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# Navy Gets the POW Word

## Washington

When the Navy picks this year's admirals, officers who were POWs should go to the top of the list, Navy Secretary John W. Warner says.

In an attempt to shake up traditionally conservative promotion practices, Warner said Thursday that Navy captains who are experts in electronics, foreign affairs or spacecraft should not lose out just because they spent less time commanding ships or planes than other officers.

In a letter to Admiral Bernard A. Cleary, president of the selection board that chooses rear admirals from the Navy's captains, Warner said of the POWs:

"Whereas their imprisonment prevented them from obtaining line and specialist experience, their misfortunes did provide them with the occasion to demonstrate extraordinary moral strength, leadership and loy-

alty to their countrymen."

He said the POWs loss of traditional kinds of professional experience "may well be outweighed by their gain in qualities of strengthened leadership."

At least 16 Navy captains are among the POWs who have returned so far, and Warner told the board they "merit the greatest of thoroughness in your review."

*Associated Press*