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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

HISTORY OF THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

HISTORY
OF THE
U.S. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

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RADM HENRY E. ECCLES
USN (RET)

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Naval War College

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Interviewee: RADM Henry E. Eccles, U.S. Navy, Retired

Interviewer: Mr. Anthony Nicolosi

Project: History of the Naval War College

Date: December 7, 1976

N: This is the first in a series of interviews with RADM Henry E. Eccles, U.S. Navy, Retired, currently a consultant of logistics and strategic theory at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. The interviews are being recorded for the History of the Naval War College project of the Naval War College Oral History Program. I am Anthony Nicolosi, Curator of the Naval Historical Collection, and this interview is being taped in Mahan Hall on December 7, 1976. Admiral Eccles, I've been looking forward to this for a long time. I am, of course, aware of your long and eventful association with the Naval War College, and feel confident that your reminiscences and reflections will be very valuable to our College History project. Admiral, if you have no objection I would like to conduct our discussions in topical fashion and to call upon your views, impressions, your understanding of a matter of particular moment to us in the Naval Historical Collection. As you know, a museum is to be developed in Founders Hall, the original site of the College. The Naval Historical Collection, over which I preside, will be responsible for the planning and for the eventual routine operations.

Recently we set upon a theme for exhibiting, namely the history of naval warfare. By naval warfare, I mean the theory, planning and education in tactics, strategy and related areas, and also ship engagements and battle. Perhaps this may more appropriately be translated as the science of naval warfare. The matter of the inaugural exhibit has also been resolved. It will be the Naval War College and the Second World War. It is with relation to the exhibit theme and the first exhibit that I would like to open our first interview. I would be grateful for your assessment of our course. For example, is naval warfare, as we view it, appropriate. Would, say, sea-power be more suitable? If we do decide upon naval warfare, what are our parameters? What should be our main thrust? Regarding the inaugural exhibit, what can we say about the Second World War in the light of the War College's conduct during the interwar period? How should we look on the education of the College in the career of the naval officer?

E: I believe that the first part, is to gain an understanding of the mission and objectives of the Naval War College and thereafter to relate the mission and objectives to the development of the thinking of the naval officers, the other military officers and civilians who have attended or have been associated with the Naval War College. I can speak to all of those subjects and have discussed the mission and objectives of the War College as I have conceived them to be over the years

in several papers.

N: Does this mean, Admiral, that you view the museum as having a basically educational function.

E: This is the point that I am coming to. I think it would be a great mistake for the Naval War College to attempt to reproduce or to excel or improve upon the military and naval museums in other places, such as Naval Academy, Washington, West Point and so forth. Those museums are largely devoted to the action elements of military and naval power and only incidentally, it seems to me, do they focus on the intellectual aspects of the use of military and naval power. It is those intellectual aspects which constitute the unique opportunity and challenge for the Naval War College Museum. This means, of course, that the museum would not attempt to make the broad public appeal that some of the other museums make. Instead, it would pick its exhibits. It would design its exhibits to attract and inform a quality audience. I realize that this is not a popular public relations idea, but I think it conforms to the thinking of the best thinkers who have been at the Naval War College. I speak particularly of men like Kalbfus and Spruance, both of whom I knew well. I also think that Ernest King would approve of such an approach. I believe the War College has no place for the mediocre. It should be a place for the superior thinkers and superior ideas. Naturally, however, ideas are best remembered when they are illustrated

and illustrated by action. It is a combination of intellectual idea exhibits and artifacts of various sorts that will achieve the effect that I would seek. I go back to this, the two important points of focus or points of departure depending on how you look at it. In the first place, I would quote Mahan in his Naval Strategy, who said, "the search for an establishment of leading principles, always few around which considerations of details group themselves, will tend to reduce confusion of impression to simplicity and directness of thought with consequent facility of comprehension." It is very easy to bow to Mahan. It's not quite so simple to understand Mahan and follow his precepts. But with that statement of Mahan as a beginning, I would then go to William Reitzel's analysis of Mahan's writing in which he discusses the relationship of maritime power, seapower, sea force, naval strategy and as all related to grand strategy, national strategy, military strategy, maritime and naval strategy, all having a sense of a relationship and all being very well expressed in one way or another by Mahan but brought into a sharp focus by Reitzel.

N: I know about Professor Reitzel's paper, and I can't help but raise the question regarding what obligation we are under for developing his themes in the museum.

E: The only obligation there is the obligation of the fundamental principle of the Naval War College which is to provide intellectual leadership, to be a source, a stimulus to

creative leadership. If the War College in its curricula and in its museum merely follows conventional wisdom, the party line, the usual approach to things, it will in no sense fulfill its obligation to provide intellectual leadership. I think this is an important distinction.

N: Yes, it's true, but there are definite parameters within which we are forced to work. Limited resources and capabilities for example. Therefore I must ask what are the essentials of our function? What must we seek to achieve? Is it to provide information on the history of the art and science of naval warfare, the fighting war, or the broad perspective which Professor Reitzel addresses.

E: Well, it is primarily, in my opinion, a broad perspective with illustrations coming from the secondary perspective. This is what I tried to express in that quick paper I wrote you the other day. Before going much further with this type of discussion, I would like to have that paper and a series of blackboards in which I could first reexamine my paper in the light of the comments of other people and then work on blackboards to put these various factors into a more coherent structure in which the development of each category within that structure could take place in an orderly manner eventually leading to an analysis of the consensus as to the relative importance and the relative amount of space and resources that we devoted to each one of these categories,

subjects and sub-topics. This would be an extensive analysis but in my opinion, the foundation for that analysis is the understanding that as Mahan said, there are certain leading principles and that these principles have illustrations of defiance, as in the case of the Vietnam War and adherence, as in the case of many of the events of World War II. So, you can illustrate both adherence to and neglect of these fundamental principles with the historical statements of the consequences that are apparent.

N: You seem to be suggesting that our overall theme should be seapower rather than naval warfare.

E: Maritime power. With seapower as one of the important elements of maritime power and as Reitzel points out sea force which is the Navy as another element of maritime power. But when we are faced today with the exemplification of the Russian understanding of maritime power and the use of maritime power, I think it is most appropriate for us to at least match their comprehension when we are thinking of the functions, purposes, objectives of the Naval War College.

N: Essentially, what I think you are saying also is that the full main thrust, the regime of study here at the War College should be in this guise. Is it?

E: I would not use this interview as a means of discussing the curriculum in the Naval War College. I think there are many fine things in the curriculum. The War College, of course,

has a tremendous handicap in a time to give naval officers who have had no very good Command & Staff Course the higher level education which they cannot fully comprehend without having had a staff course. This is a navy policy not a War College policy, and it creates defects in the curriculum in the structure of the War College that otherwise we would be able to correct.

N: Admiral, do you think that we're on a proper course in thinking in terms of maritime power or sea power or naval tactics and strategy in its broadest historical perspective? Do you think that this is reasonable?

E: I think that it's not only reasonable, but I think it's essential if the War College Museum is going to be different from other museums. The other museums have much more experience, much more money and are in locations and in circumstances where the work they do attracts popular attention and approval. I don't think this is the kind of museum that is appropriate for the War College.

N: There's been some talk that perhaps the War College Museum should also concern itself with another theme; that is, history of the Navy in Narragansett Bay. What do you think of that?

E: Well, as a small section of a War College Museum, I can see where that idea might be attractively developed, and it certainly would add to the local interest. But I don't see

that as a central focus of the museum. I think that is relatively trivial in comparison to the challenge of the broader intellectual models.

N: Do you think, therefore, that exhibit plans should be on the educational philosophy and the leadership of Mahan and Luce and the other College giants, so to speak.

E: As I said in my paper, the history, concepts, significance of maritime power should certainly be the foundation for the museum. It's a theme that runs through it - maritime power and the oceans - with that as a basic theme the War College Museum, I think, can concentrate on the intellectual aspects and the development of concepts and those concepts, therefore, relate to the further development of strategy, tactics and the illustrations of the application of those concepts which can be done in a highly dramatic manner. I will give you one illustration which is not directly related to the War College, but is probably the single best illustration of what I have in mind. That is Leonard Marcus' book, The Age of Nelson. In it he brings out the enormous importance of Sir John Jarvis' book on St. Vincent, who was the great strategist of the British Navy and who with William Pitt, the Younger, developed the maritime power and action that defeated Napoleon. There are certain paragraphs in Marcus' book which could very well be reproduced in bronze to give you the theme of the combination of broad, strategic concepts, the creation of a very effective

navy, the creation of morale and discipline in that navy, the tactics and the logistics that work together in harmony under the direction of St. Vincent to the defeat of Napoleon. This is the single, most dramatic illustration of what I have in mind.

N: I am impressed by what you have to say but as the person responsible for implementing the exhibit program, I foresee the awful obligation of being very well versed in all aspects of maritime power and sea power. Is it conceivable to you that we might be able to call upon this expertise in-house, our faculty and student body, to help us to do justice to the presentations?

E: Not only conceivable, I would say it is essential and I would make the further comment that if the faculty of the War College cannot grasp the nature and importance of this type of approach they have failed in their appreciation of maritime power and the process of military and naval education.

N: I see. So therefore you do favor the integration of the study responsibilities for purposes of museum exhibiting. In other words, some kind of control and some kind of involvement is essential in order to make this work to its fullest.

E: Well, I would say that it's a difference between a man who is a time servicer who is drawing a salary and going through the routine of holding certain facets and performing certain teaching functions, and a man who has intellectual curiosity

and a dedication to the pursuit of knowledge as related to maritime affairs and sea power and who has a sense of appreciation of the real intellectual challenge of the War College. Now, I have found in my experiences at the War College that we have some very fine men. Also, I have seen on the faculty routine thinkers who are interested only in drawing their paychecks.

N: Admiral, it strikes me that the scope of our museum in terms of its appeal is quite narrow. That is, although the main theme is broad for the specialists, that is where it ends. I mean that it doesn't seem to go beyond the appreciation of the esoteric. We do, after all, have an obligation to the public. I think that the very fact that we will have a museum implies a public audience. Doesn't this pose a difficulty.

E: It poses a challenge to the knowledge, ingenuity, and good taste and imagination of the people that are going to design and operate the museum, and I don't imply that this is an easy task; this is a task for good men and if they are not in a position to work at this in a high level with the desire and purpose of providing something unique, then I think it's a waste of time.

N: I see. Can we for a moment get into another matter, namely our first exhibit which is going to be the Naval War College and the Second World War. Could I ask for your assessment of that beginning? Do you think that is a good way to open up?

E: I think so. I see no reason why that should, in any way, conflict with the ideas that I have suggested. I think that would be one way of illustrating some of the ideas that might not be presented in exhibit form until later.

N: Do you think this is appropriate, to focus in on one war?

E: Depending on whether you're talking about the ultimate focus or the initial focus.

N: Well, it would be the initial focus, of course. A presentation of a five year span in which the focus is actual naval combat. We will not be addressing the general thesis, naval sea power and maritime power. Rather a fighting war and the War College's relationship to it.

E: I see no reason why World War II, the combat of World War II cannot be the initial phase of the museum, but I do not think that a final decision on that should be made until the more fundamental concepts of the museum are agreed upon. In other words, I don't think that you should put up an exhibit for the purpose of getting underway and then to decide what you're going to do about a museum later. I think that would be silly.

N: I agree. I think we should settle it on our overall exhibiting theme as a matter of policy.

E: It's all too easy for this just to be another group of artifacts. It would attract some people and it might be a nice adjunct to the Newport Chamber of Commerce, but it would

not contribute anything particularly to the intellectual conduct of future and military conflicts.

N: So, in the first instance, this museum has to be meaningful to the institution itself and to the responsibility for educating officers.

E: Of course it must be. Otherwise why not just combine it with the America Cup Museum that they are building down at Bowen's Wharf.

N: A second good reason is that it has to have applicability to the overall area of knowledge of naval warfare, maritime sea power, it must have a meaningful value in those areas to the specialist.

E: I would point out something beyond that. As would resources become more a matter of public concern the understanding of the ocean and its vital importance to mankind, to the survival of the human race, maritime power, maritime resources, the maritime world are all going to be of tremendous public importance in the next fifteen or twenty years. Question of the law of the sea, the drilling of oil and things of that sort, cannot be neglected. It does not have the same emphasis that an exhibit at Woods Hole or Scripps Institute in Ohio will have, but never-the-less, there must be something of that to provide background and coherence to the overall series of exhibits. Naval warfare just for the sake of fighting is ridiculous.

N: I'm sure you are aware that down through this institution's

history, there has been something of a dichotomy in approaching how and why officers should be educated, namely theory and concepts and the general global strategy approach, and preparing officers for command situations. It is pretty much the amorous situation we have here today. But there are those that feel very strongly about what should be emphasized is the warfare side of the officer education.

E: I have written so much on this subject that I don't wish to comment on tape in a hasty manner. My War College educational files are now being reorganized and I hope to have them in a more coherent form in the next month or so. But I come back to what I said. What do you mean by a War College? Are you talking about an institution which is similar to the Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth or are you thinking of an institution which is somewhat like the National War College or the Defense University in Washington? Now, the problem with the Naval War College for the past 75 years has been they have tried to combine both of those things in one course and that attempt at combination of two related but different things has resulted in a considerable amount of, let's call it law.

N: I can see that very clearly and I'm sure that many other people can also.

E: Now, the question is, you have to go back to what does the Navy require. How many people does the Navy require.

How many people does the Navy require for certain other types of things and how can people get an appreciation of the purpose of their work, in the technical, tactical, operational fields unless they have some idea of the relations of strategy to the nation and the purposes of the nation to combine them all in one technical, tactical operational expertise and together with a third course in geopolitics and national strategy and national policy is an extremely difficult .

N: I recognize that fully and that is why I bring it up. It's a challenging question for me as the curator of this museum. I must, after all, present the War College's mission in an effective and comprehensive way. Now what am I going to emphasize? Is our museum going to focus in or the implementation of techniques of fighting war at sea as demonstrated through the emphasis here or will I be obliged to emphasize the strategic.

E: You'll have to emphasize both. The question of relative emphasis is another matter. Until you get to the details of the design and the analysis of the overall thing in the method I suggested earlier in this interview you cannot answer that question. You have to make the analysis before you reach a decision. Don't reach the decision and then make the analysis to justify the decision.

N: Well, it seems to me like it's going to be a pretty hard nut to crack.

E: Certainly, it's a hard nut to crack. Who suggested it was easy?

N: Admiral, looking at the Vietnamese War for a moment, can you give me your impressions of how you see its relationship to the kind of thing we are projecting for our museum. How you envision presenting the Vietnamese War.

E: Well, the Vietnam War is a superb illustration of what I am trying to emphasize in the Naval War College. The Vietnam War was the worse and most far reaching political-military disaster in U.S. history. The U.S. military technology was generally excellent. The concepts governing the employment of military force were very bad in many critical areas, and this raises the question, did the faith in our technical excellence distract our leaders from the importance of theory and concepts? I think it did, and I think it was the overt defiance of sound theory and principle that made all the research and money, the time, the effort and training that went into the achievement of technical excellence, wasted. It was faulty concepts at the top. And this is one of the most important tasks we have in this country, to develop some kind of educational system or institution in which these fundamental military principles and concepts can be inculcated in the leadership of both military and political leadership of the nation.

N: Do you feel that the failing was in large part, on the

part of the military leadership?

E: The chief failure in the military leadership, in my opinion, was that they did not oppose the faulty concepts of the political leadership and the military-civilian leadership to the degree they should have. The biggest blunders were made in defiance of the recommendations of most of the senior military leaders.

N: With regard to the museum and presenting the Vietnam War, you would say this is a clear demonstration of neglecting certain basic concepts. And that the obligation to adhere to these concepts were both political and military.

E: Yes, I think my Vietnam hurricane paper discussed these in reasonably good form, although it does not pretend to be complete because it does not go into many political questions which were involved. Now, I am not suggesting that it is practical for the Naval War College to put up a devastating exhibit of political incompetence and expect the political establishment of the U.S. to support the Naval War College. But from the standpoint of the people who are designing and thinking about the Naval War College Museum, it would be a very good thing if they bought this situation on this fact that it was a huge disaster. Bear that in mind and get some understanding of why it was such a disaster. So, temper your enthusiasm for technology by recognizing that technology alone just leads you into disaster and more disaster.

N: It seems to me that during the latter part of the 19th century when the Navy in particular was enamored with technological developments there seemed to be a similar problem among the leadership.

E: I think this is true. This is why the Naval War College was found.

N: Isn't it ironic in a way that in our modern age, when we have so much enlightenment and so much more information, that we could be entrapped in the same snare?

E: Well, it's ironical but it's not only ironical, it's tragic and in a broad context this is known as an illustration of the human tragedy.

N: Do you feel that by educating officers in this kind of an example we could probably develop a much better performance in their command situations; in other words, the general line officer very rarely gets to the point where he's able to make command decisions of strategic or global strategy dimensions. Why, therefore, emphasize or give him a high dose of this kind of knowledge.

E: This kind of education is given to military officers not so much to prepare them to exercise the high political authority which decides these things as to give them an appreciation of the problems which face the men in political authority who do have to make these decisions and therefore, to give them a realistic understanding of the way the world actually works.

N: This all gets back to what we discussed in the beginning: The necessity to truly comprehend maritime and seapower aspects of naval warfare.

E: Precisely.

N: Well, I certainly recognize the obligation of a museum within the context of an institution like this. But doesn't it strike you that sea power and the demands about sea power and maritime power are constantly changing? The variables fifty years ago during the time of Mahan and the variables today are quite different. In striking out for certain basic concepts in sea power and maritime power, if you will, is a dangerous task.

E: Not if your concepts are basic.

N: There are many people that quarrel with basic concepts and principles, if you will.

E: In my opinion, the people that quarrel with those principles, with the idea of having principles, indicate to me they don't quite understand the facts of life. They are like Richard Livingston. He was talking about technicians. We need good technicians in the world, he said. We must have them. But by a mere technician I mean a man who knows everything about his job except the ultimate purpose and place in the order of the universe. Now, when a man tells me that he has no use for military theory and principles and things of that sort I immediately class him in the category of a mere technician no matter what

his rank is or academic prestige. I exhibit my own prejudices in this manner.

N: Of course a hundred years ago the naval officer or the whole naval service was probably viewed almost in its totality as a technical type function. I'm not putting that as well as I should, but I think you know what I mean.

E: You are partially correct. We had some very, very able men in the U.S. Navy from its inception who realized there was more to the world, to strategy, to naval warfare and mere technical excellence. We had a lot of them. We also had many of the other kind and the problem came to crisis in three specific cases: (1) The arguments as to the foundation of a naval academy, (2) the arguments related to a particular core of engineers when steam became the function of the navy, and (3), the arguments about the foundation of the Naval War College. So this conflict has been going on for some time, and we can expect it to go on.

N: The War College's history has been such an uneven quantity. It seems to manifest to me a lack of real appreciation for it. I like to think that in our day and age there is a clear understanding and recognition of its utility, but I'm not entirely convinced. What you just have to say brings home the fact that the War College always has to prove itself.

E: I think this is true. I think it will continue. I think the power of ignorance is a tremendous thing.

N: There's another side of this and that relates to the

function which the War College seems to fulfill to the people who are in positions of authority. It seems as though it is the very nature of the War College to be in a constant state of flux in order to meet new definitions as well as new problems.

E: You then come to the distinction between the various degrees of turmoil that peace leads to complacency and stagnation and peace in an educational institution and total harmony in the educational institution and the church will probably lead to a considerable amount of either dull dogma or intellectual stagnation. And therefore you have to change. But change for the sake of change is nonsense and change without some appraisal of your expectations along the line and without some understanding of the side effects of change is stupid. So, it's always an intellectual challenge to run any kind of an educational institution and the point of the thing is that a good educator has the intuitive understanding of where he is in this continuing turmoil and a good educator keeps the turmoil alive but keeps it under some kind of control so it doesn't lead to total disintegration.

N: You say, in effect, that the War College is not unlike any institution of high education.

E: Well, they're all the same in one way or another. They have the same basic faults which stem from the nature of human beings, their perceptions and aspirations and their aspirations for personal recognition and personal achievement. And this is the nature of the human species--and that's not going

to change in the 3 or 4,000 years.

N: Do you think its more prevalent or more true of the War College because it is in the military sector and because it is a governmental activity?

E: I'm not in a position to say that. I can't answer that.

N: I'm leading up to what kind of stability is there associated with an institution of this kind. What kind of stability is there in the appreciation for what it does. Maybe those aren't the best of questions, but I see them having a relevance to what we hope to do with the museum.

E: Well, I've expressed my idea on the question of theory and stability and change in education and in military affairs in my paper, "Military Fundamentals and Principles" which I keep adding to and revising over the years, and if you don't have that I'll give you a copy of it and you can look it over because I feel with that question extensively. I wrote my first paper on problems of change in 1966-67 and I went into a discussion of the nature of change which was taking place in our society today and the necessity for understanding the side effects of change and being prepared to compensate for those side effects.

Interviewee: RADM Henry E. Eccles, U.S. Navy, Retired

Interviewer: Mr. Anthony Nicolosi

Project: History of the Naval War College

Date: January 13, 1977

N: This is the second in a series of interviews with Rear Admiral Henry E. Eccles, USN, Retired, for the Naval War College History Project of the College's Oral History Program. The interview is taking place in Spruance Hall, Room 114, on Thursday, January 13, 1977. The focus of this second interview will be the background to Admiral Eccles' association with the Naval War College.

E: My interest in the Navy started when I was a very young boy living in Bayside, Long Island, which has just been incorporated into the city of New York. I was fortunate enough to make five trips to Europe with my family between the years 1904 and 1911. I loved being at sea. I enjoyed a storm at sea. I loved the whole atmosphere of being aboard a ship. I also had another interest in the Navy through my mother who was Lydia Lawrence. She was rather a distant relative of Captain James Lawrence. The Lawrences having settled in this country in the 17th Century, some of them in Massachusetts, some of them in Bayside, Long Island, and some in New Jersey. I was of the Long Island branch.

James Lawrence was the New Jersey branch. My mother was very proud of this distant relationship, and he was a boyhood hero of mine. This combination in my early years focused all my ambition toward becoming a naval officer. I did not go to school until I was ten years old having learned to read at the age of five and being taught by my mother, and for a very brief period by a private tutor. I went to a small Dame school for one year and then entered the sixth grade at Trinity School in New York. There I remained through the period 1916. After a short interim period at Flushing high school I went to Annapolis to the Wilmer Prep School, there to prepare for taking the entrance examinations to the Naval Academy, having received a first alternate appointment from New York. Due to various political shenanigans when all Congressmen were given an additional appointment, I was eased out of my appointment. I failed to get the principal appointment even though I passed the entrance examinations. As a consequence, I spent some time working as a bank messenger at the Guarantee Trust Company in New York where I learned a great deal about New York City. I then went to Columbia College for a year, left in the spring of 1918, and took a six week cruise as a bridge cadet in the United Fruit Company 601, a banana boat, through the Caribbean, coming back in early June and entering the Naval Academy on 18 June, 1918. After a very interesting four years at the Naval Academy, I graduated in 1922, went to the USS MARYLAND and stayed there until March of

1924. I then was transferred to the USS NEW YORK and stayed on the NEW YORK until December 1924. I was married to Isabel, a neighbor of mine, in Flushing on the 12th of November, 1924, and in mid-December I and several other junior officers from the NEW YORK were transferred to the Submarine School in New London, Connecticut. There I took the five month submarine course.

N: Admiral, can you give me some of your impressions of the Naval Academy during your four years there.

E: Well, the Naval Academy was quite different from what it is now. My impressions of the Academy, of course, are colored by personal experiences and personal bias. Unfortunately, for some respects, my year at college had put me ahead of most of my classmates, and I had no trouble at all in the plebe year. The consequence being, I got out of the habit of studying and went downhill scholastically for the next two years, having a very good time and being known as one of the non-regulation midshipmen, being in continual minor disciplinary trouble, trivial matters with no major offenses except for some reports for smoking.

N: I seem to recall that you had met Theodore Roosevelt at the Academy?

E: I met Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., who was then the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and this happened in my first class year when I happened to be manager of both the lacrosse and the football teams. I was Mr. Roosevelt's guide for one day of his

visit to the Academy, for part of his visit, and among other things I introduced all the members of the football team to him at the Hut. I had a very interesting conversation with him at the Superintendent's House. Before I went to the Naval Academy I spent the summer of 1916 at the Junior Military Training Camp of the U.S. Army at Fort Terry on Long Island Sound. This was a junior Plattsburg. We had about 1200 young men there, and we learned the Army way of life. Among the interesting things was that both General Lenard Wood and ex-President Theodore Roosevelt came to Long Island and addressed us. So I have a clear recollection of listening to men like Wood and Roosevelt speak to large crowds without the benefit of electronic amplification. To go back to the Naval Academy, I loved the Naval Academy. I had wonderful friends. I worked very hard my first class year and pulled my academic record up so that I graduated about the top of the lower third of my class. Of course, in those days the experience of a midshipman was quite different. Our summers were spent on old coal burning battleships, and for the first two cruises there were really only two things that midshipmen did. One was to shovel coal and the other was to scrub decks. I became a very good fireman on V&W water tube boilers on the USS MINNESOTA, having fired the MINNESOTA for 56 days consecutively on our cruise from Hawaii to Annapolis by way of Seattle.

N: These were not cruises as part of the fleet, they were independent cruises?

E: These were midshipmen cruises divorced from the fleet itself. The interesting thing is that at no time did we have any gunnery practice. We learned navigation; we learned seamanship; we learned coal burning steam engineering. We learned how to work under adverse conditions. I remember very distinctly aboard the ALABAMA we were allowed one bucket of fresh water a day in which we did our bathing, our shaving and our washing of clothes. We had to keep clean, and we did it on one bucket of fresh water a day supplemented by many buckets of salt water.

N: Your impression then is that the Naval Academy training for the midshipman was thorough and very rigorous.

E: It was thorough to a limited degree and was rigorous in all respects. I did enjoy the Naval Academy, and I enjoyed my sea duty very much. I was always interested in command, and I was happy to go to submarines because I could expect to get command earlier than if I had stayed with the surface navy. I never had any particular desire to be a flyer although when I graduated aviation was beginning to pick up momentum and many of my classmates who went into it were successful.

N: When did you go into the submarine service?

E: I went to the submarine school on the 1st of January, 1925.

N: And that was at New London?

E: At New London. When I was aboard the S-28 on the West Coast I started the correspondence course in strategy and tactics at the Naval War College, but I never completed the course

because in the midst of it I was transferred to become Engineering Officer of the S-25 which had come up from Panama on a tow line. I had good fortune to take over a broken down engineering plant which could do nothing but improve. As a consequence, I had a very interesting and rewarding year and a half. From there in 1928 I went to the Postgraduate School at the Naval Academy where I took the first year of a course in mechanical engineering, specializing in diesel engines.

N: The Postgraduate School was at Annapolis in those days?

E: Yes. The second year at the Postgraduate School was spent at Columbia University where I had close associations with some of the top professors in the engineering field. New York was a particularly interesting place for engineering study, and Columbia was particularly interesting because so many of the professors in the engineering school at Columbia were consultants for large companies. For example, Dr. Lucky was a consultant with the BMW Boiler Company and various other engineering firms. The result was that these people had an up-to-date knowledge of industrial technology. After the last summer at the Postgraduate School I spent at Schenectady at the General Electric Company. There we concentrated on what in those days was known as a heat balance. This is identical in concept and basic technique to what is now known as systems analysis. The terminology has changed, computation facilities vastly improved, but the basic techniques and philosophy of the heat balance as taught

us in 1930 is basically the same as a highly publicized form of systems analysis introduced by Mr. McNamara to the Department of Defense. I also had the great privilege that summer of meeting Louise Homer, the great opera singer, and Adolph Parks, the publisher of the New York Times. This is another story. Upon completion of my postgraduate course, I took command of the USS PEARL ONE.

N: What were submarines like in those days?

E: They were known as the "pig boats". They were small, uncomfortable, battery operated and diesel oil, and on a long cruise smelled sweat and dirty feet. We had a wardroom but ate precisely the same food as the enlisted men. We lived with the enlisted men to all intensive purposes.

N: What was the Navy's conception of their use?

E: Well, of course, that was a matter of great discussion. At the time I went to submarines, the large fleet submarines were just coming into service. But the early submarines were great failures. For example, the T-Boat was a very long boat. She was so designed that she could not dive at a steep angle because her bow would reach a crushing depth before she could submerge. This was bad design. We had big trouble with submarine design, but this is another matter.

During this period of my service, the concept of the employment of submarines was confused. The leadership in the submarine force itself was not aggressive. For example, as a

consequence of the sinking of the S-51 and later the S-4 in the vicinity of Provincetown, the senior officers of the fleet were afraid to use submarines, and I remember spending one summer in Puget Sound when we were required to keep a written log of sightings of surface warships of the fleet and to maintain a record of the bearing and distance of the ships at all times while we were submerged. This, of course, interfered with our normal operations and was perfectly ridiculous. Our force commanders out there did not know how to use submarines and our training was very poor, very elementary.

N: How did this compare with the international scene?

E: Well, those of us who were in the submarine force, were sure that if a war should break out, the U.S. would use submarines in basically the same way the Germans used them in WWI, for commerce destruction as well as for attacks on enemy warships. The submarine situation changed in the Pacific when Admiral McClain took over as Commander, Submarine Force Pacific. He was a very strong officer, vigorous, domineering, an assistant to Sims in Sims' gunnery revolution in the early 20th Century, and a man who knew nothing about submarines but was a splendid naval officer. He brought a new sense of purpose to the submarines in the Pacific. I remember he raised particular hell when he went out to Pearl Harbor and found the R boats living a life of luxury with a minimum of work, enjoying the pleasures of Hawaiian life. He changed that. During that period we also

spent time on the surface looking for various flyers who were flying from San Francisco to Honolulu, or from some other around-the-world flight. We spent a lot of time searching for lost aviators, which was unrewarding.

N: How about the development of the vessel itself?

E: Well, in the meantime, and some time later, the B-Boats began to come along and were much more successful than the early large submarines. But in 1930 we had started a program of large submarines that worked reasonably well. There were nine B-Boats built, and they all were collared heavy diesel engines. But in the early 30's there was a design competition to bring about a smaller, high-speed engine. This ultimately resulted in the engines that powered our submarines in WWII. But when I went to New London, Admiral Hart was a junior admiral at that time, Tommy Hart, Commander of the Submarine Force, Atlantic, and he established a board to draw up the specifications for a small relatively low performance submarine for mass production in case of war. I was on that board, and I submitted a dissenting report on the general recommendations of the board. I recommended that this specific type of engine be built as opposed to the other members of the board. As a matter of interest, eight years later, I in the Bureau of Engineering in Washington, was given the task of supervising the construction of the submarine that we had recommended to Admiral Hart, including the installation of the engine that I had recommended.

This was my first association with Admiral Hart. In the summer of 1952, I was in command of the submarine R-13 at the Naval Academy, and it was the first time that midshipmen had been given submarine training during the summer and this was interesting. And again by that time, Admiral Hart was the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, and I reported to him for duty. One of the interesting highlights of the year 1930-31 was that we put the row boats out of commission in the Philadelphia Navy Yard and at the same time Mr. Hirsch initiated the abortive attempt to operate under the ice using the old pretty well run-out submarine O-10 which was rechristened the Nautilus and supposedly put into first class condition. Actually, it was a shambles. The Nautilus, the O-10, secured along the side of the O-1 and I was able to observe closely the manner in which the old submarine was put back into commission. In fact, I gave her a battery charge and I saw the bailing wire that had been put around the leads of the high pressure air compressor of the engine. I heard of bailing wire jobs, but this was the first one I had seen. As an interesting sidelight, the chariot ridge that was supposed to stand up under an Atlantic crossing was of sheet brass secured to the tower by 1/4" stove bolts. After seeing the manner in which the Nautilus was operated, I was ready to venture my own professional reputation as a submarine commanding officer and engineer by betting she would never get across the Atlantic on her own power. Well, the

USS WYOMING towed her the last half across the Atlantic. The whole operation was, in fact, a fraud and so Hubert Wilkins was the goat. He was a very fine man who knew a lot about the Arctic and ice, but he didn't know anything about submarines, but he learned something.

N: Did you know him personally?

E: Yes, I did.

N: During this time frame, did you have the occasion to meet Admiral Nimitz?

E: No, I knew him.

N: I guess he was developing a reputation for himself at this time.

E: Yes, he was. In 1933, I went to shore duty at New London, became the engineering repair officer and at the same time, of course, it was during the depression and the economy was coming along and they transferred the overhaul of East Coast submarines from Portsmouth Navy Yard to the submarine base at New London. I assumed responsibility for this with a staff of six warrant officers and 87 enlisted men. We used the dry dock at Electric Boat Company in Groton for docking and underwater and major hull work. Electric Boat Company was practically broke, and the small contracts we were able to award helped them survive during this difficult period. I had close personal relationships with the executives of the Electric Boat Company at this time which I picked up later when I was in the Bureau of

Engineering in submarine design in 1938 to 1940. It was fascinating the operations out of New London, because anyone who can handle a submarine in the Thames River with the temperature at 15^o, 20 knot north wind and an ebb tide is qualified to handle seamanship problems anywhere in the world and under any conditions. This was frequently encountered in our watch commanding submarines in New London. It was a great experience.

In the Winter of 1933-1934 the temperature in New London in the heat of the day for one week in January got as high as 5 below zero and each night it dropped between 25 and 30 below. The consequence was the bay had frozen over. We smashed up a lot of propellers trying to operate in the early days of the freeze, but we gave up. At that time, 1934, it became obvious to some of us there was going to be a World War and we assumed that we would get into it. The submarine base was in deplorable condition, not having been inspected by anyone for 11 years.

N: By this time our government had committed itself to increasing naval forces.

E: Yes. President Roosevelt's naval program was underway. It included a large number of submarines and their design was being started in Washington.

N: There was a transition in thought regarding the use of the submarine during this time frame, too, wasn't there?

E: Yes, and then that was when the high speed fleet submarine came in. The concept of that developed and the development of

a high speed lightweight engine, it became possible to have a high speed submarine. This is a very complex story. I did institute the rehabilitation of the old shops at the base at New London, getting a total of about \$600,000 in WPA money with which to outfit the machine shop and several other shops, I getting my first experience in blowing up a machine to specifications and purchase one.

N: What was your position at that time?

E: I was the Engineer Repair Officer and it was a fascinating experience. I learned a great deal.

N: During this time frame did you have any association with the War College?

E: I had been interested in the War College and had put on my fitness report the two things I had wanted to do: either go back to the Naval Academy or go to the Naval War College. In the Winter of 1934 I came up to Newport for the first time and visited a friend of mine, Eddie Graves, who was a student in the Junior Course at the War College. I came over to the War College several times and watched war games in which some of my friends were participating. I was very much interested in the War College at that time. Well, I left New London in 1935 and went to the West Coast as Assistant Engineer aboard the heavy cruiser, SALT LAKE CITY. I stayed on my job for three years. I had to work hard but I enjoyed the life aboard a heavy cruiser. I was then ordered to the Naval Academy for

duty and when I reported to the Naval Academy I was met by a messenger who gave me my change of orders from the Naval Academy to the Bureau of Engineering. Hence, the Summer of 1938 instead of going to the Naval Academy where I was going to teach either math or English, I went as the number three man in a diesel engine design section of the Bureau of Engineering under LCDR Elliot Bryant. I had just been promoted to LCDR after 16 years of commissioned service.

N: Where was your official residence at this time?

E: Well, I lived in New London for five years, 1930-35. I lived on the West Coast, and Mrs. Eccles and our son lived in Long Beach. But we would travel up and down the coast when the ships were making their long visits. They also came out to Hawaii for several months in the summer of 1937-1938.

I really thought that the Bureau of Engineering and Bureau of Ship Building from 1938-1940 was extremely interesting. We, at that time, were building frantically. We all in the group were sure that war was coming and that we would be in it. I don't want to go into details of the submarine story in that period. Instead I will skip to 1940 when I made a 3-1/2 month intelligence trip to Manila by way of South Africa and the Indian Ocean. The object of my intelligence was primarily to make a survey of oil in the Persian Gulf and in the Indian Ocean area.

N: You were instructed to this by...

E: This was the Chief of Naval Operations and this is another story. In any event, I took command of the destroyer JOHN D. EDWARDS (DD-216), a four pipe destroyer, in early October 1940 and again reported to Admiral Hart who was Commander-in-Chief, Asiatic Fleet, and made my report to him.

N: Can I have your estimate of Admiral Hart?

E: Well, I would prefer not to estimate Admiral Hart in this interview. He was a great man. His integrity and professional competence were of the highest, and I have great affection and respect for Admiral Hart. I don't want to go into that today. I commanded the EDWARDS during the Indonesian Campaign which actually started in late November 1941 and continued until the first week of March 1942. After the disastrous battle of the Java Sea, the EDWARDS and three other destroyers, the only survivors of the battle, made their escape to Australia and I was detached from command in Australia and came home aboard the USS WEST POINT and reached Washington in early May 1942. I was then ordered to duty in the Base Maintenance Division of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and with the assistance of six new ensigns and one new junior lieutenant. I was given the task of coordinating all U.S. advanced naval base activities in the world. This small section of seven, one commander, one lieutenant and five or six ensigns, expanded rapidly until there were about 80 officers. But in the critical period of the Summer of 1942, I was in charge of supervising

the build-up of bases in the Central Pacific, South Pacific, in Iceland, Newfoundland, Northern Ireland, Central America, and West Africa.

N: Can you give us the circumstances leading up to your taking command?

E: I was not taking command. I had no command authority at all. I was a staff coordinator who saw my responsibility was to see that the orders given by the CNO for the development of bases were carried out. I was the expediter of the coordinator.

N: Was there an advanced base activity in the Navy before the war.

E: No, you had the Base Maintenance Division. This was a small division that looked after all our naval bases.

N: I see. It was a consequence of the war.

E: Oh, yes. This was the build-up. I stayed in this activity for about one year and then various complications arose, and it ended by my being ordered as a student to the Naval War College to report in July 1943. Before that time, however, in May 1943 I came to the War College and gave a lecture on the subject of advanced bases. That was my first lecture at the Naval War College. I think it was the 16th of May 1943. The War College at that time had been changed and we had the Command Course and the Staff Course. The Staff Course was chiefly young reserve officers, the Command Course was a small group of few reserve officers but chiefly regular commanders

and captains.

N: Was this called a preparatory course?

E: No.

N: There was a Command Course and a Staff Course?

E: Yes. I don't remember the exact name. Admiral Pye was president of the War College at that time. I left that in December of 1943. I was promoted to Captain, and I was ordered to Pearl Harbor to become the Head of the Advanced Base Section for Commander, Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet. I stayed in that job, coordinating the advanced base activities of the Central Pacific until my detachment at the end of the war in December 1945. The most significant part of that work from the standpoint of overall concern with strategy came in what was known as the echelon conferences. These were conferences held by Commander-in-Chief, Pacific for the purpose of scheduling all shipments of material and personnel and equipment involved in the assault and later consolidation and base development of the islands in the Pacific that were captured during the Central Pacific Campaign.

N: A matter of logistics?

E: This brought me into the strategic aspects of logistics in a big way. For example, we brought that process of planning to, I think, approximately perfection in the planning for the capture and development of Okinawa. The echelon conference for Okinawa took place at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, the pineapple pentagon, all during Christmas week, 1944, and I had the task of coordinating

all the U.S. Naval effort on the island of Okinawa in the development of the huge bases, airfields, depots, and so forth, that we established there. In this period of one week at Fort Shafter, I scheduled 1,800,000 tons of material to go in 10 day echelons into Okinawa.

N: What kind of staff were you working with?

E: I had a staff of 135 officers and about 50 enlisted men. I had 23 engineers, a doctor, 20-25 supply officers and the rest were line officers. I was the only regular officer; the rest were reserve officers. In November of 1944, Admiral the Deputy, CINCPAC, called me in and told me I would have to expand my section because I was charged with the coordination of all U.S. base activities for the invasion of Japan, which was scheduled for the next year. As a consequence, I went to Washington with a personal letter from Admiral to Admiral which I did not have to use. My job was to go to the Chief of Naval Personnel and get him to give me very highly qualified officers for this important work. I was successful in this. I participated in the planning for the invasion of Japan, making a trip to the Philippines in the Summer of 1945 to coordinate with General Kruger who was MacArthur's number one man for that operation. I had to work very closely with the Army and Army Air Force, as well as being the number one man for the development of the planning for the U.S. naval activities. At the end of the war, frankly, I was

a wreck. I had seen from my office in Pearl Harbor, I could watch the movement of men and material on the main highways of Hawaii to the docks and aboard ships and out to sea, and I got the sense of the process of logistics, the flow of logistics and the element of logistics lead time, the momentum of the logistic system were thoroughly impressed on me and I was exhausted at the end of the war.

N: What made the system work. I'm assuming, of course, that it did work well.

E: Reflecting the bitter experiences of 1942-43 where we made such enormous and wasteful mistakes, the system worked primarily because in 1944 the Commander, Western Sea Frontier, was established as Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet and Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific. Admiral Ingersoll, 4 stars, took over as Commander, Western Sea Frontier, and he was charged with the logistics coordination for the entire Pacific. He did a superb job. He obtained control of transportation, and we related the movement of material to the availability both of air and sea transportation and port capacity for both loading and unloading. For the first time in the history of warfare that coordination was made in an operating theatre. This was what made the system work. It is the system that should have been applied in Vietnam and was deliberately ignored by the inexperienced, ignorant members of the McNamara administration and the uneducated military men who ran

who ran the logistics of the Vietnam War. This element of control coordination under an operating theatre commander was what made the Pacific logistics system work. This was inbred in me; it was part of the system, watched it develop and saw it work. And it worked better than any other theatre in the war and better than any other theatre in the history of warfare.

N: Admiral, were there any plans for this type of a system prior to the war?

E: No.

N: They were all original.

E: It all came about during the war. For example, under the direction of Admiral King in a conference in August of 1942, Jack Metzger and I developed a concept of the functional component system for advanced base planning. This resulted in the development of the first advanced base catalog in December 1943. It has now become a standard honor in naval logistic planning. This was one thing. With Captain Ulman in the Office of Naval Transportation we developed the decimal priority system for the control of shipments and shipping which was what we used in the control of shipping in the Central Pacific area and western sea frontier in 1944-45. These were some of the things with which I was associated.

N: In originating all these original concepts, you must have had a great deal of cooperation.

E: I got cooperation from the bright people, and I got opposition from the dumbbells.

N: Well, in the short period of time which these systems were employed, I can't help but be struck with the fact they worked well, albeit the many frustrations I am sure confronted you in implementing them. How do you account for that?

E: Well, we had some very able men. For example, Paul Heel, who was a Commodore, was the logistics officer to Admiral Ingersoll on the West Coast. Paul did a beautiful job on this. We had some very able men in the Bureau, OPNAV and in the fleet who saw what could be done, who were responsive to suggestions, and who were willing to delegate authority. The secret of it was there was a high degree of centralization of authority, such as the very great power of Commander, Western Sea Frontier. He delegated and the delegation was such as a captain I was able to make decisions and send dispatchers and things that most Vice Admirals and full Admirals couldn't do today. It was delegation. People were working under the incentive of a major war.

N: So these people were basically highly qualified people.

E: Well, the men I had working for me were very well qualified. These naval reserve officers were splendid. We had in Pearl Harbor a floating population of misfits. Several thousands of officers who made it a career to go to various schools, to fill the schools quota, to stay out of the war, and floated around and had a wonderful time in the flesh pots of Hawaii. But we also had some dedicated, very competent and energetic

reserve officers who had had years of business experience in movement of freight, construction and industry in one sort or another, who were dedicated to the work and performed brilliantly.

N: So this was a factor.

E: A major factor. We drew upon the best brains of the civilian community of the U.S. and we put them to work and they liked it. Now, at that time, at the end of the war, I took leave and got my strength back and came back and spent six weeks writing my report which was the only report about advanced bases written from the perspective of command that was written by anybody at the end of World War II. I still have a copy of that report. I then went to the Joint Board of Operational Review in Washington, under VADM Hill and General Grunther. There were 50 of us from all branches of all services and we spent nine months reviewing the operations of World War II and writing a book Joint Overseas Operations. Then our group was split up to reconstitute the Industrial College to establish the National War College and to establish the Armed Forces College. I went then to the command of the battleship WASHINGTON which was immediately put out of commission, and I was without a job and went to Washington to look for a new job and my friend and classmate, Captain Akinson said that Admiral Nimitz had signed a directive to establish a logistics department, a logistics course at the Naval War

College and said would you be interested. It will be a Rear Admiral's job. I said, yes, I would. And this was Admiral Nimitz' directive of 7 January 1947, which established the logistics department at the Naval War College. I went to
and said do you want this job. If you'll take the job in Newport, I'd like to go as your assistant. He said no. I went to several other people that I thought were qualified and they didn't want the job either, so I went to see Admiral Carney and said I want the job. I had worked with Admiral Spruance on several occasions very closely during the 1944-45, and he was president of the War College, and he was very glad to have me to establish the logistics course. I had in my job as Head, advanced base work in Washington and in Pearl Harbor, I had seen the global process of logistics, men and material in movement. I had been part of it. I had seen it and I had seen how it had developed on a very largely improvised basis. I remembered so many of the practically snap decisions that I had made and made them stick with this major flow, overflow of material and men and I realized how many very serious mistakes had been made and I got interested in ascertaining the fundamental theory on the latest. That sense of the importance of basic principles was reinforced by my nine months on the joint operations review board. Because General Grunther and Hill emphasized that in our work there we should not think just from the transient phenomena, but we

should try to distinguish between what was transient and what was fundamental and that was the philosophy on which that joint review board operated under their expert guidance, and I became involved with that philosophy and that was the philosophy that I took with me to the Naval War College. I arrived on that job on the 15th of April 1947 and, of course, started in August of 1947 one year earlier than the original directive called for. The original directive called for it to start in 1948 on a conference in Newport in January 1947. Admiral Carney said I cannot hold the money for an extra year. Henry, can you start the course in August of 1947 rather than as the directive says in 1948? And I said if you give me my staff by the 15th of April I can. By the 15th of April I had three men, the rest of my staff finally came in June/July. Nevertheless, I got the course started on time. And that's all I want to talk about today.

N: Did this begin your continuous relationship with the War College?

E: Yes.

N: Well, then, we will end this interview here and pick it up later.

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Interviewee: RADM Henry E. Eccles, USN (Ret.)

Interviewer: Mr. A. S. Nicolosi

Subject: "Career to 1960"

Date: 14 June 1977

N: This is the third in a series of interviews with RADM Henry E. Eccles, USN (Ret.) for the Naval War College History Project of the College's Oral History Program. The interview is taking place in Conolly Hall in Room 304 on Monday, June 13th, 1977. The focus of this third interview will be ADM Eccles' early association with the War College.

E: I reported for duty at the Naval War College on the 15th of April 1946 and was assigned an office on the first floor of Luce Hall and Miss Mary Murphy was assigned as my secretary -- she recently having transferred from the Naval Torpedo Station to the Naval War College. For the next four years she was my secretary. Commodore Morgan was the Secretary of the War College and was in charge of the physical arrangements of the War College and in particular he was in charge of the renovations of Sims Hall. The Navy Department had allotted \$90,000 for this work. I took very little part in this renovation because I concentrated primarily on the elements of the course we were establishing and on assembling and organizing my staff.

Sims Hall was the old Naval Training Station Barracks C and among the major jobs that had to be undertaken were the filling in of the swimming pool, the conversion of the swimming pool area into a library and drafting room, and the establishment of offices for staff and students.

N: Was that in the East Wing?

E: It was in the East Wing of Sims Hall. I did, however, insist on two major points. One, that we had an adequate number of conference rooms and secondly, that all rooms, particularly the conference rooms, be equipped with large blackboards. As for the decor and the furnishings, we had none. We had linoleum floors and the barest of essential furniture most of which we got from the various schools in Newport which had been disestablished at the end of the war. A great deal of the furniture came from the junk heaps and was repaired by War College personnel. Most of it was wood and very plain. We were not, however, concerned with anything other than the substance of the work we were doing, and we did not care particularly as long as we had plenty of conference rooms and blackboards.

N: Did you get the full cooperation of the War College in setting up the course?

E: Oh, I got complete cooperation from the War College, there isn't any question about that. The degree of understanding on the part of various members of the staff at the War College, however, varied greatly. But there was

a warm cooperation and in most instances my requests were fulfilled and I had no difficulty whatsoever in getting contact with Admiral Smith, the Chief of Staff or Admiral Spruance, the President of the War College. The difficulty was to assemble the requisite number of qualified officers for the staff. We were delayed in this due to circumstances beyond the control of the War College and it was not until the middle of the summer that our staff was complete.

N: Admiral, can I take it back one step and ask you something about Admiral Pye, the President prior to Admiral Spruance? I understand he was very much in favor of logistics studies at the War College.

E: I never discussed logistics studies with Admiral Pye and I have no knowledge of his feeling in this matter. I was a student at the War College in 1943. Admiral Pye was very much concerned and doing a great deal of personal work on the revision of "The Green Boom" Sound Military Decision. I never knew what took place as a result of that revision. I know it was not published.

N: I understand that Admiral Spruance was very enthusiastic about the full concept of logistics studies.

E: Admiral Spruance was very enthusiastic about the concept of logistics studies. In the year preceeding the establishment of the course he had spoken very strongly to the effect that the proper place for the study of

logistics in the Navy was at the Naval War College where it could be associated with the study of strategy and tactics. In his mind they really were inseparable. I wish many modern officers had as clear an understanding of the relationship of strategy and tactics with logistics as Admiral Spruance had.

N: Do you feel he was reflecting in a way the sentiments of Admiral Nimitz at the time?

E: Well, I know that Admiral Nimitz felt the same way but I don't know whether Spruance was reflecting his sentiments or whether both of them had basically the same understanding. I prefer to think that both of them had the same basic understanding of the problem rather than that one was reflecting the other.

N: When you came onboard and had these preliminary difficulties with bringing the facilities into shape how about the staff, did they give you every one you wanted?

E: Oh, no. Nobody has ever had exactly the people he would choose. Captain Willie Outerbridge who had commanded the USS WARD, the destroyer that opened World War II for the U.S. by firing on a submarine outside of Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. He was a member of the senior class and I was very happy to get him as one of my senior officers. Captain Bill Bierer, SC, was a splendid man. He had the unfortunate handicap, however, of being a poor public speaker and he was utterly unable to give

a lecture, but, insofar, as knowledge of the job and cooperation as an executive he was splendid. This handicap of speaking came as a surprise. He stood on the platform and simply couldn't speak. I had to ask for his relief at the end of the year because I needed people who could instruct. But he was an excellent man and I was very unhappy that I had to change him. I also had a brilliant young Supply Officer Robert Webber, who had made a specialty of the study of communism while he was a member of the junior class at the War College. In the first year of the course CDR Webber and CAPT Outerbridge worked on the logistics war games that we had at Sims Hall and they developed the concept of the one stop replenishment ship which years later came to fulfillment in the design and construction of the USS SACRAMENTO, ADE-1, which played such an enormous part in the logistics support of naval forces in the Vietnam War. That concept was worked out on the gameboard that we built in the east wing of Sims Hall for logistics war gaming.

N: You built your own war gaming maneuver board?

E: Oh, yes. It was a very simple matter. It was just a matter of developing checkerboards and using the equipment that was already at the War College. The history of logistics at the War College was thoroughly prepared by CDR Ralph Williams and anyone who is making any attempt to understand the War College in the period of 1946-1952

should certainly read that history of logistics at the War College that Williams wrote. I had another very able commander in the supply corps, CDR Connie Mathis. An essential element of the logistics course and a whole concept of the logistics course was that it revolved around a logistics library. The only logistics library in existence was the logistics library at the Naval Supply Corps School and in ADM Nimitz' initial directive of January 7, 1947, he ordered that the logistics library be transferred from Bayonne to the Naval War College and that the Naval War College establish a logistics research facility. This is something that later developed into a very complex and difficult matter because I want to give special attention to this matter of logistics research because the initial concept of logistics study at the War College included major logistics research for the Navy. The manner of organizing that research and organizing a course in logistics at the same time proved to be impossible. I'll go back to CDR Mathis because I specially selected him some months before I arrived at the War College because of his knowledge and interest in logistics. He conducted the initial development of the logistics library at the Naval War College. The problem of getting a librarian was rather difficult because we were not able to get an experienced librarian. Instead the job went to a very good man but a man who did not have the background

to cope with the associated intellectual problems of logistics. Mr. DiNapoli served at the War College for a good many years but he did not have a grasp of logistics; he was merely a library technician. We needed somebody that really understood logistics to do the job. However, he worked hard and he did excellent work. A great tragedy took place just as the course was starting in the middle of August. One Saturday afternoon my Library Officer, CDR Mathis, died suddenly of a heart attack. And, I had to start the course without this support. I got in touch immediately with VADM Dorsey Foster who was Chief of the Bureau of Supplies and Accounting. ADM Foster has always been a tower of strength; a very close friend of mine and a man who has a thorough understanding of logistics. He established the Aviation Supply Depot in Philadelphia and was a monumental figure in the Supply Corps in the U.S. Navy. ADM Dorsey Foster called me on the telephone and said he was not going to give me a Library Officer immediately because he had a special man who was particularly well qualified but he was in Guam. I was very glad, and I waited. Meanwhile, I assigned CDR Edward K. Scofield, who had just graduated from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and had been recommended to me by CAPT "Smokey" Stover, SC, who had been my Supply Officer in the Advanced Base Section Service Force during the war. He recommended Scofield to me

as a top flight man. He turned out to be just that. So Scofield came and took over the job of Library Officer in place of Mathis until LCDR Ralph E. Williams came from Guam. He did a superb job in getting things organized. I had a very fine Army Colonel as my Army Officer, Cleland Sibley. He had had a most unfortunate experience during the war. He had been the first commander of the port of Cherbourg after it had been captured by our forces, and had been given an absolutely impossible deadline for re-opening the port. His requests for additional men and equipment were all refused. Consequently, the Army relieved him of his command and put in another man and gave the other man all the equipment and men that Sibley had requested and he got the port opened. But even he did not get it opened in the time required. Sibley was a very able officer. The unfortunate part of the matter, however, was that he and CAPT Outerbridge never got along. It was a personality conflict between two first class, devoted men. I respected each man and liked each man. Sibley served very well the entire time here and I have the highest regard for him. LtCol Lawrence Lewis, USAF, was my Air Force Officer. He was a man of splendid disposition who adapted well, knew logistics, and had the kind of personality that made life easy for everybody. He was a thoroughly competent fellow.

N: A very good public relations person?

E: Well, we didn't worry about public relations. We had no public relations, we were too busy.

N: Well, among the staff.

E: He was just a very fine, agreeable, competent man.

N: I see.

E: CDR Charles Dailey was a civil engineer - he was a good, steady, competent man. Our medical officer was Dr. Stone; a great big man built like a wrestler with a charming wife. He did a splendid job. I found that he understood the logistics aspects of medicine. Captain Harry Heneberger was an officer that I'd known some years. He was one of the survivors of the cruiser Astoria. He had been a gunnery officer on the cruiser. He became my personnel officer. In the initial concept I had requested the number two man in the logistics department to be a naval aviator because of the tremendous importance of logistics in aviation. The senior officers in the naval aviation section of the Bureau of Personnel laughed at me when I requested a top flight man for the logistics course. They just could not conceive of using a good man in logistics. That was their attitude. In fact, the officer who laughed at me later became Operations Officer for CINCNELM and when I went over to London some years later, he as a rear admiral had prepared a large group of plans. Not one of them was worth the

paper it was written on. This was because there was no mention or any discussion or consideration for logistics whatsoever. He was the one who laughed at me when I asked for George Anderson or Jim Russell as my number two in the logistics course! Yet he himself was worthless as a plans officer because not only did he not understand logistics, he wasn't interested in it. Well, I think I've mentioned most of the members of the staff and Commodore Penn Carroll who was a very fine man, was an assistant to Admiral Spruance, a plans officer at the War College, and he was very helpful in developing the concept under which we would develop logistics throughout the courses. Having to do 15 months work in three months made it necessary to make compromises in the development of the logistics course and to utilize to the fullest extent the established courses in strategy and tactics at the War College. The whole concept was that strategy, tactics, and logistics must be integrated in the minds of officers who are expecting to exercise command authority.

N: Was this an original concept?

E: It was the concept that Admirals Carney and Spruance had and Smith and I had, and it was a reflection of the facts of life in wartime. Therefore, my logistics people had a considerable overlap with the senior course in strategy and tactics. They created a problem in scheduling but this I worked out with people like Outerbridge and

COMO Carroll and COMO Dees who was head of the Strategy and Tactics Department -- he was most cooperative. I had to write the initial lectures myself - get them organized. I did it the first summer. I did most of the lecturing, and as my staff broke in, they took over more and more. Among the things that I stressed were the enormous importance of transportation. Secondly, the importance of petroleum. And third, industrial mobilization. In industrial mobilization, I worked very closely with the Industrial College of the Armed Forces where I had many friends from the Joint Operations Review Board. We established a scheme in which each year for one week the Industrial College sent a team of experienced officers to the Naval War College to conduct lectures and seminars on industrial mobilization. This was developed in complete harmony and as part of my regular course. I found this a most effective manner of operating.

N: The course first began in 1947?

E: Yes, August of 1947.

N: How did you get your students?

E: They were assigned by the Bureau of Naval Personnel. And that first year I had nothing to do with the assignment of students.

N: You prepared all the lectures for that first year?

E: I prepared the initial lectures, the introductory

lectures. These were generalized lectures giving the major relationships and the major structure of logistics as I had developed it in my own work. I developed a structure for logistics, a theoretical structure of logistics. I got some very good advice from Admiral Morton Ring, SC. Admiral Ring was Class of 1915, he had been a supply officer for Admiral Nimitz, and during the latter part of the war at Pearl Harbor we were very good friends. When he came back to Washington and I came to the War College, I visited him and he gave me both in writing and in personal discussion suggestions as to the structure of logistics, the relationship between procurement and distribution and requirements and he was an enormous importance. RADM Ring, VADM Dorsey Foster, RADM Frank Dunham of the Supply Corps were the men who were tremendously important in their friendly, understanding cooperation and dedication to the ideas we shared.

N: Did you ever have these men in to lecture?

E: Oh yes. Then Admiral Towers was also interested. CDR Antoniak was my A.E.D.O. and he was a splendid man. Admiral Towers selected him. When he came and reported to me he said: "I saw Admiral Towers before I came up to Newport and he said tell Henry Eccles to make logistics interesting." (Laughter.) So, I've been trying to do that ever since.

In our study of industrial mobilization we leaned heavily on the Industrial College but the climax of that study of industrial mobilization was the logistics thesis which was a major paper each student had to write. At the War College at that time each student had to write two major papers; they were called theses. One in the first term and one in the second term. The strategy paper for several years was a concept of a war with the Soviet Union. Then, I introduced in the logistics course, the thesis, "The comparative war potential of the Soviet Union and the United States." Now the interesting thing about that is that the problems of energy, petroleum, and transportation that are now, in 1977, occupying a great deal of attention in the U.S. Congress and Executive office, were matters of immediate and great concern to all my students who were writing about comparative war potential. Energy, petroleum, and transportation were essential elements of their theses and my people back in 1947, 48 and 49 knew a hell of a lot about petroleum. And I don't make any apologies for that.

N: Was there any thought given to the energy crisis that we find ourselves in now?

E: A great deal of thought. The difficulty, as it turned out, was that in 1948-49, we took a very pessimistic view of petroleum resources. And that was before the full potential of the Arabian oil fields and been recognized.

And we grossly underestimated two things: (1) the growth in the use of petroleum, and (2) the development of new so-called petroleum reserves. This in no way alters the fact that the petroleum reserves of the world, of the planet, are finite and limited. The point is we cannot put an accurate number as to that limitation. The course of events proved we underestimated the reserves and grossly underestimated the usage. It would be interesting to get some of the papers out of the files and see what we did on the energy analysis back at that time because they are all in the files somewhere.

N: Yes, they are in the archives and some young scholar one of these days will be looking at them, I'm sure.

E: O.K. But this energy situation now in the discussions cover very familiar ground to me and anybody who was working with me at that time.

N: Was much thought given to nuclear energy as a supplemental source?

E: Not for several years and this brings up an interesting question and relationship to the nuclear submarine. Admiral Rickover is a friend and classmate of mine, and we had both worked together in the Bureau of Ships in 1940 and Advanced Bases in 1945, and we both took the nuclear physics course in Washington in 1946. The only and major difference was that he understood nuclear physics and I didn't. (Laughter.)

E: But RADM Durward Leggett who was Chief of Bureau of Engineering, had been my immediate boss in the Bureau of Ships at the time Rickover had the electrical desk, and I was working with Leggett in submarine construction and diesel engineering. I asked Leggett one time in Washington what had happened about Rickover and he said, he denied any implication that Rickover being a Jew, was discriminated against. I think the idea of such discrimination is nonsense because Rickover had a very satisfactory career as a naval officer and I never heard any anti-Jewish sentiment in regard to Rickover in the many years that I've known him. He was competent and recognized as a competent officer and was generally well liked. He was recognized as being difficult at times, but I don't know if he was in anyway hurt by the fact that he was a Jew.

N: That certainly is not evident today with the influences still...

E: But, in discussing this and why Rickover had such a hard time in getting the concept of nuclear power to the Navy, getting it across, was Leggett told me that at the time Rickover was first passed over for rear admiral at that time, of course, the competition was intense. There were some very good engineers in that category. Just as I got passed over for read admiral. We were both good and we knew it, and the competition was intense. Leggett

told me that the Atomic Energy Commission said that the supply of uranium was so limited that there was no prospect that there would be enough uranium that could be taken from the weapons program to provide for any significant amount of nuclear power. That was the official statement of the Atomic Energy Commission to the USN when the Navy brought up the question of nuclear energy for submarines. If this is true, and I have no reason to believe it's not true, it explains a good deal about the delay in and the difficulty of the nuclear submarine program.

N: The Navy had already stated its feelings regarding this.

E: Yes, as in so many instances the Navy probably did not present a united front on this one. Conceptual unity was a very difficult thing to obtain in any large organization.

N: How much of the traditional aspect weighed in the outlook or the decision?

E: I couldn't say. I was not associated with it. But the ship building, ship maintenance, ship procurement was an essential part of the logistics course. We also introduced the study of management. At that time, there was a very small management section in the Navy Department. I think the man in charge of it was Mr. Andrews, a very competent man. I initiated the study of management science here at the War College. He came up and lectured

several years on it but we ran into a great deal of difficulty because some members of the staff in the Department of Strategy and Tactics and in intelligence and other areas, felt that logistics was so much nuts and bolts that they should not bother with it. And this, of course, was an attitude that lasted a long time and was very difficult to deal with. Management did not appeal to them at all. There were some things I had to do for both strategy and tactics students and logistics students -- and management was one of those things we introduced.

N: So, the inception of management at the War College really began way back...

E: The first lecture on management as such under the title management were under my auspices, at my instigation.

N: I see. Very interesting.

E: At about this same time the Office of Naval Research got interested in the development of computers for naval use and established a special logistics research project at George Washington University under Dr. Charles Thompkins, who was the son-in-law of Dr. George Gamov of George Washington University who wrote the first lucid explanation of atomic energy. Thompkins was a brilliant mathematician. The Office of Naval Research established this logistics research project for the purpose of developing computers for naval use and particularly in the field of logistics. Dr. Mina Rees was head of the

mathematical sciences division over at the Office of Naval Research. Alan Waterman was the Chief Scientist in the Office of Naval Research and Joe Weyl was the son of the great Austrian mathematician. They and Dr. Oskar Morgenstern, (who has just received the Nobel Prize and, who with John Von Neuman developed the theory of games), got in touch with the Naval War College on this. For several years I worked with Dr. Rees, Thompkins, and Morgenstern in establishing the George Washington University of Logistics Research project in the initial development of computers for the Navy. This was in 1949 and '50. I was on the outskirts of this, but there was so many areas in my work that were susceptible to computerization, particularly the development of planning factors and things of that sort. We had a very great mutual interest so I was in the early development of the big computers in the Navy. My association with people like Rees and Morgenstern was very rewarding. We had a lot of fun together.

N: Here again, did any of these men come to the War College to lecture?

E: Not so much to lecture as to consult and discuss.

N: Admiral, during this formative period of logistics studies at the War College, a number of other things were happening at the College, the WWII Battle Evaluation got underway with Admiral Bates in 1946, the Naval War College Review was inaugurated in 1949, and of course the

Roundtable Discussions - the predecessor of what came to be called Global Strategy Discussions and is now known as Current Strategy Forum started in 1949. Was there any attempt to integrate logistic notions or theory into the Roundtable Discussions at that time?

E: Well, of course. The Roundtable Discussions on Strategy such as was established here in 1949 is not a suitable forum for the integration of logistics theory. It is a suitable place to discuss logistics considerations in strategy. And it came in in various ways. You would have to get a program of the strategy discussions to see their content. I wouldn't try to bring it out of my memory and tell you just what we had. They were initiated, very largely, by Admiral Brown, Charles R. Brown, who was the Plans Officer and then became the Chief of Staff after Admiral Smith. But Cat Brown was the moving spirit behind the Global Strategy discussions and, of course, I worked very closely with him in their initiation. There were some very able officers who helped organize and conduct those initial Global Strategy discussions. Bear in mind they were of a much smaller scale than now. There were relatively few reserve officers and very few civilians. The result was that we had no trouble accommodating everyone in Pringle Hall Auditorium. We had smaller committees and the discussions were very high quality.

N: And the focus was almost wholly strategic with just some interest in logistics.

E: Yes. There was a subsidiary interest in logistics.

N: I understand. Could you give me your views on the other things which occurred -- the Naval War College Review. Were you a factor in the development of that?

E: No. Although some of my lectures were published in it, I had nothing to do with the development of the Review.

N: How about the WWII Battle Evaluation Group.

E: That was well established when I got here. I had known Bates for many years -- since 1922. We were good friends and naturally when I came here to the War College I saw a good deal of him. He was very interested in my work. He gave me some good ideas and information. I was interested in his work and from time to time he would consult me on matters of logistic elements in his analyses. And frequently when he ran across something of significance in logistics he would pass it along to me for my use. So we worked together as very close friends during that entire period and grew closer as time went on.

N: How about the Advanced Course during this period?

E: Ah, the advanced course. That's another matter.

Admiral Conolly came in the fall of 1951. We've got to bear in mind that the War College went through some very,

very unfortunate happenings in that period 1947 and subsequent to that. One of which was the heart attack of Admiral Beary.

N: Oh yes.

E: Beary was an excellent president of the War College. He had command in Surface Squadron Six in the latter part of WWII in the mobile support of Okinawa. He had a very keen understanding and enthusiasm for the study of logistics. Mrs. Beary had very severe arthiritis - very much of a cripple. When his heart attack took place, RADM Ross Cooley took over. He was in command of the naval base, and he had been an old friend of mine. One of my first papers on the War College was a paper I wrote for ADM Cooley when he became president to give him some information and background. But Admiral Beary left and then Admiral Cooley acted for awhile and then Admiral Conolly came. I had known Admiral Conolly, and had a very great respect for him. When I became Chief of Staff...

N: When was that Admiral?

E: That was back in, I think, early January, 1951.

CAPT John Sweeney, class of 1924, was head of the Department of Strategy and Tactics, and one of his ablest officers was CDR Joseph C. Wiley, Bill Wiley. I had known Bill Wiley when he was a student and liked him. As Chief of Staff, I frequently exchanged ideas with CDR Wiley and at times this annoyed CAPT Sweeney because I

didn't go through CAPT Sweeney to talk to CDR Wiley.

(Laughter.) Nevertheless, we came up with three concepts in that period in the winter of 1951. One was the establishment of the Research and Analysis Department. The other was the Advanced Course for the study of sea power. CDR Wiley was the real instigator of the Advanced Course in the study of sea power. I was very enthusiastic about it and sold the idea to Admiral Conolly and the degree to which Conolly initiated it and the degree to which Wiley and I did it and Wiley putting the bug in my ear this I can't remember. But I do remember that Wiley was a major element and I was most enthusiastic about it and Admiral Conolly was enthusiastic about it. I want to go back to the history of research because when we first established a logistics course in 1947, about October, the Bureau of Naval Personnel sent us a letter asking when it could establish and send out this directive to the effect that logistics research has been established at the War College. I said, wait a minute. We're not prepared to do that. We haven't got the library straightened out and it would take us another year and we have to have some more people if we're going to handle logistics research. And I said I want more people from BuPers to do this. And Cat Brown was here as Plans Officer and later as Chief of Staff. Brown said, "I just don't want to start logistics research until we establish a grading

on the overall research program at the War College. I think it would be a mistake to have logistics research divorced from strategic and tactical research." And I said I agree with you. But this was a thing that cannot yet be done." And so he never did approve the OpNav directive to establish logistics research at the War College. It kept getting postponed and finally forgotten about. But then when I became Chief of Staff Admiral Conolly was very sympathetic - we thought alike about a lot of things - and when I was Conolly's Chief of Staff this came as an obvious move - now was the time to do it and Conolly was very much in favor. We established the Research and Analysis Department. But then again fate entered. Dr. Walter Albertson, who was the physicist in charge, died within a year. When I got back here in '52 they had the Research and Analysis Department going. The first year it was under a man whose name I can't remember. He was there for a year but he was very good. Then he had to go to sea and he was replaced by Captain Caulfield, who was a good sea-going officer, nice guy and everything like that, but he didn't have the slightest interest in research. He wanted no part of it and he spent all of his time getting a sea job and finally he got a squadron and left with great joy, leaving the department in total shambles.

N: I see.

E: In other words there's no point in putting a man who likes only to be on the bridge of a ship and has no other interests, in charge of military research.

N: During Conolly's administration they had what was called a Flag Officer Refresher course. Was that an extension of the Advanced Course, or merely a change in name? Are you familiar with that at all?

E: The Flag Officer Refresher Course was a short course in which flag officers who did not have billets came up here and did a little work.

N: I see.

E: The Advanced Course, though, was a two-year course. Captain Dow was on that. He was a member and there were some very good men in there. I can see their faces but I can't remember their names. Advanced course - Mr. William Reitzel was the political scientist.

N: Is that when ^{William} Admiral Rietzel came aboard? about that time?

E: Yes. You ought to get his ideas.

N: I intend to. Well, 1951 found you detached from the War College.

E: By the 15th of May.

N: How did you leave the logistics situation at the College? What was your assessment of it when you left?

E: Pessimistic because there was no senior line officer who was really enthusiastic about taking over.

N: Now you left the War College to go where, Admiral?

E: As logistics officer for Commander in Chief, North Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean in London (CINCNELM).

N: And how long did you stay there?

E: I stayed in London about six weeks and then went to Naples where the command had been shifted. I had a two hat job as Assistant Chief of Staff for Logistics for CINCNELM and Assistant Chief of Staff for Logistics for the newly established CINCSOUTH. Admiral Carney was both CINCNELM and CINCSOUTH.

N: This seems to imply that logistics was becoming a very meaningful part of command situations or had already become so. Do you care to comment on the part you played in those particular commands?

E: Well, in 1950 Commander Scofield left here and went as the Supply Officer on Staff, Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet. He found there was absolutely no consideration for logistics in any of the plans in the Atlantic Fleet. He drew up a plan for the reorganization of the staff for CINCLANT. His proposed reorganization included a section for logistics, and it was so revolutionary that the Chief of Staff kept it on his desk for six months. Finally, it was established and they began to have a logistics section in the staff of CINCLANT. The state of planning in logistics in the U.S. Navy was deplorable at that time. There was no effective logistics planning on

the part of the forces afloat in the Atlantic area. None whatsoever.

N: Well, what kind of a role did you function in in that kind of a situation? I mean, did you find the commands you were assigned to receptive to logistics...

E: Well, I was only assigned to one command after I left here which was Admiral Carney's command. And he, of course, having been VCNO Logistics understood the problem and was very much in favor of logistics reorganization and supported it. But the members of his staff did not generally have his enlightened attitude.

N: How long did you remain abroad?

E: Just one year.

N: Then you returned...

E: I came back and retired the 30th of June 1952.

N: And then what did you do?

E: Well, I had several job offers - offers from people who were interested in research. First, one think-tank and then George Washington University offered me a job. I didn't want to work in Washington, and I made a decision which was probably the best decision that I ever made in my life. And that is I would work independently and would take much less pay on the provision that I did what I wanted to do when and how I wanted to do it. And they get the benefit of what I did for I settled for roughly

50% of what they offered me on a full-time basis. I discussed this matter with Admiral Conolly, who was very much in favor of this, and since we had the Research and Analysis Department at the War College, I fitted into that. Now the interesting thing about it was that when they were setting up Research and Analysis, the George Washington University logistics research office under Tommy Thompains, which was well established by that time, was very much interested. Because of shortage of funds the War College could not employ a secretary for this section so George Washington University said they would pay the secretary and Mrs. Vermillion came as secretary to the Research and Analysis Department at the Naval War College paid for by George Washington University.

N: I see.

E: She was succeeded by Mrs. Irma King who was a very expert secretary. We had offices in Pringle Hall. The tragic thing was the almost total lack of understanding of research on part of some of the senior people at the War College. For example: we had a "wave" officer. And instead of letting the "wave" work on substantive matters she became the liaison officer for aviators at the College, arranging their flight programs at Quonset and handling weather reports. At one time the Supply Officer, CDR Garrett who was in the Research and Analysis Department was assigned the job of auditor of the Officer's

Club was in great trouble financially. He spent 50% of his time or from 3-6 months working at the Officer's Club instead of doing research. And then people complained because there was no such work coming out of the department. It was the most beautiful job of sabotage I have ever seen.

N: You yourself were not an official member of the War College staff.

E: No. Since my retirement I have never been an official member of the staff. I've been a visitor, a consultant, a guest at the War College.

N: I see.

E: I've been paid on the basis of individual lectures and certain seminars I've conducted.

N: And this association with the War College began in 1952?

E: '52 - '53...with Admiral Conolly. I forget the exact date. But the fact that I had freedom enabled me to have associations, an independence of activity that probably at least doubled the amount of useful work I was able to do. Because I kept away from all the administrative matters.

N: When did you get into serious publication work?

E: In the summer of 1948.

N: What inspired you?

E: Quite simple. There was no suitable text for the

study of naval logistics so I wrote one, dictating a great deal to Mary Murphy. It was edited by CDR Ralph Williams and later published by the Bureau of Naval Personnel as Operational Naval Logistics. A colonel at Fort Levenworth getting a copy of this in its first form before it was printed said it was one of the most important books on military theory that has been written. He wrote a review for the Military Review but the Military Review wouldn't publish the review because it was a book written by a naval officer or some silly thing like that. That was COL George Reinhardt. My Operational Naval Logistics became the basis for my reputation in South America because they got the book and used it extensively down there.

N: I see. Well, that was the very beginning of your publications work then.

E: That was my first book.

N: Well, when did you publish your other books?

E: Well, in 1953 I started Logistics in the National Defense under the title Principles of Logistics very shortly after I got back and started to work at the War College in 1953. I began to develop this rather slowly. Mrs. King came in...I guess it was 1954 when I really started to work. She was an expert stenographer and I was able to work very successfully with her. I put this together in very rough form during early 1954. At that

time I had spinal trouble. I had a disc that finally got the better of me and in the fall of 1954 I went to the hospital in October and finally went to Chelsea Hospital, Boston, and was operated on for a spinal disc in November of 1954. But I finished the first draft of the last chapter of my Principles of Logistics lying flat on my back in the Naval Hospital, Newport, just a short time after the hurricane, "Carol." I put this together and the War College duplicated it and distributed it in the War College. Admiral Robbins, Chief of Staff, was very enthusiastic about it and he gave me some very fine encouragement. In 1957 I had a contract with the Naval Institute to publish it. The Naval Institute had not liked my style very much and they asked me to have CDR Williams help me with the revision. Williams agreed to do it. I mentioned Ralph Williams who had helped me with the Operational Naval Logistics. But in the meantime, in 1957, Ralph Williams became the speech writer for Admiral Burke, who was Chief of Naval Operations, and he had to withdraw from this project. When I wrote to the Naval Institute that CDR Williams had to withdraw from the project, I got a very curt letter back saying, "in the light of CDR Williams' withdrawal, your contract is cancelled."

N: I see.

E: I was naturally infuriated. I had told them I wanted a 90-day extension to make the revision without his aid

and their response was to cancel the contract. It was the rudest action I've ever seen with any naval organization and remains to this day totally inexplicable to me. I finally got Stackpole to publish it in 1959. Admiral Robbins was very helpful to me in the revision of this book. He suggested to change the name to Logistics in the National Defense. In 1961 - it was published in 1959 - Dr. Henry Wriston who was President of the American Assembly wrote the introduction to the book. In 1961 I went to Germany and spent four days with the German publishers and I got the most severe cross examination I've ever had in my life - when they cross examined me on the book after they finished translating it - the final corrections in the German edition. The Russian edition was published in 1963. I have the introduction to that but I don't have the book itself. But the Yugoslavian edition was published in 1967 and I have a couple of copies of that. The Spanish edition was published in 1967 also. Then I finished Military Concepts and Philosophy in 1963 and it took until 1965 to get that published it being rejected by some very good publishers. It was finally published by Rutgers University Press.

N: How were these things reviewed? I take it they were reviewed in the Naval Institute Proceedings?

E: Oh, they got very good reviews in the Institute. The reviews from the Institute have always been very good.

N: During this time frame in your association with the War College, Admiral Conolly has left by now, a number of very important things continue to take place during the 50s. The foreign service school, NCC, got underway in 1957. Did you play an active role in that?

E: Not a very active role. I consulted on a lot of things. Admiral Robbins then had just taken over as President after the death of Admiral McCormick.

N: What did you think of the foreign officers course at the College?

E: What did I think of it or what do I think of it?

N: Yes. What do you think of it?

E: I think it's splendid.

N: Did you think so at the time?

E: Yes. It got a good start. Admiral Robbins handled the thing very well and Captain Dick Colbert, was an ideal man for the course because he had a very good overseas experience in the diplomatic-political area and had been a good student at the War College. He was a very competent man. He was the ideal man.

N: The story is that Admiral Arleigh Burke was the one responsible...

E: Oh yes. Admiral Burke was one of the major factors in that course, but I did not see all the correspondence. I knew the negotiations were going on, but I couldn't say who did what. I cooperated and helped in discussions

of the curriculum and things of that sort and started lecturing there and for many years I gave two or three lectures a year there.

N: How about the fate of the logistics course? By this time it was integrated into the School of Naval Warfare.

E: Well, that was when Admiral Conolly put over a two year course and the logistics course then officially disappeared.

N: Officially disappeared? Was it therefore integrated into some...

E: Supposedly. Admiral Carney, who was the Chief of Naval Operations at that time, approved the two-year course on the provision that logistics be fully integrated and become an essential part of the course. Unfortunately, Admiral Conolly put the idea of a two year course across and then he left to become President of Long Island University rather than supervise the course that he instituted. This was a serious mistake.

N: Did he have an option to stay?

E: I think if he had wanted to stay he could have. He never discussed this thing with me. I felt very unhappy about it because the course actually was approved on certain assumptions which were never fulfilled. And, of course, the chief handicap of the thing was the Chief of Naval Personnel simply would not assign top flight people here for two years.

N: I take it you were in favor of the two-year course?

E: I was in favor of a small two-year course; but I've written so much on this subject I prefer you go to the records.

N: O.K.

E: I've got a stack - a box this big - on my desk in Founders Hall on my writings on the Naval War College. AND if you want to lug that over to your office you may examine them. (Laughter.)

N: How about war gaming at this time, about 1957 NEWS got underway.

E: Oh, that started much earlier (1948-49?) with CAPT Claude Ricketts and a small fire control instrument up in Pringle Hall. They started trying to automat^e war gaming - and made several experimental runs there. This had been something that had been in the minds of people for many years. And Captain Claude Ricketts that time, in 1949, I guess it was - 1948-9, did a few experiments up in Pringle Hall war gaming, with this in mind. And then it took years to develop the concept that would be suitable for electronic use. At the same time computers were developing rapidly and the problem became that of catching up with the state of the art while your basic concepts were still undeveloped. It is a very difficult thing to deal with.

N: I can imagine.

E: Very difficult. Captain Edward Robertson who had been here (he had been head of the Command and Staff Course) did an excellent job in getting that done. Then he went to Raytheon. That was in '58, I guess.

N: During the 50's two other things happened that came something as a surprise to many people - the WWII Battle Evaluation Group went out of existence. Do you know anything about why that happened?

E: That is an extremely difficult question to answer. That Battle Evaluation Group was never popular in certain parts of the naval establishment. It was very popular and very well thought of by some people and continually disparaged by others. I've always had the feeling that the people who were more likely to oppose it were aviators.

N: I see.

E: I've had that feeling. It's a very difficult thing. You have to go through Bates' papers extensively to develop that and again, I would suggest people interested in the research, to go into the Bates papers on that Battle Evaluation Group than rely on my faulty memory. All I do know is that for years he spent at least half of his time defending what he was trying to do rather than doing the substantive work. If he had gotten really good cooperation from Washington he could have produced twice as much. I know that.

N: Another thing of import that occurred during the latter part of the 50's was the first annual Naval Reserve Officers School - they called it an instructive seminar.

E: I lectured from time to time to things of that sort but I never knew anything about them or held any opinion on them.

N: It seems to have begun the official association of the reserve element with the College.

E: Well, that came in with the Global Strategy.

N: It did.

E: First, it was the Global Strategy and then we began bringing reserve officers in the first Global Strategy discussions.

N: Incidentally, Global Strategy, I guess, began to develop quite well during the 50's.

E: Oh yes.

N: It seemed to have a fine reputation.

E: But then it got so big, in my opinion, the quality went down.

N: Oh, I see.

E: It just got too big for that kind of discussion.

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Interviewee: Rear Admiral Henry E. Eccles, USN (Ret.)

Interviewer: Mr. Anthony S. Nicolosi

Subj: College History Project

Date: 13 March 1978

N. This is the fourth in a series of interviews with Rear Admiral Henry E. Eccles, USN (Ret.), being done for the College History Project of the Naval War College Oral History Program. The interview is taking place at the College on Monday, March 13, 1978. My name is Anthony Nicolosi. Admiral Eccles, this morning I would like to focus once again directly on the College and your long association. Having perused your personal papers on deposit in our Naval Historical Collection, I realize full well that they contain a great deal on the subject of the College and that your views on particular matters are very well and very comprehensively expressed. In view of this, I would like to discuss matters of a broad scope. In affect, I am asking you to paint with a very broad brush in this interviewing session. To begin with, I would like to call upon you for your assessment of the College in terms of its mission. You can give us your views of its strengths

and its weaknesses as you observed them over the years.

E. In terms of its mission, I have for years felt that the statement of the mission and the objectives of the War College has both been inadequate in that they have not emphasized the element of intellectual leadership in the study and conduct of maritime power--naval warfare--that the--I still go back to the statement of the objectives of the Naval War College that I derived from my association with Admiral Bates twenty-five years ago and that I have expressed in my papers and originally in my official memos to the President of the War College while I was head of a department at the War College. I think this element of intellectual leadership requires a type of independence at the War College that is not understood by the hierarchy of the Navy Department in Washington. If the War College exists to serve the organizational structure and ideas of the current group of officers and officials in Washington, it cannot exercise intellectual leadership because intellectual leadership frequently demands disagreement with the conventional and organizational wisdom. I have discussed the objectives and mission of the War College at length in other papers and I do not want to say more than that at this time about the subject, because I would want to be more precise. As to the strength of the War College, the War College has--the fact that it has endured in spite

of the overt or covered opposition of many officers and officials--has been its great strength and has been a demonstration of strength. The weakness in the War College has been part self-generated and part imposed by circumstances, but that weakness over a long period of time has been the lack of consistency and continuity in the statement of the mission and objectives of the War College and in the policies as related to the assignment of personnel. This is a matter for both continuity--tenure, length of service at the College--and quality for personnel. This has varied enormously in my experience. For the last few years, there has been a great improvement in both continuity of personnel and the quality of personnel but, nevertheless, there still exists an inherent weakness in the War College as it is presently--as it is currently constituted--in that there have been two courses, a senior course and a junior course, which have been very similar, with the consequence that the area of overlap has been too great for the senior course to fulfill its expectations or for the junior course to do the thorough job in the lower level areas of naval thought that it should do. Admiral Turner specifically stated that there was no chance that the Navy would ever make it a policy that a man would have to be a graduate of the Command and Staff Class before he could be a student in the senior course.

We have the very sad situation of many naval officers coming to the senior course who have not understood operational planning, have never had any experience in wartime operational planning, or have never studied operational planning and, therefore, appear at a great disadvantage in the techniques of operational planning that are taught to the Marine officers, the Air Force officers and the Army officers who are their contemporaries at the War College. This is merely one aspect of that thing. Another fact in the War College that has been a great difficulty, has been the unhappiness of a relatively few number of graduates who have been promoted to flag rank. This, of course, has varied greatly from some years when we have a considerable number and other years there have been practically none, or none in fact. I'm speaking now over a long period of time. The Navy has specifically rejected the custom of the United States Army that graduation from their War College, or at least from their Command and General Staff College, is a prerequisite to promotion. The Navy has specifically rejected that idea and for very good reasons. But, nevertheless, as long as that custom exists in the Navy, the War College can expect to have some dissatisfaction with its affect on promotion. Again, I merely mention that as a problem now. From the intellectual point of view, the

broad intellectual point of view, I state my opinion that the chief weakness in all our high-level War Colleges-- Army, Navy, Air--is that there has been no really serious attempt to discuss a comprehensive, coherent military theory. There has been no serious attempt to even inventory the nature and substance of military knowledge. As a result, there has been a continuing turmoil in relationship to the curricula at War Colleges and the level at which certain subjects should be approached or taught. This is a weakness that extends to all military studies. This has a definite relationship to military writing and military research. I have addressed this in its simplest terms by my chart, the scholar and the operator. I have addressed it in my lectures with only partial success. For a long time, there was a very brief weakness at the Naval War College due to the lack of continuity of personnel and purpose and to the preoccupation with administrative affairs that always characterize large organizations that is the loss of institutional memory. There has been a great deal of excellent work done at the War College over the years that has been buried in the files. It has been published in many instances in the Navy War College Review and yet the faculty and students of the War College have, in many instances, displayed little knowledge, understanding or

interest in this work that has gone on in the past. The recent development of the Advanced Research Project and the type of work that has been done on the War College Review under the last three editors, has done a great deal to correct this long-time fault. There still need to be more. One of the best things that has been done in that respect has been the recent and unpublicized publication by Rutgers' Press of the compilation of Naval War College Review articles written by Tony Simpson.

N. Admiral, can I ask you a question about institutional philosophy? Do we have a hard and fast institutional philosophy here at the War College? Something that is readily accessible and understandable?

E. I would say no.

N. Would you consider this to be a grave failing on the part of the institution?

E. Not necessarily. It is very difficult to define what you mean by the term institutional philosophy and it is very difficult to formulate a satisfactory institutional philosophy in terms of any definition and then get agreement among a large number of people as to what the meaning of that formulation is.

N. Admitted. But, can we say for the sake of discussion this morning that the institutional philosophy that I'm

talking about here has to do with the War College's primary mission in education and in training. That is, the obvious institutional philosophy and how it relates to preparing officers for commands, both in their understanding of warfare theory and in the practice of the Navy in command situations.

E. I'm not prepared to speak to that. I'd want that to be presented in writing and would want to think it over very carefully before I tried to answer that. You have got to make the distinction between education and training. You have got to realize that one of the most difficult and important things that a War College can, or should do, is in the nature of war gaming but you must bear in mind that the technology of modern warfare has made a thorough, realistic war game an extremely difficult and expensive thing, and the War College has been suffering for years because of the inescapable gap between the requirements for good war gaming and the ability to translate electronic theory and hardware into a smooth-working, war gaming institution or establishment which can deal with the various elements of war that should be gamed and this is because of the engineering design and construction lead time and the inexorable problem of budgeting. So it is not the fault of the War College that its war gaming is not adequate to the needs of the war game.

N. I see.

E. It's inherently a very tough problem and the wargame routine--you've got to admit what the War College has done in recent years, I think, has been very important. Not perfect, but good and important.

N. Do you think our new students coming into the War College have enough of an orientation regarding what the institution is all about?

E. I can't answer that very well. The problem of orienting students--I have not attended the orientation sessions and I'm not prepared to answer that.

N. Can you give us your assessments of the institution in terms of its own vision, of its own appreciation of itself? Is there a vision of greatness associated with the War College?

E. On the part of the faculty or on the part of the student body or the part of the administration?

N. I would like to say on the part of all concerned.

E. I see. I would say the answer is no.

N. And yet is this not an essential ingredient to an institution of this kind? In thinking in historic terms, at least.

E. It is essential to seek to achieve this. Bear in mind, that the strength of the War College--its greatest strength

--is the fact that it does gear the individual who desires to improve his intellectual ability in relation to military/naval affairs, the opportunity--the access to the literature both philosophical, historical and technical--it gives him access to other people of similar taste and diverse military/political background and the name college means an association of men with a common purpose and this association at the War College is an intangible element of enormous value that is hard for some people to appreciate but that is the great strength of the War College. They have a fine library; they have an excellent faculty; they have an excellent student body; all of which can be improved but, nevertheless, are excellent. And it is that association that gives a man an opportunity to improve his understanding and the problem is to give him the incentive--and some people don't need to have an incentive given them--they've already got it.

N. Would you agree with what Spruance had to say many years ago, namely, that the occasional development of a good idea or of an advanced thinker more than justifies all the annual efforts of the War College?

E. Yes.

N. In keeping with this, with regard to Spruance, do you see him as being the epitome of this kind of individual who

derives obvious benefits from association with the institution?

E. Well, epitome is rather a strong term. I wouldn't use. I knew Spruance well and had great admiration and affection for him. I would disagree with some of the statements he's made and some of his ideas, but not many. He was a great man.

N. Do you feel that he was one of a small element that took full advantage of the War College or am I underestimating the full impact of the War College in terms of the numbers associated with it.

E. I would say the answer to that is yes. He did take full advantage of the War College and he benefited enormously from it and he applied what he had learned at the War College to very great useful affect. No question about that.

N. That comes across loud and clear in Tom Buell's book.

E. No question about it. The point is you must allow for individual differences. Now, one of the weaknesses of the War College that I feel, is the tendency to try to get too big in the number of students, particularly in the senior course. This comes out in the Current Strategy Forums and things of that sort. So frequently they are so big that they become Public Relations activities rather than intellectual stimulation. The problems of war and the problem

of high command is so great and high-level decision is so great that I think it is a mistake to try to have too large a senior class. Now, what is the optimum size, I don't know, but I think there should be greater strength in that concern.

N. Can I ask you a question again about what you mentioned earlier about continuity of development? Sort of a corporate memory in the institution. You pointed that as one of the prime deficiencies of the institution. Can you expand upon that for us? Why is it so essential for an institution to have a corporate memory? An institution of this kind where there is a certain amount of flux associated with its development.

E. When I say corporate memory, I mean use of the material that they have spent so much energy on to prepare and this corporate memory and continuity of thought are similar. People desire to change sometimes for the sake of change. I have been appalled over the years by the Public Relations aspects of the Navy Department or some of the discussions that people put out in coming to the War College. I have seen time and again people advertising that they were "shaking up" the War College and then their successor had his own "shaking up" to do, and the War College has suffered from excessive shaking.

N. Yes.

E. At the expense of continuity, because in the shaking

process, while some good has been done, some very serious mistakes have been made.

N. I can see that very clearly in the Archives, over and over again, a certain amount of repeated performance which has had very little or no dividends associated with it.

E. I prefer to deal with some of these things in writing very carefully rather than in a taped interview because you get on very difficult ground and I would prefer to be very precise and careful in stating things about the curriculum policies of the War College.

N. O.K. Is there anything that you can point to with regard to the War College in terms of a sense of function. We've spoken of a necessity of a vision of greatness. In some of your early papers you make reference to the need for a sense of function in the War College. Can you explain that for us?

E. No, I'd have to look the papers up.

N. You'd have to look that up. O.K. How about the institution in terms of its own operations. That is esprit de corp which is normally associated with an institution of this type. Do you feel that the College has to have this or does have this?

E. I have not seen enough of the students in the last couple of years to comment on that.

N. O.K.

E. I know that years ago we had a very--there had been times when there was a very great sense of purpose and esprit de corps and I can't comment on that, I don't know enough about it.

N. During Admiral Conolly's administration, determined effort was made to increase the student time at the College to two years--talking in terms of a two-year curriculum requirement. This really never got off the ground substantially.

E. As I recall, I discussed this subject in my first interview.

N. Yes, you did.

E. That was because--two reasons for that. One because, as I stated, Admiral Conolly did not remain with the War College to carry out the ideas that he established, or the curriculum that he established. And, secondly, the Bureau of the Navy Department simply would not assign first-class officers to a two-year course.

N. I see.