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World Renown Security Affairs Strategist Speaks at NPS

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Article By: MC1 Grant P. Ammon

New York Times bestselling author Dr. Thomas Barnett lectured to a King Auditorium crowd of more than 800 faculty, staff and students during NPS' latest SGL presentation, Oct. 26. Barnett, a nationally known public speaker and security affairs strategist, lectured to the enthusiastic crowd on a variety of subjects ranging from the impacts of globalization to the correlation between communications connectivity and regional stability.

Barnett introduced attendees to a "new look" at the world map that suggests rough boundaries can be drawn around the globe. His outline divides the world into two distinct groups: the Functioning Core, characterized by economic interdependence, and the Non-Integrated Gap, characterized by unstable leadership and absence from international trade. He noted almost all post-Cold War conflict and military actions involving the U.S. occurred in the non-integrated regions that finds trouble keeping pace in the global economy.

"It's this disconnectedness that tends to define danger areas during this era of globalization," said Barnett. "These countries, for a variety of reasons, aren't able to integrate their national economies into the global economy."

Examples of this military involvement ranges from full-scale combat operations and demonstrations of force to security and peacekeeping missions, as well as contingent positioning and reconnaissance efforts.

The Harvard alumnus also suggested a new approach for determining American foreign policy that recommends a future realignment and shaping of American military assets. His approach suggested the military should organize itself according to two roles; the "Leviathan" and the "System Administrator."

His plan calls for assigning traditional roles of force and deterrence and to the Leviathan group, and the role of System Administrators to be that of peace keeping and nation building. This outline implied a delicate balance between U.S. Departments of Defense and State and the developmental role the nation plays in various theaters around the globe.

Barnett skillfully interwove complex global issues with humor drawn from life experiences gained while studying at Harvard, raising a family, and working as a professor at Naval War College. The predominately military audience often rewarded his humor with booming laughter and enthusiastic applause. He wrote about the personal significance of his presentation shortly after the SGL in his personal blog.

"This was one of those audiences that you live for," he wrote. "It's the one that reminds you why you do this, why this career matters to you, and what your ultimate impact is."

National Security Affairs student Michael Williams, whose topic of study focuses on stabilization and reconstruction, nominated Barnett as an SGL speaker because he studied Barnett's presentations at NPS and believed a personal appearance would be incredibly relevant to the principles of the university and its students.

"Dr. Barnett regularly addresses the most significant national security issues facing us today," said Williams. "The future leadership of the military, for example the students at NPS and similar institutions, will have a huge influence on how we tackle those issues."

Williams also commented on the effectiveness of Barnett's SGL presentation.

"Basically, he nails it," noted Williams. "He talks about the right things, in the right way, and in a manner that points you in the right direction to learn more. He is very effective in inspiring productive dialogue."

After lecturing more than an hour Barnett fielded a small group question and answer session for nearly 30 students, and even a smaller handful of interested students joined him in the Trident Room for an even closer examination of world affairs.

"He entertained student questions for more than an hour after his speech, then went to the Trident room and continued to converse with students and faculty until 2230 or so," added Williams.

Barnett is the author of several books, contributing editor for Esquire magazine, and an avid blogger.



Dr. Thomas Barnett lectures to faculty, students and staff members during the university's latest SGL presentation. (U.S. Navy photo by Javier Chagoya/released)