

10 JULY 1998

A. The ISSMI, or the Italian Joint Staff War College, is located in the "Centro Alti Studi Difesa (CASD)" in Rome along with the second year force specific (Army, Navy, Air Force) war college. Starting in September 1998, the entire year will be the Joint Staff War College or ISSMI, but preceding years split the course, so the first half was the force specific school and the second half was the ISSMI.

B. The Naval War College began on 20 September 1997, and ran through 1 February 1998, when the ISSMI commenced until its completion on 10 July. The school year was interrupted twice for separate breaks during Christmas, in which 16 days were given, and then in Easter for 6 days. Singular Italian Holidays averaged about once every two months.

C. Weekly schedules - Weekly schedules were used to organize and present the course material and at the beginning of the school year, a handout containing the rough weekly schedules for the entire scholastic year was issued. Expect the weekly schedule to be posted in a smooth format the Friday before it goes into effect.

D. Daily schedules - A sample daily schedule follows:

0800-0820: Work with the tutor and morning administration.
0820-0910: Conference/Seminar/Class
0910-0920: Break
0920-1010: Conference/Seminar/Class
1010-1030: Break
1030-1120: Conference/Seminar/Class
1120-1130: Break
1130-1220: Conference/Seminar/Class
1220-1310: Lunch**
1310-1400: Conference/Seminar/Class
1400-1410: Break
1410-1500: Conference/Seminar/Class
1500-1510: Break
1510-1600: Conference/Seminar/Class
1600-1630: Work with the tutor and afternoon administration.

**School ends at 1300 on Fridays so as to allow the Italian Officers the chance to go home for the weekend. So expect a conference to replace lunch on that day.

E. Lunch at the CASD - As a foreign student you must pay for lunch before you eat, assuming you want to eat at the CASD. Meals are inexpensive, costing 5,280 lire each lunch. You must also reserve your meal by signing the request form in the morning between 0800-0820, then pay for lunch during the break between 1010 and 1030. You can pay for the entire week on Mondays.

F. Student breakdown - The following table describes the demographics of the students for the 97/98 school year:

	Army	Navy	Air Force	
Italian		70	25	50
Foreigners		16*	3**	1***
Total		86	28	51

*Lebanon-2, Tunisia-1, USA-1, Spain-1, Argentina-1, Venezuela-4, Portugal-1, GBR-1, Switzerland-2, Germany-1, Austria-1

**Tunisia-1, Egypt-1, USA-1

***Brasil-1

- Initially, the Army, Navy and Air Force were separated and attended classes on their own. They were further separated into force specific working groups numbering 8-10 students each. In the ISSMI though, the branches were mixed and so the working groups, numbering 10-13 students were also mixed.

G. Uniform - The Italian Navy wears Summer Whites and Khakis until November 1. Then their standard uniform changes to Blues until June 3 when it reverts back to the summer uniforms. Note that khakis are not authorized for Italians during the winter months. As per the rules set by the Embassy, you should wear the same uniform as the Italians.

H. Curriculum

1. Italian Naval War College - The studies centered on international laws, national laws and geostrategic/geopolitical strategies.

2. ISSMI - The course expands on the force specific school by offering a myriad of conferences by foreign Ambassadors or national and international dignitaries. Subject matter includes the following:

1. NATO Expansion
2. Russian Security in the Wake of NATO Expansion
3. Public Information in Peace Support Operations
4. Planning a Peace Support Operation
5. Multinational Operations
6. Italian Defense Structure
7. Italian Defense Policy
8. Italian National Security Council and Crises Management
9. Italian Foreign Policy
10. Civil Defense
11. Middle East Peace
12. North African Development
13. Global Challenges
14. International Relations and Geostrategies
15. International Organizations, Alliances, Unions
16. Public Relations and Communication

I. Exercises/Projects during the Naval War College - Four separate papers were completed and presented, of which three were individual projects, including a mini-thesis, and one group effort project. Each document produced required a presentation to the force specific class. The following topics were covered in my presentations:

1. "Mare Clarum" - This was a geostrategic look at a specific country, in my case Qatar.

2. "Aladino" - This was the group effort in which 10 students were to derive an operations plan for a Western European Union intervention in a mock conflict over islands in the Red Sea.

3. International Laws of the Sea - This focused on military usage of the seas. Specifically, the document covered where and when armed vessels can travel.

4. Mini-Thesis - The document covered the status of forces for the US Navy and its plans for the next century.

J. Exercises/Projects during the ISSMI - From 1 February to 10 July, 5 exercises were completed. Each exercise entailed a group discussion, a paper and a presentation on the related topic. Furthermore, each working group completed White Papers on certain countries, such as Ukraine and Pakistan, and finally a thesis on an assigned topic such as NATO's Expansion. The following topics were addressed in the exercises.

1. Peace Support Operations - This was European Union operation to support the peace efforts in a North African Country.

2. Civil Defense - The goal was to examine the military's role in civil defense. Specifically, the government played a role in the recent disasters in Italy, such as the earthquake in Umbria and the mudslides in southern Italy, and the War College evaluated the intervention.

3. Communication - During a Peace Support Operation, how is the Commander going to solve the potential media problem and incorporate PSYOPS?

4. NATO Enlargement - What is the global impact on NATO's expansion and what are the ramifications.

5. Combined Joint Task Force - What is the mission. Why is it necessary. How should Italy solve the dilemma of contributing to such a force.

K. In-Country Visits - All but one of the several in-country visits were one-day trips and therefore, the schools proximity to most high-level military establishments proved beneficial. In Rome, all the force Chiefs of Staff, local bases, several ministries and Presidential Palace were visited.

L. Force Specific Class Trip - The Army, Navy and Air Force took separate trips to Germany, Tunisia and Brazil, respectively. The one-week trip proved extremely interesting and rewarding.

M. Trip to Eastern Europe - Perhaps the most interesting trip was the visit to an Eastern European Country. Separate mixed groups visited The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Ukraine. The one-week trip was entirely paid by the Italian government.

N. Euroweek - This is a yearly exercise in which all the European War Colleges participate in a one-week operation relating to the same topic. Each separate War College can hosts many different Eastern and Western officers and typically sends its students abroad. This year's exercise dealt with the European Union and OSCE's intervention in a Peace Support Operation.

O. Conferences/Lectures/Symposiums - Expect all the briefings to revolve around the current exercise or theme, whether it is Communication or NATO Expansion. Ambassadors and the higher level briefers typically offered stand alone conferences, which did not fit into the current exercise or theme; however, these were typically much more important and interesting since their topics covered real and very large problems. By far, the most interesting conference was a debate between the Israeli Ambassador to Italy and his Palestinian counterpart. A symposium on "The Nation of Islam," also proved extremely interesting.

P. Debrief: The debrief of my impression of the school is separated into bulletized items of interest. This itemization is not all-inclusive but will give an idea of the school year.

1. I was told on my "welcome aboard" by the senior Navy representative, CAPT

Muliere, that there was no way I was going to compete with my Italian counterparts, and that my efforts should not be to challenge them at all. On the contrary, I should do whatever task is put before me and do it as best I can, but more importantly, interact as much as possible with my Italian counterparts. I was told I was not just a student at the school, but an American with a different opinion and that I should speak my thoughts whenever I can.

2. People - With little exception, Italian Officers carry the same respect for professionalism and discipline as Americans do. They all seem to have a great deal of respect for the American military, though not all agree with our policies.

3. Conferences - For the better part, the briefings were extremely interesting and educational. For example, the chance to hear Russians brief on NATO Expansion and as mentioned already, a debate between an Israel and a Palestinian, cannot be overlooked as just "interesting" but rather a unique opportunity. As for the exercises, most exercises incorporated just the European nations, though NATO doctrine was always applied and therefore, it behooves follow-on students to study the NATO Handbook before arriving at the school.

4. Schedule - Though the ISSMI staff took pride in the job they did as far as providing schedules and expectations, execution of a weekly schedule or even the daily schedule was a constant unknown variable. There were constant changes and sometimes they were not even published. Even worse was the disregard for some scheduled events. The unfortunate frequency of this occurrence lead to a level of uncertainty towards scheduled events.

5. Organization - According to one of the higher officials at the school, there was an effort to destructure the course so as to allow for free-flowing discussions and opinions. The "free-flowing" discussions, therefore, had no end, and thus little was accomplished. Additionally, most everyone wanted to contribute, sometimes all at the same time.

6. As a final thought, it is very important to constantly improve the language so as to facilitate participation in group discussions, which are typically exhausting simply because they are in Italian.

Q. Conclusion

- In closing, my year as a diplomat abroad was very work-intensive yet very rewarding. The greatest amount of stress was ironically the most rewarding aspect of my stay at the War College, that is, I was unable to expertly communicate a thought like an Italian, but as a foreign student, I was told my Italian was the best of my group. The goods definitely outweighed the bads and so I highly recommend this billet for future adventurous officers.

Enclosure (2)

See attached file for the map. If You are unable to download it, the map is not essential; furthermore, the attache' office can assist in helping new students find the CASD.

Enclosure (3)

ROME PASSDOWN

I. Before the Transfer Rome

A. The most important issue when transferring to Rome is the hunt for an

apartment and how to tap the help available on the foreign side. Though the Embassy is contributive on ideas of where to look and in offering helpful hints, you do not belong to them so do not expect them to find an apartment for you. Your point of contact for "house-hunting" is the Housing Assistance Office near the NATO Defense College (011-39-6-592-2642). See enclosure (4) for the telephone number and do call before your transfer to relay your desires and eventually set up an appointment.

B. House Hunting: Rome offers a myriad of options for even the most experienced of apartment hunters. The key decisions to be made when choosing a home are its location and whether or not it is furnished. Below are listed a few locations available that are both safely located and recommended:

1. "Roma Centro" (Downtown) - Those that live in Downtown Rome benefit from this location by its proximity to all the historic sites, attractions, the War College itself and public transportation. Due to the school's proximity to the western side of the "Centro", travelling time from any apartment in the downtown can vary from as little as 5 minutes on foot to as much as 30 minutes using public means. The very thing that makes the "Centro" attractive though, is also its major drawback. Since public transportation is readily available, privately owned vehicles are not allowed to enter the "Centro" without a pass and that pass is costly. In fact, a one-year "permesso" costs over \$400 and is very time difficult to purchase. Furthermore, parking is extremely difficult.

2. EUR - This area lies well to the south of downtown Rome but the apartments tend to be newer, larger and more economical. Basically, it is the complete opposite of the "Centro". A vehicle is necessary and travelling distances are longer. Travelling time will average 20 minutes to school and slightly more to the American Embassy. Rome traffic can be intense and these times can grow to an hour when travelling during rush hour.

3. Parioli and Cassia - Most Embassy personnel live in either of these two areas. They offer the advantages of the aforementioned locations with regards to apartment size, relative proximity and access to public transportation. Expect travelling times to still be rather lengthy, averaging 15 to 20 minutes with no traffic.

C. Furnished vs. Unfurnished - As with any other location, Rome offers a variety of furnished and unfurnished apartments. But the problem lies on the Italian understanding of "unfurnished apartments". When searching for such an apartment you may find them completely barren without sinks, toilets, cabinets and other items one would think are standard. Another option is the partially furnished apartment that does have all the items mentioned and may have additional furniture, but availability of these apartments is scarce. The best choice of all is to leave your furniture at home and live in a furnished apartment, which is just as available as the unfurnished one.

D. You will need to make reservations at a hotel prior to your arrival. Your Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) will allow you to stay in the hotel up to 30 days while you search for an apartment. The Defense Attaché Office (DAO) in the Embassy can help with this by making the reservation in a hotel in close proximity to the Embassy.

E. If your planned arrival date precedes your class start date by more than one month attempt an Italian language course billet at the school in Perugia. DAO can also help with this by either scheduling the class or pointing you in the right direction. Furthermore, if you do arrive early and there is nothing available at the language school, the DAO may be able to employ you for a

short time. Either way, contact the DAO as soon as possible for possible early employment and your expected arrival date.

II. Upon Arrival to Rome

A. Ensure the DAO knows your flight data so they can pick you up or at least arrange a ride. Furthermore, ensure you have their phone number handy.

B. Embassy Benefits - Your proximity to the Embassy allows for a convenient "home base" with American military personnel and other US services. Some items of interest follow:

1. Upon your check-in with DAO, Embassy personnel will give you a pass and a security briefing by the Range Security Office (RSO). Although access to some areas is restricted, ensure your security clearance is updated as specified on your orders.

2. There is a commissary and a boutique on the Embassy grounds with a good selection of American foods. When able, check in with the commissary and be prepared to leave a \$200 deposit. The deposit will allow you to charge your purchases, though they readily accept credit cards, lire or dollars. Your deposit will be returned upon checking out.

3. There is a "Banca di Roma" at the Embassy. I recommend opening an Italian account so as to have lire available at any time and it will ensure easier transfers of money when paying bills and rent. For such payments, you can wire money from one bank to the other, and finish a number of transfers in a matter of minutes. Furthermore, the bank on the Embassy grounds offers the best exchange rate for lire in all of Rome, but expect a cap on the amount to exchange.

4. There is a gym on the Embassy grounds and access to it requires a code that the Range Security Office issues. The code allows access to the Embassy annex, so do not tell anybody your code.

5. When it comes time to file taxes, an IRS office is conveniently located at the Embassy. An automatic extension allows for later filing with a due date of June 15 vice April 15.

6. An Italian Social Security Number - Called a "Codice Fiscale" allows for large purchases such as merchandise and even utilities. The number is will mostly be useless, but it can be a lifesaver in the case of utilities. When arranging a rental agreement with your landlord, inquire about what utilities are supplied and which ones you have to purchase. If you must purchase them yourself, a "codice fiscale" will be needed. The Embassy will assist in this matter and inquiries can be made at the DAO.

7. Remember that you do not belong to the Embassy so do not expect assistance from everyone. DAO is always willing to help, but sometimes even their hands are tied and you will be on your own, as is the case for housing assistance.

C. If you have not done so already, call the Housing Assistance Office to begin your apartment search. It will behoove you to be established before the War College begins.

D. Though your leave in transit ended upon your check-in to Rome, you will need to check into PSD in either Naples or Gaeta (Sixth Fleet) as soon as possible. Contact PSD Naples (see phone list) before you go and coordinate a meeting. When you do travel to Naples, remember to keep your train ticket

receipt or your car rental receipt. You will need this for your travel claim.

E. While you are in the hotel under TLA, pay your bill every ten days. While you are on TLA, you will also receive per diem. Keep in contact with PSD Naples to ensure they have your correct accounting data and personal mailing address.

III. Departure from Rome

- Throughout your stay in Rome, be sure to coordinate with your landlord the payment of your bills. Do not allow them to delay delivery of the bills and ensure you receive them all. The electricity is very expensive and throughout most of the year, the "ENEL" bill is based on the prior year's consumption rates; therefore, your bills will be estimated unless someone physically reads the meter. Electricity, phone and gas meter readings are very important when you first rent your apartment, because on closeout, the landlord will use those readings to calculate your final bills. Assuming your bills were estimated throughout the year, there is potential for a final large payment to the landlord, or to you. Avoid this by coordinating as best as possible with the landlord and remember to retain all your bills and do not throw any of them away.

IV. Rome (in general)

A. The Language - While enjoying your stay in Italy, you must remember to properly maintain and improve your newly acquired Italian language skills by continuously exercising it. While in school you will be able to communicate a thought in English but never quit with your attempts in Italian since this effort will be beneficial towards your rapport with your classmates. Though the speaking and reading skills improve quickly just by practicing, the listening needs constant attention. Watching Italian movies helps enormously and I would further recommend action films since the plot is somewhat easier to follow if the language is not. The idea is to "figure out" what is going on. Also, never be afraid to ask what is happening, because a misunderstood statement is more detrimental than not knowing anything at all; consequently, find an Italian friend willing to go to the movies with you.

B. Climate - Specifically in Rome, the climate tends to be warm. High temperatures, medium-high humidity and little rain characterize summer. Due to a lack of air conditioners, locals seek refuge from the 900 heat and take vacation for the entire month of August (Ferragosto). So as summer approaches, travelling inland becomes easier with an exodus to the beach, and the opposite is true in the winter when all the skiers head to the mountains. Winter tends to be mild and rainy in the city with temperatures rarely dropping below freezing but in the mountains, snow sports prevail. Transitions between summer and winter are relatively quick and thus spring and fall offer little relief between seasons

C. Ferragosto - August 15 marks an official holiday for Italy and all locals depart for the beach for some Mediterranean relief. Italians traditionally departed for all of August but now they seem to take two-week shifts. This vacation time can have a profound impact on an American that is not expecting to see Rome empty for an entire month. Do not be fooled. They are at the beach. Plan around August for such things as car maintenance, major purchases, and some emergency items; furthermore, do not be surprised when the returning crowds go back to work in September and create massive traffic jams.

D. Travelling in Italy - Aside from a personal vehicle, the train accommodates every desire for travelling and due to the high costs of gas, it offers a much

more economical means of travel in some cases. The travel office in the Embassy can reserve train tickets and can offer advice on popular locations for any specific time of the year. In any case, whenever you travel by train do not ever forget to validate your ticket just before you embark. This holds true in any mode of travel and failure to do so can result in a hefty fine if caught.

E. The Rome Metro and Bus - An extensive bus and subway system allows for travelling anywhere in the city for just under \$1.00. Though individual tickets are purchased for 1500 lire, other passes such as monthly or seasonal, are available and depending on your needs, more economical. But always remember to validate your ticket each time you travel!

F. Utilities - Utilities are slightly more expensive than those in the US with the exception of electricity, which is extremely expensive. Furthermore, phone bills tend to be slightly higher since you actually rent the phones themselves and even a local call cost a certain amount. The phones supplied by Telecom Italia are the only ones authorized even though US phones will work.

Enclosure (4)
IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

When calling from the US to Italy, first dial (011) for an overseas operator, then (039), and then (6) for the area code followed by the number. The numbers listed below assume calling from the US. Area codes are used within Italy and are preceded by a (0).

American Embassy	
Operator	011-039-6-4674-1
Defense Attaché Office	_____4674-2339
FAX	_____4674-2628
LCDR Munaco, USN (Asst Naval Att.)	_____à4674-2413
CWO3 Pat Derby, USA (Ops)	_____à4674-2671
YN1 Parker (Admin)	_____à4674-2594
Housing	
Housing Assistance Office	011-039-6-592-2642
CASD	
International Student Liaison	011-039-6-4691-3103/3013
FAX	_____474-6303
Naples	
Operator	011-039-81-568-1111/0111
DSN	626-0111
PSD	011-039-81-568-5823/5850
DSN	626-5850
DSN FAX	626-5781
Motor Vehicle	_____724-4114
NFCU	_____724-4481