

# **DIA director points to skills leaders need for new international environment**

*Thomas Zimmerman, Army War College Public Affairs Office*

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Jan. 4, 2012 -- A world in transition, uncertain challenges, and the need for even more interagency and international cooperation are just a few of the tests that will face students of the Army War College Class of 2012 when they graduate, according to the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Lt. Gen. Ronald Burgess, DIA director, discussed these challenges and more as part of the Francis W. De Serio Lecture series, Jan. 4.

Burgess reviewed the significant international developments of the past 18 months, including the end of the Iraq War, the death of Osama bin Laden, the continuing effects of the Arab Spring and the impacts of social media in Egypt and Syria.

“Many of you will be at the center of the challenges we face,” said Burgess. “The leaders of today and tomorrow must have the skills needed to operate within an accelerating pace of change -- one in which flexibility and continuous adaptation are required. This is our new baseline.”

“You are here to broaden your minds and to begin to contemplate the breadth of responsibilities yet to come, and to contemplate the evolving challenges confronting our nation,” he said. Schools like the Army War College are important for developing mental agility and a grasp of the role of relationships. The students will need to recognize the need for information sharing and cooperation both interagency and with our international partners,” he said.

Instincts, intuition and integrity are vital traits for future leaders, according to Burgess. These will guide them as they balance relationships and make decisions based on incomplete and ambiguous information.

“In the end, as tomorrow’s senior military officers, how you eventually apply what you have learned in combat at such great costs, may be among the most honorable and fitting ways to honor those who joined you in battle and failed to return home,” he said.

“Your most important contributions and your greatest legacy lie ahead. The faculty, readings and lectures in these hallowed halls will enable your future success as tomorrow’s national military leaders.”

The Bliss Hall lecture to students and faculty was sponsored by the Army War College Foundation, honoring the memory of Francis W. De Serio, USAWC Class of 1972.

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 01 February 2012