

SUMMARY OF ORIENTATION UNIT  
AND  
INTRODUCTION TO EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

9 September 1955

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INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Washington, D. C.

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9 September 1955

COLONEL WALSH: Colonel Baird, Captain McCaffree, gentlemen: This afternoon, as you have noted from the weekly schedule, we have come to a turning point in the course. We are going to take a look at what we did in the last few weeks. Colonel Dick Barrett is going to do that in the first part of this meeting. Then we will take a look at what we will do next week on executive development.

You, the student body, have asked for a period like this. Some of you individually have talked to various members of the faculty, asking questions about the course at lunch, or over a cup of coffee, or even over a drink at the officers club. In a larger sense, the student body has asked about the course by answers to questionnaires given to previous classes. The classes of other years have indicated an interest in hearing an explanation of various parts of the course and their interrelation.

To give you a brief faculty point of view on the Orientation Unit of the course, we are going to take a look at what we have been doing so far.

For the next fifteen minutes or so, I shall ask Colonel Barrett to lead us in that attempt to look back. He will try to integrate what you have been doing. Dick.

COLONEL BARRETT: General Calhoun, gentlemen: When Jim assigned me to give this short talk summing up the work on the Orientation Unit, the first question that came to mind was: How do I do it?

I have read many papers and have been told by many people that, by virtue of the fact that I wear a uniform, I am afflicted with, or blessed with, a military mind--it follows naturally. I have heard it so many times and read it so many times I have come to believe it--and to act on it.

The military mind, I understand, always proceeds by the numbers, so when I was given this task I naturally took it by the numbers. The first number that comes to mind in summing up the work and objectives of the Orientation Unit is to look up a definition. Let's get a definition. We have been trying to orient you. What does it mean? To orient: verb transitive--first definition, per Mr. Webster: "To cause to face toward the East as in worship."

Well, the second thing you do by numbers is say: "Have we done this?" At first I thought we had. It seemed to me that, at 0845 every morning when the buzzer buzzes, you all face the East, cross the "Bridge of Sighs" and assemble in Auditorium B--as in worship. Some of you even may close your eyes from time to time--as in worship. Then I gave that a second thought, and there was something wrong. You don't face the East; you face the West. Obviously the definition does not apply.

Proceeding still by the numbers, I looked at definition No. 2-- "To set right by adjusting to facts or principles; to put (especially one's self) into correct position or relation; to acquaint (especially one's self) with the existing situation." Now, here we begin to hit pay dirt. This is generally the purpose we have had in mind, and we believe you had in mind, during the Orientation Unit. This has been the general process. Now, let's proceed from the general to the particular.

How have we been trying to help you "to acquaint (especially one's self) with the existing situation; to put (especially one's self) into correct position or relation?"

The first facet of the existing situation is that you have started a ten-months' assignment to the Economic Mobilization Course, 1955-56. Therefore, we started out by serving you a set of lectures (two by Louis Hunter) and providing reading assignments that were intended to help you arrive at an understanding of the field of your studies as a whole. This was done by definition and description and by tracing the history of the process of economic mobilization, particularly the relatively recent history of World War II. The objective of this was not to give you a nice neat snap answer that you could pop out readily in the event anyone asked you: What is economic mobilization? It was to give you a generalized understanding that economic mobilization is the process of organizing and directing the Nation's men, materials, machines, management, and money--the

classic five M's of the economy--in support of the Armed Forces in peace, in war, and in the various gradations in between.

I ran by that rather fast. I will repeat it. Economic mobilization is the process of organizing and directing the Nation's men, materials, machines, management, and money--the classic five M's of the economy--in support of the Armed Forces in peace, in war, and in the various gradations in between.

This makes at least the third definition of economic mobilization that you have heard from this platform so far. First, Jim Walsh, in his introduction, gave you a Branch Chief's definition. Louis Hunter gave you a Ph.D. 's definition. Now I have given you a common Indian-type definition.

I think no doubt, however, that by now you have in your minds generally a definition of your own. That is the important one. We have accomplished our purpose in the first part of the Orientation Unit if we have helped you come to a clearer and more comprehensive idea of what economic mobilization is than you had three weeks ago.

Having completed the definition and geneology process with the term "economic mobilization," we took up two other factors that we think here at the College are necessary to acquaint you with the existing situation--to hark back to the definition of "orient" which I mentioned a while back.

It keeps me clear on these two factors if I take the two component parts of our key phrase--"economic mobilization"--and break them apart. I will talk about the second half first.

It is a mobilization that we are studying here; that is, a process of pulling things together and moving them in a desired direction. Now, the agency by means of which we mobilize the economy is, of course, the Federal Government. So this then becomes naturally one of the things to which we plan to devote some time at the beginning of the year.

You have all had many years of service with the Federal Government, many years of relations with a good many of its numerous facets. Compared with the average of the citizenry, you are, as a group, well acquainted with the Government, but your relations with it have been somewhat specialized, and your dealings have been on the practical

rather than on the theoretical level. We felt that it could be useful to you if through reading and lectures we could provide material that would start you off thinking about the Government as a whole and about some of the broader factors involved in the relationship of the Government to the country. Also we felt that you might need at the outset of the course a sort of general familiarization with the portion of the Government that deals most directly with mobilization and mobilization planning.

These two objectives have been in our minds in selecting the public-administration lectures and reading. The lectures have each been centered about some one or more of the general problems involved in Government relations with the Nation.

Dr. Elliott emphasized to you especially the never-absent problem of manning the Government with the sort of brains, capabilities, and integrity that we need in time of peace to plan for mobilization and in time of war to execute it. That is by way of example only, and is not intended to imply that his coverage was limited to that point.

Mr. Roger Jones sketched for you, in a brief historical rundown, the shift in this country in the past 25 years that changed the Federal Government and has seen it develop from a relatively distant and rarely met with factor in the lives of most citizens to an influence that is felt every day by most of us and is recognized as felt in our daily lives. He perhaps gave you a better understanding of the problems that fact has brought to Government operations and management by describing for you the development during this period in terms of expansion, extension, organization, and reorganization of the Office of the President.

Following Mr. Jones, Professor Somers explored with you some very basic, but often overlooked aspects of the role of the general public, or rather of the varied and numerous publics in the making of and execution of Government policy. I would expect that you will find your minds returning frequently during the year to Dr. Somers' message to you when you hear or read of "rousing the public" being urged as the nostrum for solving all sorts of problems, ranging from improving traffic flow to civil defense.

Yesterday Louis Hunter touched fleetingly on the problem of civilian control of the military and seemed to arouse some rather lively response.

While these lectures were outlining a sample of some of the broader Government problems, your reading and the handouts in your boxes were giving you some picture and description of how the Government is now organized. This, of course, was not intended to fix a detailed picture in your minds--time doesn't allow it. The details are too many and, in any event, in case of need you can always look up the particular aspect or the particular agency with which you are concerned. The reading was designed instead to give you a sort of bird's-eye view of the various organizations whose work you will be concerned with during the year, and a familiarity with the types of questions people have been asking about them and their workings and some of the answers being evolved.

Now, a few minutes back I started to talk about the public-administration part of the Orientation Unit. I broke apart the phrase "Economic Mobilization" and took off on the word "mobilization." Now let me use the word "economic" as a spring board.

Since we are going to spend most of the year here studying economic mobilization, it seems sound at the outset of the year to give you an opportunity to get your minds sort of tuned to thinking about economic problems--to thinking about the five M's; men, materials, machines, management, and money--and their interrelation with each other as a whole.

You all come here as men of wide experience and considerable practical and academic education. You have been a part of and dealing with the economy in varying ways, professionally and personally, for years. But for most of you it has been quite a while since you had an opportunity to sit back and think about the fundamental nature of this economy, this system of economic society we live in. You have been too crowded by professional problems of a relatively specialized nature to be able to do so. Yet, again and again during this ten-month study you have undertaken, you are going to be working with problems where a sort of overall personal economic theory and picture of the economy is going to influence your approach.

So we have found that it can be very definitely helpful to you in getting into stride if, through reading, through lectures, and through discussion groups we can provide at the beginning of the course a warmup of your economic thinking. This has been, as you have gathered, the purpose of the Economic Review Section of the Orientation Unit. From it some of you probably have learned some new

facts about things like foreign exchange mechanisms, the Federal Reserve System, the public debt. Others of you may have been reminded of facts which you had almost forgotten. Many of you may have discovered that you held strong opinions on subjects you had not consciously thought of for years. Others of you may have been led to question during this past two weeks some things you always felt were obvious, and you may have started thinking and evaluating on economic questions for the first time in quite a while.

We have no doubt at all that the impact of the Economic Refresher Course on you as a group has been most varied. Varied as it may have been, however, we feel quite sure that it will have warmed up your thinking about the economy and about the relation of its parts with each other, before you proceed to study the aspects of harnessing or mobilizing it.

I know you saw clearly during the period that we were not trying to "teach" you economics or to give you an "approach" to your solution of economic problems. That could not be done in the time allotted and, if it could be done, we would not want to do it. This is a graduate-level school for practical men facing practical problems. You bring to it a wealth of experience and knowledge. The purpose of the economic review is not primarily to equip you with new knowledge, but it is to act as a catalyst to start your experience, knowledge, and judgment reacting on economic problems rather than on the military or agency problems with which you have been concerned up to three weeks ago.

In this sumup of the Orientation Unit up to now I have covered the parts of the unit devoted to explaining the term "economic mobilization," and the parts covering public administration and economic review. There has been one other part going on continuously throughout the unit, and that has been intended to provide you with a general backdrop against which your study in 1955-56 will be carried on. This has been set up for you by Mr. Cherne's lecture here, and by the War College lectures in Auditorium B.

This complete phrase you find here you will find also repeated throughout the year on the flyleaf in each unit curriculum book. It not only says "Economic Mobilization Course." It specifies 1955-56. We are dealing with a problem here at the College that is never static, never set. There are no final solutions, since each year and each month brings its own new factors that change the problem. So

certainly in orienting you, it is worthwhile to include information and opinions that will help you to keep your thinking and work on economic mobilization related to the situation in which we are operating and will operate during 1955-56.

During the Orientation Unit, the National War College lectures have been setting a backdrop for you along general lines covering the world today, and the nature of the conflict that impels our active interest in economic mobilization and perhaps governs the form it will have to take. Throughout the year these lectures will continue to provide that backdrop for you and they will keep you, I believe, reminded of the various political and military considerations that ceaselessly impinge on and interact with all aspects of our economy and its mobilization.

This about ends the sumup of the purpose and operation of the Orientation Unit. I think that word "unit" is important. There is only one course in the Resident Section of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. That is the course in Economic Mobilization. Each unit that you will have throughout the year is just a piece of that single course, in which you will be exploring one of the five M's-- money, men, management, materials, or machines--or you will be exploring one of the processes used in controlling the five M's. For example, manpower, natural resources, and production obviously relate directly to some of the M's. Courses like procurement and economic stabilization just as obviously relate to processes involved in controlling and using the M's. The other units fit into place similarly.

In a few days, having completed the Orientation Unit, you will start on two of the component parts of this Economic Mobilization Course--Manpower and Economic Stabilization.

Coming back to the definition of orient: "To acquaint (especially one's self) with the existing situation; to put (especially one's self) into correct position or relation," we in the Branch are hopeful that you will enter these units adequately oriented, even though you do have to face to the West every morning at 0845 instead of to the East.

Thank you.

COLONEL WALSH: It is our custom, gentlemen, to have a feedback in the form of questions from the audience to the speaker. I

remind you as I indicated last week that we would like to have your feedback in a little more formal way than usual. While we are meeting here, a questionnaire should be put into your boxes.

May we ask you to comment in writing on what we have given you? We ask you specific questions, and we would appreciate your returning the completed questionnaire to us within the next week or ten days. Thus you have a chance to come back at us.

I don't want to do away with the custom of verbal questions completely. Before I turn to the second half of what we are doing today, if anybody has a comment or a question of general interest, we won't turn it away.

Well, there being none--you are all tired out after the ball game--let's turn from a look at the past to a look at the future; and see what we are going to do next week. The Orientation Unit is not quite finished, but next week's work has a separate curriculum book, and deals with a separate subject. Its title is Executive Development. Copies have been placed in your boxes. I think many of you, or at least the one of you who rides with me, have already read the curriculum book. We discussed it on the way in, this morning.

The first question you might ask me is: What is it? I don't intend to repeat what it says in the curriculum book. Briefly it is a study of some of the skills of an executive, a leader, or a manager. It concentrates on the human-relations area--that is, how to deal with people.

I come back to what Dick had to say on what we covered in the orientation on economic mobilization. People are one of the five M's that he talked about. In my opinion the most important of those M's is the human material, without which no human endeavor, including economic mobilization, could be effective. Man is the fundamental and all-important ingredient. At least it seems so to me.

What is the purpose of the course? I have had copied from the curriculum book a chart to which I would like to draw your attention.

The method that we use is having you share with each other the knowledge that you have of how to handle the most important of the five M's--men. As expressed on the chart, the first purpose of the

case discussions is to study the behavior of people in real situations in order that we may increase our understanding of the significance of individual behavior. We know that each of you is successful as a leader, an executive, with something approaching 20 years' experience apiece. Otherwise you would not be here! Most of us, then, have been in executive or leadership situations in the past.

We have an opportunity here for you to teach each other--some of that store of management knowledge that you have. But, just as each of you know something about it, the lessons that you know may not be the same lessons that the fellow sitting next to you knows.

And that relates to the second objective on the chart: to discuss what we do not know--and some of what we know--about handling men. We have a chance during this unit to teach each other and learn from each other in that area.

The third objective is to become more aware that the people who surround us are individuals of widely different reactions and perceptions who can't be handled by formula. Each individual is different, so there are no hard and fast rules in this area. One analogy I can think of is a military unit, with which many of you in the audience are familiar. A unit always seems to take on some of the personality of its commander, despite the organization tables and the regulations. The variability in people does make a difference.

I think there are two additional questions which you can ask me about next week's work. One is, why have the unit in the course at all? The second is: Why use the method about which I have already made some comments--the case discussion method?

Taking those two questions in order, the first question is: Why have it in the course? Let us hark back to the fact that men are one of the five M's and I have said that I feel they are the most important ones. Another of the five M's is management, and this unit deals with the "human relations" aspects of management. An improved understanding of how to handle men would seem to be sufficient justification for the unit.

I think there is a more direct justification that I can make--in the mission of the College itself. Part of that mission is "to prepare selected personnel for important policy-making and command and staff assignments." In those assignments you are going to have to

handle men. It seems to me we get close to that part of the mission in the type of approach I have been talking about--learning more about how to handle people.

A further answer to the question, a good Ph.D. -type answer, is in an article you have been asked to read for Monday--the article by Professor Fritz Roethlisberger of the Harvard School of Business Administration--"Training Supervisors in Human Relations." I recommend it highly. I have read it a half-dozen times and always find it rewarding to read again.

Turning to the second question I asked, "Why do we approach this subject by means of case discussions?" Well, you all know that American education in general, and we in this school, use the lecture method to present to you the material of the course. We bring experts here to lecture. Lectures, of course, can be valuable, but if you are motivated to learn, study on your own part can be more valuable. Some people think there are better ways to learn.

I am reminded of a story about the lecture method. In college circles, a lecture has been described as an exercise in which a professor takes information from his notebook and tells it to the class, and it goes through his mouth and through the ears of the students into their notebooks without passing through the minds of the lecturer or the students.

In this area of how to handle people, when you know a lot about this subject already, a lecture might be entertaining and even informative. But, will you change your method of handling people because I or any of the visiting experts come here and tell you how to do it, or how they think it can be done, next week?

In case discussion, on the other hand, we think by virtue of your hearing from various successful leaders and discussing with them how they would handle people, it tends to help you to reevaluate your own method of handling people. If a set of circumstances are described, and people have gotten themselves into a problem area, it may develop next week that other students will not agree with your method of handling the problem. They may have an altogether different approach. Talking to you about it, telling you how to do it, even, is not too effective a way of enabling you to reevaluate the way you handle people. Each of us must do that for himself.

The cases we present to you are actual cases. They are not dreamed up. As it says in Dragnet, "Only the names have been changed to protect the innocent." Other than that, they are real cases from industry and from the military services. You will find that the faculty moderators, who are experienced men, will not try to give you the solution to these cases. They have a solution, but their solution is no better than yours. There are good solutions and poor solutions. There is no one solution.

In the 140 students and 12 faculty moderators, we have 150 people with something approaching 20 years of leadership experience apiece. Thus there is 3,000 manyears of experience going to work on each case. Each of you can expand your experience in how to handle people by virtue of sharing it with others and having them share their experience with you.

I have suggested the importance of participation. Unless you bring to the discussion table your method of handling the people involved in these circumstances, and unless you listen and try to see the point of view of other students in the discussion, the discussions will not be a success. That depends on your participation both active and listening.

I would like to urge you to read and reread the cases. You are going to exchange opinions and it has to be on a common basis. For example--"You and I saw Washington play Chicago in the Washington ball park this week. I went to the stadium yesterday, and you saw them the day before. We went to the same ball park and saw the same ball teams play--but we cannot exchange views profitably because we didn't see the same ball game." So I am urging a complete familiarity with the cases. Of course, during the case discussions, you can keep the cases before you on the desk and refresh yourselves on the circumstances at anytime.

I am going to turn now to some administrative points which are involved in the course next week. We have found from experience in previous years that the length of time required for the case discussions warrants a longer morning. So, instead of the lunch hour beginning at 12:00 noon it will begin at 12:30. The length of the lunch hour will still be an hour and one-half. The afternoon period will begin at 2:00 p.m. That is for next week only.

On a typical day next week, the weekly schedule is your guide as to where and when to go to the place involved. We will have a lecture

each morning. An expert will come and give you his point of view on his assigned subject. We will have case discussions in assigned discussion rooms. Room assignments have been placed in your boxes.

We will exchange views from the various groups when you reassemble here after the case discussions each day. We ask you to sit by discussion groups, and the faculty moderators will give you details on where to sit.

There will be some afternoon periods next week. On Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. we will have a couple of films, followed by a discussion period. The discussion period will be voluntary. You can leave when you want after seeing the films.

On Wednesday afternoon the case for Thursday, which is the "Joe Robbins" case, will be presented here in Auditorium A by a recording, so you can hear it, as well as read the case in the printed word. For some of you, it will change the tenor of the case to hear the voices of the characters, and you will get a different impression of the people involved by receiving impressions through a different sense, through the ear.

Thursday afternoon we present a film. The name of the film is "Patterns." Some of you may have seen it on TV. We came up with it after the curriculum book had gone to press, and we threw it in because we think it is very appropriate to the work we are doing next week. As long as it is added, we made it voluntary. I am mentioning it particularly because I would go out of my way to see it, even if it had no connection with the course. Following the showing there will also be a voluntary discussion period.

Those of you who have read the curriculum book already realize that the last page in the curriculum book is a critique sheet. There are questions concerning how you like this unit, and what you get out of this week of developing skills in handling people. You will be asked to meet a week from today with the faculty moderators so they can gather those sheets from you.

I mention it so that you will have an opportunity to make notes throughout the week on what you are going to say on the critique sheet. A word in advance is worth many words after the fact.

In the discussion groups we like to encourage an informal atmosphere. You are asked to bring your name cards. They are the same cards you have been using in economics. You can put them in front of you in the new groups, to identify yourselves by name.

As has been said from this platform a number of times, this school is for you. You are the important thing, you, the student body. So, discussions are not to be interrupted by visitors. I will conduct the visiting lecturers around to drop in on the discussion rooms. Continuance of your discussion is desired. We do not want to disturb you in these discussions.

I would like to call to your attention the fact that in the library all the bibliographical material that pertains to this unit has been gathered in one place. In the library on the first floor of the Industrial College you will find it on the shelves in the rear reading room.

One housekeeping detail--We encourage having coffee in the discussion rooms. Ruby, who runs the snack bar in the Industrial College here asked me to make this announcement. If the groups will mark on a piece of paper the room number and the number of cups of coffee desired, she will have it ready for you at the time you ask for it. You are asked to go down and get the coffee. We don't have busboy service in the College yet. Also, please return the coffee jars down there, or the discussion groups wanting coffee the next day will not have any coffee. Besides, leaving coffee standing in it rusts out the pot.

Now I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you the faculty moderators who will lead the discussion groups. I ask that they rise one by one to be recognized.

Group No. 1--Ed Murphy

Group No. 2--Ben Benedict

Group No. 3--Cass Conner

Group No. 4--Doc Keane

Group No. 5--Tom O'Neil

Group No. 6--Pete Croker

Group No. 7--Bill Eckles

Group No. 8--Bud Seeds

Group No. 9--Charlie Gerlach

Group No. 10--Carl Mott

Group No. 11--Smitty Smith

Group No. 12--Harold Clem.

These men constitute the major resource of the College in presenting this, the Executive Development Unit, and I would like to thank them in advance.

The next thing on the schedule is for you to gather with these faculty moderators for organizational matters in your discussion groups. I am sure you, the student body, are going to enjoy the unit. I wish you good luck.

Does anybody have any general question before you leave here?

COLONEL KEARNEY: We are not clear on the schedule on Monday as yet.

COLONEL WALSH: The schedule for Monday has an adjustment in it. The lecturer, Mr. Moorhead Wright from General Electric, is going to talk about executives in business today. He called to say that as a touring executive he has to be somewhere else on Monday afternoon. He has to take a plane on Monday noon. His lecture is scheduled for 8:45 a. m. and there will be a question period immediately thereafter. We will gather as discussion groups at 10:45 rather than at 9:45, and spend the balance of the morning in discussion groups. We will not reassemble here late in the morning. Notice to that effect has been posted on the student bulletin board.

QUESTION: How does that affect people who are supposed to go to lunch?

COLONEL WALSH: There will be no lunch.

QUESTION: There is one book, "Executive Training by Case Method." (Question not heard)

COLONEL WALSH: Yes. The question was about the essential reading. The essential reading has been issued on an individual basis to each member of the class. Concerning the item "Executive Training by the Case Method," there are two articles in one folder. The other article in that folder is "Training Supervisors in Human Relations" by Roethlisberger, to which I referred.

COLONEL CONNER: I would like to clarify a point. I have not heard the recording of the "Joe Robbins" case yet. As I understand it, the recording does not follow the printed word of the case word by word. In other words, it covers the dialogue. Is that correct? If it is, I don't think we ought to leave the students with the impression that they should not read the case if they hear the recording. That is the impression I got. Maybe I am wrong.

COLONEL WALSH: The students should read the basic material of the "Joe Robbins" case for next Thursday. The recording portrays the characters in the events which are discussed in the case. However, the material has been reduced to a skit, and the characters talk to each other. The general nature of the material is the same, but the words are not the same. It is desirable to do both; do the reading, and listen to the recording. There's an object lesson involved here, concerning the different impression one gets by a new sense impression. I mean the timbre and quality of a man's voice can affect what you think about him.

Any further questions?

Thank you very much.

(28 Sep 1955--250)O/feb