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SUBJ/2025 CNO 34 PROFESSIONAL READING PROGRAM//

RMKS/1. Shipmates, the U.S. Navy is, and must remain, the most formidable maritime fighting force the world has ever known. Our ability to deter, fight, and win depends not just on ships and aircraft, but on the sharpness of our minds, the strength of our character, and the resilience of our bodies.

2. Reading is a force multiplier. It equips us with the knowledge, perspective, and critical thinking necessary to lead, to innovate, and to prevail in the unforgiving crucible of combat. This list is not political, not trendy, and not designed to check a box. It is chosen deliberately to sharpen everyone in the Navy from the halls of the Pentagon to the forward-deployed deckplates in order to enhance our warriors ethos.

3. These are books I've found useful in my development as a Sailor and a leader to encourage critical thinking, professional development, and discussion. The views expressed in the recommended books are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Navy, Department of War, or the United States Government.

4. I have organized the books into categories aligned with my priorities: Foundry, Fleet, Fight - and added Total Sailor, which encompasses character, competence, decision-making, nutrition, and the whole person. Each category links to who we are, how we prepare, and how we fight.

5. This is a professional reading list-but it is also a call to reflection, discussion, and growth. Use these books in your wardrooms, your Chiefs' Messes, and with your civilian teams. Ask tough questions. Challenge assumptions. Expand your thinking as a life-long learner.

6. "Foundry" books:

- a. The Box: How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger (Marc Levinson)
- b. Freedom's Forge: How American Business Produced Victory in World War II (Arthur Herman)
- c. Skunk Works: A Personal Memoir of My Years at Lockheed (Ben R. Rich)
- d. The Origins of Victory: How Disruptive Military Innovation Determines the Fates of Great Powers (Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr.)
- e. Innovating Victory: Naval Technology in Three Wars (Vincent P. O'Hara and Leonard R. Heinz)

7. "Foundry" discussion questions:

- a. How do industrial breakthroughs change the character of naval warfare?
- b. What lessons from WWII's industrial surge apply to today's defense industrial base?

8. "Fleet" books:

- a. Six Frigates: The Epic History of the Founding of the U.S. Navy (Ian W. Toll)
- b. The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors: The Extraordinary World War II Story of the U.S. Navy's Finest Hour (James D. Hornfischer)
- c. A Brief Guide to Maritime Strategy (James R. Holmes)
- d. Deterrence (Lawrence Freedman)
- e. The Eurasian Century: Hot Wars, Cold Wars, and the Making of the Modern World (Hal Brands)

9. "Fleet" discussion questions:

- a. What role does history play in shaping the modern fleet's doctrine?
- b. How should we balance global presence with combat readiness?

10. "Fight" books:

- a. Under the Southern Cross: The South Pacific Air Campaign Against Rabaul (Thomas McKelvey Cleaver)
- b. The Battle of Tassafaronga (Russell Crenshaw Jr.)
- c. Fleet Tactics and Naval Operations, Third Edition (Wayne P. Hughes Jr. and Robert P. Girrier)
- d. AI at War: How Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, and Machine Learning are Changing Naval Warfare (Edited by Sam J. Tangredi and George Galdorisi)
- e. The Neptune Factor: Alfred Thayer Mahan and the Concept of Sea Power (Nicholas A. Lambert)

11. "Fight" discussion questions:

- a. How do we prepare tactically for a fight we cannot fully predict?
- b. What enduring truths of naval warfare remain constant despite new technologies?

12. "Total Sailor: Character" books:

- a. Marcus Aurelius - Meditations: Adapted for the Contemporary Reader (Translated by James Harris)
- b. Legacy: What The All Blacks Can Teach Us About the Business of Life (James Kerr)
- c. Man's Search for Meaning (Viktor E. Frankl)

13. "Total Sailor: Character" discussion question:

- a. How do leaders balance humility and authority in command?

14. "Total Sailor: Competence" books:

- a. So Good They Can't Ignore You: Why Skills Trump Passion in the Quest For Work You Love (Cal Newport)
- b. The Design of Everyday Things: Revised and Expanded Edition (Don Norman)
- c. The Talent Code: Greatness Isn't Born. It's Grown. Here's How. (Daniel Coyle)

15. "Total Sailor: Competence" discussion question:

- a. What role does technical mastery play in building confidence?

16. "Total Sailor: Decision-Making" books:
  - a. Thinking in Bets: Making Smarter Decisions When You Don't Have All the Facts (Annie Duke)
  - b. Farsighted: How We Make the Decisions That Matter the Most (Steven Johnson)
  - c. Predictably Irrational, Revised and Expanded Edition: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions (Dan Ariely)
17. "Total Sailor: Decision-Making" discussion question:
  - a. How do leaders make high-risk decisions with incomplete information?
18. "Total Sailor: Nutrition & Fitness" books:
  - a. Peak: The New Science of Athletic Performance That is Revolutionizing Sports (Marc Bubbs)
  - b. The Performance Cortex: How Neuroscience is Redefining Athletic Genius (Zach Schonbrun)
  - c. Why We Sleep: Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams (Matthew Walker)
19. "Total Sailor: Nutrition & Fitness" discussion question:
  - a. What parallels exist between elite athletic performance and Sailor readiness?
20. "Total Sailor: Whole Person" books:
  - a. Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance (Angela Duckworth)
  - b. Can't Hurt Me: Master Your Mind and Defy the Odds (David Goggins)
  - c. Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage (Alfred Lansing)
21. "Total Sailor: Whole Person" discussion question:
  - a. How does personal resilience improve unit cohesion and readiness in combat?
22. Built in the Foundry - Tempered in the Fleet - Forged to Fight.
23. ADM Daryl Caudle, 34th Chief of Naval Operations sends.

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