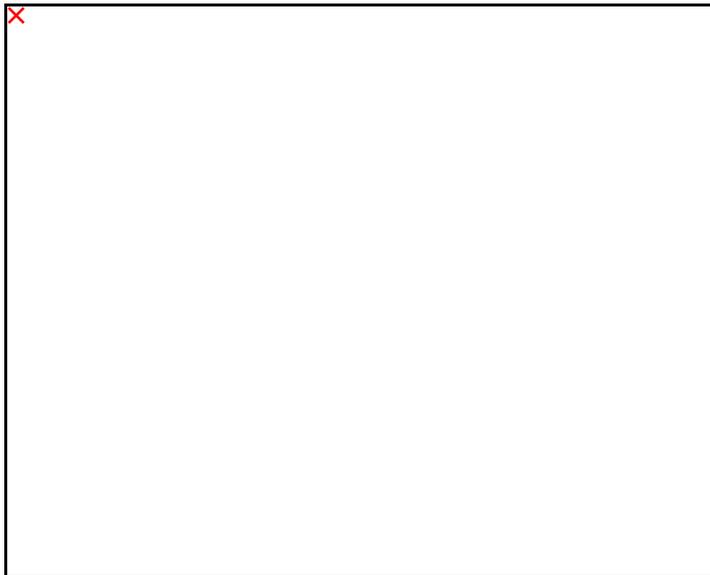


Ethical, moral factors of strategic decisions

Thomas Zimmerman, Army War College Public Affairs Office

USAWC students reminded of ethical, moral factors of strategic decision making



Sir David Omand spoke to USAWC students about ethical, moral factors of strategic decision making in Bliss Hall on Nov. 12. Photo by Scott Finger.

Nov. 12, 2009 -- Army War College students gained valuable insights and advice from a British perspective about how important strategic planning is during a lecture by Sir David Omand in Bliss Hall Nov. 12.

Omand, currently a visiting professor in the War Studies dept at King's College in London, is a former senior British civil servant. He spent much of his career in the Ministry of Defence, including as Deputy Secretary for Policy, as Under Secretary in charge of the defence programme, and as Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.

He focused his remarks on the ethics of making decisions at the strategic level and how important it was that when making these decisions that you don't allow the tactical or operational needs to override the strategic vision.

Omand also pointed out how it is very easy to win tactically and lose strategically. Omand used historical examples like the use of double agents during World War II and decisions made during conflicts with the IRA. During both of these situations tough choice had to be made at the strategic, tactical and operational level that had varying degrees of success in the months and years later.

The speaker provided the students with plenty to discuss in seminar according to **Lt. Col. Andy Lippert**.

"I gauge the speaker's success not only on the talk and question and answer period but on the questions it raises inside of me and my seminar mates," he said. "In this case I think he gave us a lot to think and talk about in seminar."

Col. Philip Sherwood, USAWC International Fellow from England, agreed.

"There are big moral and ethical issues that face us in decision making," he said. "It was fascinating to hear the cases studies of the complexity of planning an operation. There are few people who could speak so eloquently on this topic."

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 12 November 2009