

**A:** "If possible, he or she can come to Washington and see me or, at least, telephone or write a letter—all of this after the individuals have tried to solve their problems within the local chain of command. All correspondence and phone calls are answered. Fact is, every year my staff researches and drafts official correspondence in answer to more than 1,000 letters originating with Navy personnel, their dependents and others. Additionally, we provide answers to more than 7,000 phone queries annually."

**Q:** Do you actually "go to bat" for individuals with problems?

**A:** "If individuals have legitimate problems that have not been resolved at the local command level, then I'll go to bat for them. If someone is simply bellyaching about Navy policy, then I'm not going to support such an individual. However, when someone has a genuine problem—even if it doesn't affect the entire Navy—I'm going to support that individual anyway I can."

**Q:** You advocate open and candid conversation between juniors and seniors "to ensure a smooth operating chain of command." Some people now feel it necessary to explain the reason for every order to subordinates. Is this what you intended?

**A:** "I wasn't advocating the explaining of every order and regulation. But, if seniors are willing to communicate and explain exactly what they are trying to accomplish and why, individuals should have a greater trust and respect for authority."

"Part and parcel of this is 'command listening,' so the communication circle is complete with each party understanding the position of the other."

**Q:** Why did you initiate a program which deferred automatic advancements for "A" school graduates until after a 4- to 8-month indoctrination period at their first command?

**A:** "A frequent complaint by petty officers and commanding officers is that "instant POs" don't have the capability

