



BUILDING KNOWLEDGE & ENRICHING THOUGHT



The Use and Misuse of the American Military

Six Tuesdays, April 11 to May 16th

10:45 AM to 12:30 PM (On-line and possible in person classes)

U.S. strategic aspirations are advanced by a foreign policy utilizing trade, diplomacy, military warfare, intelligence, foreign aid, and global environmental cooperation. The US military has been used (and at times misused) the last 75 years as a foreign policy cudgel in an uneven and sometimes inexplicable fashion. This has made the US appear imperialistic, arrogant, hypocritical, and erratic. The results are embarrassing – the world’s most powerful military has not won a war in 75 years-- and has spawned disdain for our policies and loss of faith in the word of the U.S. Government. We will look at case studies of American military aggressions which resulted in foreign policy fiascos which have eroded the image and reputation of America around the world and attenuated the role of the US as a staunch defender of freedom, rule of law, and democracy.

Dr. Michael Baker retired from a 50-year career in medicine involving the practice of general surgery and trauma surgery. As a Navy Officer, he has experience in operational medicine, overseas deployments, war gaming, and strategic planning. He worked on contingency planning for various potential theaters of conflict. These include the Persian Gulf area as Naval Forces Central Command Medical Officer, plans and exercises for potential events in Korea / Asia as the Commander of US Naval Medical Forces Korea, and he had a tour at US Strategic Command – America’s deterrent force. He retired with the rank of Rear Admiral, and currently teaches combat casualty care, triage, trauma, and response to complex disasters and humanitarian emergencies.

He has been in Ukraine twice during the 2022 war to teach Advanced Trauma Life Support to medical personnel, and will soon leave on a 3rd tour. He has serves on the Board of the World Affairs Council of No. California. Using his experience in both careers, he will inform the students about US foreign policy and the use and misuse of the military and try to bridge the gap between the public and those who serve in uniform. He will assess the role of the military in American society, and seek an optimistic way forward for the nation.