NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND

Our Greatest Strength

Navy Wives and the Manpower Crisis in the 1970s U.S. Navy

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Cover art: Spouses and children line a pier in San Diego, California, to meet their husbands and fathers after a long deployment in Vietnam on the guided-missile destroyer *King* (DLG-10), November 1965. (United States Naval Institute [USNI] 099036006.)

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FOREWORD

Our Navy families—spouses, children, sisters, brothers, parents, and grandparents—serve in critical roles alongside our sailors. They are our backbone and, in many ways, our future. Through multiple deployments, missions, and countless permanent change of station (PCS) moves, our families often endure long separations. Spouses shoulder the day-to-day responsibilities of managing the home front while balancing their own careers, volunteering, and other interests. Military families do all of this with grace and dignity. So today, for all the seen and unseen responsibilities they carry, and for the daily sacrifices they make, let's take time to applaud their service, dedication, and support. Make no mistake: we value and honor their sacrifice to our nation and our Navy.

While today we recognize the contributions that families—in particular, spouses—make to Navy readiness, recruitment, and retention, it has not always been that way. This publication reminds us how far the Navy has come in the last 50 years. Before 1970, the Navy put little focus on the hardships of family separations and frequent moves. However, that began to change when Admiral Elmo "Bud" Zumwalt Jr. became Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) in 1970. In the midst of the Vietnam War, the public's perception of military service was at an all-time low. The newly appointed CNO had to confront what the Navy termed a "manpower crisis" as sailors indicated a desire to leave the Navy. Based on his personal experience, Zumwalt connected the declining retention rate to the difficulties experienced by sailors' families. As a result, he instituted policy reforms to make life better for spouses and children.

But Zumwalt's reforms to family policy were not dictated from the top down. Instead, the reform process created opportunities for Navy spouses to affect Navy policy. Zumwalt enabled spouses to serve on retention study groups (RSGs). He also created the Navy ombudsman, an essential role that celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2020. Drawing upon her own experience, Mouza Zumwalt, the CNO's wife, made key contributions to this drive to uplift spouses, partnering with her husband to make life better for Navy families. By meeting frequently with officer and enlisted wives, for example, she kept her husband abreast of their views. As the

admiral would later credit, Mrs. Zumwalt raised issues with him that he had no other way of finding out about. Zumwalt's ambitious policies were not always a success, nor were they without controversy. In fact, they often sparked powerful disagreements that revealed sailors' deep generational divides. But these reforms set the service on a new footing—one that took personnel issues seriously and valued innovative solutions to difficult social problems. Today, I find these actions and policies continue to give spouses and other family members a place to be heard and valued.

While this publication highlights the reforms to Navy family policy, it is also very much about Navy spouses themselves. It illuminates the experiences of spouses in their own voices and the struggles they faced in the 1960s and 1970s, some of which endure to this day—including isolation, stress, anxiety, and juggling family and professional commitments. This work is a story of solidarity, community, and empowerment as spouses were acknowledged as valued members of the Navy team.

Finally, this piece reveals the possibilities for exploring a new range of important topics in the Navy's nearly 250-year history. The Navy's history is, of course, operational. But it is also made up of other stories—social, cultural, and economic. As we work today to place sailors' families at the heart of Navy policy, this publication reminds us that they truly are at the heart of the Navy's history.

Reflecting on the stories of Navy spouses in the following pages, I'm grateful for their efforts to make naval service more compatible with family life. Their contributions and sacrifices will continue to impact future Navy spouses and families. As we move forward, I trust that we can use the lessons of the past to ensure that Navy families remain an acknowledged and valued part of the lives of sailors as they serve our great nation.

Stacey Lindsey
Ombudsman-at-Large
United States Navy

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In November 2018, I found myself at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in College Park, Maryland, digging through the files of the Army Science Board (ASB). I was working for the U.S. Army Center of Military History and had been tasked with writing the comprehensive history of the ASB. The board's records, which had been misfiled at NARA a decade prior, proved difficult to track down. When I finally received the 12 boxes, they were still taped shut, signaling that no historian had ever examined them.

Inside was a wealth of information, but I was drawn to one specific file. In a 1988 report, board member Barbara Pate Glacel described traveling to South Korea to observe and study the lives of "non-command sponsored" Army spouses. This designation referred to wives that had followed their soldier husbands to South Korea, explicitly against the Army's wishes. They lived in local Korean communities, many in one-room apartments with no indoor plumbing. They had no guaranteed access to U.S. military services—no commissaries, exchanges, base schools, or hospitals. Yet despite the hardships of daily life facing these young women, Glacel noted that the Army had no useful deterrent to keep them from moving to Korea. They had done so for one simple reason: "to keep their families together."[1]

After reading this report, I became deeply interested in the history of military families, and I began to file away information for a future project. This volume on Navy wives in the 1970s is the result. When I began working at the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC), I was surprised to encounter a dearth of scholarship on Navy spouses and children, especially in comparison to the healthy historical literature on Army families. This piece attempts to fill the gap, at least in part, by highlighting the lived experiences of Navy spouses in their own voices.

All writing projects benefit from the encouragement and brain power of a network of friends and colleagues, and this one is no exception. For

1 Barbara Pate Glacel to J. R. Sculley et al., "Report on Families in Korea," 10 February 1988, box 6, folder: Army Families in Korea (88), Committee Files, Army Science Board, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

supporting my proposal to explore a unique and untrodden part of naval history, I thank Charles Brodine Jr., Gregory Bereiter, Anna Holloway, and Peter Luebke. My thanks also go to John Sherwood, Regina Akers, and Melissa Blair of Auburn University, whose constructive feedback carried this project into new and more fruitful directions. I would like to thank Tyler Bamford, Timothy Francis, Allison Somogyi, and Martin Waldman, each of whom supported me at various stages in the research, writing, and publication process. I relied heavily on colleagues at the NHHC Archives who were dogged in their efforts to facilitate my access to essential materials. For their continual support, I thank Laura Waayers, William Baehr, Gabrielle Spiers, Amanda Shaw, and Glenn Gray. In the Navy Department Library, I am indebted to Heidrun Perez and the late Sandi Fox. Emily Abdow and Christina Daniels of NHHC's Communications and Outreach Division (COD) were instrumental in bringing this project to publication. I would also like to thank Janis Jorgenson of the United States Naval Institute for helping me source relevant images and Kristi Chiaravalloti of Naval Services FamilyLine for providing me with access to that organization's archive at the Washington Navy Yard. Lastly, to my friends Justin Blanton, Kirsten Cooper, Brian Drohan, Nathan Marzoli, Sarah McNamara, Jeanine Navarrete, Janet Northey, and Andrew Ringlee, thanks for listening to me talk about this project, probably too much.

Much of the story of Navy families remains to be written. I hope this piece demonstrates that, given the integral place families hold in recurrent operational conversations about Navy readiness, recruitment, and retention, there is great value in documenting the history of Navy spouses and children. My thanks again to the abovementioned individuals for helping to support a publication on this important and underserved topic, especially in the context of the difficult work conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

"I can still recall my introduction to the Navy as a naive bride of nineteen," Donnarae Sowell wrote in a 1973 edition of the magazine *Navy Wifeline*.[2] "What a rude awakening that was!" Drawn to her would-be husband, Isaac, by the "bewitching effect" of his crisp Navy uniform, Sowell quickly discovered that, once married, Navy life came with special hardships. On shore duty, Isaac had to spend several nights a week at the barracks, and unlike for her friends' civilian partners, requesting a vacation day was no simple process. "If the Navy wanted him to have a wife," he joked, "they would have issued him one." Isaac's weekly absences were difficult, but when he came home with news of his ship's upcoming European cruise, Sowell could hardly contain her excitement, leafing through glossy brochures of glamorous Mediterranean ports. It came as a crushing blow, then, when she learned that Isaac was going to Europe without her. "It was about this time I began to get an inkling that the Navy actually resented me," Sowell wrote. "We were competing for the same man."[3]

As Isaac advanced in his Navy career, the couple had four children—a blessing that also brought challenges. While her husband was away, Sowell had to be totally self-reliant. But when Isaac returned, she had to undergo an awkward transition. "After several months of holding the family together and depending largely on herself," Sowell wrote, "the Navy wife must, at a moment's notice, become so helpless that she can hardly remove the lid from the peanut butter jar." In the end, patriotism was enough to convince Sowell that Isaac's long absences at sea were worth the sacrifice. But, she readily admitted, "It would seem foolish to say that there are not times when a military wife is ready to chuck it all and join the civilians."[4]

Sowell's blunt appraisal of what it meant to be a sailor's wife reflected the Navy's distinct challenges with reenlistment and retention during

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2 *Navy Wifeline* was produced by the Navy Wifeline Association, a nonprofit organization established in 1965 to inform and support Navy wives. Though the association was structurally independent of the Navy, some of its outreach operations, including its publications, were funded by the Department of the Navy. See Anne Mandeville, "Wifeline Association Works!," *Navy Wifeline*, Winter 1978, 11. As of 2021, the organization is known as Naval Services FamilyLine and located at the Washington Navy Yard.

3 Donnarae Sowell, "So You Want to Be a Navy Wife?," *Navy Wifeline*, Fall 1973, 3.

4 Sowell, "So You Want to Be a Navy Wife?," 7.

the 1960s and 1970s. While wives and children were by no means new complications for the military, the composition of the Navy had changed dramatically between the end of World War II and the Vietnam War.[5] More so than at any time in its history, the 1960s Navy was made up of sailors who had families.[6] Given the special hardships of military service on wives and children—including long deployments, frequent moves, and comparatively low incomes—sailors' decisions to reenlist often hinged on the feelings of their family members. The Navy, however, was slow to recognize its shifting demographics and the "manpower problems" they created.[7] Even worse, before 1970, Navy leaders were guilty of ignoring sailors' wives.[8]

Today, the Navy understands the central importance of spouses to recruitment, retention, and readiness. "Our families serve with us and demonstrate their incredible resilience every single day," Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral Michael M. Gilday noted in his *CNO NavPlan, January 2021*. "We are committed to strengthening programs that support

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5 See Betty Sowers Alt and Bonnie Domrose Stone, *Campfollowing: A History of the Military Wife* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

6 By 1977, 77 percent of enlisted sailors and 70 percent of officers were married. See Vice Adm. James D. Watkins, chief of naval personnel, foreword to *Military Families: Adaptation to Change*, ed. Edna J. Hunter and D. Stephen Nice (New York: Praeger, 1978), vii.

7 While women's service in the Navy was long established by the early 1970s, the vast majority of sailors were men. The same was true of the other service branches. Military leaders, policy makers, and commentators spoke almost universally in terms of "manpower" to describe the challenges inherent in recruiting and retaining an all-volunteer force after Vietnam, hence my use of the term. They also universally understood "spouses" to mean wives alone, which was, for the most part, true at this time. For the early history of women in the Navy, see Susan H. Godson, *Serving Proudly: A History of Women in the U.S. Navy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2002); and Regina T. Akers, *The Navy's First Enlisted Women: Patriotic Pioneers* (Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage Command, 2019). For discussions of "manpower" in the 1970s military, see, for example, Barry E. Goodstadt and Albert S. Glickman, *The Current Status of Enlisted Attrition in the U.S. Navy and in the U.S. Marine Corps and the Search for Remedies* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Naval Personnel, 1975); and Brig. Gen. Willard Latham, *The Modern Volunteer Army Program: The Benning Experiment, 1970–72* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1974).

8 Edna J. Hunter, *Families under the Flag: A Review of Military Family Literature* (New York: Praeger, 1982), 10–13. The Navy was not alone in this, nor was it the worst offender. For the experience of Army wives, see Jennifer Mittelstadt, *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 120–47.

our families," he added.[9] The Navy adheres to an official family policy, the Naval Family Framework, released in 2017 and updated in 2020.[10] It also operates fleet and family support centers around the world, which deliver key services to sailors and their families.[11]

How did the Navy go from considering wives as an inconvenience in the 1960s to viewing the family as a pillar of strength 50 years later? The Navy's key turning point toward the development of a comprehensive family policy came during the tenure of Admiral Elmo "Bud" Zumwalt Jr. as CNO from 1970 to 1974. With a reforming zeal, Zumwalt confronted the Navy's difficult challenges of race, gender, and the family, ushering in a new era of social policy in which the U.S. government would take a more active role in providing benefits to service members and their families.[12] Zumwalt's reforms, not least in the areas of streamlining communication and alleviating family separations, put the Navy on its current path to recognizing spouses not as liabilities but as full members of the Navy team—and powerful, independent advocates in their own right.

"HUMANIZING" THE NAVY

On 10 May 1970, tens of thousands of student protesters poured into Washington, DC, by car, bus, train, and plane. Their destination was a hastily organized antiwar demonstration on the Ellipse, the large green space south of the White House.[13] Just six days earlier, members of the Ohio National Guard had opened fire on protesters at Kent State University, killing four students and wounding nine more. The demonstrations had been part of a wave of national protests against President

9 Adm. Michael M. Gilday, *CNO NavPlan, January 2021* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 2021), 14.

10 "Chief of Naval Operations' Navy Family Framework," Commander, Navy Installations Command, last modified 2 November 2020, https://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/family_readiness/chief-of-naval-operations--navy-family-framework.html.

11 "Fleet and Family Support Program (FFSP)," Commander, Navy Installations Command, last modified 16 August 2021, https://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/family_readiness/fleet_and_family_support_program.html.

12 The trend toward greater government involvement in social policy through the armed forces encompassed the other services. An extensive study of this development in the Army is Mittelstadt, *Rise of the Military Welfare State*.

13 Richard Harwood, "Some Eruptions Occur at Nightfall," *Washington Post*, 10 May 1970.

Richard Nixon's authorization of the invasion of Cambodia, a move that threatened to expand the already intensely unpopular war in Vietnam. In the aftermath of the massacre, when one young student at Kent State was asked if he would still consider throwing rocks at the Ohio guardsmen, he replied that he would. "I wasn't very political before," he added, "but now I'm dedicated."[14] At the same time, a May 1970 Gallup poll found that 56 percent of Americans now considered the U.S. intervention in Vietnam a mistake, at that point the highest measurement of public opposition to the war.[15] These developments crystalized commanders' concerns that the military was losing touch with a generation of potential recruits, precipitating a personnel crisis.

In the midst of this social and political upheaval, Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. was relieved as Commander of Naval Forces, Vietnam. Less than two months later, on 1 July, the 49-year-old admiral found himself back in Washington as the youngest Chief of Naval Operations in the Navy's history. Having bypassed 33 more senior officers, including eight of four-star rank, Zumwalt—a young, socially progressive Californian—brought a new perspective, one that promised to reorient Navy policy to address the institution's most pressing personnel problems.[16] Vietnam had imparted an entire generation with an "anti-militaristic mood," Zumwalt would later write.[17] "If we are to continue to attract the finest and most talented young men and women," he noted, "we must reverse this alarming trend."[18] Given Nixon's public endorsement of an all-volunteer force, Admiral Zumwalt and other senior leaders knew that they could no longer rely on the draft. The Navy would soon compete for recruits directly with the other armed services, as well as with civilian employers.[19]

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14 "Students: Turmoil for Peace in Tragic Week," *New York Times*, 10 May 1970.

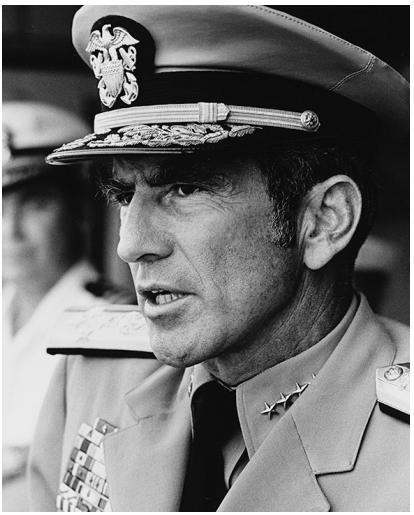
15 "Most in a Poll Term Vietnam a Mistake," *New York Times*, 28 June 1970.

16 John Darrell Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy: Racial Unrest in the Fleet during the Vietnam War Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 31; Ritch K. Eich and William E. Wiethoff, "Toward a Model of Hierarchical Change: Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt and Naval Innovation," *Communication Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (Winter 1979): 31.

17 Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr., *On Watch: A Memoir* (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), 167.

18 Zumwalt, "Chief of Naval Operations," *Navy Wifeline*, Winter 1971/72, 6.

19 Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy*, 30.



Admiral Elmo Zumwalt Jr., Chief of Naval Operations, speaks to the crew of *Newman K. Perry* (DD-883), 14 September 1970. (NHHC NH-97205.)

But while recruitment remained one of the Navy's signal issues, the service also had a linked problem with retention.[20] In 1970, only 9.5 percent of sailors chose to reenlist after their first hitch—a rate well below the established goal of 35 percent.[21] The Navy's retention difficulties were rooted in its organizational culture. Many sailors felt inhibited by overregulation and low pay. Moreover, the demographics of the average sailor were changing, as most officers and enlisted men were now married with children, a trend that held for every branch of the military.[22]

As CNO, Zumwalt immediately set out a reforming agenda to "humanize" the Navy, to make it more inclusive of women and minorities, and to reverse the downward trends in recruitment and retention.[23] Along with strategic deterrence and sea control, he positioned personnel reforms—or support for what he called "people programs"—as part

20 Drew Middleton, "Morale Sag Afflicts Career Servicemen," *New York Times*, 26 October 1970.

21 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 167.

22 Hunter, *Families under the Flag*, 8.

23 "Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr.: Nineteenth Chief of Naval Operations, July 1, 1970–July 1, 1974," Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC), last modified 7 October 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/people/chiefs-of-naval-operations/admiral-elmo--zumwalt-jr-.html.

of an essential realignment of naval strategy to counter the threat of the Soviet Union. This strategic review, which spanned the admiral's first two months in office, was called Project Sixty.[24]

One of Zumwalt's first personnel initiatives was to establish a means of publicly addressing the concerns of young sailors. On 1 July 1970, his first full day in post, the admiral dispatched the first in a series of Z-NavOps messages directly to the fleet. "Dynamic political, economic, and social changes are at work in our nation and abroad," he announced, adding, "the excellence of our people has long been our heritage—it is my source of strength."[25] Later affectionately termed "Z-grams" (or "Zulu-grams," "Zumie-grams," or "Zoomies"), these directives were designed to improve the quality of life of sailors and their families.[26]

In Z-Gram 2 of 14 July, Zumwalt outlined the means by which he proposed to implement social reforms within the Navy and to "[restore] the fun and zest of going to sea."[27] He announced the establishment of a retention study group (RSG) at the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) in Washington, DC.[28] The group would be composed exclusively of young sailors representing "all branches of the officer corps and a cross section of

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24 Jeffrey I. Sands, *On His Watch: Admiral Zumwalt's Efforts to Institutionalize Strategic Change* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 1993), 31–33. See also Cmdr. Joel Holwitt, "Lessons from Admiral Elmo," *Naval History* 34, no. 6 (December 2020); and "Humanizing the U.S. Military," *Time*, 21 December 1970, 16.

25 "Z-Gram #1; Dated 1 July 1970: Relieving Admiral Moorer (Zumwalt Assumes Duties as CNO)," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-1.html.

26 "Humanizing the U.S. Military," *Time*, 21 December 1970, 16.

27 "Z-Gram #2; Dated 14 July 1970: Retention Study Groups," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-2.html. In emphasizing the "fun" side of Navy life, Zumwalt differed from some flag officers, notably his successor as Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral James L. Holloway III, who believed that a military career was a "demanding profession and a tough life." Adm. James L. Holloway III, quoted in Edgar F. Puryear Jr., *American Admiralship: The Art of Naval Command* (Minneapolis: Zenith Press, 2008), 463.

28 The first RSGs were initially chaired by two young junior officers, Lieutenant Bill Antle and Lieutenant Dave Halperin. Later, the chairmanship fell to Lieutenant Commander Donald G. Gentry, CNO fellow at the Center for Naval Analyses, who was assisted by Lieutenant Wally Dye. See "CNO Retention Study Group Report," 1 May 1972, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, Archives Branch (AR), NHHC, Washington Navy Yard, DC.

enlisted ratings" to provide recommendations on improving retention and morale. Before leaving Vietnam in May 1970, Zumwalt had made a point of going out into the field to gather ordinary sailors' unvarnished opinions of naval service. The idea to convoke an RSG had come from two junior officers in those consultations.[29] Zumwalt assured sailors that the RSG's proposals would be shared directly with the CNO, with no initial prescreening. The group would not duplicate the Navy's existing efforts to improve retention, he declared, but it would "permit [him] to keep personally apprised of the views of junior officers and enlisted men."[30] In effect, the RSG would become one of the CNO's personal brain trusts.

Secretary of the Navy John Warner (*center*) presents pairs of aviators' flight safety boots to Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate L. L. Reiter (*second from left*), Aviation Boatswain's Mate Third Class J. M. McGregory (*second from right*), and their wives following the Aviation Boatswain's Retention Study Group, c. 1972. (Box 856, folder 4, CNO Immediate Office Files, AR, NHHC.)

29 JO2 Jim Trezise, "RSG: Lines of Communication, Paths of Action," *All Hands*, August 1972, 2; Stephan A. Schwartz, "Navy Must Change to Survive in Coming All-Volunteer Age," *Navy: The Magazine of Sea Power*, January 1971, 17.

30 "Z-Gram #2; Dated 14 July 1970: Retention Study Groups," NHHC.

Members of the first RSG were drawn from officers of the naval aviation community and included men who intended to stay in the Navy, those who planned to get out of the service, and those who were undecided. They met on 20 July 1970 and, by the end of their discussions, had drawn up a working list of recommendations.[31] In a mark of the importance accorded to Zumwalt's retention initiative, the Secretary, Under Secretary, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy, as well as all flag officers in the DC area concerned with personnel matters, attended the RSG's hour-long briefing to the CNO. Shortly thereafter, several other RSGs began operating simultaneously, using the naval aviation group as a model, and by late September 1970, the first group composed exclusively of enlisted men had met.[32] Zumwalt employed a mixed strategy to implement each group's recommended 60 to 80 reforms. While some orders were intended to lead to immediate action, others required directions for further study, pilot programs, or lobbying efforts in Congress. One of Zumwalt's innovations was to expand a decision-making process that he had implemented in the Navy's brown-water fleet in Vietnam, issuing directives, or so-called green stripes, to action officers like the chief of naval personnel.[33] If a reform could be made more effectively at the command level, however, it was taken up there.[34]

In November 1970, Zumwalt circulated a Z-gram that announced the elimination of the many "demeaning or abrasive regulations" that had come to be known as "Mickey Mouse" or "chicken" regs. These rules, which policed things like uniforms and grooming requirements, placed unfair burdens on younger sailors whose styles and interests had diverged

31 "CNO Retention Study Group Report," 1 May 1972, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

32 "Z-Gram #28; Dated 21 September 1970: Retention Study Group Progress Report," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-28.html.

33 "Zinging Zumwalt, U.S.N.," *Time*, 9 November 1970; Leslie Julian Cullen, "Brown Water Admiral: Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. and United States Naval Forces, Vietnam, 1968–1970" (PhD diss., Texas Tech University, 1998), 86; and Vice Adm. Henry C. Mustin, interview by David Winkler, 7 February 2001, Naval Historical Foundation, https://www.navyhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Mustin-Oral-History.pdf.

34 Trezise, "RSG: Lines of Communication, Paths of Action," 2.

from the older generation. In Zumwalt's judgment, chicken regs had been just as harmful to Navy recruitment and retention as more structural problems, like family separations and the inadequate delivery of healthcare, childcare, and other services.[35] Moreover, regulations were not uniformly enforced across the Navy. What might be acceptable on one ship could be strictly forbidden on another—all according to the whims of the commanding officer.

Early reforms allowed sailors on sea duty to wear civilian dress on liberty or shore leave.[36] Zumwalt also took account of recommendations to liberalize the regulation of hairstyles and facial hair. The Navy needed to learn to "adapt to changing fashions," Zumwalt began. "I will not countenance the rights or privileges of any officers or enlisted men being abrogated in any way," he added, "because they choose to grow sideburns or neatly trimmed beards or mustaches or because preference in neat clothing styles are at variance with the taste of their seniors." Zumwalt even ensured that sailors would not be penalized for having unkempt facial hair during the awkward "growing out" phase between stubble and full beard.[37] In recognition of the need to serve all sailors, he later ordered that Black barbers be employed at every Navy base.[38]

Zumwalt's reforming impulse extended beyond grooming and into the realms of leisure and lifestyle. All naval facilities were required to allow entry to motorcycles, and the drivers were permitted to wear helmets of any color.[39] Sailors living in bachelor quarters were allowed to possess and consume alcohol. Base commanders were even "encouraged to install beer

35 "Z-Gram #57; Dated 10 November 1970: Elimination of Demeaning or Abrasive Regulations," NHHC, last modified 20 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-57.html.

36 "Z-Gram #5; Dated 30 July 1970: Civilian Clothes Aboard Ship for First Class Petty Officers," NHHC, last modified 25 August 2017, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-5.html.

37 "Z-Gram #5; Dated 30 July 1970: Civilian Clothes Aboard Ship for First Class Petty Officers," NHHC.

38 "Navy Points Way Toward Equality," *New York Amsterdam News*, 2 January 1971.

39 "Navy Points Way Toward Equality."

vending machines" in these accommodations.[40] In response to criticism that the entertainment in commissioned officers' messes catered exclusively to patrons over the age of 30, Zumwalt directed base commanders to include junior officers on the advisory groups that governed planning. As a pilot program, he also established five "hard rock clubs" for young Navy officers as annexes to the officers' mess. These clubs were designed to "give junior officers a freer hand in organizing officers' messes in a manner more responsive to their desires."[41] In November 1970, the *New York Times* described the scene at one such club, the Brass Room at the San Diego Naval Station, packed with junior officers and their partners: "A young Navy ensign and his pony-tailed dance partner gyrated to the hard-rock rhythm of 'Groovy Grubworm,' played by a long-haired musical group with all the pulsating tenderness of a destroyer's engines pounding through heavy seas at 20 knots."[42]

Zumwalt's reform agenda, however, was not without criticism, both in its form and function. "Z-grams were coming out of Washington as message traffic," Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Delbert Black recalled, "so the Sailor in the communication center would be the first to know." He added that "sailors on the mess decks would be talking about 'Z's' latest changes before the skipper even saw the message." Such a system was bound to create a "bit of heartburn in the chain of command."[43] Zumwalt himself estimated that some 10 percent of commanding officers had been critical of Z-grams, with a noticeable divide in opinion by age.[44]

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40 "Z-Gram #35; Dated 25 September 1970: BOQ/BEQ Conveniences," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-35.html.

41 "Z-Gram #30; Dated 23 September 1970: Commissioned Officers' Messes Open," NHHC, last modified 3 October 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-30.html.

42 "'New Navy' Providing Hard Rock in Clubs and Beer in Barracks," *New York Times*, 29 November 1970.

43 MCPON Delbert Black, quoted in Charlotte D. Crist, *Winds of Change: The History of the Office of the Master Chief Petty Officer, 1967–1992* (Washington, DC: Office of MCPON and the Naval Historical Center, 1992), 36.

44 "'New Navy' Providing Hard Rock In Clubs and Beer in Barracks." For further discussion of resistance to Zumwalt's personnel reforms, see Eich and Wiethoff, "Toward a Model of Hierarchical Change," 35–36; "Editorials: Admiral Courageous," *Life*, 1 December 1972, 44; Mustin, interview; and Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy*, 167–92.

Three months into the job, after checking up on the enforcement of his orders, Zumwalt was dismayed to find that very little had been done to put them into effect. In November 1970, for example, a sailor aboard *Constellation* wrote to Zumwalt anonymously to report that his commanding officer (CO) had bluntly told the men of R Division that Z-grams did not apply to them. "If you want to be a hippie," the CO had apparently declared, "just get out of the Navy."[45] At the same time, commissioned and noncommissioned officers who were amenable to Z-grams also wrote to Zumwalt about the pushback they were receiving from their superiors. "I was constantly getting flak from above while trying to live up to the Z-grams," retired second class supervisor Leland R. Palmer reported of his final years in the Navy, which had coincided with the period of reform.[46]

In response, Zumwalt began to assign an action officer to each policy change to ensure that it was carried out.[47] Moreover, in Z-Gram 48 of October 1970, entitled "Programs for People," the admiral focused on creating accountability. "It is one thing to promulgate new programs," Zumwalt wrote, "but quite another to sustain and nourish their forward progress." To ensure that his reforms were acted upon, he established a new office, Pers P, in the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS), headed by Rear Admiral David Bagley, who was deeply committed to Zumwalt's vision of the Navy.[48] The CNO also later greenlit an initiative for *All Hands*, a monthly Navy Department periodical in circulation among

45 Anonymous enlisted sailor of R Division, *Constellation* (CVA-64) to Zumwalt, 17 November 1970, box 187, folder 3: Anonymous File, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC. Two years later, *Constellation* would be the scene of a highly publicized and controversial sit-down strike by enlisted Black sailors against persistent racism aboard the ship. See Henry P. Leifermann, "A Sort of Mutiny: The *Constellation* Incident," *New York Times*, 18 February 1973.

46 Leland R. Palmer to Zumwalt, 4 December 1972, box 185, folder 2: Letters to CNO re: Good Order & Discipline Nov. 72–Mar. 73, No. 1, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

47 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 174–75; Ann O'Keefe, *Launching the Navy Family Support Program: A Heartfelt Blend of History and Memoir* (self-pub., Amazon Kindle Direct, 2019), 191. See also Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 178–80.

48 "Z-Gram #48; Dated 23 October: Programs for People," NHHC, last modified 3 October 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-48.html. See also Schwartz, "Navy Must Change," 18.

sailors, to carry extensive coverage on how Navy leaders were implementing the recommendations of RSGs.[49]

Admiral Zumwalt (*center left*) is lowered to the deck of a Seventh Fleet ship from a hovering helicopter during his tour of 17 vessels in the Gulf of Tonkin, 23 August 1972. (JOC Lee L. Thompson, "CNO Drops In," *All Hands*, December 1972, 52.)

49 See Rear Adm. Douglas C. Plate, deputy chief of naval personnel, memorandum to Chief of Naval Operations, "Retention Study Group Follow-On," 27 January 1972, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC; and R. J. Damico, deputy special assistant to CNO/VCNO for decision coordination, "Memorandum for Vice Admiral Bagley (CHNAVPERS)," 20 June 1972, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

While many entrenched old-timers balked at the social reforms suggested by RSGs and enacted by the CNO, the changes proved wildly popular with young enlisted sailors.[50] When Zumwalt toured the Seventh Fleet in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1972, he was greeted like a celebrity. "There they were, on ship after ship," *All Hands* reported, "waiting patiently, hanging from the boat davits, manning the rail, the ladders, braced in hatchways, linking the signal bridges, cameras in hand, waiting."[51] Zumwalt addressed each crew and took their questions in turn. If he was unable to provide an immediate answer, he promised to report back. Lieutenant Alan Armstrong of *Cleveland* (LPD-7) attempted to explain young sailors' enthusiasm for the admiral. "He's the guy who made it easier for the first-termers to make the transition from civilian life to Navy life," he told a reporter. "They believe in him."[52]

In many ways, Zumwalt understood the average sailor because, for him, the question of reenlistment was deeply personal. In the aftermath of World War II, a young Lieutenant Zumwalt had agonized over whether to stay in the Navy or to leave and enroll in medical or law school. In the long run, he could make more money as a civilian, but his young family would have to endure several years of low income while he returned to the classroom. Zumwalt, however, identified that the "most powerful argument" for leaving the Navy had been "the itinerant life and the long and frequent absences" that were inflicted upon his wife and young children. Moreover, his wife, Mouza, had the added challenge of adjusting to life in the United States. Born in Harbin, Manchuria, to a Russian mother and a French father, Mouza had met Lieutenant Zumwalt in Shanghai at the conclusion of the Second World War.[53] In the end, finding himself in his first shore assignment happily teaching ROTC at the University of North

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50 Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy*, 169.

51 JOC Lee L. Thompson, "CNO Drops In," *All Hands*, December 1972, 53.

52 Thompson, "CNO Drops In," 55.

53 After a whirlwind courtship and marriage in China, Mouza Zumwalt had arrived in Seattle, Washington, to a different world. "Everything was very strange to me," she later recalled, including the fact that she no longer needed to boil tap water. Mouza Zumwalt, quoted in Lloyd Shearer, "Elmo Zumwalt Jr.—the Mod Admiral and His Lady," *Parade*, 14 March 1971.

Carolina for two years, Zumwalt and his wife elected to continue their service in the Navy.[54] But there were difficult years ahead. The future CNO was at sea during his wife's first pregnancy, and in the first 25 years of their marriage, the couple estimated that they had spent over 10 years apart.[55] With Mouza's counsel, Admiral Zumwalt would ensure that during his time as CNO the position of spouses, in particular, would be of the utmost concern to the Navy.

SUPPORTING NAVY WIVES

By 1972, 30 retention study groups had met and submitted more than a thousand recommendations.[56] Over a hundred of them had been enacted, with the most dramatic reforms affecting the lives of enlisted sailors.[57] But while beards, beer, and hard rock all received prime publicity as signals of the "New Navy," they were not the most consequential reforms of the Zumwalt era. Navy leaders had begun to recognize finally that the hardships experienced by service families, and especially spouses, were driving a sizeable proportion of officers and enlisted men away from naval careers.[58] The Navy set out to understand the unique problems of wives and to mitigate them.

In April 1970, officials at the Naval Personnel Research and Development Laboratory had begun to back up anecdotal evidence of wives' negative feelings about Navy life with hard data. Working

54 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 25–27. While in Chapel Hill in 1950, Lieutenant Zumwalt had the opportunity to spend a day with General George Marshall, then living in nearby Pinehurst, North Carolina. Marshall helped convince Zumwalt to stay in the Navy. Zumwalt later told Ann O'Keefe that the general had "pushed the patriotism button." See Zumwalt, quoted in O'Keefe, *Launching the Navy Family Support Program*, 190.

55 Shearer, "Elmo Zumwalt Jr.—the Mod Admiral and His Lady."

56 Trezise, "RSG: Lines of Communication, Paths of Action," 2. The RSGs were so generative of new ideas that, in March 1973, Vice Admiral David Bagley recommended that the Navy increase the time between groups in order "to allow some of the affirmative action plans to reach target milestones." Bagley also noted that it was important "to prevent [RSGs] from becoming routine." Vice Adm. David H. Bagley, memorandum to the Chief of Naval Operations, "Retention Study Groups," 23 March 1973, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

57 "CNO Retention Study Group Report," 1 May 1972, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

58 Hunter, *Families under the Flag*, 73–74.

collaboratively with the Navy Wifeline Association, they devised and mailed a survey directly to 25,000 spouses, both officer and enlisted, enclosed in the monthly edition of *Navy Wifeline*. A further 125,000 questionnaires were distributed in commissaries, exchanges, and other Navy facilities.[59] The intent of the study was to reveal spouses' true opinions about life in the Navy in order to effect policy changes that might reverse the downward trend in retention. "These wives," the study's authors asserted, "exert a significant influence on their spouses' Navy career plans and day-to-day job performance and satisfaction."[60] In the end, the survey's sample size was 3,063 officers' wives and 7,520 enlisted wives.

For the first time, the study gave the Navy a basic understanding of the demographics of Navy wives. The average officer's wife was 32 years old. She had been married to her husband for over nine years, and they had two children. Enlisted wives were much younger—just 24 years old. They had been married to their husbands, on average, for over three years, and they had one child.[61]

The survey results confirmed the troubling perceptions of Navy life held by a large proportion of wives. Among officers' wives, 75 percent of respondents felt that their husbands were underpaid, and 38 percent felt that the Navy's moving allowances were not enough to make ends meet during their frequent changes of duty station. Some 41 percent of those surveyed reported that, when off duty, their officer husbands moonlighted in part-time work to make extra cash. When asked to select their least favorite aspect of life in the Navy from 19 possible options, 27 percent chose their husbands' long absences from home. Some 13 percent of officers' wives indicated that "it was alright that their husbands were in the Navy, but they didn't want them to make it a career." A further 5 percent reported that they were anxious for the day their husbands would leave the Navy.[62]

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59 T. W. Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions of Conditions of Navy Life* (Washington, DC: Naval Personnel Research and Development Laboratory, March 1971), 3 (available at Navy Department Library [NDL], NHHC).

60 Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions*, 1.

61 Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions*, iv–v.

62 Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions*, iv–v, 23–29.

Among enlisted wives, the results were even bleaker. Ninety percent of respondents felt that their husbands were underpaid, with 36 percent decrying the inadequacy of the Navy's moving allowance. Thirty-eight percent of enlisted wives reported that they had been separated from their husbands for more than half the time they had been married. Only 30 percent of respondents were happy that their husbands had chosen a Navy career. Eighteen percent were satisfied with their current lot but did not want their husbands to make a career in the Navy, while an astounding 34 percent of enlisted wives were anxious for their husbands' time in the service to end.[63]

Wives join their husbands as full members of a retention study group to present recommendations to Admiral Zumwalt (*seventh from left*) and Secretary of the Navy John Warner (*seventh from right*), c. 1972. (Box 856, folder 4, CNO Immediate Office Files, AR, NHHC.)

As a way of addressing their concerns, Admiral Zumwalt began to empower wives to help craft new Navy policies. After the first five retention study groups had convened and delivered their recommendations, Zumwalt asked the wives of officers and enlisted men who had been

63 Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions*, v–vi, 37–44.

appointed to RSGs to join their husbands as members of the group.[64] Over the meetings of the next eight RSGs, wives made important contributions, diversifying the recommendations that ultimately landed on the CNO's desk and affirming Zumwalt's belief in the important role that spouses had to play as part of the Navy team.[65] Wives' participation was curtailed after separate groups began to repeat the same recommendations, but a year later, officials reincorporated spouses back into the process, both to solicit new ideas and to provide feedback on the success of ongoing reforms.[66]

Just as Zumwalt had made a point to visit sailors aboard ships in the Gulf of Tonkin and elsewhere, he also brought his reforming message directly to wives. In a December 1970 speech to the Navy Doctors' Wives Club of Bethesda, Maryland, Zumwalt reported that he was requesting "commanding officers and base commanders avail themselves of your talents." Improving the Navy was "everybody's job," he added, "and I hope you will also let your wishes and desires be known."[67] After the speech, several young members, encouraged by his warmth and approachability, peppered Admiral Zumwalt with requests for help and advice. The club's honorary president, Helen Davis—wife of Navy Surgeon General Admiral George M. Davis—later wrote to Mouza Zumwalt to "confess a bit of embarrassment" that the CNO had had to field questions that should have been taken up at a lower level. She hoped he would take it as "a portrayal of the great respect for Admiral Zumwalt and his new policies."[68] Like

64 "CNO Retention Study Group Report," CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

65 Trezise, "RSG: Lines of Communication, Paths of Action," 4.

66 Lt. Cmdr. Donald G. Gentry, memorandum for the Chief of Naval Operations, "Wives Participation in Retention Study Groups," 24 May 1972, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC. Zumwalt approved Gentry's recommendation that wives resume their former positions on RSGs. He asked that officials "try to lay on a USN airplane from each coast" to help ferry the wives to Washington, DC, but such a plan proved financially unworkable. Zumwalt, CNO comment sheet, "Wives Participation in Retention Study Groups," 26 May 1972, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

67 Zumwalt, transcript of remarks to Navy Doctors' Wives Club, Washington, DC, 10 December 1970, box 257, folder 36: Navy Doctors' Wives Club Luncheon, 10 Dec. 70, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

68 G. M. (Helen) Davis to Mouza Zumwalt, 14 December 1970, box 14, folder 21: Mrs. Zumwalt's Correspondence (2), Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

their husbands who had been energized by Zumwalt's open and transparent listening sessions, young Navy wives were equally eager to be heard.

In involving women directly in the reform process, Zumwalt demonstrated the importance of representation and diversity of thought in the Navy's administrative processes. Spouses' participation on RSGs helped to supply unique recommendations that ranged from small changes in the delivery of Navy services to full-scale structural reforms. In the Navy's 1970 survey of enlisted wives, for example, the top suggestion for improving commissaries was to implement longer operating hours that would allow for night shopping.[69] Z-Gram 39 did just that, extending commissary operating hours "as a service to our personnel and many working wives."[70] Zumwalt also established a program of advisory boards for commissaries and exchanges that was designed to improve communication between management and patrons. Representatives of Navy wives' clubs were appointed to these boards. Z-Gram 33 dictated that these new boards should "contain a broad ethnic and representative minority base" to reflect those "having the greatest need for these facilities and those who are utilizing them with the highest frequency."[71] Diversity on commissary and exchange boards achieved immediate results, of which Zumwalt later provided an example. Consultations had revealed that exchanges did not stock makeup and other cosmetics for Black women. "No one had ever paid attention to this," Zumwalt admitted in a December 1970 interview in *All Hands*. "I plan to meet with black officers and their wives, and black enlisted men and their wives," the admiral added. "I have a lot to learn."[72]

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69 Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions*, vi.

70 "Z-Gram #39; Dated 5 October 1970: Extended Commissary Hours," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-39.html.

71 "Z-Gram #33; Dated 25 September 1970: Navy Exchange and Commissary Store Advisory Boards," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-33.html.

72 Zumwalt, quoted in JOCS Dan Kasperick and JO2 Jim Shields, "An Interview with CNO," *All Hands*, December 1970, 14. See also Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 201.

Two separate RSGs were eventually convened to collect the feedback of Black officers and enlisted sailors.[73]

Admiral Zumwalt (*seated, third from left*) speaks with the Human Relations Council at Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan, 2 July 1971. (NHHC NH-97204.)

Much of the admiral's empathy for, and understanding of, the challenges of Navy families in the 1970s was facilitated by his wife, Mouza, whose official activities kept her attuned to feelings at the grassroots level. As the most senior Navy spouse, Mrs. Zumwalt played a key role in organizing meetings at Admiral's House, which gave fellow spouses an official forum to voice their opinions. With as many as 80 attendees, these workshops often hosted speakers on topics like volunteerism and community programs, interpersonal communications, drug abuse, and the special

73 Lt. Cmdr. Donald G. Gentry, "Black Officer RSG," n.d., box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

challenges of POW/MIA families.[74] Mouza Zumwalt was also involved directly in the itineraries of RSG members. When enlisted Black sailors and their wives came to Washington, DC, to take part in an RSG, for example, she hosted a meeting for the spouses at the Naval Observatory.[75] She also served as a member of the board of the Navy Wifeline Association.[76] Given Mrs. Zumwalt's deep involvement in the core family issues affecting retention, the admiral later revealed that one of his wife's most important contributions was in "[calling] attention to many things I had no other way of finding out about."[77]

For sailors and their families, frequent transfers to new duty stations were a standard rule of Navy life—and one of its biggest challenges.[78] The RSGs' recommendations spurred policy changes that sought to make these regular transitions as easy as possible for families. One of Zumwalt's early Z-grams extended leave at the time of a permanent change of station (PCS) to 30 days for both officers and enlisted personnel. Sailors were not required to take the full period of leave but were "encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity for a well-deserved rest."[79] The Navy also established a servicewide sponsorship program, whereby transferring families were welcomed to their new duty station by a local sponsor.[80]

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74 Mouza Zumwalt, interview by Marleen Keenan, 20 August 1973, draft article for *Army Times Wives Newsletter*, box 384, folder: Mrs. Zumwalt's Crono File, Jul. 1972–Jun. 1973 (3 of 3), Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC. See also Baroness Stackelberg, "The Admiral's Wife," *Palm Beach Life*, December 1971, 38–40.

75 "Check Off List for Coffee Hosted by Mrs. Mouza Zumwalt in Honor of the Wives of the Enlisted Black Minority Personnel Retention Study Group," 19 November 1970, box 14, folder 21: Mrs. Zumwalt's Correspondence (2), Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

76 Jean Clarey (signed Mrs. Bernard Clarey), chairman of the Advisory Board, Navy Wifeline Association, to Mouza Zumwalt, 21 September 1970, box 14, folder 21: Mrs. Zumwalt's Correspondence (2), Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

77 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 358.

78 Hunter, *Families under the Flag*, 12.

79 "Z-Gram #4; Dated 20 July 1970: 30 Days Leave Authorization for All PCS," NHHC, last modified 20 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-4.html. See also "Leave, Liberty … and the Pursuit of Happiness," *All Hands*, November 1970, 44–47.

80 "Z-Gram #7; Dated 11 August 1970: Navy Sponsor Program," NHHC, last modified 20 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-7.html.

Mouza Zumwalt (*center, seated*) and Navy wives participating in an RSG pose for a photo at Admiral's House, date unknown. (Box 856, folder 4, CNO Immediate Office Files, AR, NHHC.)

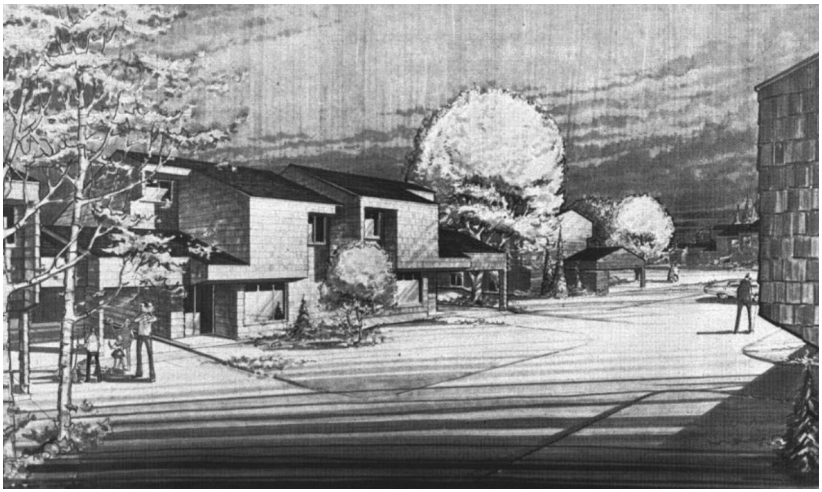
Further Navy reforms targeted housing, both temporary and permanent. To ensure that transferring families had access to convenient and reasonably priced temporary accommodations, the Secretary of the Navy established the Temporary Lodging Program in January 1970. That June, the Navy Resale System Office (NRSO) combined its existing guest houses and motel rooms under a new program, the Navy Lodge. In fiscal year 1971, the NRSO, the Bureau of Naval Personnel, and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command began a joint effort to build 900 new units at 13 naval installations. The NRSO also planned the construction of a further 200 units per year until demand had been met.[81]

To ease the pressure on permanent housing, Zumwalt negotiated with the Pentagon to have $20 million—or enough money to keep four to five destroyers fully functioning for a year—reallocated from his budget and matched by the Department of Defense. The combined $40 million would be used to build new housing for sailors and their families.[82] As with

81 Trezise, "Navy Lodges for Navy Families," *All Hands*, August 1971.

82 "Humanizing the U.S. Military," *Time*, 21 December 1970, 16.

commissaries and exchanges, the Navy incorporated the expertise and opinions of wives into the development of new permanent housing. Based on a recommendation by the Service Forces Enlisted RSG, wives would provide input on the design of Navy housing at two completion points, when homes were 30 percent complete and when they were 60 percent complete.[83] From 1970 to 1972, the Navy completed large-scale housing construction projects, including Nimitz Village at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, composed of 48 buildings of two-, three-, and four-bedroom units—enough to house 150 families.[84]



An artist's rendering of the Navy's planned Murphy Canyon housing development in San Diego, California, c. 1972. ("Murphy Canyon," *All Hands*, May 1972, 47.)

In the Murphy Canyon development at the San Diego Naval Station, 900 enlisted families moved into spacious homes, which had been allocated by lottery. "The Navy has never had anything like this before for enlisted men," Petty Officer Second Class Eugene Wetter reported after moving his family into a four-bedroom single-family home. "With three

83 "RSG Achievement Chart: Service Forces Enlisted," *All Hands*, August 1972, 13.

84 "Nimitz Village," *All Hands*, May 1972, 46.

children, a single house is beautiful, especially if you've been an apartment dweller," he added.[85]

New housing stock helped mitigate the pressures on Navy families, but it didn't eliminate them, especially for Black service families.[86] After consulting with Black sailors and their families, Zumwalt reported in Z-Gram 66 that he was "particularly distressed by the numerous examples of discrimination black Navy families still experience in attempting to locate housing." The issue pertained to housing both off base and on base. "In some places," Zumwalt wrote, "housing personnel are tacitly contributing to discrimination in housing." Zumwalt and Secretary of the Navy John Chafee instructed their staffs to begin an in-depth investigation into discrimination in Navy housing. Zumwalt also instructed each commanding officer to appoint "an aware minority group officer or senior petty officer as his special assistant for minority affairs," with direct access to the CO.[87] The CNO's own special assistant for minority affairs, Lieutenant Commander William S. Norman, took the lead in coordinating the activities of these specialists in their drive to make the Navy a more equitable institution.[88]

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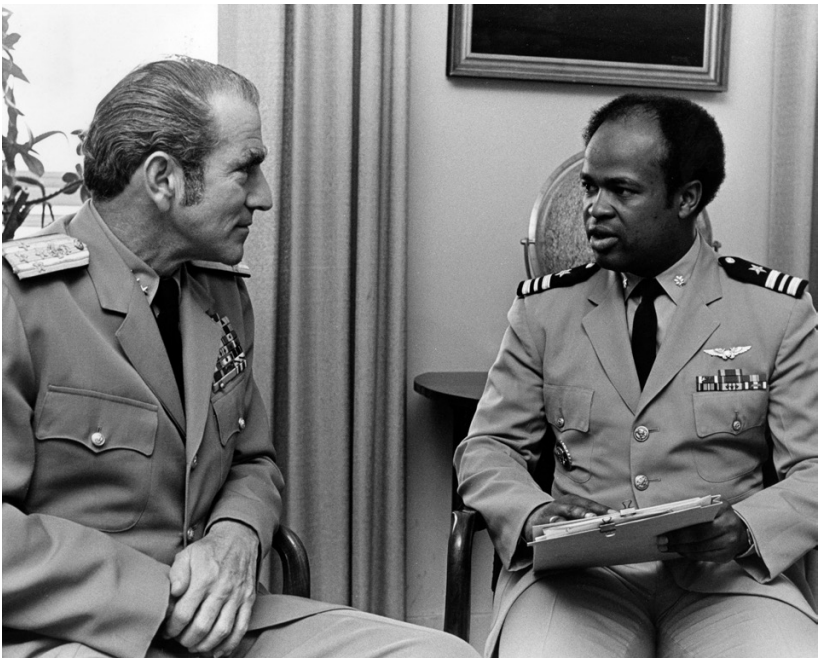
85 "Murphy Canyon," *All Hands*, May 1972, 47. The vast majority of military personnel expressed a preference for single-family housing. See Susan S. Stumpf, "Military Family Attitudes toward Housing, Benefits, and the Quality of Military Life," in Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, 10.

86 Some Navy housing developments, including Murphy Canyon in San Diego, would go on to face social challenges in the 1970s and 1980s, like inadequate services, crime, and juvenile delinquency. See Ryan Reft, "The Metropolitan Military: Navy Families and Housing in the American Sunbelt, 1941–2000" (PhD diss., University of California San Diego, 2014), 300–308.

87 "Z-Gram #66; Dated 17 December 1970: Equal Opportunity," NHHC, last modified 21 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-66.html. As Sherwood writes, "In one stroke of a pen, Zumwalt created a 2,763-person-strong minority affairs establishment in the Navy." Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy*, 46.

88 "An Interview with CNO's Minority Affairs Officer," *All Hands*, April 1971, 6–11. See also JO3 J. R. Kimmins, "Introducing Your Minority Affairs Specialists," *All Hands*, April 1971, 16–18.



Zumwalt (*left*) is briefed by his special assistant for minority affairs, Lieutenant Commander William S. Norman in Washington, DC, June 1971. (National Archives [NARA] USN-1148104.)

Zumwalt's effort to confront discrimination in housing was just one skirmish in a wider battle to address institutional racism in the Navy, and in the military services at large. As one retired Black senior master sergeant from the Air Force wrote to Zumwalt in November 1972, "I can count on one hand the days out of 20 years when I did *not* experience or witness some form of racial discrimination or injustice."[89] On 10 November 1972, in the wake of several highly publicized racial incidents in the fleet, including a riot on *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63) and a sit-down strike on *Constellation*, Zumwalt publicly reinforced the Navy's antiracist policy agenda in a speech that was widely perceived to be a rebuke to

89 Senior Master Sgt. Clarence Hall, U.S. Air Force (USAF), to Zumwalt, n.d., c. November 1972, box 185, folder 3: Letters to CNO re: Good Order & Discipline Nov. 72–Mar. 73, No. 2, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

reactionary White Navy officers.[90] Minority affairs assistants, as set out in Z-Gram 66, had been hamstrung by the Navy's chain of command, he declared. Instead, Zumwalt directed commanding officers to "create an environment within their command that makes equal opportunity a reality and discrimination, for any reason, an unacceptable practice."[91] Affirming that, in the future, selection boards would pay greater attention to sailors' commitment to equality, Zumwalt later told the press that anyone who objected to these ideals would "be weeded out in the Navy's selection system."[92]

By positioning service wives to inform policy, Zumwalt sought to address spouses' complaints about Navy life. But his reform agenda was not a panacea for many deep-seated issues, especially those that reflected the changing position of women in society in the context of feminist discourses, the political activism of the women's movement, and Congress's passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in March 1972.[93] The April 1970 survey of Navy wives had exposed trends among both officer and enlisted spouses. The more educated the respondent, the more likely she was to be dissatisfied by the prospect of her husband pursuing a naval career. Some 43 percent of officers' wives who responded to the survey

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90 See Lt. Col. Maurice L. Lien, USAF (Ret.), "News, Notes, and Comments," *The Retired Officer*, January 1973, 10–14; and Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy*, 83–102, 130–66.

91 "Text of Zumwalt's Remarks to Senior Naval Officers on Causes of Racial Unrest," *New York Times*, 11 November 1972. See also Drew Middleton, "Zumwalt Rebukes Top Navy Leaders on Racial Unrest," *New York Times*, 11 November 1972; and Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy*, 167–92.

92 "Racist Officers Will Go, Zumwalt Says," *Chicago Sun-Times*, 12 November 1972.

93 Zumwalt asked his staff to keep well apprised of the ERA's movement through the legislative process. In 1972, Navy officials were working through the legal implications of the ERA for the service, fully expecting that it would be ratified by the necessary number of state legislatures and pass into law as a constitutional amendment. See box 382, folder: Equal Rights Amendment, files 1 and 2, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC. See also Rear Adm. Roberta L. Hazard, "Women in the US Navy: Historical Perspectives on Women and the Military," Dining-Out of Women Officers Professional Association, Main Navy Officers Club, Washington, DC, 26 September 1986, box 1, folder 15, RADM Roberta L. Hazard Papers, AR, NHHC; and "*AFJ* Interview with Elmo Zumwalt," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 1972, 30. The ERA ultimately failed to receive ratification by enough states to become a constitutional amendment—though the process is still alive. See Matthew Haag, "The Equal Rights Amendment Was Just Ratified by Illinois. What Does That Mean?," *New York Times*, 31 May 2018.

had earned at least a college degree; an additional 29 percent had taken college coursework. Among enlisted wives, 7 percent had graduated with a college degree, and a further 21 percent had taken some coursework. While increasingly educated, a substantial proportion of women also expressed a desire to work, especially given their aforementioned criticism about sailors' low pay. Twenty percent of officers' wives were employed, and 25 percent desired to work. Among enlisted wives, the numbers were higher, with 30 percent working and an equal amount hoping to find a job.[94] The activism of the women's movement in the 1960s had spurred Congress to outlaw workplace discrimination on the basis of sex through Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. [95] As this legislation unlocked new career opportunities for women, many Navy wives found the strictures of their husbands' naval service an impediment to their own professional ambitions.

While the Navy began to realize that sailors' spouses could be important and valued contributors to its mission, Zumwalt's reforms were nevertheless premised on deep-rooted assumptions about naval careers and the nature of women's labor. In 1973, sociologist Hanna Papanek propagated the idea of the "two-person single career," in which employers conflated the paid labor of the husband with the unpaid labor of the wife.[96] In the Navy, for example, commanders often took for granted that a wife would willingly serve "as an adjunct to or supporter of" her husband's career, whether through childcare, volunteerism, or participation in wives'

94 Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions*, iv–vi, 23–29, 37–44.

95 See Katherine Turk, *Equality on Trial: Gender and Rights in the Modern American Workplace* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 3–5; Nancy Maclean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945–2000: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009), 16; and Maclean, "Women Challenge 'Jane Crow,'" chap. 4 in *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace* (New York: Russell Sage, 2006).

96 Hanna Papanek, "Men, Women, and Work: Reflections on the Two-Person Career," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1973): 852–73. For the application of Papanek's theory to the Navy, see Laurie Weinstein and Helen Mederer, "Blue Navy Blues: Submarine Officers and the Two-Person Career," in *Wives and Warriors: Women and the Military in the United States and Canada*, ed. Laurie Weinstein and Christie C. White (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1997), 7–18.

clubs.[97] A naval career was what psychologist and researcher Edna Hunter called a "two-for-the-price-of-one situation."[98]

Women's rights activists march from Farragut Square to Lafayette Park in Washington, DC, 26 August 1970. (Library of Congress LC-U9-23117-25.)

Zumwalt himself viewed wives' voluntary labor as one of the Navy's greatest assets. In a 1971 issue of *Navy Wifeline*, the admiral set out his theory that during the Vietnam conflict, the Navy declined in popularity, in part, because of its failure to explain to the American people its wide range of activities *off* the battlefield. He hoped to mobilize wives in support of a wider goal. "We have hidden many of our most worthwhile, non-military activities from the general public," he wrote. "I ask you also

97 Weinstein and Mederer, "Blue Navy Blues: Submarine Officers and the Two-Person Career," in *Wives and Warriors*, 8. For the case of Army wives, see Mittelstadt, *Rise of the Military Welfare State*, 126. "The army came to depend on army wives' commitment and labor for social and economic support that it did not provide directly to soldiers and their families," Mittelstadt argues.

98 Hunter, *Families under the Flag*, 11. For the submariner wife's role in a two-person career, see Alice Ivey Snyder, *The Wife of the Career-Oriented Submariner in Mid-life Transition* (Arlington, VA: Office of Naval Research, 1978), 7 (available online from the Defense Technical Information Center [DTIC], https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a054395.pdf).

to consider strongly increasing your commitment to programs sponsored within the civilian community." By encouraging Navy wives to act as unofficial goodwill ambassadors to the American public, Zumwalt could kill two birds with one stone. Marketing a softer image of the Navy might increase enlistment. At the same time, informing and involving Navy wives would give them a personal stake in the service's mission, possibly easing the pressures on retention. "You ladies have always been one of our prime sources of strength," Zumwalt wrote.[99]

The admiral reiterated this point in a speech to hundreds of officers' wives who gathered at the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, in March 1971. "Within this room, I see an assemblage of skill, wisdom, and talent, which I know can be of invaluable assistance in support of existing local and federal programs," he declared. Navy wives were unique in that the trials they faced required them to develop "a fine independent spirit." He implored those assembled to put their special expertise as Navy wives to good use in the civilian community. "You are child psychologists, chauffeurs, clerical assistants, and world travelers," he added.[100]

But with increasing opportunities in work and education, not every Navy wife was happy to fulfill the admiral's assumption that she would devote her life to her husband's career and to voluntary activities.[101] "I have had to sacrifice my life to his," one submariner's wife bluntly told anthropologist Alice Ivey Snyder, as she conducted field research for a report sponsored by the Office of Naval Research in 1978. "I resent the menial wifesy chores we're given to do," she added. "I feel that I have great potential, but I am not able to direct it toward any constant goal since our life is always 'up in the air.'"[102] Martha Dye, another Navy wife, held similar views. Writing in *Navy Wifeline* about the wives she called

99 Zumwalt, "Chief of Naval Operations," *Navy Wifeline*, Winter 1971/72, 6.

100 Zumwalt, transcript of remarks to Senior/Junior Officers Wives Coffee, National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC, 23 March 1971, box 258, folder 22: NOW Club Address – 23 Mar. 71, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

101 For similar developments in the Army, see Mittelstadt, *Rise of the Military Welfare State*, 133–35.

102 Unnamed Navy officer's wife, quoted in Snyder, *Wife of the Career-Oriented Submariner*, 11.

"unsettled women"—in other words, those who did not choose to inhabit the role of the prototypical Navy spouse, mother, volunteer, and community member—Dye laid bare the anxieties felt by many of her counterparts:

> Perhaps when [they] were first married, they had no idea that their husbands would choose to extend years of military service into a career. Perhaps during their years of maturation, they developed desires for permanent careers of their own and are now feeling frustrated because they are finding it hard to achieve this end. Perhaps, when their husbands are away, they are self-conscious and lonely and do not possess the self-certainty that would allow them to interact with other wives. And, just perhaps, all the advice to join, join, join—whether it be wives' clubs, bowling leagues, ceramic classes, or churches—serves only to frustrate them more.[103]

In her 12 preceding years as a Navy wife, Dye admitted that her biggest burden had been a "loss of self-identity, [her] self-esteem." Unable to find personal fulfillment on terms separate from her husband Jim and his career, their marriage flagged. Martha became depressed; Jim turned to alcohol. In the end, the couple sought out marriage counseling and reconciled. Jim remained in the Navy, but Martha's relationship to the institution changed. "I've found that the only really healthy attitude for me is to put importance on my goals," she wrote. "Living only for my husband or only for the Navy is not enough for me." Dye's case was an example with a happy ending, both for the couple and for those concerned with Navy retention. But her testimony, and the stories of women like her, revealed the growing tensions between a Navy wife's commitment to her husband's career and to her own.[104]

The spouse's desire to work, however, did not always arise out of professional ambition or an effort to carve out a distinct self-identity. In order to make ends meet, many Navy wives were forced to find additional

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103 Martha Dye, "A Navy Wife," *Navy Wifeline*, Summer 1979, 4.

104 Dye, "A Navy Wife," 5. Many Army wives found themselves in similar situations. See John C. Woelfel and Joel M. Savell, "Marital Satisfaction, Job Satisfaction, and Retention in the Army," in Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, 31.

sources of income, often on top of childcare and voluntary work. In his March 1971 speech to Navy wives, Zumwalt relayed the findings of a recent Department of Defense study that had identified some 12,500 military families relying on state and federal assistance programs. The admiral estimated that some 3,000 of those families struggling against poverty belonged to the Navy.[105] In an anonymous letter to Zumwalt, one Navy wife decried sailors' low wages. Identifying herself as "highly educated and capable of earning a salary that [supported] two adults," she wrote not out of a concern for herself but for those families that struggled to live on one income. "I am not pregnant, nor encumbered with young children," she noted, "for if I were, and consequently were unable to help my husband support us, society would yet be burdened by another 'poor family' who needed 'public assistance.'" Appealing to Zumwalt's reputation as a "humanist among militarists," she implored the admiral to consider how low wages burdened Navy families. She also underlined that sailors had no leverage to make demands of the Navy. "It isn't fair to discriminate against this nation's lowest paid workers," she concluded. "They can't quit; they can't strike; they can't even express their opinions through their representatives in Washington. It goes against our whole philosophy of government."[106]

In the Zumwalt era, while the Navy made great strides in addressing the concerns of wives, not every problem had a ready-made solution. The increasing opportunities for women presented a challenge to the Navy's assumption that wives would accommodate themselves to their husbands' careers. At the same time, many struggled to balance low household incomes and the demands of childcare.[107] These were enduring issues that would require further attention in the 1980s, 1990s, and beyond. In fact, many of these issues have compounded with the influx of male spouses

105 Zumwalt, transcript of remarks to Senior/Junior Officers Wives Coffee, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

106 Anonymous Navy wife (identified only as Joanne) to Zumwalt, 2 September 1971, box 187, folder 3: Anonymous File, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

107 See, for example, Louis Jacobson, *Research to Quantify the Effect of Permanent Change of Station Moves on Wives' Wages and Labor Supply* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, January 1983).

and dual–military career families.[108] Nevertheless, the Navy's efforts to make life easier in the early 1970s made material differences for families.

The most forward-thinking reforms cohered around two concerns: first, facilitating better communication and interaction between Navy leaders and spouses and, second, limiting the time sailors spent separated from their families.

"COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATIONS"

In 1971, Rear Admiral Samuel L. Gravely Jr., head of Naval Communications Command and the Navy's first African American flag officer, was asked to address the readers of *Navy Wifeline*. "It is through the medium of good communication among members of a family that a smooth, well-run home is operated," he wrote. The same was true of the Navy at large. "I have always looked on the Navy wife as an important part of the Navy team," Gravely added, "and if she is unhappy the team cannot function at peak capacity. Information must be shared to the fullest extent permitted by regulations."[109] The main complaint among service wives was that they were not aware of what their husbands did for the Navy. In other words, wives and children had little means of judging whether their many sacrifices were worth it. According to Gravely, the breakdown in communications lay with husbands who failed to share important information with their wives. But it was also down to the Navy itself.[110] While communication channels steadily improved, he encouraged wives to take control of the situation. "Ask questions; be active in your wives' organizations; read everything you can lay your hands on which might pertain to Navy life,"

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108 For a discussion of Navy wives who sought independent careers, see Della J. Suter, "The Two-Career Family in the Navy" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1979), 20–21, 34–36, 58–62. Suter's "two-career family," in which both husband and wife have jobs, should not be confused with Papanek's "two-person career."

109 Rear Adm. Samuel L. Gravely Jr., "Guest Spot: Command, Control, and Communications," *Navy Wifeline,* Winter 1971/72, 3, 7.

110 Husbands, for example, had to sign a Privacy Act Statement that allowed Navy personnel to contact their wives directly. As the authors of one study noted in 1978, "Unless such a signature is obtained, information about the navy and how to obtain assistance, if needed, cannot be provided to wives according to current navy regulations." Gloria Lauer Grace and Mary B. Steiner, "Wives' Attitudes and the Retention of Navy Enlisted Personnel," in Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, 53.

Gravely wrote. "And last, but by no means least, do not be afraid to approach your husband's commanding officer if you have a serious question," he added. "One of his duties is to keep his men satisfied—and one of the best means of accomplishing this is to keep his family happy."[111] Gravely had invited wives to grasp their own power and agency within the institution.

Rear Admiral Samuel L. Gravely Jr. (NHHC NH-96775.)

For Navy wives, poor communication was an endemic problem that led to feelings of isolation and alienation from the institution. In the early 1970s, one way in which the Navy began to make wives feel more included in its mission was by facilitating day-long voyages for family and friends, also known as "tiger cruises."[112] On one such tiger cruise in November 1971, the guided-missile cruiser *Chicago* (CG-11) set out from San Francisco on a tour for wives and children that included a morning church

111 Gravely, "Guest Spot," 7.

112 See "Tiger Cruises," Naval Historical Foundation, last modified 23 August 2019, https://www.navyhistory.org/2019/08/tiger-cruises/.

service and lunch, followed by demonstrations of shipboard equipment, including a surface-to-air Talos missile. In the meantime, spouses were free to explore the ship to acquaint themselves with the types of duties their husbands performed.[113]

Tiger cruises became a rite of passage in many Navy families, especially for children. Hull Maintenance Technician First Class Bernard Preston answers questions about firefighting and damage control equipment aboard the battleship *Iowa* (BB-61), 16 August 1985. (NARA 6409080.)

Across the Pacific, 50 members of the Navy wives' club of San Miguel Communication Station at Subic Bay in the Philippines joined a day-long tiger cruise aboard the minesweeper *Pledge* (MSO-492). The voyage was filled with guided tours of the ship, as well as history lessons on both the vessel and past engagements that had taken place in the bay. "It's the first time that some of these women have been aboard a Navy ship," Mrs. Hopkins, wife of the San Miguel Station's executive officer, noted, "and I think that the small size of a minesweeper and its crew gives the ladies a

113 "Families & Friends on the High Seas: Aboard USS *Chicago*," *All Hands*, November 1970, 22–23.

chance to get a more personal view of shipboard life." *Pledge*'s CO, Lieutenant Commander Vernon L. Rosson, took the ship through a simulated minehunting exercise, allowing the 69 crewmembers to explain their jobs in detail to the assembled wives. "I never thought they would have so many questions to ask," one crewmember reported, "and I never realized how much I really knew about the ship and the Navy until I started answering them."[114]

A young boy waits for his father on the bow of the destroyer *Fife* (DD-991), May 1980. (United States Naval Institute [USNI] 099033006.)

While tiger cruises helped wives to better understand their husbands' working lives and to discover their own buy-in to the institution, Admiral Zumwalt sought structural reforms that would create a permanent channel of communication between commanding officers and families.[115] Among the many replies that the Naval Personnel Research and Development Laboratory had received to its April 1970 survey, one data point had revealed troubling results among the wives of enlisted men. Respondents were asked who would be their first point of contact in the event of an emergency. Some 38 percent of enlisted wives reported that their first call would not be to the Navy—not to any office, nor even a

114 PH1 James A. Davidson, "The Ladies Pledge Their Support," *All Hands*, November 1971, 38.

115 For a broader discussion of Zumwalt's emphasis on two-way communications in the Navy, see Eich and Wiethoff, "Toward a Model of Hierarchical Change."

fellow Navy wife—but to the Red Cross. Navy chaplains came in a distant second at 17 percent. Only 6 percent of enlisted wives reported that they would reach out to their husband's commanding officer; just 1 percent would call the CO's wife.[116] If enlisted wives did not have the confidence to approach the Navy in a time of emergency, it stood to reason that they would not engage the institution with less urgent matters.

Family members board the aircraft carrier *Carl Vinson* (CVN-70) for a tiger cruise after the ship's commissioning ceremony, 13 March 1982. (NARA 6350878.)

In the same month that Admiral Zumwalt placed wives as joint members of RSGs, he also dispatched his most enduring Z-gram on family policy. In Z-Gram 24 of 14 September 1970, Zumwalt announced the creation of an ombudsman program for Navy wives.[117] Originating in Scandinavia in the early nineteenth century, the position of ombudsman was designed to act as a representative and advocate of citizens to government. Zumwalt recognized that spouses had never had an "official representative to express their views to commanding officers and base commanders." In order to resolve this oversight, he instructed all shore-based commanders to "establish procedures which give Navy wives an opportunity to present complaints, viewpoints, and suggestions to

116 Muldrow, *Navy Wives' Perceptions*, B9.

117 Schwartz, "Navy Must Change," 19.

commanding officers." The wives' ombudsman would follow the model of similar advocacy programs for sailors across the Navy. "We have each been getting good advice from our own wives," Zumwalt stated. "Let's listen carefully to an official representative."[118]

Judy Speilberg shares information about her ombudsman program with her husband, Bill, and daughters Norma (*left*) and Karen (*right*), c. 1979. (JOC Scott Hessek and JO3 R. C. Budlong-Campbell, "Ombudsman … Linking Family and Command," *Navy Wifeline*, Winter 1979/80, 9.)

The ombudsman would be a volunteer, selected by the commanding officer, to act as an intermediary between leadership and spouses. She would be responsible for disseminating information both up and down the chain of command. She would also act as a resource for Navy wives, answering questions about services and responding to emergencies. For Judy Speilberg, serving as an ombudsman was important because she understood the power of good communication. After 12 years as a Navy wife, Speilberg became one of the first ombudsmen in the Naval Reserve, ministering to 75 families of Naval Air Reserve Unit Norfolk. "When I first became a Navy wife it was hard to get help and information," she recalled. "You'd have to go on a fishing expedition for information, and you'd often

118 "Z-Gram #24; Dated 14 September 1970: Wives Ombudsman," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-24.html.

come up with the wrong answers." She described her new role as "smoothing out the wrinkles" for Navy families, often answering seemingly minor questions by telephone, like when the commissary closed or how to enroll a daughter in Girl Scouts. At the same time, Speilberg's position had real clout. While she had no power to enact policy changes, she had the license to make inquiries of any official on base, no matter how senior. "I have the authority to call anyone I want, ask any question I want, and expect a truthful answer," she stated.[119]

For another Navy wife, Brenda Scott, participating in the ombudsman program was a lifesaver. As a new bride at age 16, Scott had struggled to adjust to Navy life, suffering the same hardships of low pay and long separations felt by many. She soon found solace in the community of Navy wives bound together by shared experiences. Absence, she said, "became the glue in our lives." Scott eventually volunteered to serve in the role of wives' ombudsman for her husband's ship. In that position, she had to learn about every facet of the command. "With knowledge about the Navy," she noted, "came an understanding of its mission and the vital part my husband played in fulfilling missions and assigned tasks of the ship." She gained trust in the institution through communication and transparency:

> Knowing why a cruise deployment was necessary and how it fit into the overall defense picture gave me the strength to cope and carry on, no matter the temporary obstacles thrown in my path. With knowledge, too, came pride, a satisfying air of calm which put difficulties to rest and made loneliness and separation much more bearable. With this pride, with this calm, came a purpose to life—even a purpose to my children's lives. We all had our parts to play, our niche to fill.[120]

Sometimes the ombudsmen provided answers that the questioner did not anticipate or accept, but finding an effective way to deliver bad news was an important part of the Navy's communication strategy. As the authors of

119 JOC Scott Hessek and JO3 R. C. Budlong-Campbell, "Ombudsman … Linking Family and Command," *Navy Wifeline*, Winter 1979/80, 8–9.

120 Brenda Scott, "Just Another Beginning," *Navy Wifeline*, Winter 1978, 9–10

one study put it, the Navy's efforts "should be directed toward creating realistic expectations about navy life."[121]

Navy wives engage in a role-playing session at the Ombudsman Training Academy in Norfolk, Virginia, May 1979. (Hessek and Budlong-Campbell, "Ombudsman … Linking Family and Command," 6.)

Over the 1970s, the ombudsman program became formalized, with more focused trainings providing better tools. In 1977, the Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, established the Ombudsman University to meet quarterly in San Diego. In various training courses, more than 150 Navy wives learned about the command's structure and available resources; they were joined by commanding officers and executive officers who also sought to benefit from the information presented.[122] A year later, the Navy established an equivalent program on the East Coast called the Ombudsman Training Academy at Norfolk. Among other courses, the ombudsmen were schooled in crisis intervention, including what to do if one of the families under their purview was afflicted by a serious illness or death.

121 Grace and Steiner, "Wives' Attitudes and the Retention of Navy Enlisted Personnel," in Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, 53.

122 "Ombudsmen Attend 'University,'" *Navy Wifeline*, Winter 1978, 2.

"Death is a hard subject to discuss," one student of the Ombudsman Training Academy admitted, "but I feel a little better about it now that I understand how the Navy is prepared to help."[123]

The Navy's efforts to improve communications in the early 1970s reflected its growing awareness of the essential role that wives played in retention. By informing wives, by making them an active part of the team, Navy leaders sought to better acculturate them to Navy life.

A local television reporter interviews Navy wives' ombudsman Tina Campbell at the Naval Family Service Center in Norfolk, Virginia, during Operation Desert Storm, 17 January 1991. The Navy wives' ombudsman would prove to be one of the most enduring family policy innovations of the Zumwalt era. (NARA 6465966.)

123 Hessek and Budlong-Campbell, "Ombudsman … Linking Family and Command," 7.

OPERATION PEGASUS

While transparency and more effective communication helped Navy families to understand the importance of their husbands' and fathers' service, and their own role as part of the Navy team, the improvements did not make frequent separations any easier. Long deployments had always been the most acute downside of life in the Navy, for both sailors and their families.[124] While husbands and wives waited with deep anticipation for their family reunions, these moments were not always easy. In their husbands' absence, many wives had become accustomed to new roles. They were more independent and self-sufficient. But, as Edna Hunter put it, "Roles which shifted during the separation period must be reshuffled after the return."[125]

The burden of prolonged separation was even more taxing in the 1960s for those wives with husbands serving in Vietnam.[126] Ruth Jackson, wife of Utilitiesman First Class John Jackson, felt intense stress during her husband's two tours in Vietnam, one of them in the midst of the Tet Offensive. When the phone rang at 3:00 a.m., she picked up the receiver in a "blind panic," expecting to hear the worst about John. Instead, she heard

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124 One study of 108 Navy wives found social isolation, depression, sexual frustration, anger, and resentment to be just some of the effects of long separations. See Kathryn Brown Decker, "Coping with Sea Duty: Problems Encountered and Resources Utilized during Periods of Family Separation,"in Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, 119. Submariners' wives found prolonged absences especially difficult. See Kathleen Reardon Boynton and W. Barnett Pearce, "Personal Transitions and Interpersonal Communications among Submariners' Wives," in Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, 130–41. In a 1977 study, anthropologist Alice Ivey Snyder found significant correlation between wives' suffering from physical illness and their partners' absence at sea. See Snyder, *Sea and Shore Rotation: The Family and Separation, Final Report, 1976–77* (Pearl Harbor, HI: Naval Regional Medical Clinic Hawaii, 1977), 2. See also D. Stephen Nice and Arne Beck, *Feelings of Depression in Navy Wives Prior to Separation* (San Diego: Naval Health Research Center, 1979) (available online from DTIC, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA118119.pdf).

125 Hunter, *Families under the Flag*, 16.

126 This was especially true for the families of sailors declared missing in action (MIA) or prisoners of war (POW). For the experiences of MIA/POW families, see Dorothy Benson et al., "Waiting: the Dilemma of the MIA Wife," in *Family Separation and Reunion: Families of Prisoners of War and Servicemen Missing in Action*, ed. Hamilton I. McCubbin et al. (Washington, DC: Superintendent of Documents, 1975), 157–67 (available online from DTIC, https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a038370.pdf). See also Heath Hardage Lee, *The League of Wives: The Untold Story of the Women Who Took On the U.S. Government to Bring Their Husbands Home* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2019). For Zumwalt's efforts on the issue, see Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 389–91.

his voice telling her that he had broken both legs. She was relieved that he was alive, but Tet had "presented the first test of my mental durability," she later wrote.[127] As the spouse of a sailor on *Juneau* (LPD-10) summed it up in August 1971: "How long can a wife hold up her chin and try to bring up a husband's morale when we're getting so discouraged ourselves?"[128]

A Navy wife from Naval Station, Subic Bay, Philippines, holds her child while waiting to greet her husband upon his return from an Indian Ocean deployment aboard the aircraft carrier *Midway* (CV-41), 14 February 1980. (NARA 6394685.)

Beyond stress and anxiety, separation could have real and deleterious effects upon couples who were trying to navigate sensitive personal issues like family planning. In January 1971, two anonymous wives of sailors serving aboard *Chicago* wrote separately to Zumwalt to register their discouragement at the ship's slow return from its tour of the Western Pacific. "Why do they have to take so long fiddling around doing nothing

127 Ruth Jackson, "Homecoming," *All Hands*, July 1972, 35–37.

128 Anonymous *Juneau* wife to Zumwalt, 17 August 1971, box 187, folder 3: Anonymous File, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

before they come home?" one of them asked.[129] The crew had been away from home for two Christmases in a row. But the real blow had been the cancellation of the ship's scheduled yard work. "My husband and I were counting on the yard period to meet the requirements to adopt our child," one of the *Chicago* wives wrote to Zumwalt. "With him going again so soon," she added, "it is an 'unstable atmosphere,' and we will have to wait to start our family."[130] She lamented that the couple had waited four years for this period of shore duty, only for their meticulous family planning to be upended at the last minute.

The ship's long deployments had had similarly severe effects for the other anonymous *Chicago* wife and her husband. "We have had a lot of difficulty having children," she confided in Zumwalt. After four failed pregnancies, the wife had managed to bring a baby to term, but her husband had been unable to spend any time with the child. "You wanted to know why more men wouldn't stay in the service," she wrote to the admiral. "A good happy relationship is much more important to us," she stated. "We wouldn't have that if we stayed." In the end, she told Zumwalt, "Families can't remain families when forced into almost constant separation."[131]

While taxing for wives, long deployments were equally difficult for many husbands. Admiral Carlisle Trost, who served as Chief of Naval Operations from 1986 to 1990, recalled one trying personal example from his time as commander of the nuclear submarine *Sam Rayburn* (SSBN-635). In December 1968, as his boat headed out for a 70-day patrol just before Christmas, he "waved to [his] wife on the bank over at the officers' club with [his] little kids standing there." "It wasn't easy," he added.[132] But

129 Anonymous *Chicago* Wife #1 to Zumwalt, 28 January 1971, box 187, folder 3: Anonymous File, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC. The two wives wrote separately. But given the similar tone and format of the letters, and the fact that they were sent and received on the same days, they likely coordinated as part of a joint attempt to reach Zumwalt. To differentiate between the two letters, I refer to the author of the letter that appears first in box 187, folder 3 as Anonymous *Chicago* Wife #1 and the author of the second letter in sequence as Anonymous *Chicago* Wife #2.

130 Anonymous *Chicago* Wife #2 to Zumwalt, 28 January 1971, box 187, folder 3: Anonymous File, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

131 Anonymous *Chicago* Wife #1 to Zumwalt, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

132 Adm. Carlisle Trost, quoted in Puryear, *American Admiralship*, 558.

for some sailors, the degree to which a husband and father longed to be reunited with his family was yet another marker of the generational divide in the Navy, with younger men keener for quick reunions. "Some of the officers don't think enough of their wives," one sailor wrote to Secretary of the Navy John Warner in January 1973, "and in turn, don't think we [younger sailors] should." The young sailor in question was unmarried but quick to state his disagreement with such a viewpoint. "When and if I ever get married, my wife will always come first with me," he stated.[133]

Family and friends greet sailors aboard *Hoel* (DDG-13) as the ship returns to San Diego, California, from deployment in the Western Pacific, 1 August 1974. (NARA USN-1161112.)

Family separations could never be eliminated fully in the Navy. Time away from home was an enduring feature of a sea-going career. But in response to Vietnam, Navy leaders implemented reforms to make long separations more bearable. One of Zumwalt's first policies as CNO was

133 EN3 Michael C. Williams to Secretary of the Navy John Warner, 23 January 1973, box 185, folder 2: Letters to CNO re: Good Order & Discipline Nov. 72–Mar. 73, No. 1, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

to institute a dependent air charter program to enable family members to visit sailors overseas during peak leave periods. While the program operated at no expense to the government, Zumwalt noted that charter flights would bring the cost of airfare down to a reasonable rate for family members, creating an "incentive for such travel which has in the past not been within the financial capability of many of our personnel."[134] The Navy established pilot programs on both the East and West coasts, which provided charter flights to four overseas destinations during the 1970 Christmas season—Athens, Nice, Tokyo, and Hong Kong.[135] One of the anonymous *Chicago* wives who wrote to Zumwalt to register her disappointment at the cancellation of the ship's yard work had taken advantage of the newly instituted charter flight program. "I was able to go to Hong Kong for Christmas and see the reactions of the men to many of the changes—including the beards," she wrote. "I rather like them myself."[136]

Aside from fostering much-needed reunions, charter flights had an added benefit. They allowed Navy wives to experience their husbands' globe-trotting, albeit briefly. The Navy had long recognized that the prospects of travel and living abroad were just as attractive to wives as they were to sailors themselves.[137] In 1956, the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) produced a research memo titled the "Appeals of Navy Life for Navy Wives," based on an analysis of 400 essays submitted to the Mrs. U.S. Navy 1956 contest. Among the benefits, BUPERS concluded that the slogan "Join the Navy and See the World" appeared to have a "definite appeal value for the wives in the study group." Officials suggested adding

134 "Z-Gram #6; Dated 11 August 1970: Dependent Air Charter Program," NHHC, last modified 19 September 2016, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/z/list-z-grams/z-gram-6.html.

135 "Pilot Program for Dependent Charter Flights," *All Hands*, November 1970, 46.

136 Anonymous *Chicago* Wife #2 to Zumwalt, Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

137 The prospect of an international posting became somewhat less enticing as children aged and families became less mobile. See Hunter, *Families under the Flag*, 94.

an additional slogan to future advertising campaigns: "Navy Wives Join the Navy and See the World with Their Husband."[138]

Though the tagline was never taken up, travelling remained the most appealing part of the Navy for someone like Janet Darwin, who boasted of a life spent in communities from "Norfolk to Naples, San Diego to Sasebo, [and] Boston to Brussels."[139] For Marcia Flint, the benefits of travel were simple; it "broadens your outlook, opens your mind, increases your awareness of other people in the world," she stated, "and makes you more tolerant of their differences."[140]

Wives of sailors aboard the guided-missile cruiser *Sterett* (CG-31) tour the Philippines in a tricycle, a local form of transportation. (NARA 6353705.)

138 Personnel Research Memorandum, Pers-152 Memo 56, 4 November 1957, quoted in Lt. Richard C. Farrell, *The Role of the Navy Wife in Career Retention: A Study of One Aspect of the Career Retention Problem* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Naval Personnel, 1965) (available at NDL, NHHC).

139 Janet R. Darwin, "A Navy Family Sees the World," *All Hands*, July 1972, 40–41. See Alt and Stone, *Campfollowing*, 135.

140 Marcia Flint, "Moving: An Adventure," *All Hands*, July 1972, 39–40.

Wives also extolled the value of "seagulling," or following their husbands' ships from port to port around Europe or Asia.[141] In 1977, Edie Hall Smith traveled as a seagull for six months, following *Constellation* to the Philippines, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan. In periods when she couldn't be with her husband, Don, she travelled alone, making friends with locals, including a Filipino woman who taught her to cook traditional dishes.[142] Peggy Hayward, wife of future CNO Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, recalled her own seagulling experience in Europe with great fondness. "Many husbands and wives are away from each other so much," she noted. "That's why it's important if a wife can take advantage of the opportunity to follow her husband's ship. It can be a real adventure for both of them," she added.[143]

For Zumwalt, his maxim that Navy life should be fun was meant to apply equally to family members. One program that Zumwalt believed would make Navy wives happier was overseas homeporting. "To 'homeport' a ship overseas," Zumwalt later wrote, "means to move the families of the ship's crew to the port out of which that ship operates when it is deployed overseas."[144] Basing ships abroad was not unprecedented. The Navy had always had a few ships with foreign homeports, and in 1972, that number was 37.[145] But Zumwalt's expansion of homeporting to include families afforded Navy wives and children the opportunity to live abroad.

While Zumwalt considered moving ships overseas to be a strategic imperative in the context of the Cold War, his primary motivations in supporting a forward-deployment program related to his personnel reforms. Instead of returning to port once every six months, a ship homeported

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141 The Navy Wifeline Association produced a pamphlet encouraging women to undertake this type of travel. "Tagging along is an adventure," it stated, "one that will make your marriage and horizons grow." Navy Wifeline Association, *Tag-Along to Europe* (Washington, DC: Navy Wifeline Association, 1969), 1.

142 Edie Hall Smith, "The Adventures of a 'Seagulling' Wife," *Navy Wifeline*, Fall 1978, 11–13.

143 Peggy Hayward, quoted in Joanne E. Dumene, "Interview with Mrs. Hayward: Courage and Strength—Marks of a Navy Wife," *Navy Wifeline*, Fall 1979, 7.

144 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 126.

145 *Political and Strategic Implications of Homeporting in Greece: Joint Hearings before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Subcommittee on the Near East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives*, 92nd Cong. 18 (1972), https://www.google.com/books/edition/Political_and_Strategic_Implications_of/TdtEAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.

overseas would return every one to two months, enabling more frequent family reunions. At the same time, homeporting had positive downstream effects for the crews of ships based in the United States. By eliminating the need for regular relief journeys across the Atlantic or the Pacific, homeporting would increase the amount of time U.S.-based sailors spent at home by 15 percent.[146] In the long run, the initiative also promised to save money, as ships would need to return to the United States less often for major overhaul and repairs. Overseas homeporting would require the installation of basic medical, educational, and commissary facilities, but families would live primarily off the local economy and stay in private accommodations.

More broadly, the U.S. military and government, as a whole, stood to benefit from the soft diplomacy of service families living abroad. According to Mouza Zumwalt, military families had a unique opportunity "to try to get to know the native people and their customs in an effort to promote understanding on a personal level." She believed families should "encourage communication and friendship all over the world." Just as her husband promoted Navy wives as goodwill ambassadors to civilian communities in the United States, Mrs. Zumwalt saw military families living abroad as important American cultural envoys in the era of the Cold War. "The military family can have as much responsibility as an ambassador," she stated.[147]

In October 1970, in conversations with President Nixon, Admiral Zumwalt outlined his desire to base a carrier task group in the eastern Mediterranean.[148] Because of the nature of carrier operations, sailors aboard those ships experienced the longest periods of separation from their families. All told, they could expect to be away from their families for 13 out of every 18 months. According to Zumwalt, this reality had negatively affected the retention of sailors serving aboard carriers, with a first-term reenlistment rate of 9.9 percent in March 1972 as compared with 15

146 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 126–27.

147 Mouza Zumwalt, interview by Marleen Keenan, 20 August 1973, draft article for *Army Times Wives Newsletter*, box 384, folder: Mrs. Zumwalt's Crono File, Jul. 1972–Jun. 1973 (3 of 3), Zumwalt Papers, AR, NHHC.

148 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 127.

percent for all ships. The reenlistment rate for ships already homeported overseas was 20 percent.[149]

With Nixon's support, the Navy ultimately selected Athens, Greece, as its preferred Mediterranean port. But it would be nearly two years before Zumwalt could put his plan into action. Homeporting placed the Navy directly in the crosshairs of several members of Congress who viewed basing more troops abroad as violating the spirit of the so-called Nixon Doctrine—the idea that, in the zero-sum environment of the Cold War, allied nations under threat would be expected to provide for their own defense.[150] They also objected to Greece, whose popularly elected government had been overthrown in a 1967 military coup.[151] But in the late summer of 1972, the six vessels of Destroyer Squadron (DesRon) 12, carrying some 1,700 men, set sail for Athens for three years of overseas duty.[152] This would be the first phase of Zumwalt's Mediterranean homeporting initiative, with 6,700 men and 3,100 family members of the carrier group slated to follow within 18 months.[153] Almost all of these sailors would be volunteers. It would be what one congressman called the "married man's fleet."[154]

What should have been a headache—that of relocating the 831 family members of DesRon 12, as well as their pets, cars, and household goods, from the Eastern Seaboard to Greece—instead became a valuable opportunity for the Navy to display publicly the institution's newfound concern

149 *Political and Strategic Implications of Homeporting in Greece*, 92nd Cong. 7 (1972) (statement of Zumwalt, CNO).

150 See Richard Nixon, "Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam" (speech, Washington, DC, 3 November 1969), The American Presidency Project, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-the-nation-the-war-vietnam.

151 Michael Getler, "Navy Boss Defends Plan to Base Ships in Greece," *Washington Post*, 8 March 1972; Graham Hovey, "Making Foreign Policy," *New York Times*, 22 January 1973. See also *Political and Strategic Implications of Homeporting in Greece*, 92nd Cong. 18 (1972).

152 Five of the vessels were *Sampson* (DDG-10), *Barry* (DD-933), *Vreeland* (DE-1068), *Richard L. Page* (DEG-5), and *William M. Wood* (DD-715).

153 Mario S. Modiano, "Athens Becomes a U.S. Homeport," *New York Times*, 3 September 1971.

154 *Political and Strategic Implications of Homeporting in Greece*, 92nd Cong. 16 (1972) (statement of Benjamin Rosenthal, congressman).

for its human side. In June 1972, while preparing for a two-week cruise to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Captain O. Keith Hallam, commanding officer of the destroyer tender *Puget Sound* (AD-38), was ordered to ready his ship to transport 681 wives and children to Athens.[155] Captain George A. Church of *Nashville* (LPD-13) was ordered to take similar action, though his ship would carry only 151 women and children.[156] Upon completion of the cruise, code-named Operation Pegasus, both refitting vessels would remain in the Mediterranean to make needed repairs to the ships of DesRon 12.[157] The store ship *Rigel* (AF-58) would transport some of the families' furniture and personal belongings.[158]

A Navy wife and son board *Puget Sound* (AD-38) during Operation Pegasus, August 1972. (*Pegasus '72* [*Puget Sound* cruise book], NHHC.)

155 Capt. O. Keith Hallam to director of naval history, 1972 *Puget Sound* (AD-38) Command History, 5 March 1973, box 646, folder: *Puget Sound* (AD-38) II, 1972–1973, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC. See also Hallam, "Operation Pegasus," in *Pegasus '72* (*Puget Sound* cruise book, n.p., 1972) (source uploaded to Facebook group for veterans of *Richard L. Page*, https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1578189828893874&id=100001086152622&set=oa.10154959739595952&source=56).

156 Capt. George A. Church to director of naval history, 1972 *Nashville* (LPD-13) Command History, 16 March 1973, box 230, folder: *Nashville* (LPD-13), 1972–1974, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC.

157 *Puget Sound* herself was homeported abroad in January 1980. Based in Gaeta, Italy, she served as the Sixth Fleet's flagship and provided maintenance and logistical support to surface units in the Mediterranean. See U.S. Navy Sixth Fleet Public Affairs Office, "News Release: USS *Puget Sound* Becomes U.S. Sixth Fleet Flagship," n.d., c. January 1980, box 646, folder: *Puget Sound* (AD-38) II, 1972–1973, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC.

158 Mario S. Modiano, "Athens Becomes a U.S. Homeport."

Puget Sound's deck is converted into an outdoor retreat for Navy wives and children, August 1972. (Ester Fisher, "A Tender Story about a Winged Horse," *Navy Wifeline Special Issue: Operation Pegasus*, 1972, 4.)

On *Puget Sound*, Hallam had no easy task in transforming an active naval vessel into the type of space that could accommodate family members safely.[159] First, the ship's rails were lined with chicken wire to prevent small children from tumbling overboard. With the addition of sun lounges and wading pools, the crew turned the ship's deck into an outdoor retreat. Sheltered kennels for 40 dogs and 13 cats were arrayed around the fantail. Inside, the crew allocated separate spaces for playrooms, nurseries, feeding rooms, bottle-sanitizing stations, and pantries that stocked baby formula. Carpenters installed changing and dressing tables in the ship's lavatories. In the room designated to serve as a beauty parlor, electricians refitted the circuitry to enable grounded hair driers and curling irons to be

159 The Navy had a precedent for Operation Pegasus, though on a much smaller scale. *Little Rock* (CLG-4) returned 36 dependents from Italy to Newport, Rhode Island, in August 1970—the first such sealift by a major combatant ship. The cruise was intended by Zumwalt to be a morale booster. See "Families & Friends: 'The Navy's Not What It Used to Be,'" *All Hands*, November 1970, 25. See also *Little Rock* (CLG-4) Command History 1970, box 479, folder: *Little Rock* (CL-92/CLG-4/CG-4) I, 1970, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC; and J. Reilly, "History of USS *Little Rock* (CLG-4)," April 1973, 4, box 479, folder: *Little Rock* (CL-92/CLG-4/CG-4) I, 1970, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC. Two other ships later carried out small-scale sealifts of family members in the Western Pacific. For *Dixie* (AD-14), see "Dixie," *All Hands*, July 1971, 8. For *Samuel Gompers* (AD-37), see the ship's 1970 cruise book at https://www.navysite.de/cruisebooks/ad37-70/013.htm.

used. Liaising with Navy exchange and commissary officials, the crew also sought out the most sensible products for women and children. They stocked the ship's store with everything from children's toys and candy to panty hose and sanitary napkins.[160] Similar modifications were made aboard *Nashville*, including fitting out the flight deck to host nightly live music from the crew's rock, country, and western bands.[161]

A child plays tetherball on the deck of *Puget Sound* during Operation Pegasus, August 1972. (*Pegasus '72*, NHHC.)

A *Puget Sound* sailor comforts a child, August 1972. (*Pegasus '72*, NHHC.)

Embarking its first passengers on 18 August in Newport, *Puget Sound* made for Norfolk and Charleston before spending the next 18 days at sea.[162] *Nashville* left Norfolk on 23 August, making a stop at Charleston before sailing for Athens.[163] As Admiral Zumwalt later noted, "The sealift of the families, which we called Operation Pegasus, saved the Navy a

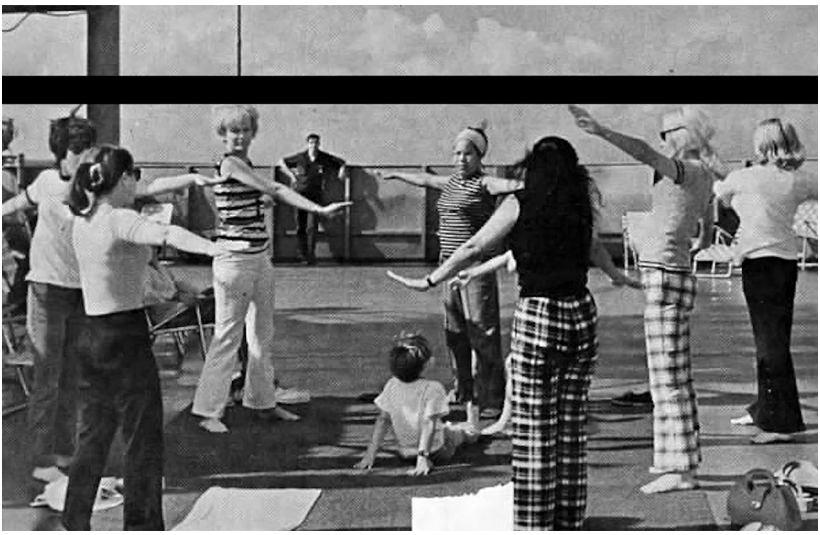
160 *Operation Pegasus: Your Voyage with the USS* Puget Sound *AD38 to Athens Greece* (n.p., n.d.) (source uploaded to Facebook group for veterans of *Richard L. Page*, https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1582740711772119&id=100001086152622&set=oa.1015497124993095 2&source=56).

161 Church to director of naval history, 16 March 1973, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC.

162 Hallam to director of naval history, 5 March 1973, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC.

163 Church to director of naval history, 16 March 1973, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC.

certain amount of money, but its real purpose was to increase morale."[164] In a welcome message to the family members aboard *Puget Sound*, Captain Hallam expressed his "desire to make this cruise as pleasant, interesting, and educational as possible."[165]



Wives exercise aboard *Puget Sound*, August 1972. (*Pegasus '72*, NHHC.)

When the kids weren't patronizing the ice cream bar, receiving routine medical and dental checkups, or taking part in a program of activities organized by *Puget Sound*'s chaplains, they were made to feel part of the ship's crew. Boys between the ages of 7 and 14 occupied berthing compartments 3 to 38, an area separate from their mothers and sisters—affectionately called "Boys Town." They participated in a big brother program, paired with sailors whom they joined on the job and at meal times. On

164 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 132.

165 Hallam, "Welcome Aboard," in *Operation Pegasus: Your Voyage with the USS* Puget Sound *AD38 to Athens Greece* (n.p., n.d.) (source uploaded to Facebook group for veterans of *Richard L. Page*, https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1582740488438808&id=100001086152622&set=oa.10154971249930952&source=56).

Nashville, *All Hands* reported that "crew members often doubled as a storyteller, playmate, or just providing a nice lap to sit on."[166]

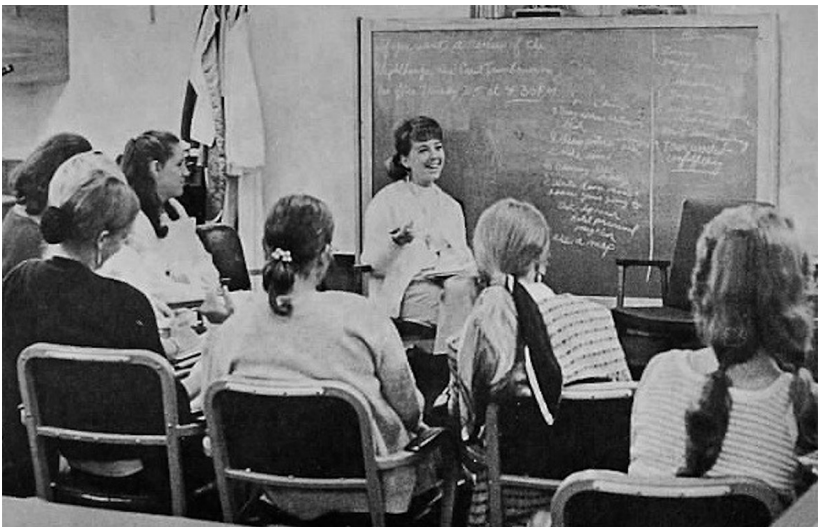
A *Puget Sound* sailor teaches children about his work on the ship. (*Pegasus '72*, NHHC.)

While there was plenty of time for rest, relaxation, and leisure, wives used the voyage to prepare for what life would be like in Greece. On *Puget Sound*, a civilian husband and wife team, hired specifically for the cruise, gave rudimentary Greek language courses, while two sailors with experience driving in Greece schooled the wives in local traffic laws.[167] At the same time, Operation Pegasus operated along similar lines to the tiger cruises of *Pledge* and *Chicago*, as a way to inform wives about their husbands' duties at sea and to better incorporate them into the institution. The crew organized tours of restricted parts of the ship, like the bridge and the engine room. "In this age of change, women's rights, and equality," the *Puget Sound* cruise book recounts, "the women of DesRon 12 got the

166 "Traveling Family," *All Hands*, December 1972, 23.

167 "Traveling Family," 23.

opportunity to venture where few women have had the chance to go."[168] Indeed, for nearly three weeks, Navy wives had witnessed the behind-the-scenes operations of *Puget Sound* and *Nashville* some six years before women sailors began serving on noncombatant surface ships.[169]



Navy wives aboard *Puget Sound* take Greek language classes in transit to Athens, August 1972. (*Pegasus '72*, NHHC.)

For the wives of DesRon 12, the journey—by all accounts—had achieved Zumwalt's mission of improving their morale and imparting them with a newfound appreciation for the Navy. "I can understand more the feelings that must go along with being out at sea," one wife reported,

168 "Charleston," in *Pegasus '72* (*Puget Sound* cruise book, n.p., 1972) (source uploaded to Facebook group for veterans of *Richard L. Page*, https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1578189932227197&id=100001086152622&set=oa.10154959739595952&source=56).

169 "Women in the U.S. Navy: Historic Documents," NHHC, last modified 30 November 2017, https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/diversity/women-in-the-navy/announces-that-navy-to-begin-assigning-women-to-ships.html. See James L. Leuci, *Navy Women in Ships: A Deployment to Equality, 1942–1982* (Norfolk, VA: Hampton Roads Naval Museum), 44–45, 86; and Rear Adm. Roberta L. Hazard, "Women in the US Navy: Historical Perspectives on Women and the Military," Dining-Out of Women Officers Professional Association, Main Navy Officers Club, Washington, DC, 26 September 1986, box 1, folder 15, RADM Roberta L. Hazard Papers, AR, NHHC.

"the beautiful sights, the loneliness, the feeling that you've been dropped out in the middle of nowhere." The journey had provided a valuable experience in helping her to understand her husband's career. "Now I know how he feels, being at sea and having someone there waiting at the pier when he comes home," she reflected.[170]

Navy wives debark from *Puget Sound* in Athens, Greece, and are reunited with their husbands, September 1972. (*Pegasus '72*, NHHC.)

On 5 September 1970, *Puget Sound* sailed into Piraeus, the port of Athens. Her situation report, published in the ship's daily newspaper, the *Pegasus Bugle*, summed up the cruise: "Departed with a load of pale mono-lingual americanos and now have same number [of] bilingual golden Greeks."[171] Captain Hallam relayed a message of congratulations from Admiral Charles K. Duncan, commander-in-chief of the Atlantic Fleet, to the crew of *Puget Sound*. Their efforts, Duncan declared, had "made a great contribution toward enhancing the value and attractiveness of a

170 "Traveling Family," 21.

171 "Operation Pegasus Wemissya Situation Report," *Pegasus Bugle*, 5 September 1972, 5 (source uploaded to Facebook group for veterans of *Richard L. Page*, https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1582743185105205&id=100001086152622&set=oa.10154971254660952&source=56).

Navy career in the eyes of these Navy families as well as other personnel in the Atlantic Fleet."[172]

Aviation Storekeeper Airman Gerd A. Jakuszeit and his wife Julie shop for groceries in the commissary in Athens, Greece, February 1973. (USNI 099039013.)

Four years later, Admiral Zumwalt—by then, retired—provided proof of the success of his homeporting initiative in Greece. In its first six months, DesRon 12 reported a 21.3 percent first-term reenlistment rate, compared with 15.7 percent for similar ships in the Atlantic Fleet. Zumwalt had also championed the homeporting of another destroyer squadron, DesRon 15, in Yokosuka, Japan, which reported a 34.2 percent first-term reenlistment rate as compared with 18 percent in the rest of the Pacific.[173] The improved rates were likely down to Navy wives' content-

172 Adm. Charles K. Duncan, quoted in "General Information – The Trip Continued," *Pegasus Bugle*, 5 September 1972, 7 (source uploaded to Facebook group for veterans of *Richard L. Page*, https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1582743275105196&id=100001086152622&set=oa.10154971254660952&source=56). See also Hallam to director of naval history, 5 March 1973, Ships History Files, AR, NHHC.

173 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 133.

ment with reduced separations.[174] "It's like a constant honeymoon," Lucy Delap told the *New York Times*. "When your husband is in for a week at a time, there isn't time to get into the big arguments." At the same time, there was real appeal to living abroad. "People pay thousands of dollars to come here from the States to see the Acropolis," one spouse reported. "Here we have it just outside our window."[175]

Greece would not prove to be the best example of the Navy's continuing efforts to homeport ships abroad. In 1974, the Navy delayed and later cancelled its plans to base a carrier in Greece, and after Zumwalt retired, interest in Athens as a long-term homeport flagged.[176] In the end, Japan would prove more successful as an enduring homeport for carriers.[177] Yet Operation Pegasus and the forward-deployment program had shown that ambitious policy innovations to tackle the retention problem could bear fruit, especially those plans that no longer treated wives and families as excess baggage but instead gave them a greater stake in the Navy's mission.

174 It is worth noting, however, that families homeported overseas had volunteered for the posting, meaning that wives were perhaps more inclined to support their husbands' decisions to reenlist. In a 1978 study for the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego, Arne Beck and D. Stephen Nice found a statistically small number of families (some 6 percent) who had been unable to complete their tours abroad. The authors put this down to "extreme personal or family stress." Nice and Beck, *Cross Cultural Adjustment of Military Families Overseas* (San Diego: Naval Health Research Center, 1978), 2 (available online from DTIC, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA118119.pdf).

175 Juan de Onis, "6th Fleet Enjoys 'Home' in Athens," *New York Times*, 26 December 1972.

176 In 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, leading to the eventual collapse of the Greek military junta. Greece's restored civilian government ended the U.S. Navy's homeporting arrangements at Piraeus in the summer of 1975. See Steven V. Roberts, "Greek Base Shift Is Termed a Ploy," *New York Times*, 7 April 1974; Roberts, "Caramanlis on TV," *New York Times*, 16 August 1974; and "Some Navy Wives Favor Greek Home-Port Plan," *New York Times*, 25 May 1975.

177 See Kotani Tetsuo, "Presence and Credibility: Homeporting the USS *Midway* at Yokosuka," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 15 (2008): 51–76.

CONCLUSION

After the Second World War, several senior military wives took up the habit of publishing (and republishing) guidebooks targeted at more junior military spouses.[178] In the traditionalist opinion of the authors, these books were intended to teach younger service wives how to be better spouses to their husbands, and to the Navy.[179] In a key Navy text of this genre, 1967's *The Sailor's Wife*, Lucy G. Wright provided advice on how best to handle the delicate subject of reenlistment. "If your husband hasn't decided definitely whether he wants to ship over or leave the Navy," Wright wrote, "he will, of course, want your opinion about what to do." The natural course would be for unhappy wives to argue against reenlistment and for happy wives to argue the contrary, she noted. "Well, either way," Wright continued, "say what you honestly think will be better for him, but—and I can't emphasize this point too strongly—*the final decision must be his*." She added that "he has to make up his own mind and feel that what he decides to do is right for him."[180]

In 1977, exactly a decade after the last reprinting of Wright's ubiquitous guidebook, the Naval Institute Press published a third edition of *The Sailor's Wife*, this time penned by a new author—Jean Ebbert. Her advice for the prospective reenlistment conversation sat in marked contrast to the older version. "As you've learned from this book and from your own experience," Ebbert wrote, "his naval service has very much involved you, and your opinions and reactions to Navy life are a very important part of his considerations on whether or not to reenlist." Ebbert advised that much of the husband's decision-making process would hinge on how he thought his future career might unfold in the Navy. "He's the one who must get the information about what the Navy might hold for him," she wrote, "but you can help by learning something about the possibilities yourself, so you can make better sense of whatever he learns." In the end, Ebbert summarized,

178 See, for example, Anne Briscoe Pye and Nancy Shea, *The Navy Wife* (1942; repr., New York: Harper & Row, 1967); Shea, *The Air Force Wife* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951); and Shea, *The Army Wife* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954).

179 For commentary on this genre of writing, see Alt and Stone, *Campfollowing*, 115.

180 Lucy G. Wright, *The Sailor's Wife* (1962; repr., Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1967), 94. Italics in the original.

"If you've encouraged each other to express yourselves freely, if you've looked at all sides of the question, then more than likely you'll come to a wise decision."[181] The evolution in thinking between Wright in 1967 and Ebbert in 1977 reflected the transformative influence of the women's movement in empowering Navy wives. It also demonstrated the Navy's evolution in response to this activism and changing discourse. No longer relegated to the sidelines, Navy wives were considered an important voice within the institution.[182]

As part of Admiral Zumwalt's reform agenda, Navy wives had won recognition and an equal footing. At the same time, the Navy's retention crisis, while not eliminated, had been alleviated—though the economic recessions of 1969–70 and 1973–75 may have played a role in motivating more sailors to reenlist.[183] Nevertheless, between January 1970 and March 1972, the first-term reenlistment rate in the Navy rose from 10.3 to over 23 percent. The second-term reenlistment rate climbed from 69 percent in January 1970 to 80 percent in March 1972.[184] The data for officers showed more modest improvements in retention, though their rates started at a higher footing than those of enlisted sailors. By the time Zumwalt left his position in 1974, the first-term reenlistment rate for the fiscal year had reached 32.9 percent.[185]

181 Jean Ebbert, *The Sailor's Wife*, 3rd ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1977), 172–73.

182 For a contemporaneous discussion of the effects of feminist discourses on Navy wives, see Patricia J. Thomas and Kathleen P. Durning, *Role Affiliation and Attitudes of Navy Wives* (San Diego: Naval Personnel Research and Development Center, 1980) (available online from DTIC, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA079630.pdf).

183 Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy*, 176.

184 Trezise, "RSG: Lines of Communication, Paths of Action," 7.

185 Zumwalt, *On Watch*, 271.

First-Term Reenlistment Rates for Enlisted Personnel in the U.S. Military, 1965–72

	Navy	Army (Reg.)	Air Force	Marines	DOD Avg.
1965	22.8	25.7	25.5	16.3	24.0
1966	23.7	28.0	18.9	16.3	23.2
1967	18.9	23.7	16.8	10.6	18.8
1968	16.8	28.0	18.1	11.9	19.6
1969	16.3	17.4	15.2	7.4	14.9
1970	10.3	18.3	15.8	4.7	13.5
1971	17.0	18.6	20.3	7.9	17.3
1972	23.2	10.2	32.6	12.4	18.6

Source: Vice Adm. David H. Bagley, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, memorandum for Chief of Naval Operations, "Monthly Enlisted Reenlistment Report for December 1972," 22 January 1973, box 856, folder 4: CNO Retention Study Group, CNO Immediate Office Files, 1970–79, AR, NHHC.

After Admiral Zumwalt retired, the Navy's family policy continued to evolve. In 1978, the Norfolk Family Awareness Conference heralded the launching of the Navy Family Support Program, which was renamed Fleet and Family Support in 2001.[186] In the 1980s and 1990s, the Navy continued to deliver key social services to families. It also began to grapple with even more complicated questions of family policy. By the late 1970s, there were 17,000 single-parent families in the Navy; two-thirds of them were led by men.[187] The Navy now had to consider what constituted a family and how the service could best support single parents and dual–military career families.[188] With the influx of active-duty women sailors, Navy husbands joined the ranks of wives, forever changing what it meant to be a spouse

186 In its history, the program has operated family service centers around the world. See Hunter, *Families under the Flag*, 89. For the full history of these developments, see O'Keefe, *Launching the Navy Family Support Program*.

187 Watkins, foreword to Hunter and Nice, *Military Families,* xi.

188 See Dennis K. Orthner and Richard J. Brown III, "Single-Parent Fathers: Implications for the Military Family," in Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, 88–102.

in the Navy.[189] Navy leaders grappled with the role of Navy husband, and how his needs as a spouse differed from those of Navy wives.

These were not questions with easy answers, and they were far from the only difficult social issues facing the Navy as it sailed into the twenty-first century. But the reforms of the early 1970s had set the institution on a new footing, imparting the Navy with a strong framework through which commanders, sailors, and their spouses could respond, together, to enduring challenges with innovative and efficient solutions. In succeeding decades, the Navy continued to recognize and value the strategic role that family members—and especially spouses—played in sailors' retention and readiness.

A contemporary Navy spouse waves goodbye to her husband aboard the guided-missile destroyer *O'Kane* (DDG-77) as it departs Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, for a deployment to the Western Pacific, 23 March 2012. (Defense Visual Information Distribution Service [DVIDS] 547421.)

189 By 1977, 20,000 enlisted women were serving in the Navy, up fourfold from 1972. Watkins, foreword to Hunter and Nice, *Military Families*, viii.

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