutenant (junior grade), but his famous name pulled him through. Roosevelt personally approved his promotion adding, "But notify candidate of the grave doubt there has been as to his promotion owing to the adverse reports...; he should take warning thereby."⁴⁷

In fact, Rear Admiral Evans took warning and attached his son to his personal staff, never far to stray until the admiral's retirement. Then, in short order following the elder Evans's May, 1908, departure from the fleet, young Evans was arrested in San Francisco for public drunkenness and carrying a concealed weapon (June, 1908), reported for disobedience of the orders of the rear admiral commanding his division while officer-of-the-deck of the flagship at sea (August, 1908), and finally, given a general court martial for leaving his post as officer-of-the-deck in port, sharing alcoholic beverages with the enlisted members of his watch in his stateroom while all were on duty, and verbally assaulting the executive officer when discovered (September, 1908). The court found him guilty and sentenced him to lose 150 numbers, which the President subsequently reduced to 50 numbers.⁴⁸ Despite these "minor" transgressions, Taylor Evans remained in the service and eventually retired as a captain! Standards certainly have changed since then. As William S. Sims noted, Taylor Evans was an "utter swab" who should have been dismissed from the service, and would have but for the influence of his father.⁴⁹

Theodore Roosevelt's positive impact upon the Navy has been much examined and recorded. However, the President's intimate involvement in the affairs of the Navy also had two, probably inevitable, negative effects. His tendency to permit direct, unofficial correspondence from junior officers, according to the normally supportive *Army & Navy Register*, "well-nigh demoralized" those officers who did not enjoy the President's friendship.⁵⁰ Rear Admiral Charles M. Thomas, one of those officers on the "outside,"

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wrote with some bitterness that Roosevelt had "six special pets in the Navy": Willard H. Brownson, Cameron McRae Winslow, Richard Wainwright, William S. Sims, Albert Gleaves and Albert L. Key.⁵¹ In this respect at least, the *Register* editorialized, "it will be a relief to the services when Mr. Roosevelt retires to private life."⁵²

Roosevelt's close attention to the affairs of the Navy also led to most significant naval projects becoming directly identified with the President. As the *Army & Navy Journal* correctly observed on the occasion of Paul Morton's relief of Secretary William Moody in the summer of 1904, no change in secretaries could "reverse nor long interrupt the policies favored by the President."⁵³ This argument was presented as a strength of the system; but there was a less obvious negative implication

During TR's first term his close identification with naval projects had no particularly adverse effect; however, in the final years of the TR presidency, as relations with Congress became more strained for other, non-naval reasons, the naval program was unnecessarily put at risk. In 1908 the Administration engaged in a bruising battle with Congress seeking four dreadnoughts; and throughout the battle the President postponed, until too late, decisive action on reorganization of the Navy Department. Congressmen "who are not influential in initiating legislation may be very powerful in preventing it," *Army & Navy Journal* had much earlier warned. "As a gentleman said of a watchman, who referred a prospective employer to him for a recommendation: 'He is no good as a watchman, but if you do not employ him he will set your house on fire.'"⁵⁴

By TR's final years in office, the need for a single, strong Secretary, with a clearly defined program of his own and able to interact with Congress as only former Congressman Moody of all of TR's Navy secretaries had, had become apparent. But by then, Secretary Metcalf was in poor health, and one final change in office was unavoidable. Had Roosevelt distanced himself some (though it is not at all certain that he had it within himself to do so); had he appointed a single strong secretary, like Josephus Daniels in the Wilson Administration or John Lehman in the Reagan years, the Navy ultimately might

have fared better. But make no mistake: it is clear that TR truly loved the Navy; it is just that in the process he unwittingly fulfilled the dictum of the old popular song, "You always hurt the one you love."

ENDNOTES

¹ Research for this paper was made possible by the Navy Historical Center's grant of the Secretary of the Navy's research chair in naval history for 1991-1992. The National Endowment for the Humanities supported additional research on enlisted men. I gratefully acknowledge this invaluable support.

² "A Sailor's Prayer" was easily adapted to any ship of the Navy, and any port. A number of versions have survived; the one quoted is from the diary of Hospital Apprentice, 1st Class Deane C. Hartley, USS *Minneapolis* (Protected Cruiser), volume 2, entry for 9 April 1905; U.S. Military History Center, Carlisle Barracks. "U.S.F.S." was the designation then in use for "United States Flag Ship." For another version of the prayer, see *The Buckeye* (shipboard magazine of the battleship USS *Ohio*), May/June, 1908, edition. Copy preserved in the Nimitz Library, U.S. Naval Academy.

³ William Loeb (Secretary to President Roosevelt) to Charles J. Bonaparte, 9 Aug. 1906. National Archives, Record Group 80, Entry 19, Case 22456, Document 2. Hereafter, NA, RG 80:19/22456-2.

⁴ Adm. Albert Gleaves, *The Admiral: The Memoirs of Albert Gleaves, USN*. (Pasadena, Ca.: Hope Publishing House, 1985): 101. Emphasis added.

⁵ The North Atlantic Fleet's designation was changed, however, in 1905, to the Atlantic Fleet.

⁶ For short biographies of each of Theodore Roosevelt's Navy Secretaries, see Paolo E. Coletta (ed.) *American Secretaries of the Navy, v.1 1775-1913*. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980).

⁷ Paul T. Heffron, "Paul Morton: 1 July 1904 - 30 June 1905," in Paolo E. Coletta (ed.) *American Secretaries of the Navy, v.1*: 472.

⁸ For Metcalf's resignation and TR's acceptance, see *Army & Navy Register*, 44 (21 Nov. 1908): 2. Metcalf's statement concerning his health is reported in *Army & Navy Register*, 44 (19 Dec. 1908): 16.

⁹ For contemporary background on Moody, whose initial claim to fame was his service as district attorney during the Lizzie Borden murder trial, see L.A. Coolidge, "The New Secretary of the Navy," *Independent* 54 (27 March 1904): 744-46, and Haverhill, Ma., *Evening Gazette*, 15 Mar. 1902.

¹⁰ Paul T. Heffron, "Paul Morton, 1 July 1904-30 June 1905," in Paolo E. Coletta (ed.) *American Secretaries of the Navy, v.1*: 470, citing TR to Morton, 25 July 1904, TR Papers.

- 11 *Army & Navy Register* 38 (30 Sep. 1905): 9. Similar sentiments were expressed with Bonaparte left the Navy Department in 1906. *Army & Navy Register* 40 (27 Oct. 1906): 5.
- 12 *Army & Navy Register* 30 (14 Dec. 1901): 492 prints Hackett's letter of resignation and Secretary Long's letter of acceptance.
- 13 Redfield Proctor to John D. Long, 13 July 1901. Long Papers, Box 61. Massachusetts Historical Society.
- 14 *Army & Navy Register* 38 (4 Nov. 1905): 9.
- 15 *Army & Navy Register* 38 (4 Feb. 1905): 17 prints Darling's letter of resignation and TR's letter of acceptance. Darling's personal expenditures are discussed in unidentified newsclipping citing *Brattleboro Reformer*, ZB Files, Box 58, Operational Archives, Navy Historical Center.
- 16 For a short contemporary biographic sketch, see "The New Assistant Secretary of the Navy," *Army & Navy Register* 38 (25 Nov. 1905): 2.
- 17 For a short biographic sketch, see *Army & Navy Register* 44 (19 Dec. 1908): 3.
- 18 Sargent to Dewey, June 26, 1905. Letter written from Cavite, P.I. Sargent Papers, Navy Historical Foundation Collection (NHF), LC. For some of Taylor's faulty conclusions while President of the Naval War College in 1894, see John B. Hattendorf, B. Mitchell Simpson, III and John R. Wadleigh, *Sailors and Scholars: The Centennial History of the U.S. Naval War College* (Newport: Naval War College Press, 1984): 42-43.
- 19 "A Peculiar Attack," *Army & Navy Register* 37 (11 March 1905):6, quoting *New York Sun*.
- 20 Brownson to Chief Constructor W. L. Capps, 27 May 1905. Brownson Papers. NHF, LC.
- 21 This incident is recounted in Samuel McGowan to Secretary Charles J. Bonaparte, 14 August 1906. It apparently occurred before March of that year. McGowan Papers, NHF, LC. (Hereafter, McGowan Papers.)
- 22 Thomas McGowan to Bonaparte, 1 March 1906. Text of letter included in Samuel McGowan to Secretary Bonaparte, 14 August 1906. McGowan Papers.
- 23 Samuel McGowan to Bonaparte, 14 Aug. 1906. McGowan Papers.
- 24 Bonaparte to McGowan, 25 Aug. 1906, 29 Aug. 1906, 31 Aug. 1906, 17 Oct. 1906. McGowan Papers.
- 25 Bonaparte to McGowan, 17 October 1906; Paymaster General Eustace B. Rogers to McGowan, 22 October 1906. McGowan Papers.
- 26 H.T.B. Harris to McGowan, 24 Aug., 26. Aug. 1906. McGowan Papers.
- 27 Harris to Newberry, 21 Aug. 1906. McGowan Papers.
- 28 Harris to Loeb, 24 Aug. 1906. McGowan Papers. In fact, Harris, who was already on the retired list, was relieved of his position by President Roosevelt just days after this correspondence. Roosevelt to Harris, 10 September 1906. McGowan Papers.
- 29 John D. Long, *The New American Navy* (New York: Outlook, 1903): v.1:117-18. Although generally unknown, Long's memoir, for which he was much complimented by

his peers, was ghost-written by Cal O'Laughlin, who had covered the Navy Department as a correspondent for the Associated Press during Long's tenure.

³⁰ Charles J. Bonaparte to TR, 8 Sep. 1906. TR Papers, LC.

³¹ Ibid.

³² See, particularly, Elting E. Morison, *Admiral Sims and the Modern American Navy* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1942): 203-215.

³³ Roosevelt to Newberry, 28 Aug. 1908.

³⁴ William S. Sims memorandum to President Roosevelt, March, 1907. Sims Papers, NHF, LC. For further detail, see James R. Reckner, "Teddy's 'Ollie' and the Teflon Admiral: William S. Sims vs. Robley D. Evans in TR's Navy," paper presented at the 11th Naval History Symposium, Annapolis, 23 Oct. 1993.

³⁵ *Army & Navy Register* 37 (8 Apr. 1905): 12.

³⁶ Rear Admiral Charles M. Thomas to Ruth S. Thomas, 13 March 1908. Thomas Papers, NHF, LC.

³⁷ Key to Sims, 3 April 1908. Sims Papers.

³⁸ Harrington to Luce, 21 Sep. 1904. Luce Papers, LC.

³⁹ Radm. Bowman H. McCalla, "Memoirs of a Naval Career," chapter 30, p.35. Unpub. typescript, McCalla Papers, NHF, LC.

⁴⁰ Charles S. Sperry to Edith M. Sperry, 28 Nov. 1902. Charles S. Sperry Papers, NHF, LC. Hereafter, Sperry Papers.

⁴¹ Sperry to Edith M. Sperry, 29 Oct. 1902. Sperry Papers.

⁴² *Army & Navy Journal* 41 (13 Feb. 1904): 620.

⁴³ *Army & Navy Register* 35 (30 Apr. 1904): 2; (18 June 1904): 3; *Army & Navy Journal* 41 (18 June 1904):1097; 25 June 1904): 1124.

⁴⁴ Term used by William S. Sims. Sims to Anne H. Sims, 30 March 1907. Sims Papers.

⁴⁵ Yates Stirling, Jr. *Sea Duty: The Memoirs of a Fighting Admiral* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1939): 102.

⁴⁶ Sargent to Dewey, 24 May 1905. Sargent Papers.

⁴⁷ Roosevelt quoted in Secretary Newberry to Attorney General, 2 March 1909. NA, RG 80: 19/26282-26:2.

⁴⁸ Ibid. This report contains a summary of all reports filed against Evans.

⁴⁹ Sims to Anne H. Sims, 3 Oct. 1908. Sims Papers.

⁵⁰ "The President and Service Friendship." *Army & Navy Register* 45 (16 Jan. 1909): 6; see also, *Army & Navy Register* 37 (8 April 1905): 12.

⁵¹ Thomas to Ruth S. Thomas, 13 March 1908. Thomas Papers.

⁵² "The President and Service Friendship," *Army & Navy Register* 45 (16 Jan. 1909): 6.

⁵³ "The New Secretary of the Navy," *Army & Navy Journal* 41 (2 July 1904): 1155.

⁵⁴ *Army & Navy Journal* 39 (15 March 1902): 699.