



**STRATEGY
RESEARCH
PROJECT**

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RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND THE STRATEGIC LEADER

BY

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ABSTRACT

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This study explains the current United States Army education process for officers and addresses the need for more resource management knowledge by strategic leaders. It discusses the Army's professional development system for basic branch officers in general and comptrollers (Functional Area [FA] 45) in particular. The study identifies a lack of sufficient courses which deal with resource management and finally recommends changes to improve officers' understanding of resource management to enable them to assume their roles as the future strategic leaders in the "Army After Next."

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INTRODUCTION

The strategic Army environment demands officers with skills, knowledge, and attributes attained through many years of dedicated service. However, one of the most critical of skills, Resource Management, is not being developed in our junior and field grade ranks. Consequently, our senior leaders are not prepared to manage programs, prepare budgets, justify requirements and analyze execution at the Headquarters level. The following vignettes illustrate the void in resource management knowledge at several levels:

Second Lieutenant Tim Guthrie reports to his first duty assignment after finishing the Ordnance Officer Basic Course. He has just been assigned to the 108th Transportation Battalion as the Assistant S4. Captain Ronnie McCloud, his new boss, hands him a stack of reports and exclaims, "Tim, you are now the most important soldier in the battalion. You are the battalion budget officer. I want you to prepare next year's budget. By the way, it's due in two weeks. You will also need to prepare our monthly execution reports for the Program Budget Advisory Committee meeting." Dismayed, the young lieutenant replies, "Sir, you've got to be kidding! I don't even know how to balance my checkbook."

Lieutenant Colonel Jake Smith, Battalion Commander, 177th Ranger Regiment, receives a message from Total Army Personnel

Command. He opens it and finds a Request for Orders (RFO). He turns to his Executive Officer and says, "I'm going to the Pentagon after my command. Looks like I'll work in DCSOPS, an office called Resource Analysis and Integration. Wonder what they do there?"

Later, Lieutenant Colonel Smith, an Infantry officer discusses his new assignment with the Commander, 452nd Signal Battalion: "I got a call from the guy I'm suppose to replace. He said that I need to get smart on something called Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBES). About all I know of PPBES came from that boring class we had at Command and General Staff College, where they showed us a wire diagram from hell and expected us to memorize it. I'm an Infantry officer, not a bean counter."

General Will Raynor, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, has just finished another seemingly endless week testifying "on the Hill" to justify the Army's requirements for an additional \$5 billion. Exhausted, emotionally drained, the General had spent most of his career as an Armor officer. Today, he addresses a group of Army War College students giving his insights on where the Army is heading in the years to come. Following his presentation, he asks if there are any questions. One of the students raises his hand, identifies himself as Danny Dalerie, Seminar 21, and asks "General, what is the biggest challenge you faced as the Chief

of Staff?" Without hesitation, the General replies, "My biggest challenge has been fighting the Army's resource battles."

The experiences, issues, and concerns of these fictional officers are very real. Army officers do not understand basic resource management theories and the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting Execution System (PPBES). Sadly, PPBES is the principal decision making process used to resource the Army at the strategic level. If senior leaders lack a working understanding of the funding process, there is a high risk for failure-failure to get the funding required to execute mission and failure to get moneys needed to take care of our soldiers! The learning curve is steep for our senior leadership. Why? Because we have not developed a curriculum, educational platform, or training ground commensurate with requirements for strategic leadership.

Strategic leadership is the process used by a leader to affect the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing the organizational culture, allocating resources, directing though policy and directive, and building consensus within a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous global environment which is marked by opportunities and threats.¹

The strategic leader affects the allocation of resources from the U.S. Government budget, the largest among the nations of the world. The largest single allocation of federal funds goes to the Department of Defense (DOD). In Fiscal Year 1998,

the DOD was appropriated \$260 billion dollars to spend in execution of the U.S. National Military Strategy. All military personnel, including DOD civilians, are either directly or indirectly involved in the process of planning, programming, budgeting, or executing appropriated funds.

This study discusses the Army's academic efforts to educate basic branch officers and, in particular, Functional Area 45 officers, Comptrollers. Finally the study recommends changes to improve officers' understanding of Resource Management and to enable them to assume their roles as strategic leaders in today's fiscal environment.

OFFICER EDUCATION

Several U.S. Army senior strategic leaders, have declared to the Army War College Class of 1999 that the task they were most unprepared for was their role as the main advocates for obtaining the Army's resources. Their statements should not surprise anyone who knows about the training opportunities afforded senior officers.

Education is important to the Army because it develops our most valuable resource, our soldiers. However, as strategic leaders, we need to be prepared to allocate resources to develop a land component in support of the National Military Strategy. Yet, generally, little formal education is provided on how to do

just that, and even less on the resource related areas, such as PPBES.

In the Army Officer School system there is a Basic Course (OBC), Captains Course, Command and Staff College (CSC), and Senior Service College (SSC). Not all of these curriculums include Resource Management related classes. They should. Let us review the various courses and the amount of resource management classes taught in each.

OFFICER BASIC COURSE

The basic officer branches are Infantry, Armor, Field Artillery, Air Defense Artillery, Aviation, Special Forces, Engineer, Signal Corps, Military Police, Military Intelligence, Civil Affairs, Adjutant General, Finance, Chemical, Transportation, Ordnance, and Quartermaster. Branch basic courses prepare the newly commissioned officer for their first duty assignments. The instruction focuses on most common junior officer branch tasks related to platoon, squad, and team levels.² But the curriculum does not include resource management or budget-related instruction.³

With virtually no resource management classes in our basic officer courses, it is conceivable for officer apprentices to find themselves unprepared for the challenges of fighting the resource battles which are waged at their level. Moreover,

often the unit's junior officer is given the additional duty of managing the budget.

CAPTAINS CAREER COURSE

The Captain's Career Course is designed to prepare young officers to train and command a company and to serve as battalion/brigade level staff officers. The course is divided into two phases: Phase 1 provides instruction in advanced branch training and common core instruction. The first phase focuses on the tasks associated with company command and mission accomplishment. Phase 2 provides staff process training. It develops officers to effectively function as staff officers at installation, brigade, or battalion level. It emphasizes communications, problem solving, and an understanding of Army operations. For the first time in an Army academic environment, some time is devoted to resource management.⁴

Having served twice as Division Resource Manager (Comptroller), I have worked directly with captains and lieutenants who had responsibility for developing budget requirements and executing the budgets at brigade and battalion level. They did not possess even a working knowledge of how resources were allocated and managed in the Army. They encountered a steep learning curve and worked endlessly to

become proficient. In effect, they learned on the job, by their bootstraps, but not in the Captain's course.

COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE (CSC)

The purpose of Command and Staff College is to educate selected officers, usually in the grade of captain or major, in the conduct of military operations at the operational level. Corps and division level operations are emphasized. In CSC students are introduced to the complexity of the PPBS/PPBES. In all thirty hours are devoted to the art of resource management.

At this point in their careers, most officers have served as unit budget officers and have a detailed knowledge of the importance resources play at the tactical level. Nearly all officers have now learned how to function as budget officers through "on the job" training opportunities, but not through the formal education process.

SENIOR SERVICE COLLEGES (SSCs)

SSCs prepare officers and selected civilians for senior command and staff leadership responsibilities in a strategic security environment during wartime and peacetime. Senior service school students study the role of landpower, as part of a unified, joint, or combined force, in support of the U.S. national military and peacetime strategy.⁵ The curriculum

includes a sixteen hour resource management course which highlights the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting Execution System. This useful course, however, lacks the substance to be considered sufficient. For many officers the SSC education experience is the last military schooling of their careers. But a few who are destined for selection to general officer will attend the General Officer Force Integration Course.

GENERAL OFFICER FORCE INTEGRATION COURSE

The Army Force Management School, Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, was established as the Army's central educational institution for preparing senior strategic leaders for assignment in the Force Management community worldwide.⁶ General officers are required to attend the one-week Force Integration Course (FIC), which includes a 4-hour block of instruction on PPBES. Thus, these general officers receive nothing more than "refresher" training on the Department's resource management system. Again, we have failed to provide the educational and professional wherewithal for our strategic leaders to win the budget wars.

Our senior leaders "must be experts in their domain and in the bureaucratic and political environment of the decision making process in a democracy."⁷ Recognizing this need, the Chief of Staff, commissioned the Officer Professional Management System (OPMS), which is responsible for developing an "Army

officer corps that will lead forces in the early 21st Century across the full spectrum of crisis...balanced with the right grades and skills"⁸ to develop the right fix.

OFFICER PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM XXI

Effective 1 October 1998, changes were made to the officer management policies and system. The Officer Professional Management System XXI (OPMS XXI) fundamentally changed how officers are managed and promoted. The transition period runs until 2002. The focus of OPMS is to access, develop, assign, and separate officers consistent with the Army's needs. OPMS XXI is viewed "as essential to developing an officer corps with the right skills, knowledge, and attributes to respond to evolving and future challenges."⁹

OPMS addresses three pillars of leader development: institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development. This study focuses on the Institutional training pillar, which

includes all of the schoolhouse training and education leaders receive. During institutional training, leaders train to perform critical tasks while learning the values, attributes, skills and actions essential to high-quality leadership. When these same leadership dimensions are tested, reinforced and strengthened by follow-on operational assignments and meaningful self-development programs, leaders attain and sustain true competency in the profession of arms. Institutional training provides the solid foundation upon which all future development rests.

Institutional training provides the progressive, sequential education and training required to develop branch/functional area technical and tactical competencies as well as the core dimensions of leadership. The bedrock institutional training (Officer Basic courses, Captains Career Course and Command and Staff College) is taught in the small group instructional mode where greater emphasis is placed on an individual student officer's contribution to and participation in the learning process.¹⁰

From the very beginnings of our Army (nearly 225 years ago), institutional training has long been a part of the Officer Professional Management System. In the last three decades, the Army conducted several significant officer management studies. One of the six principles articulated in past officer management studies completed in 1971, 1984, and the 1997 (OPMS XXI) asserts that "leader development programs should be responsive to the environment, including such factors as law, policy, resources, force structures, world situation, technology and professional development."¹¹

Officers understand the need to know how the Army runs. DA Pam 600-3 acknowledges this requirement by dispersing throughout the Officer Education System classes designed to broaden officers understanding of Department of the Army Staff operations. The first formal education begins with the Combined Arms Staff Course, provided as part of the Captains Career Course.

Various factors influence the OPMS environment and policies, such as: law, policy, proponent vision, officer needs, and budget.

Perhaps the most important impact on the career development of officers is embodied in the annual fiscal year defense budget. Funding limitations and allocations imposed by Congress affect the entire spectrum of officer management. . . . Future budget decisions will continue to impact the Army and its officer corps.¹²

Budget decisions are obviously critical to future Army equipment and force structure requirements. Officers keen in the art of articulating the Army's needs should spearhead Planning, Programming and Budgeting operations.

OFFICER CAREER FIELDS

One of the OPMS XXI changes is officer classification: officers' branches and related functional areas are now slotted into personnel management categories called Career Fields. This classification serves to build an officer corps that is both skilled in combined arms operations in the joint and multinational environment, and as well fully experienced in the technical applications that support the Army's larger systemic needs, such as Comptrollers working PPBS.¹³ Career Fields are designated as Operations, Information Operations, Institutional Support, and Operational Support. Figure 1 graphically depicts

the Army's transition from the former one career field system to the four distinct Field Grade Career Fields.

OPMS XXI - Four Career Fields

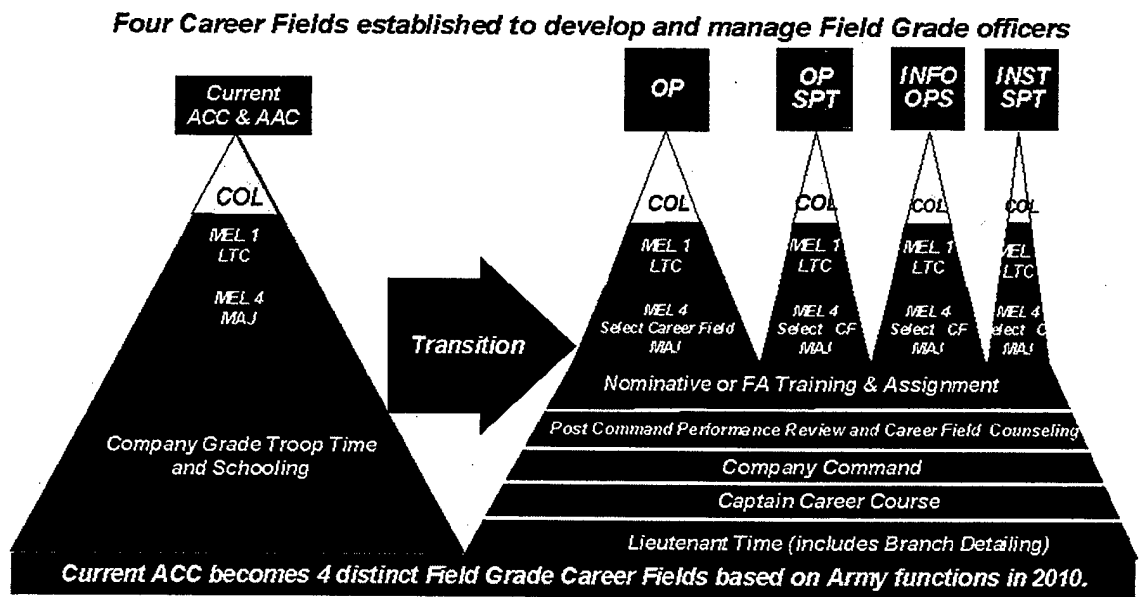


Figure 1: Four Career Fields

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The Institutional Support Career Field functional areas, which include the Comptroller functional area, reflect the increasingly technical and complex nature of running the Army as an organization. Comptrollers are warfighters skilled in determining, justifying, and managing critical Army resources.¹⁴

DA PAM 600-3 describes the Comptroller as an officer who provides advice and guidance concerning resources (dollars, manpower and time) to commanders and activity chiefs. Comptrollers prepare and execute the program and budget based on available funds. The FA 45 officer evaluates organizational structure and functional responsibilities, administers command and management programs, and conducts work analyses and studies of organizational problems for the purpose of recommending improvements.¹⁵

Comptroller officers serve as the commanders' "honest brokers" in deciding how best to allocate limited resources. Comptroller duty positions are located throughout the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of the Army. They fill a variety of duty positions:

1. Director of Resource Management.
2. Division Comptroller.
3. Deputy Chief of Staff Resource Management.
4. Assistant Chief of Staff Resource Management.
5. Chief, Program and Budget.
6. Chief, Budget Analysis.
7. Chief, Military Personnel Account.
8. Chief, Comptroller Division.
9. Deputy Director Investment.
10. Deputy Director for Cost Analysis.

Figure 2 depicts the relationship of Career Fields to an Organization. The organizational representation could be found at any level within the Army.

Career Fields vs Organizations

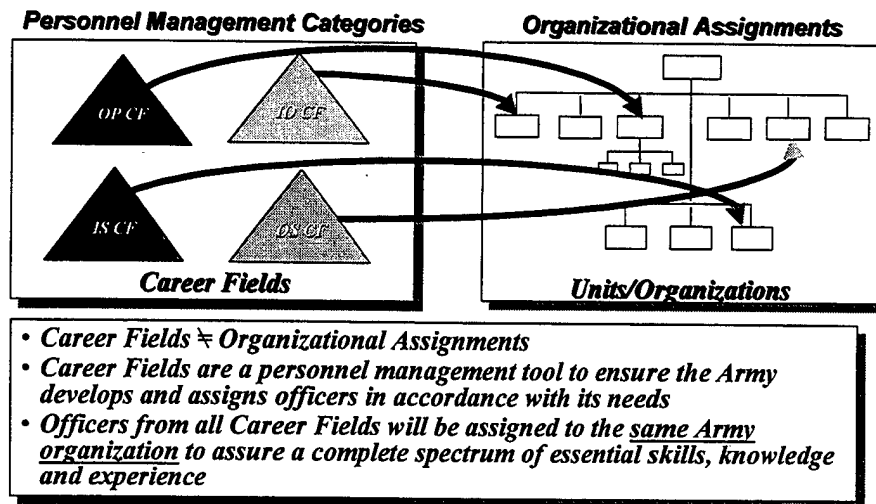


Figure 2: Career Fields Vs Organizations

ARMY COMPTROLLER EDUCATION

Although some educational opportunities exist for each grade in the Comptroller functional area, formal schooling requirements begin at the grade of major. Majors are required to complete the Army Comptrollership Course and may qualify for Advanced Civil Schooling or the Army Comptrollership Program. After promotion to lieutenant colonel, comptrollers should obtain a Master's Degree and attend the Professional Resource Management Course and Professional Military Comptrollership Course. Additionally, there are two courses offered at the Finance School at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina: the Planning,

Programming, Budgeting and Execution System Course; and the Resource Management Budget Course. These two week courses are available to officers assigned to resource management positions.

ASSESSMENT

PPBS/PPBES remains effective today as the resource decision-making framework it was designed to be. This time-tested budget process has resourced the most modern, technologically advanced Army in the world. Its success is evident in the 100-hour ground war that decimated an Iraqi army, then considered the fifth most powerful force on the face of the earth. Incremental changes have refined the process, but these changes have been marginal. The foundation is strong. However, the strength of the system rests with those who understand and "play their cards right." Thus, the knowledge required by the Army's strategic leaders is not taught at the right time with sufficient depth.

Our senior leaders have served, on the average, over 20 years. They have received varied educational opportunities. They have set the Army on a course for the future. They have served in a number of command and staff positions and are certainly linked through a common bond to shape the Army After Next with scarce resources.

In a September 1993 issue of Army Focus, then Army Chief of Staff General Gordon R. Sullivan noted thoughtfully and persuasively that

The times we live in are times of profound change . . . political, ideological and technical. We must adapt to that change and we must grow. Such "growth" of course must entail new perspectives, new learning, and new behaviors on the part of many senior officers. Since they initiate and exemplify organizational change, their performance as part of any change strategy is crucial.¹⁶

In my opinion leader development should include more than leadership skills. Army leaders must be able to effectively address future resource requirements. Eight hours of resource management at the grade of captain; thirty-two hours as a major; sixteen hours, if selected for Senior Service College, as a lieutenant colonel or colonel are not sufficient. OPMS XXI is a step in the right direction, but we need to build further on that concept.

Early opportunities for varied responsibilities can support leader development. Here the Army "leads the way". No institution does it better. Most lieutenants have opportunities to lead groups of significant size in performing challenging tasks. They are exposed to command and staff relationships and resource management early on. Young people in the corporate world often must wait five to ten years for opportunities to head a project team or to be responsible for an office of 20-40

people.¹⁷ But this challenging "on the job training" is not a substitute for formal education in managing resources. In today's competitive Army no young officer should be placed in a position to fail because of a lack of educational opportunity.

The U.S. Army has prospered for over two centuries as the result of a combination of an enduring political system, thoughtful strategic leaders, and fundamentally sound systems. A study of the U.S. education process revealed:

Our people are our strength. Accordingly, the means by which we train our work force and educate succeeding generations of young Americans for the future deserve close and constant examination, analysis, and adjustment when necessary.¹⁸

Now is the time to expand the training programs of our Army's senior leaders to focus on the right mix of balanced resources to fulfill the needs of our nation in the future. We can learn from our former enemies:

The German system of teaching officers how to command in war has never been equaled in the modern world. Probably its greatest strength, namely the single-minded concentration on the conduct of war on the operational level, was also its greatest shortcoming: Particularly during the later decades it did not offer sufficient instruction in the nonmilitary aspects of war, including politics, economics, technology, and business administration.¹⁹

The U.S. Army's ability to cope with the challenges of the 21st century will be determined largely by the collective values and abilities of its general officers. They will set and exemplify standards and create policies and climates.²⁰

The OPMS XXI concept which delineates Operations from Institutional requirements is about right, in my view. Comptrollers will receive some of the essential basic training in their field. The education mapped out in DA Pam 600-3 is basically sound. Captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels will go through a series of short resource management courses aimed at "scratching the surface." But the apex of resource management education for the Army officer is still missing.

Not all comptrollers will have the opportunity to attend a civilian institution for graduate education. In fact, it is not so much civilian higher learning in the skills of resource management that is needed. The Army's senior resource management leadership must be effectively schooled in the art of Planning, Programming, and Budgeting Execution System.

First, officers have studied subjects that are perceived as somehow related to the conduct of war, such as national security, strategic studies, military theory, and rarely, military history. The number of officers who have specialized in these subjects is, however, smaller than their intrinsic importance would suggest. The explanation is probably that officers believe, correctly, that administration, not fighting, is what modern armed forces are all about; in an age of deterrence, if they have to fight they have already failed.²¹

Whereas our senior leaders are well prepared in the art of war-fighting, they are virtually unprepared to administer to the Army's on-going needs for vital resources. In order to be adequately resourced, the administrative management tool PPBES

must have worked effectively, with an acceptable degree of accuracy. Those responsible for the proper identification of those resources have not received the necessary education to make crucial decisions. The Army ethos is such that you are expected to have the potential to perform innumerable functions not based on any formal educational or job related opportunities, but on your merit. But only, a few General Officers now serving in the Pentagon have held positions related to the art of resource management. Most have a background that includes many assignments with the operational Army and no assignments, which directly interacted with PPBES, until their current one.

General Officers are assigned to positions of great responsibility and of strategic importance. The importance of financial management positions at Headquarters Department of the Army and the Department of Defense cannot be overstated. They truly shape the future Army by ensuring the resources are planned, programmed, and budgeted appropriately. Under the current system these resource/financial management positions could come from any of the branches in the Operation Career Field. In my view, such positions-those directly involved with the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting Execution System-should be filled by senior leaders in the Comptroller Career Field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

So what is the solution? How can we ensure that our senior leaders are seasoned and ready to work at the strategic level's to wage a successful campaign-to win the budget war in the "building" and on the hill.

First, we need to relook the Officer Basic course. Currently, the curriculum does not include a class which trains the officer in the basic skills required to manage resources at the level they will enter the Army. Yet, they are expected to manage the organization's budget. Thus, as part of the core curriculum of the Officer Basic Course, include a class which teaches the basics of budgeting and budget execution. Just as children are our future, so are the lieutenants the future of the Army. They deserve the education that will help them achieve success.

Second, we need to interject resource management training in our command courses. Our Army's commanders are expected to lead their organization at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of command. Those officers selected for command of battalions, brigades, divisions, and corps have varied backgrounds, civilian education, and branches. Yet they are expected to seize the elusive objective of obtaining enough resources to complete their missions. A few hours of PPBES education in Army schools is not sufficient to enable them to

make the right decisions at the level they find themselves. The Army proponent for Comptroller should develop a two-week Resource Management Orientation Course for commanders. It should become an integral part of the Precommand Course. I believe it would offer the same benefits as the Senior Officer Legal Orientation Course or the Battle Commanders Development Course.²²

Third, we need to expand our educational track. Although the intent of OPMS XXI is to develop separate levels of expertise through the categorization of Career Fields, the Comptroller Career Field (FA45) needs a comprehensive course. A better educated, professional officer corps is necessary to weave the resource blanket of the future and ensure our capability to develop adequately resourced programs in support of emergent National Military Strategy. The School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), a year-long resident course, provides the Army with specially educated officers for command and general staff positions at tactical and operational echelons.²³ I recommend a similar year long resident course for officers of all career fields who will then be assigned to primarily operational, Major Command, and Department of the Army level positions directly involved with PPBES.

Fourth, we need to put credentialed/certified financial managers in the Army's key resource management jobs. The

typical Army strategic leader generally knows how to command and how to defeat the enemy at the tactical and operational levels. In my view, there is a further need for the senior leaders to understand the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting Execution System and related systems which together run the Army. OPMS XXI will attempt to "grow" professional officers to advise the strategic leader on the more technical areas. However, some of the strategic positions such as Director of the Army Budget and Director Program Analysis and Evaluation should be selected for promotion to general officer from the Comptroller Career Field.

CONCLUSION

Our nation's Army deserves highly trained, well-educated officers schooled in the full spectrum of functions, capable of meeting the challenges of the Army After Next. Benefiting from this study's recommendations, future strategic leaders will truly shape the future Army by ensuring the resources are planned, programmed, and budgeted appropriately.

The dynamics of the federal budgeting process strongly influences decisionmaking at the strategic level. Competition for scarce resources among the multiple claimants at the national level is intense...To be effective in this national system of resource allocation, the strategic leader must understand the programming and budgeting system of the Department of Defense.²⁴

WORD COUNT: 4,688

ENDNOTES

¹ United States Army War College, Strategic Leadership Primer, 3.

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⁴ Ibid.

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⁸ Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, 1.

⁹ Gill, Clair F. "OPMS XXI and the Comptroller Functional Area." Resource Management (2nd Quarter '98), 25.

¹⁰ Ibid., 3.

¹¹ Ibid., 4.

¹² Ibid., 5.

¹³ Ibid., 30.

¹⁴ Ibid., 179.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Walter F. Ulmer Jr., "Military Leadership Into The 21st Century: Another "Bridge too Far?" Parameters (Spring 98): 8.

¹⁷ Ibid., 16.

¹⁸ Burns, Dave et al. "Education," 1998; available from <<http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/icafe/publications/industry/educ98.doc>>; Internet; accessed 1 February 1999.

¹⁹ Martin Van Creveld, The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 101.

²⁰ Ulmer., 8.

²¹ Creveld., 75.

²² DA PAM 600-3., 18.

²³ Ibid., 17.

²⁴ Strategic Primer, 15.

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