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President's Notes

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PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Of all the domestic sources of military policy, the economic factor is the one which most immediately and most persistently demands attention. The importance of "defense economics" is increasingly recognized, but the subject can find few exponents and fewer still with . . . the ability to communicate with laymen.

K. Booth,
Navies and Foreign Policy



In my discussions with others concerning the course of instruction at the Naval War College I am often asked why the curriculum includes a course in Defense Economics and Decision Making (DEDM). Generally those challenging the need for such a course focus their questions on how DEDM supports the more practical and operationally-oriented elements of the college curriculum. In responding to such queries, one must assume that the questioner is willing to concede the basic premise that success in war is irrevocably linked to the wise choice and acquisition of forces during peacetime. This is especially true today in the "come as you are war" era, because outcomes will be determined by the forces in being, their strategic disposition, the innovative tactics and the courage and resolution of the fighting men and their commanders. We no longer have the luxury of an extended period of time in which to create the forces for war. Thus, choosing and defending required military forces for the eighties and beyond is an important and very complex responsibility of senior military officers and their supporting staffs. The importance of this responsibility increases as competing claims on federal resources become more intense.

The major focus of our Defense Economics and Decision Making course

is the theory and methodology underlying acquisition and application of human and monetary resources when building military forces, recognizing the risks and uncertainties inherent in the process. The goal of the course is to provide our students with a sound understanding and perspective so that their views are not influenced solely by past experience and functional orientation.

The following areas of the DEDM curriculum are emphasized:

- The domestic and international economic environments with concentration on the security implications of scarce resources.
- Contrasts in the nature of resource applications between Allies and the Warsaw Pact countries.
- The concepts and major long-run issues involved in the choices of competing strategic, general purpose, and contingency forces and individual and organizational influences on decisionmaking in this area.
- Strategies for executive level direction and resource allocation within large, complex national security agencies.
- A concluding simulation that examines the current Consolidated Guidance requiring detailed student research into actual and critical

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Program Decision Memoranda for the Fiscal Year 1982 through 1986 defense program.

Uniquely designed for the Naval War College, DEDM is taught from the perspective of a senior decisionmaker and attempts to force an integrative view of the competing pressures that make it difficult to achieve a balance of military forces and acquire them in the adequacy dictated by present and future threats. The students begin their study with a close examination of the economic sources of cooperation and probable conflict, analyzing linkages between national security, economic interdependencies, and foreign economic policy. The national security implications of the relations between industrial nations and developing nations with special emphasis on U.S. trade and sea lines of communication are then examined. Net economic assessments are undertaken to identify the methods, nature and levels of Soviet resource allocation to defense and to determine potential military intentions based on present and future Warsaw Pact economic security requirements.

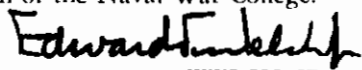
After surveying the economic roots of potential future conflict, the course shifts to alternative concepts and techniques for choosing and defending future military forces. Theory and practical cases are blended to enhance student ability to analyze the issues involved. Sample cases in this area of the course include: Strategic Nuclear Force Alternatives, Naval Force Planning Concepts, Issues and Effectiveness Analysis, The Use and Limitations of Campaign Analysis Techniques, NATO Force Concepts, Issues and the Use of Limitations of Land Combat Modeling, and Present and Future Contingency Force Alternatives.

The course is treated in the context of the various external and internal pressures on naval decisionmakers.

Special emphasis is placed on both the

use and especially the limits of analysis techniques. Moreover, through other course offerings, the student is required to assess carefully certain organizational and behavioral factors that can strongly influence both the process of decision-making and the subsequent commitment or lack of commitment to the implementation of decisions that have been made. After completing this part of the program, the student should be able to participate meaningfully and effectively either as a staff officer or decisionmaker for the complex and competing issues involved in the choices of future military forces. The track record indicates this presumption is valid. Responses to questionnaires from past graduates indicate that the course is equally useful to those in the fleet and to those assigned staff duty.

A strong and free economy has always been dependent on an adequate level of military force. In this era of economic interdependencies this truth has never been more apparent. It is, however, also true that a strong military capability is centrally dependent on a vibrant and healthy economy. The degree to which those who plan and defend the acquisition of military force are able to understand and articulate these important interrelationships is related to the wise choice and application of natural resources to defense. That is the purpose of our DEDM course and I believe it to be as vital and relevant to our students as a thorough understanding of the recurring themes of warfare throughout history and the complexities of modern naval warfare today. Each facet of our course seeks to contribute to the education of the true professional officer and to the fulfillment of the mission of the Naval War College.



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