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By G.K. Cunningham



Gen. Lloyd Austin, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, was one of the guest speakers during a recent Combined/ Joint Forces Land Component Commander Course held at the Army War College.

On July 23-27, the U.S. Army War College again hosts the Combined/Joint Force Land Component Commander course, or C/JFLCC course. The program is held three times annually in Collins Hall at Carlisle Barracks.

In June 2003, the Chief of Staff of the Army directed a strategic leader professional military education program be developed to build upon the very positive results of Army-Marine cooperation in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The pilot C/JFLCC course was successfully completed in February 2004. “This course is the 25th course to be held at Carlisle Barracks and represents the U.S. Army War College’s contribution to the education and development of general and flag officers as strategic leaders,” says **Deborah Knowles**, the course’s program manager.

The mission of the program is to prepare senior officers to function effectively as C/JFLCC commanders in joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environments. Each course is seminar based, limited to 16 general officers or executive leaders from the U.S. Armed Forces, coalition partners, and often the Department of State. The course is designed for corps and division commanders and deputy/assistant commanders, and commanders of equivalent theater-level joint or service commands. The selected commanders will need to plan, prepare for, and execute land-centric military campaigns that provide coalition commanders with capabilities to achieve policy objectives through

unified land operations. The mid-year session is multinational in scope, with increased participation by general and flag officers from current and potential coalition partners.

This seminar-based course challenges general and flag officers to examine the key elements of developing and executing land component command functions at the theater level in support of joint force commanders and in conjunction with air, maritime, and special operations functional commands. Retired General **David D. McKiernan** guides an examination of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a primary case study which explores the challenges of commanding unified land operations. Other current operations and theater-level political-military subjects are also addressed. The course also includes a rigorous small-group exercise that challenges the attendees to devise solutions and issue guidance on deploying, forming, controlling, protecting, operating, and sustaining a combined and joint land command at the theater and operational level of war.

The exercise sessions and discussions are guided by senior advisors, who are retired general officers who served previously as theater-level joint and combined commanders. These highly qualified experts provide experience-based mentoring, teaching, and advice to the multinational participants throughout the course.

The C/JFLCC course remains centered on landpower to serve the U.S. Army War College mission of educating strategic leaders for the wise and effective application of national power. This mission is timeless. As historian **T. R. Fehrenbach** so eloquently pointed out in his masterpiece on the 20th century Korean conflict, *This Kind of War*, “You may fly over a land forever; you may bomb it, atomize it, pulverize it, and wipe it clean if life?but if you desire to defend it, protect it, and keep it for civilization, you must do this on the ground, the way the Roman legions did.”

The Army War College is uniquely postured to develop the strategic commanders who will provide leadership to influence human activity in the domain where people dwell, where their business is conducted, and where their values are maintained?the land. The course covers a full range of issues related to landpower, from the mere presence of Soldiers on the ground to the employment of a wide range of kinetic and nonkinetic actions and lethal and nonlethal weapons.

As the role of joint and combined land forces changes to match different threats and military environments, the course adapts to include pertinent and timely military topics. Over past C/JFLCC courses, the United States and its coalition partners have concentrated on fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, both of which transformed into counterinsurgency and stability operations. As these conflicts transition, the U.S. Army looks ahead to fulfilling a broader range of missions, and CJFLCC course content is changing to address the pragmatic application of landpower in any theater and in any emerging operating environment. Future C/JFLCC commanders must be prepared to deter and defeat

aggression in new and unanticipated areas of operations, preserving strategic initiative despite antiaccess and area denial challenges. Even as the course adapts to include operating effectively in cyberspace, it returns to issues that confronted U.S. and coalition forces in Operation Iraq Freedom, in setting the theater without preset mission command and in-place logistics infrastructure.

The C/JFLCC course will take on an even greater importance in the coming decade. U.S. Army Chief of Staff General **Raymond T. Odierno** declared in the *2012 Army Strategic Planning Guidance* that “the United States, and the Army, confronts an increasingly complex environment and an uncertain future.” He pointed out that “operational adaptability requires appropriately managing and developing the leaders the Army needs to face future challenges.” Through the Combined/Joint Force Land Component Commander course, the U.S Army War College continues to work proactively to accomplish that goal. “The C/JFLCC program is a great course that expanded my professional relationships and broadened my perspectives. This week allowed me to challenge the way I look at problem sets and confirm what I know?and don’t know,” said a recent graduate.

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 06 July 2012