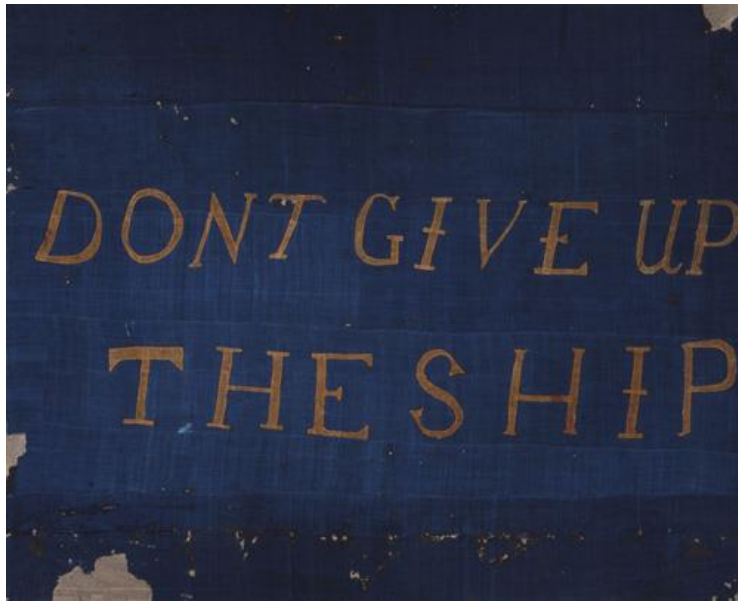


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# DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP

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A Working Paper



Battle flag of Oliver Hazard Perry aboard USS Niagara in 1813

THE CALVERT TASK GROUP  
*Alumni Defending USNA*

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## Who We Are

The Calvert Task Group was formed in 2021 as an association of U.S. Naval Academy alumni, led by members of the class of 1969. Our members believe that American Service Academies are exceptional institutions for developing future leaders prepared to assume the highest responsibilities of command citizenship and government. Our class motto – “Non Sibi” or “Not Self” – appears in the crest inscribed on our class rings and is a common bond that has molded our lives for more than half a century.

We believe we can influence debate and effect change to the present course of the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy, and our nation. “Don’t give up the ship” is among the most famous of all Navy quotations and reflects the fact that our traditions are strong and have passed the test of time. We believe that there must be universal priorities at the United States Naval Academy, and it all begins with the mission. We understand the deep meaning of “Don’t give up the ship” as it applies to everything we do. It empowers our group to defend our ship of state as represented by the Constitution, our Navy, and the United States Naval Academy. We understand that if we are not part of the solution, we are part of the problem. We are committed.

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## Mission Statement

**To support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the United States Naval Academy.**

In this context, we refer to the Mission of the Naval Academy, which states,

*“To develop Midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders how are dedicated to career of Naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government.”*

This is a high standard, unlike any other institution of higher learning except for the other service academies. We believe that it is a standard that cannot be compromised by

incorporating an implied curriculum or institutional culture which yields to the corrosive effects of ideologies that are contrary to the precepts of our Constitution. Understanding the dynamics of a complex and dangerous world is not the same as embracing divisive concepts that threaten to destroy the cohesive unity that is essential to good order and discipline in a combat environment. The United States Naval Academy must be better than that.

### **Guiding Principles**

Every four years a newly elected president swears, not only to protect and defend, but to preserve the Constitution. That oath is included in the last paragraph of Article 2, Section 1 of the Constitution itself, affirming how strongly the framers desired the preservation of that document. Our guiding principles are best described by the words of Martin Luther King, who stated that people should be judged by the content of their character, not the color of their skin.

In that spirit, we are committed to the principle that as much as is humanly possible, skin color must be eliminated from the public discourse wherever and whenever it is used to distinguish one group of individuals from another. We must ensure that skin color as a discriminator must be replaced by recognition of the more important human discriminators of character, courage, honor, and commitment. If we are to train and educate future leaders having those characteristics, then those and not skin color must be the primary focus of our attention.

### **Concerns**

We perceive a radical political element making serious attempts to change the focus of our Constitutional Republic, a national challenge without historical precedent. The insidious nature of this revisionist agenda is permeating our public-school systems and shaping divisive cultural changes in our society, the military, and the U.S. Naval Academy.

Our primary concern is that every Midshipman in the Brigade is faced with an emerging campus culture they did not anticipate. Each class takes the same oath, the significance of which now seems in jeopardy as it is threatened by required reading, training sessions and an underlying institutional culture that betrays the values of courage, honor, and commitment. This betrayal raises serious concern as to how these young leaders will face the threats of a more dangerous world with the expectations that they will assume the mantle of military leadership soon.



## **Goals and Objectives**

### **Change to Curriculum**

Effect changes to the current course of education at the Naval Academy to refocus on developing apolitical leaders of courage, character, and commitment. Ensure balance is brought back into the Academy curriculum, including emphasis on the Constitution and American exceptionalism, while eliminating a subculture that includes divisive propaganda and racial bias.

### **Engage Centers of Influence**

Engage USNA command structure, key academic departments (Leadership and Ethics?) and other key elements of the internal Academy structure in constructive dialogue on the need for unity vice divisiveness culture. Also, engage centers of influence in Congress, the media, military support organizations and other sympathetic voices.

### **Enlist Governance Groups**

Approach and enlist existing governance groups such as the USNA Board of Visitors, the Athletic and Scholarship Board of Trustees, and any/all alumni organizations.

### **Naval Academy Advisory Board**

Support efforts to define and promote a Naval Academy Advocacy Advisory Board consisting of retired Flag officers to influence our mission at the highest levels of government.

### **Recruit Spokespersons**

Recruit spokespersons for our cause to confront these issues with all the strength our class can muster.

## **Rebuttals to Current Initiatives**

We are aware of at least one other initiative by USNA alumni that appears to be in favor of Critical Race Theory education at the Naval Academy. We agree with the premise that, “It is not enough to say that racism will not be tolerated...” But we also believe that multiple insidious changes proposed and now being implemented, are racist in their own right and tie back to the new CRT dogma. They are infecting the culture of the United States Naval Academy in a way that is contrary to its mission. It is not enough for us to be merely against those changes. We must know what we stand for and be able to articulate those beliefs for the implementation of inspired actions.

### **Mirror Fleet Diversity**

It is not a goal of the United States Naval Academy to build a USNA demographic that accurately reflects the fleet. Any bias in the Blue and Gold Officer Program should be eliminated where it exists and there must always be transparency and accountability in admissions, attrition, and commissioning processes. But to say that the Academy demographic must accurately reflect the fleet is not in the best interests of the institution. The goal for incoming enrollees must be “the best and the brightest” with recognition that diversity in demographics is an important factor. Pure definition of incoming candidates based on demographics implies a quota system that would be every bit as racist and divisive as the alleged problem. The Mission of the Academy is to “To develop Midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty...” There is nothing in the Academy mission that implies that it should be a “social justice” experiment for the Fleet.

### **Anti-Racist Faculty Training**

Training trainers has long been an important element in the Navy and is seen as a way to re-emphasize core principles as well as technical knowledge. However, we believe that any training that leads to categorizing the Brigade by race, is intolerable. We reiterate Justice Roberts’ wisdom in our guiding principles, “The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race.” We see “hidden histories, systemic racism and implicit bias as code words for dividing the Brigade into racial groups. The U.S. Naval Academy must never train its trainers to teach any kind of discrimination.

### **Anti-Racist Brigade Curriculum**

As noted above with respect to the faculty, we do not believe mandatory ant-racism and bias curriculum is in the best interest of the Academy because it only serves to highlight inconsequential differences rather than focusing on unity and cohesiveness which are

key to combat unit effectiveness. Such a curriculum serves only to invite dissonance, division, and discord within the Brigade rather than promoting the ideals that drew these talented young men and women to the Academy in the first place. Our Midshipmen are all sufficiently intelligent to recognize bias and bigotry when they see it. They do not need social learning workshops to teach them the clear differences between right and wrong, especially when such training takes time away from what should be the main focus of their education.

### **@BlackAtUSNA**

This may be the most divisive aspect of what we have seen and to which we are opposed. Once again, we view this as completely contrary to Dr. King's and Chief Justice Roberts' remarks. Anything that serves to highlight differences rather than promote unity is most certainly destructive to the Academy's mission. Words matter. We would much prefer to see an Instagram page titled, "@UnityAtUSNA that would serve to draw the Brigade together rather than split it apart. We believe that a strong focus on unity and teamwork is the best way to imbue Midshipmen with the kinds of courage and ethical standards that are critical to developing tomorrow's military leaders. Done properly, it will make bias and bigotry disappear for lack of interest.



## Summary and Conclusions

After much deliberation and discussions among members of the Class of 1969 and other members of The Calvert Group, we concluded that the institution that taught us courage, honor and commitment has strayed from its mission and is risking the security of the United States because of a weakened Navy. We come to this conclusion with great apprehension and distress but are buttressed by the fact that our sister academies are experiencing similar difficulties. We are in communication with a substantial number of graduates of all three Service Academies who are deeply concerned for the future of our institutions, our services, and our nation.

We continue to come back to our guiding principles, especially the statement that, "The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race." [Chief Justice John Roberts] We continue to believe that any actions that highlight difference in lieu of unity represent more subtle types of discrimination that are more dangerous than the forms they propose to fight. The danger is masked in Aesopian language like racial equity, systematic change, and institutional ideals, but the actions proposed can only result in dissonance, division, and discord in the ranks. We are committed to fighting this virus which threatens the Naval Academy, the Navy, and our nation.

## Message

In the final analysis, our message is simple and harkens back to the old adage, "United we stand, divided we fall." We find current policies and practices affecting the USNA culture to be divisive and are denigrating the good order and discipline of the institution. We are unwilling to accept any policies that put our Academy, our Navy, and our nation in peril. We were all willing and many did go in harm's way to protect the Constitution and the nation. Anything that threatens that mentality cannot be tolerated.