

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 23-10-2009		2. REPORT TYPE FINAL		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Are Service Level Colleges Preparing Senior Leaders to Engage Effectively in Political, Civilian-Military Disputes?				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Robert C. Shiyou Paper Advisor (if Any): Professor Douglas Hime				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES A paper submitted to the Naval War College faculty in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.					
14. ABSTRACT Senior military leaders at the operational level and above must be equipped to engage effectively in high-stakes dialogue with senior civilian leaders. Ineffective communication and unresolved disputes can lead to harmful, public expressions of military dissent. Incorrect application of dissent can lead to ruinous outcomes in global conflicts. This paper presents examples of dissent and the ramifications of dissent to national security. The research assesses the standards, learning areas, and objectives for senior level colleges' Joint Professional Military Education programs to determine how well they address civilian-military relationships in their curricula. This paper also seeks to determine if future military and civilian leaders are prepared to perform in high-level policy and command and staff responsibilities, particularly whether they exhibit those skills necessary for expressing effective and acceptable dissent. Civil-military relationship models and theories are presented and discussed briefly. The research extracts and summarizes information on the current state of civilian-military relations from both recent Congressional testimony and scholarly articles. Finally, this paper draws conclusions on the adequacy of civilian-military relationship education at the senior college level and provides recommendations.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Civilian-Military Relationships; Joint Professional Military Education; Military Dissent					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 28	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Chairman, JMO Dept
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.**

**Are Service Senior Level Colleges Preparing Senior Leaders to
Engage Effectively in Political, Civilian-Military Disputes?**

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: _____

23 October 2009

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Abstract

Senior military leaders at the operational level and above must be equipped to engage effectively in high-stakes dialogue with senior civilian leaders. Ineffective communication and unresolved disputes can lead to harmful, public expressions of military dissent. Incorrect application of dissent can lead to ruinous outcomes in global conflicts. This paper presents examples of dissent and the ramifications of dissent to national security. The research assesses the standards, learning areas, and objectives for senior level colleges' Joint Professional Military Education programs to determine how well they address civilian-military relationships in their curricula. This paper also seeks to determine if future military and civilian leaders are prepared to perform in high-level policy and command and staff responsibilities, particularly whether they exhibit those skills necessary for expressing effective and acceptable dissent. Civil-military relationship models and theories are presented and discussed briefly. The research extracts and summarizes information on the current state of civilian-military relations from both recent Congressional testimony and scholarly articles. Finally, this paper draws conclusions on the adequacy of civilian-military relationship education at the senior college level and provides recommendations.

Are Service Senior Level Colleges Preparing Senior Leaders to Engage Effectively in Political, Civilian-Military Disputes?

*[It is] the people, to whom all authority belongs.
--Thomas Jefferson*

Introduction

Senior military leaders at the operational level and above must be equipped to engage effectively in high-stakes dialogue with senior civilian leaders. In the course of unproductive communication, disagreements can cause disruptions to the civil-military relationship balance with potentially destructive results. The public airing of these differences is often termed *military dissent* in the media and literature. Disagreements may arise from civil-military interaction on national defense strategy, military doctrine, and war plans, as well as preparations and prosecution of war.

Despite a recent reemergence of military dissent in the press, there have arguably been differences of opinions between civilian and military leaders throughout our nation's history. Such disputes lead to military perceptions of micromanagement and meddling by our national security leadership and sub-optimized mission success, resulting in dissent and distrust by military subordinates. Irrespective of whether such micromanagement and meddling have occurred, this research paper seeks to address how prepared are our senior military leaders for effectively engaging in contentious dialogue with their civilian masters. Analysis will focus on whether the current senior level colleges (SLC) joint professional military education (JPME) course is meeting the mission statement to prepare future military and civilian leaders for high-level policy and command and staff responsibilities

I will argue that the SLC Joint Learning Areas and Objectives of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) foundational document CJCSI 1800.01D do not adequately prepare senior military leaders to address contentious civilian-military relationships

that may arise at the operational level or above. The resultant tension is too costly and detrimental to the national efforts. National security demands that senior operational and strategic leaders be afforded the instruction needed to interact effectively in support of the national agenda.

Dissent Defined

Military dissent from active and retired officers can have corrosive effects on the civil-military relationship, compromise ongoing military operations, destroy morale of junior officers, be perceived by the general public as second-guessing the theater commander, and violate the professional ethics and core components upon which the military profession is founded.¹ Before addressing the adequacy of the SLCs to prepare senior leaders for future challenges, it is important to define and bound *dissent* within the context of discussion. To begin, it is naïve to think that senior military and top civilians should work together without friction on civil-military issues. Moreover, “a democratic government lacking such friction is first cousin to tyranny. ... Yet friction is and should be a primary feature of a healthy democracy.”² As addressed in this paper, dissent is not the respectful disagreement between senior military and civilian leaders. It is not opposing opinions that seek to challenge current practice or thought in order to improve processes or present new ideas. It is not the effort to challenge the status quo by attempts to increase mission effectiveness or for that matter, a challenge to instructions which clearly violate the law. It is the expressed disagreement in a *public outcry* from senior military leaders once they have failed to win their arguments, positions, or recommendations.³ Such dissent also includes that which may occur outside the restricted free speech of active duty officers. No attempt, however, will be made to distinguish between the legal restrictions of speech under the

Uniform Code of Military Justice or restricted speech compelled by interpretations of First Amendment rights to support and defend the U.S. Constitution.

Examples of Dissent and Ramifications to National Security

The context in which political leaders consider national security decisions is different from that of senior military leaders. National leaders have a broader perspective. One that includes domestic and international issues and the impact national security decisions will have on the world at large. Military advisors are not always involved with these other issues, but they are concerned with the impact of national security decisions on military readiness and future force structure.

Military respect for civilian authority arguably reached its highest level during World War II. Senior military advisors were so reluctant to question the authority of their civilian leaders that they failed to warn President Franklin D. Roosevelt that the Philippine Islands could not be held if war came to the Pacific. They regarded such presumptuous advice as unacceptable dissent, and ~~in~~ instead of risking the appearance of questioning civilian policy, the military continued to blur the truth about the fate of the Philippines.”⁴ The era of such military loyalty to indisputable civilian control has since waned, and ~~the~~ appearance of civil-military harmony that was maintained throughout the war no longer seems a matter to be taken for granted, but becomes remarkable.”⁵ The deterioration of the civil-military relationship was epitomized during the Korean War when General Douglas MacArthur continued to ignore orders from President Truman and took unilateral actions without consultation or authorization from the president.⁶

One of the most vivid examples of the deterioration of the civil-military relationship can be seen in the dispute between the Eisenhower administration and General Matthew B. Ridgway,

U.S. Army Chief of Staff. At the time, Ridgway opposed the administration's massive retaliation policy, believing it represented the demise of the traditional concept of war and the deterioration of conventional force readiness. Fearing the loss of the relevancy of military advice, he continued to voice opposition to the program long past the point of acceptable debate and disagreement. Eventually, he was dismissed and replaced.⁷

Prior to his appointment as U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Ridgway had been President Truman's replacement for MacArthur during the Korean War. Although Ridgway's behavior would eventually strain the civil-military relationship, some have suggested Ridgway remained "unsullied" until the end of the war.⁸ One wonders, however, if Ridgway's future dissent was inspired by his former superior and, if so, what extent senior leader dissent has on subordinates. Though ineffective in swaying the Eisenhower administration, Ridgway's dissent permeated the military's senior leadership and combined with the effect of Eisenhower's exertion of his civil authority, resulted in politicization of the senior military leadership. Over the next decade, Ridgway's replacement, General Maxwell D. Taylor and others in the military establishment continued to grow wary of the military-civilian dialogue. Eventually, they were no longer viewed as the trustworthy and authoritative source of advice on military matters. Moreover, public perceptions regarding military professionalism continued to sink to disastrous levels in the years leading up and into the Vietnam War.⁹ More damaging was the corrosive effect that misplaced dissent had on the military profession. Often considered a failure of the Johnson and Nixon administrations, some believed the Vietnam War was lost at the strategic level because the United States' senior military leaders failed in their statutory obligation to voice concerns about the likely failure of the war due to flawed U.S. policies.¹⁰

Failing to achieve support for elements that they believed were essential to success, such as a buildup of forces, mobilization of the reserves, and attacking strategic targets all at once, senior U.S. military leaders allowed their discontent to become a barrier to effective communication between them and their civilian leaders. At one point, the Joint Chiefs of Staff considered resigning en masse when it became clear they were to have little influence on the policy-making process. Although they did not resign, the Joint Chiefs still failed to confront the president with their objections to McNamara's approach to the war.¹¹ Despite the President's refusal of requests for the massing of forces and decisive action that favored an escalation to the war, the military was complicit in its failure to give advice and counsel. "The relationship between the president, the secretary of defense, and the Joint Chiefs led to the curious situation in which the nation went to war without the benefit of effective military advice from the organization having the statutory responsibility to be the nation's principle military advisers."¹² Described as a war poorly conceived, conducted, and explained by the nation's leaders, Colin Powell stated, "as a corporate entity, the military failed to talk straight to its political superiors or to itself. The top leadership never went to the Secretary of Defense or the President and said, 'this war is unwinnable the way we are fighting it.'"¹³

Under similar but different circumstances, civilian leaders may proffer strategies which undermine the likelihood of successfully achieving the nation's strategic objectives. When military officers recognize flawed strategies, they have a responsibility to counter with realistic military advice. And, that advice must be provided through the chain of command.¹⁴ The inability of senior military officers to effectively converse with civilian leaders can lead to ruinous consequences, just as civilian reluctance to accept professional dissent within the confines of the civil-military relationship has precipitated devastating military misfortunes.

Examples of occasions where ineffective professional dissent produced demoralizing failures include Napoleon's disastrous 1812 campaign against Russia, catastrophic Japanese losses at Midway, the United States ignoble departure from Vietnam, and IRAQI FREEDOM's post-hostilities debacle.¹⁵

In the examples cited above, the skills needed to engage constructively in dialogue and to preserve an effective military-civilian relationship were not well established. Senior military leaders were not effectual in providing advice, or remained silent, erring by omission, out of loyal obedience to the authority of the President and Congress. Irrespective of the political circumstances, military leaders must be prepared to engage in debate on military and national security matters. How they engage in debate and yet loyally support the President's final decisions strikes at the heart of this investigation.

Officer Professional Military Education

The requirements for officer professional military education (PME) and JPME are set forth as policy in CJCSI 1800.01D, Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP). The OPMEP defines the objectives and policies for the Department of Defense's various military educational institutions as well as the responsibilities of the participants in achieving those objectives.¹⁶ It provides joint curriculum guidance, emphasizes areas of study at each education level; and, depicts the progressive nature of PME/JPME officer training and development over time. To be clear, the SLCs unquestionably strive to meet both the intent and spirit of the OPMEP. Yet, while efforts to meet the prescribed objectives can drive service-level changes to the curriculum, only changes to the policy itself will ensure permanent changes to the SLC's curriculum.

The OPMEP underscores both PME and JPME as the foundation for a continuum of training, education, experience, and self-improvement over an officer's career. There are five formal education levels within the continuum: pre-commissioning, primary, intermediate, senior, and general/flag officer. This body of research, analysis, and recommendations will be limited to the senior level at the operational, theater-strategic, and national-strategic levels of war. It is not applicable to specific service school training areas that are of a technical/scientific nature or to the senior-level joint warfighting schools, which focus primarily on the art and science of war, joint warfare tactics, and employment of joint forces to achieve national objectives.

The services have established senior level colleges (SLCs) such as the College of Naval Warfare, National War College, Air War College, and Marine Corps War College to comply with applicable laws, instructions, and policies governing their existence. All of the SLCs have been initially accredited and are subject to periodic reviews to ensure continued quality education. The JPME review process comprises three main components. First, *feedback mechanisms* focus primarily on the curricula--their currency, quality, and validity. *Update mechanisms* consist of policy reviews, curricula reviews, and a joint faculty education conference hosted by the Operational Plans and Joint Force Development (J-7) entities from the Joint Staff, and U.S. Joint Forces Command. This group also conducts an initial assessment of the annual Special Areas of Emphasis (SAEs) list. Key stakeholders are invited to submit proposed SAEs for review, and up to ten SAEs are considered as educational supplements to help ensure currency and relevance of the curricula. Last, *JPME assessments* are formal, periodic peer-review processes for reaffirmation of accreditation every six years. The process for accreditation of joint education (PAJE) is performed under an approved charter written

directly into the instruction. The PAJE serves to improve and sustain the programs while fulfilling the statutory requirement for CJCS oversight.¹⁷

The SLCs endeavor to provide a top-notch education to students, incorporating current information and issues, and employing the assistance of world-class faculty, facilities, and resources. Two major areas of interest are germane to the SLC’s delivery of quality education as directed by CJCSI 1800.01D. First, Institutional Standards are discussed in Enclosure E of the instruction. The standards establish the accreditation requirements of the colleges--analogous to those required of civilian universities and colleges and summarized in Table 1 below. It is evident from the rigorous standards in Table 1 that the OPMEP requires the entire SLC program to be modeled on continuous process improvement.

Standards	Practical Interpretation/Application
Standard 1: Develop Joint Awareness, Perspective, and Attitudes	Think, Walk, and Talk Jointness
Standard 2: Employ Predominately Active and Highly Effective Instructional Methods	Socratic Method; Seminar Instruction and Exercises
Standard 3: Assess Student Achievement	Properly Test or Assess Learning Effectiveness
Standard 4: Assess Program Effectiveness	Feedback Loop to Refine or Develop Curricula
Standard 5: Conduct Quality Faculty Recruitment: Selection, Assignment, and Performance Assessment Program	Hiring Criteria, Performance and Accountability of Instructors
Standard 6: Conduct Faculty Development Programs for Improving Instructional Skills and Increasing Subject Matter Mastery	Faculty Continuing Education
Standard 7: Provide Institutional Resources to Support the Educational Process	Educational Resources and Physical Infrastructure

Table 1: Common Educational Standards. *Adapted from:* Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP)*, Instruction 1800.01D (Washington, D.C: CJCS, 15 July 2009)

The second area of interest concerns the Learning Areas/Objectives, which define the taxonomy of study specific to the military profession. These criteria are similar to those held by professionals needed to pass board exams or display minimum criteria to join an organization. In

essence, this is the Chairman's influence area where he builds in continuing education requirements throughout the military professionals' careers and institutes specialized knowledge requirements for the military profession.¹⁸

JPME is that portion of PME that supports fulfillment of the educational requirements for joint officer management. Joint learning areas are similar for all SLCs. The Joint Strategic Leadership learning area is common to all SLCs and *most applicable to the civil-military communications challenge*. Two objectives of primary importance within the Joint Strategic Leadership learning area are: 1) Evaluate critical thinking and decision making by strategic leaders, and 2) Evaluate the ethical and legal ramifications of specific historic or contemporary national security decisions. Surprisingly, there is one SLC (National War College) formally tasked with evaluation of dissent. The objective states, *judge the bounds and forms of legitimate dissent in the national security arena, to include civil-military relations in a democracy.*¹⁹

Civil-Military Relationships – Models and Theories

Civil-military relationships become soured when mutual expectations between the parties go unmet, leading to *alienation, distrust, disunity and, ultimately, strategic debilitation.*²⁰ Without an agreed-upon framework for acceptable debate, it is unclear when disagreements become dissent. Military officers need clear norms and a comprehensible definition of what constitutes appropriate behavior.²¹ Moreover, the lack of a suitable framework that senior military leaders can use to frame discussions, can lead to accusations of disrespect for civilian authority and be counter to healthy civil-military relations by violating, *the norm at the heart of the current civil-military bargain—the civilians' right to be wrong on politico-military judgments.*²²

One of the most prominent authors to have written about civil-military relationships was Samuel B. Huntington, who made a distinction between subjective civilian control and objective civilian control. Subjective civilian control is accomplished by competing groups through governmental institutions, ruling social classes, or constitutional form. Yet, in a democratic society, ~~the~~ military may undermine civilian control and acquire great political power through the legitimate processes and institutions of democratic government and politics.”²³ According to Huntington, the most favorable condition in which civil-military relationships thrive is under objective civilian control. A provision of objective civilian control, if not a prerequisite, is the encouragement of military professionalism. Objective civilian control provides autonomy from political processes, renders unbiased views on national security issues, and minimizes military power through the professionalization of the military, thereby maximizing military security.²⁴

More recently, several authors have offered alternative models and theories in attempts to find solutions in the wake of recent civilian-military relationship disputes. The concordance theory ~~highlights~~ dialogue, accommodation, and shared values or objectives among the military, the political elites, and society,”²⁵ though is not concerned with military encroachment into the civilian sphere normally afforded by the separation of civil and military institutions. Another approach suggests that civil-military relationships work better using a balanced approach versus a dominating approach, to ensure elected leaders receive counsel from top civilian (political) and senior military leaders. Christopher P. Gibson of the Hoover Institute at Stanford University states that the objective and subjective models currently available in the literature are insufficient for effective/optimum use of the civ-mil relationship. He has proposed a ”Madisonian” approach, which establishes a ~~civil-military nexus~~” of top civilian and military advisers to provide advice to the President and Congress.²⁶ Other social scientists have proposed normative

models or developed theories and ideas on how to improve cooperation in the civil-military relationship.²⁷ And still, others have written about the gap in civil-military relationships that is manifested as differences in culture and values resulting from real or perceived differences in intellectual, religious (thought), or political biases, which affect civil-military cooperation.²⁸

One common theme throughout is that the responsibility for closing the relationship gap between the military and civilian society lies with the civilians, particularly the President and the Congress.²⁹ Examining constitutional responsibilities make it clear that the legislative and executive branches of government share responsibilities for civilian control of the military. Formative guidance should come from the elected officials, not the top Generals or the Secretary of Defense because these positions are appointed, not elected, and do not share Constitutional responsibility for the nation's defense—that belongs to the President and the Congress.³⁰

Appointed officials (including OSD and Joint Chiefs) do not make policy. Such is the responsibility of the nation's elected officials, as testimony before the House Armed Services Committee reveals below. Gibson calls on the academic community for their help in advancing arguments and studies related to civil-military relations. He suggests academia develop a framework for evaluation, analysis, and COA recommendations for our elected officials—those responsible for making the decisions in regards to our national security.³¹ Others who have suggested the civil-military relationship needs repair have called upon the President to set the right tone, clarifying his expectations and the processes needed for effective civilian-military relationships in order to fulfill the common oaths that protect the nation.³²

Congressional Testimony

The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) has recently completed hearings on professional military education for officers, which will likely result in changes to JPME.

According to one expert, top commanders need time in the classroom to acquire the skills needed to face new situations. More time should be devoted to study history, applying lessons learned to current conflicts. The cost of the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan make it clear that certain intellectual skills needed to deal with the complexities of each new event ought to be resident among senior military leaders' capabilities. Loyola University of Chicago political science professor John Allen Williams stated, "without underestimating the need for technically competent officers, the proper balance of technical, social scientific, moral and humanist components in curricula needs to be reconsidered if we are training officers to lead people, as opposed to machines, in the most challenging and ambiguous environment."³³

Expert testimony on the strengths and weaknesses of the PME program and recommendations varied as widely as the background of the presenters. But, it was clear that redefining military education requirements was under review. Initial testimony suggested "the reform discussion should be on senior-level professional military officer education. The reason for that is simple. The skills, knowledge, and attributes of strategic leaders are the most important product of the military's professional development program. . . . They will have to understand the political dimensions of war and the complexities of civil-military relations."³⁴ Dr. Janet Breslin-Smith, retired professor and former department head at the National War College, questioned whether the college could have better provided students with the skills needed to engage effectively in civil-military relationships resulting from Vietnam to the Iraq/Afghanistan experience. In doing so, she asked, "should the college take on the issue in civ/mil relations in more depth? Should the College's existing elective in the area be expanded and include the entire student body? I believe that the students need not only the discipline of the strategic analysis models, but they also need the mental preparation to present their best

military advice, even in the face of overwhelming political pressure to go along.”³⁵ Another witness testified that many subjects taught at the senior service schools are helpful in practical day-to-day applications but that ~~does~~ not necessarily prepare them for the higher level of war making or political-military intercourse they will encounter in the rest of their careers.”³⁶

The HASC received testimony related to PME over a five month period on six separate occasions. In testimony on *Thinkers and Practitioners: Do Senior Professional Military Education Schools Produce Strategists?*, witnesses from the Air War College and National War College explicitly stated course work was influenced by the study of civil-military relations. In general, most indicated studies were designed to develop critical thinking skills and the abilities required to operate effectively at the strategic and operational levels. Course work largely focused on understanding the strategic environment, ethical decision making, the effects of decision making, and management of strategic issues.³⁷

Witnesses during the third round of congressional testimony discussed techniques for leading change, consensus building, and sustaining organizations in complex environments. Experts testified that the focus of the curricula is directed toward the development of planners and communicators, the ability to think and reason critically, the development of language skills, and the instillation of leadership abilities to enhance warfighting skills.³⁸

The fourth round of testimony addressed junior officers and will not be discussed. The fifth round of testimony reinforced the role of PME in officer development. Without doubt, the role of PME is essential to development of senior officers who can maintain clarity of thought, and make wise, skillful decisions, while operating within chaotic, complex, and ambiguous environments.³⁹ The final round of congressional witnesses expounded on the highest need for strategic thinkers while discussing the way ahead for PME. One witness stated that civil-military

interaction has suffered because military officers have been largely trained within the military academies, establishments, and SLCs, versus in civilian universities. The benefit of graduate level education in civilian universities is the exposure of mid- to senior-level officers to the civilian elites in civilian settings. The civil-military links that existed during past periods of conscripted service have eroded with the passage of time. Now, more than ever —decisions made about professional military education will have implications for civil-military relations in a society that has fewer links between the military and civilians since the advent of the all-volunteer force.”⁴⁰ The final testimony emphasized that today’s PME system has bias toward the development of tactical leaders, yet strategists are needed at the senior level. Strategic failures in planning, thinking, and execution in both Iraq and Afghanistan point to —some disturbing shortcomings in our civil-military relations at the most senior level during the last eight years,” leading some to ask if fundamental errors have been made in the educational goals mandated by PME programs.⁴¹

What Others Say

According to Don Snider, author of Dissent and Strategic Leadership of the Military Professions, dissent should rarely, if ever, be publicly expressed. Military professionals should consider the following five components when contemplating dissent: (a) gravity of the issue, (b) relevance of professional knowledge and expertise to the issue in question, (c) sacrifice incurred by the individual for taking the action, (d) timing of the act of dissent, and (e) authenticity as a leader. The litmus paper test for gravity of the issue is whether the Republic is threatened. Since the military only exist to protect national security, military professionals should not consider dissent unless the Republic is in danger. Item (b) speaks to the legitimacy of the dissenter, while the last three speak to the motive of the dissenter.⁴² One author argues that the foundations

which have prevented the military from insurgency actions against the government are waning. Though certainly not at a crisis (and unlikely to be so), he suggests that officers should “investigate their own professional views of civilian control.” This issue should be read about, talked about, taught within the profession, and pondered.⁴³ In May 2008, a colloquium of experts on civil-military relations met to examine the roles and responsibilities of civilian and military leaders, and the relationship between the two. They concluded that although there was no crisis in the relationship, incumbent and future leaders should take steps to cultivate the interaction within the relationship. When all else fails, the decision to dissent should be carefully considered, and moreover, military leaders should consider options to express dissent other than simply resigning in protest.⁴⁴

Civil-military relations have received a lot of negative press since the Iraq War. Less than desirable civil-military relations, however, have been the concern of many over the last several decades. One of the most recent debates about post-Iraq civil-military relations and PME noted that “the study of civil-military relations was weak, and now it appears to have evaporated from the curricula altogether.”⁴⁵ Before the events of 9/11, another author suggested that civil-military relations were not so severe as to alarm the populace; and, “the ship of state is very far from hitting the rapids of open civil-military conflict. Rather the problems more resemble disturbing currents running below a seemingly placid river. The hazards lie downstream...whose presence is betrayed only by a few ripples on the surface. To dismiss those rocks as a matter of merely theoretical interest guarantees an unpleasant collision in the future.”⁴⁶ The challenges of civil-military relations will likely exist as long as there remains a republic. Healthy friction and a manageable gap in civil-military relations must be balanced to enforce optimum decisions in

matters of national security. Ignoring fractured civil-military relations will lead to sub-optimal solutions in an ever-increasing, unforgiving national security environment.

Conclusion

Current conditions and details surrounding the civil-military relationship suggest that the senior level colleges do not adequately prepare senior leaders to engage effectively in political, civilian-military disputes. This conclusion is drawn from three distinct identifiable areas. First, experts on civil-military relationships generally agree that although the relationships are not broken, they can be improved. Second, expert testimony by PME institutional leaders and subject matter experts suggest it is needed. Third, the numerous incidents of dissent that have occurred most recently and in the past suggest that more education is needed in the civilian-military relationship area.

Recommendations

First, the requirement for civil-military relations training needs to be codified into the CJCSI 1800.01D. The Joint Strategic Leadership Learning Areas for *all* senior colleges should include a civil-military relations objective similar to that of the National War College as mentioned previously. Addition of this requirement would not require significant departure from current content, method of delivery, objectives, and so forth, likely only resulting in a limited change to the institutions' overall programs as defined in paragraph 6.b of Enclosure F, CJCSI 1800.01D. Although this may require advanced notification to the Chairman, this would likely not result in a substantive change and not require reaccreditation of the programs. (The Chairman must review and accredit a college which has implemented any substantive change.)

Second, the Operational Plans and Joint Force Development Staff (J-7) should consider expedited implementation of this recommendation in the form of an SAE. Review and approval

processes normally occur in the fall and approved SAEs are forwarded to the Service colleges and schools in January. Although SLCs are not required to implement SAEs, an obvious benefit is immediate wider exposure. Guidance for submitting and incorporating SAEs is included in Enclosure C of the OPMEP.

Third, case studies of civil-military conflict should be included in the civil-military relations curriculum. A case study could be required reading in advance of formal classes as part of a trimester opening event.

Fourth, guest lecturers should be invited to speak on civil-military relations.

Fifth, the SLCs should rotate annually or bi-annually to host a retired General officers' forum to discuss issues relevant to the preservation of the military profession. Of course, a key agenda item should be appropriate use of dissent to influence policy.

Summary

The inability of senior leaders to engage effectively with civilian leaders can have long-term, negative consequences for decades, leaving forces unprepared for the next war. Therefore, it is important that the U.S.'s senior-level colleges adequately prepare its nation's future senior military leaders with the skills necessary to engage successfully on matters of utmost national importance and security. The services must continue to refine the curriculum to current issues as well as those needed to advance the profession. Civil-military relations and the appropriate use of dissent should be evaluated for incorporation into the OPMEP curriculum.

ENDNOTES

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