

**2008 Annual McCain Conference at the United States Naval Academy  
May 10, 2008  
Workshop and Panel Discussion: Revolt of the Generals**

**Dr. Lucas**

I will now turn the session over to my good friend and colleague Colonel Jeff McCausland. Jeff is now the visiting professor of international relations at Penn State Dickerson School of Law and International Relations in Carlisle. Formerly, the dean of the Army War College, he is a very experienced senior career military officer. Many of you know him. He was here with us for a couple of really great years earlier in this decade as our distinguished professor of leadership education in the Department of Leadership, Ethics, and Law. Jeff is also a senior fellow in the Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs, and as you know, Carnegie has partnered with us to sponsor these McCain conferences and help get them organized. Without Carnegie's input, we would not have had these great speakers and terrific program. We are very grateful for his support particularly and for their support generally and presence here with us today.

**Colonel McCausland**

Thank you. It's a great pleasure and honor for me to chair this particular panel with two distinguished academics who are both good friends. Here is a little bit of history.

I have known Colonel Don Snider for many, many years. In fact, in many ways, I would call Don a mentor of mine. Unlike General Zinni, I had the great fortune of being dragged, kicking and screaming, to an assignment at the Pentagon. I was a young major, and then Colonel Don Snider worked on the NSC staff. Because of the issues that I was

working on, he and I met frequently. He mentored me through that particular experience.

Martin Cook is another good friend and very distinguished scholar. I had the great pleasure and honor actually to have Martin as one of my faculty members when I was the dean of the Army War College. These two gentlemen have probably had more impact on the development of young officers at two military academies and officers at the War College and the officer corps in general than any other two that I can imagine.

Contrary to what you may believe, we discussed the topic of this conference—civil-military relations—far before Dave Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker were scheduled to appear for two days in Washington. Our timing, in fact, could not have been better. A clearer demonstration of civil-military relations at work in the United States you could hardly find. Our timing is perfect for discussing this, and we have two great panelists to do that.

Let me begin with our assumption at times that our system of civil-military relations is in fact the norm. One of our great dangers is that we in the United States may take that for granted. This is not the case if one goes around the world. There are very few countries where it is clearly acknowledged in the body of politic that the uniform military will at all times defer to civilian authority. When I lived in Great Britain, for example, British colleagues of mine repeatedly reminded me that it was the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force, but the British Army, because during the time of the English Civil War, elements of the British Army gave the king a haircut about down to here.

Again, I was reminded of that a few weeks ago. I was in Berlin at the invitation of the German Foreign Ministry at a conference. It was a conference of all the countries in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), with about 100

people there. I sat down at this nice dais, like this one here, in this lovely ballroom in the Foreign Ministry. A German one-star general sat to my right. Halfway through the opening remarks, it occurred to me that he and I had gone to the Command and General Staff College together as young majors in Fort Leavenworth. On a break I asked, “General, did you by chance go to the American Command and General Staff College?” He said he had. I reintroduced myself, and he remembered me, and we were reflecting now on meeting up again some 20 years later.

What was interesting and more to the point of our discussion, as the day went on, and he and I had a couple drinks that evening, he related to me, much to his chagrin, the fact that he was not going to be promoted beyond one-star general in the German Army. The reason was that the number-one political master he had tied himself to, who had gotten him that one star, had been involved in a scandal and thrown out of political office. As a consequence, his future in the military had just flattened out. That is very much the norm in European militaries. It is obviously less so or not the norm here in the United States.

I disagree somewhat with General Zinni’s comments this morning when he said that our military has not frequently been involved in politics. Frankly, I don’t think that’s necessarily true. At Gettysburg on June 28, 1863, George Gordon Meade was wakened in his tent by a courier coming from Washington. Now Meade in his diary wrote that he actually thought he was being arrested by the President, and the courier said, “No, it’s worse than that. You’re not being arrested. You’re being promoted. They are going to make you the commander of the Army of the Potomac.”

Meade had been a corps commander. Two days before the Battle of Gettysburg,

he is promoted, because Abraham Lincoln fires a guy by the name of Fighting Joe Hooker.

Now the second part is that some people believe Lincoln picked Meade because he was born in Spain. Why does that matter? Well, Lincoln, savvy politician that he was, realized that if this guy was successful, he could never run for President, so he would never be Lincoln's opponent. Furthermore, Meade knew that one of the guys who actually had been offered the job was John Reynolds, who was the first corps commander. Reynolds turned the job down because he said to Lincoln in an interview, "Mr. President, I'll take the job if you and General Hallock back in Washington agree not to interfere in any of my decisions as the commander of the Army of the Potomac."

Abraham Lincoln said, "I don't think I can do that."

General Reynolds replied, "I don't think I want the job" and turned it down.

So this is not a first in our history. In 1865, newspapers in the United States in April carried stories of William Tecumseh Sherman marching on the capital after the assassination to take over the government. We all, of course, remember General Douglas MacArthur's speech to the 1948 Republican National Convention. After the firing of MacArthur, there's congressional testimony when then-Chief of Staff of the Army Omar Bradley is brought before the Senate. A senator asks him about how stupid it had been for the President to fire General MacArthur, and didn't the chief of staff of the Army agree?

Bradley's words are great, because they're basically a tutorial on American civil-military relations. "Now Senator," he said. "There is this thing called the Constitution. In the Constitution, this guides the commander." It's beautiful how Bradley does that.

More recently, of course, we've seen events such as the discussion during the Carter Administration or the comments by then-General Singlaub about the removal of U.S. forces from Korea. So though it's in our body politic that the military defers to civil authority, we have had those instances. This is not a recent phenomenon necessarily, but things are somewhat different now.

A few things are particularly different. One that we alluded to is how information for this war has become perhaps every bit as important as actual bullets on the battlefield. We do definitely live in a 24-hour news cycle. As a member of that particular business working for CBS News, I can tell you it is a voracious consumer. There is always someone looking for you to talk about something.

I've thought about this a great deal and thought that perhaps my limelight after 30 plus years of military service was to provide some expertise in trying to explain the complexities of what is going on to people who listen to radio programs. Having said that, I will tell you it has caused me some anxiety. At one point in time, I was criticized publicly on radio by Rush Limbaugh for my comments about a certain military commander. In response to that, I felt pretty bad about it, so I called Rush Limbaugh's staff. I got him on the phone. I offered to discuss with him live on radio a deal in which I would pledge publicly that I would not discuss the misuse of prescription medications, because he was an expert on that, if he didn't talk about the military which he didn't know anything about. Needless to say, his staff declined the opportunity for me to appear, but I have been criticized for this.

Last week, interestingly enough, I was at the Army worldwide media conference. I think it underscores really this importance of information which again draws I think the

military officer more into this particular realm of policy and politics. I asked those people there the same question I am going to ask you to think for a moment. Think for a moment in your own mind what single soldier or marine has had the greatest impact on the war on terrorism since 9/11? Think about that for a second. I'm sure someone has probably thought of Dave Petraeus, maybe George Casey, or Admiral Fallon, or someone like that. I would say PFC Lynndie England. If you don't recall Lynndie England, you should. She was the young lady in a green T-shirt with a cigarette dangling out of her mouth with a naked Iraqi detainee on the end of a dog leash. You can still see her picture, by the way, on billboards in Jordan. I think this underscores how war in the 21st century is different because of this realm of information.

In a recent book, retired General Rupert Smith, former deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), talks about this a good deal. The book is called *The Future of Conflict*, and Smith says that historically military commanders would never go into battle without analyzing certain key factors, such as weather, terrain, and troops available. In this day and age, information now has risen to that same level of importance in terms of what should be analyzed. Second of all, I think we need to acknowledge that we are involved in what has become an increasingly unpopular war. There are some suggestions now that 80 percent of the population of our country thinks we're on the wrong course and that the war in Iraq is ill advised. In many ways, we are at war, but again maybe we're not at war.

I had lunch with Secretary Rumsfeld a few days before he resigned. I asked, "Mr. Secretary, it seems to me the Pentagon is at war, but I'm not sure the federal government is at war, and I damn sure know the American people are not at war."

He totally agreed with me, and so one of the problems we have to deal with as we wrestle with these issues is: Are we really at war in the mind of the widest part of the American public? In some ways, the challenges General Zinni introduced and the panel talked about predate 9/11. There were some things that were occurring before that tragic day that began this process.

I was in the Pentagon at the time when the Bush Administration arrived. There was a sense, which was echoed by many people, that the adults have returned. The uniform military had had too much leeway during the Clinton Administration, and the new administration was going to reassert this civil control of the military. You may recall that, upon the arrival of the administration, several committees were established to examine key aspects of American strategy, be that nuclear forces, conventional forces, maritime forces, etc. And what's probably forgotten by most was that no uniformed officer was allowed to serve on any of those committees. There was no participation by the joint staff. They were basically frozen out of the process, and as a consequence, there was difficulty already building, I would argue, in civil-military relations.

Furthermore, even before 9/11, the secretary of defense had already begun entering the military's jurisdictions. For example, he required a personal interview for any officer who had been selected for three-star flag—before he or she was promoted.

Now I think we're all aware certainly that officers take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States. They don't take an oath to support any political party or any particular political figure. At the same time, that tension in our Constitution is right there. The tension comes because the President, of course, is the Commander in Chief. How do you balance these two things?

When I was dean of the War College, I would frequently point out this tension to young officers, because I would tell them by their presence at the War College, it struck me that they aspired to be promoted. But, if in fact they were promoted to colonel or eventually general officer, by being elevated to those ranks, they were going to be more and more drawn into this tension. Obviously a war like the one we're in right now makes that a lot more obvious. Even before that, you are constantly going to be brought into committees to testify, and the party that's not in power is going to constantly try to get you to implicitly or explicitly criticize civilian authority.

This also begs certain particular questions. What actually is criticism and dissent? We may want to explore that this afternoon. In my experience with the press, I will tell you I've become convinced every time you watch the news there are only two things that are factual, the baseball scores from last night and yesterday's weather. Everything else is interpretations. If everything else is interpretation, when do you go from interpretation to criticism to dissent? Furthermore, I believe there was a question about how far any prohibition on dissent or criticism goes. Obviously, there are laws that uniformed officers cannot obviously directly criticize the Commander in Chief. But does that extend now to all cabinet secretaries, all undersecretaries, assistant secretaries, deputy assistant secretaries, and office directors? If we're going to talk about a prohibition, how far, if we can define this criticism or dissent, does it go?

For uniformed officers, the case is pretty clear what you can or cannot do in uniform. General Colin Powell, when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, underscored that rather well right here at the Naval Academy. You may recall a rather famous incident in which then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell was

here at the Academy. A young midshipman asked him about the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy and the responsibility of a senior military officer. Powell said that you have two responsibilities. Responsibility number one is to provide the best possible advice to civilian authority, and then they are going to make a decision. At that point, you either A, embrace that decision and move—or B, you resign. There is no other option if you are still in uniform.

Still I believe this topic has not been particularly explored, especially in the area of National Guard and Reserve officers. One thing that has occurred since 9/11 that I don’t think we pay attention to is until 9/11, we truly had reserve forces. They were designed for two things: local emergencies in their state or locale, such as hurricanes, forest fires, riots, etc., or World War III, and that’s what they were for. They were reserve forces, reserve forces. We didn’t call them up for Vietnam. Now they are truly rotational forces, and if you were in the National Guard Reserve, you need to calculate into your lifestyle that every two to three years, you are going to be called to federal service. Someone who is wearing a uniform today might tomorrow be a congressman or a senator or a member of the house of their particular state’s legislature. We may want to talk about that.

Now some have argued that the restrictions on military officers also apply to retired officers, even after they have retired. Obviously, General Zinni disagrees with that, and so do I. We can explore that more if you want to this afternoon. If this is true in strict legal terms, obviously it is violated almost on a daily basis. In recent years, we have seen recently retired officers elected to Congress. We have seen recently retired officers running for President. And so again, if this is truly correct, it is violated more

often than it is adhered to.

Finally, as I read these two papers, it struck me that our two authors seem to have taken what I would call a Clausewitzian approach to officer responsibility. Clausewitz talked about that so-called remarkable trinity: the government, the army, and the people. In Don's and Martin's papers, they talk about the development of trust and loyalty from the officer to those three very distinct parts: the government or civilian authority, the people of the nation who you swear an oath to, and lastly the soldiers, SEALS, airmen, and Marines that you may have to lead into battle. From my read, Martin seems to suggest that these loyalties may at times impel an officer to action. He frequently referred to, for example, H.R. McMaster's book, *Dereliction of Duty*. I know H.R. pretty well. I know for a fact he did not select that title casually. He rather suggests that the chiefs of service were derelict in executing their responsibility the moment they did not live up to the trust provided them by the people, by the nation, and the soldiers they had legal responsibility to train and lead. Martin provides us a warning about being accused as an officer who is derelict at a very difficult moment.

Don follows a somewhat different track in his analysis. He begins with a careful examination of the nature of the profession and unique role of the professional military officer. He then describes his concern about the impact that criticism by retired officers may have on these same three relationships. Is there an erosion of trust between the government and the Army and the people brought about by officers, particularly retired officers, who step up and are critical?

Let me conclude at that point by saying a couple things. One is I have known these two remarkable gentlemen for a long time, and one thing I find interesting about

their papers is that I know a little bit of the archaeology. They may want to speak about it as well. If we had this conference 18 months ago, we would find a substantially greater distance between them. They have both moved toward the center. Well, I'll let them speak for themselves.

I think we all agree that civil-military relations are the bedrock of our democracy. We assume its permanence at our own peril. Furthermore, there are forces at work in our nation and around the globe that are and will continue to place enormous pressure on this valuable aspect of our democracy. This is demonstrated by the question of when and should an officer actually dissent.

I would like now to turn to my two colleagues for their introductory comments or if they want to respond to my read of the difference between their two papers, Martin's says that responsibilities may push you in that direction, and Don's is the cautionary tale about how doing so erodes the basic bonds that is part and parcel of the profession.

Without further ado, we will start with Martin and then go to Don.

### **Professor Cook**

The larger context of this paper is that U. S. civil-military relations have been in pretty serious trouble for quite a while. It's not just this administration. In the Clinton Administration, the problem was the equal and opposite problem of near insubordination. At that period, I, along with a lot of others, wrote about the importance of civil control over the military. As you will remember, there were some quite egregious episodes of public disrespect of the President and other alarming things.

Secondly, I would say one of the greatest learning experiences of my career in this field was Don's asking me to participate in his project, about the future of the army

profession. I learned a great deal from working on that project. What I initially thought was a Procrustean kind of restriction on all of us—namely, that we use a single theory to professions—turned out to be a brilliant move that allowed us to stay relatively on the same page.

When the revolt of the generals happened, Don and I started an e-mail correspondence almost immediately that summer, and it's fair to say we were universes apart in that conversation. My view was that it was a fairly obvious logical entailment from his concept of professional expertise. There had to be moments at which what professional expertise pointed you to was a conclusion that what you were being asked to do was so adverse to professional military advice that you would be driven to object to it. Furthermore, as I thought longer and considered General Newbold's comment that this was an unnecessary war, I remembered the category of war crime at Nuremberg which is participating in the planning and execution of aggressive war. I don't know exactly what Newbold meant by unnecessary, but it certainly meets that interpretation minimally if you mean by that that it doesn't meet the criterion of last resort. There could be a bunch of other things it could mean as well.

I realize this is a troubling issue to raise in the context of American officers, who don't even want to think about that possibility, but I think it's more than a theoretical possibility. Whatever position the U.S. government takes about the international criminal court—by the way, we are now referring some people to it, even though we claim we don't accept its jurisdiction—is going to exist. As a practical matter, its existence may well mean at a minimum that leaders who participate in planning wars that are deemed by the international community to be unnecessary might not want to travel very much.

We really do have to think about this. I understand why Newbold is the most interesting of these characters to me, because he was right there in the joint staff plans office. His opinion was: “I don’t want to be here when the plan is executed, because I don’t approve of it.” I wish deeply he were here today. I don’t know the man personally at all. I cite this very fine article by a chaplain published in the *Naval War College Review* in which he tries to work out this possibility. His main criticism of Newbold is— if he felt that strongly, why did he wait two years?

One common discourse that we might have, and I credit it all to Don Snider because I learned it from him, is this language of what is it to be professional as opposed to being an obedient bureaucracy. That’s helpful, because if we still disagree, we disagree within the same universe of discourse. We can explore that productively.

**Dr. Snider**

Well, my context is very much like Martin’s, as he has graciously already explained. As most of you know, I’m kind of equally divided as a scholar between the fields of civil-military relations and the study of military professions. I’ve completed two books on both. This particular paper on dissent that you read is an offshoot of a book on civil-military relations that will be published next year, specifically looking at the Rumsfeld era in the context of a 50-year retrospective on Huntington’s *Soldier and State*. Most of the major scholars in America on civil-military relations are in the book. I asked Jim Burke down at Texas A&M to take a look at one of the chapters. Jim is a colleague of Martin’s and mine from earlier research projects on the military profession. The chapter focuses on the moral component of the expert knowledge of the profession, that is, the moral and ethical cluster. You may know from study of professions that there are

four different baskets of the expert knowledge of the military profession. One is how you fight wars. The second is how you fight wars rightly. That's what we're here to talk about today. What is the expert knowledge of military professions about fighting wars rightly, and how do we imbue that into the virtuous behavior of officers? That's the challenge we all face as development.

I asked Jim to take a look, and he came back with an extremely nuanced analysis that only a sociologist of intellectual thought could produce. That's Jim's background, even though he has applied it mostly to military professions. His very nuanced analysis basically held the following: There is a moral space in the work and lives of professionals that must not be taken away if they are to consider themselves professionals. The reason that they have a unique little bit of moral space that they need autonomy in is because they are stewards on behalf of the society for both the expert knowledge and its practice. It's not just the practice. It is the expert knowledge that they are stewards of. That's why we do after-action reviews in the Army. What went right? What went wrong? How do we have to change our doctrine? He argued that anytime a professional is put in the position where that moral space is extinguished, then you are asking him to behave like a bureaucrat. In other words, professionals must have the moral space to profess if they believe that the expert knowledge is being misused to the detriment of the client.

I kept working on this book on civil-military relations, and Martin and I were keying things back and forth. I realized that one thing we have never accessed in this study of professions is parsing out the specific trust relationships of the military professions to see if in those trust relationships we can say something helpful for the

development of junior and senior officers. I mean we wrote this monographically at the Teezi leader level about how they should think about behavior as professionals within this autonomous, small space and specifically given the perhaps necessity to dissent.

The article has a table on page 21. I worked this with several faculty members at the War College which, as Martin remembers, is a rather collegial place. I was on sabbatical. It's a great place to write and research, because you've got a lot of folks that will chew on your papers and tell you if you don't agree with something and why.

As Jeff said, he comes from a Clausewitzian point of view. I come from the sociology of professions. There are three trust relationships with any profession. If you don't maintain those three trust relationships, they're going to give you the back of the hand and treat you like a bureaucracy. Look what they did to the Army after Aberdeen Proving Ground. What did they do to the Navy after Tailhook? I mean Congress came down and told the Army how to do basic training. That's the expert knowledge of the Army. They should never have taken away the profession's autonomy and treated them like a bureaucracy except that they had so utterly lost the trust of their client.

The three trust relationships are: the trust of the American people, the trust of the civilian leaders, and the trust of junior officers. I have been teaching at West Point for 12 years, and I have graduated 12 classes. I now have an e-mail file of about 50 to 60 graduates or so. Some of them are now majors, and I communicate with them regularly, so I have a reasonably good pulse of what's going on in the Army. Last week, I was back up to 10th Mountain Division, which was doing an Officer Professional Development (OPD) for three generals and all the brigade and battalion commanders and their sergeant majors. I spent a lot of time out trying to hear what the profession is saying to itself. The

junior officers right now are immensely rankled, as you might well know from reading Paul Yingling's article and Larry Kaplan's take on our vice chief of staff, who went out to talk to a group of captains at Fort Hood and wound up not assuaging their concerns about senior officer leadership at all.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not absolutely accepting all the junior officers' positions. In 1989, I participated in a major study of the military culture of all three services. We know at all times that there is a disagreement between junior and seniors because of their generational perspective and their number of years of service. It's only when that gap becomes dysfunctional that we get concerned about it, and we may be approaching something like that again. Strategic leaders—colonels, captains, and flag officers—are responsible for the profession, its expert knowledge, and its practice. Those leaders failed conspicuously in Iraq. We put an army in Iraq, gave them the mission to do counterinsurgency, and had no expert knowledge—none. That is a function of a strategic leader's past. You have to develop the expert knowledge 6 to 8 years ahead of the time you are going to practice it, because you've got to get it drilled into the practitioners. So this process of being a strategic leader is not leading the service up here. It's leading the service out there if it is to be a profession. If it is to be a bureaucracy, then you lead it up here, and you just yank it around. That's how bureaucracies work.

I think there are five aspects of these three trust relationships. My contribution to this discussion is a framework for professionals that will give them a moral calculus. Think about these three trust relationships and think about each of these five aspects of your decision, and then if you think it's necessary to profess, profess. I am not of the mind that I was earlier that this should probably never happen. I am now down to the

point that it should be exceptionally rare. I'm not as concerned with the frequency as I am about the moral underpinnings that the strategic leaders apply to the act. If it's not absolutely grave, if it is not absolutely spot-on within their expert knowledge, then the last thing we need is generals talking about politics. Huntington said 50 years ago they were incompetent. I have seen nothing in my 50 years to convince me Huntington was wrong. If the generals are not willing to accept a degree of sacrifice, and here we have got a horse in the room that nobody will talk about. The horse in the room is: Is anybody willing to give up their retirement? That's the fundamental issue. Resign your commission. Your retirement is gone.

So what do we do? We move off to the side. We seek reassignment. All I'm saying is don't forget to talk about the real issue, the timing of the dissent.

I was on a panel with Greg Newbold about two months ago. He is an extremely sensitive man. I was immensely impressed with the anguishing he went through to take the position of dissent that he did.

Every flag officer, as you all know, every colonel, as you all know, every officer, as you all know, has a legacy. We are known for the quality of our character and the quality of our leadership. Just ask your subordinates. They'll tell you. It's known. If your act of dissent is not congruent with that, don't waste your time.

Here is the framework. It is a moral framework. It is derived from the study of professions, the social trustee professions for a defenseless client, and it's designed for individual application of the institutional ethic as a professional. So I'll leave it there.

### **Colonel McCausland**

We have plenty for discussion. I might point out one thing. If anyone wants to

talk about sort of the legal issues that are underpinning this, we are going to have a distinguished JAG tomorrow for a luncheon talk, and so you may want to just defer that discussion until then. But if you want to get into it now, that's fine.

Let's move into discussion. You can address your questions to the entire panel or to a particular individual, based on what Martin and Don have raised.

### **Participant**

Maybe the real problem is not the problem of dissent. The real problem, as expressed by the generals' revolt, this unprecedented event in American history, is creating a system or an atmosphere where the best military advice from the best minds in uniform finds a receptive ear, is listened to, and acted on. Until something like that can be institutionalized, we are at the mercy of the administration's attitude (or someone's attitude within the administration) toward that kind of advice.

One fix I'd like to suggest for discussion is something I read about World War II and the relations between Ike and Marshall and FDR. My understanding was that Marshall as the Army Chief of Staff was in the chain of command, that he stood between the armed forces and the civilian leadership actually as a part of the chain of command. The position of Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff was not. However, Marshall, partly based on his personal qualities and his relationship with FDR, but partially based on just how the wire diagram was drawn at that level, was in the chain of command. Is there any possibility that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff might be—instead of a dotted line off to the side from the national command authority—in the chain of command of the national command authority and the armed forces? Could this be the beginning of a true autonomy and professional maturity for the armed forces and the way officers think about

their role and the seriousness with which they take their requirement to fully understand the role of armed force and armed conflict to enforce state policy?

**Professor Cook**

Great question. Colonel Cook's point this morning was very well taken in that some of this has been personality driven. On the other hand, I view it as a total system failure. The checks and balances that were supposed to work were asleep at the switch. The Congress was not disposed to ask hard questions. The press was not disposed to ask hard questions. The political reasons for that we could all explore. A couple of years ago, Marybeth Ulrich and I published an article in the *Journal of Military Ethics*, pointing out to senior officers that they not only had the right but they also had the responsibility to speak the truth to the Congress. If you are too nervous to tell the truth to the Congress when you're wearing four stars, because you're going to annoy the administration, I'd say we have deep institutional and professional problems.

Secondly, I think you're right. The Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reform Act has many virtues in terms of jointness, but one of the negatives is that it makes the regional combatant commanders the people who report directly through the Secretary of Defense to the President. Inevitably, that means that no regional combatant commander is going to have the purview of the overall welfare of the military professional, because they are going to be regionally focused. It's their job. In the case of someone like Petraeus, the focus is even less than regional. The dialogue yesterday<sup>1</sup> was: "My job is Iraq." It is the right response for him, given who he is, but since the administration has

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<sup>1</sup> General David Petraeus and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker testified before Congress about the situation in Iraq on April 8 and 9, 2008.

chosen to outsource the policy to General Petraeus, then that's about all the military advice we're going to get.

**Dr. Snider**

I have a short answer. You are absolutely correct to point out that the issue of dissent that we are talking about here as an element of the professional ethic is fundamental in civil-military relations. I can tell you from a book project we just finished that there is no consensus among scholars in civil-military relations that we should expect a change anytime soon that makes the military's role any less ambiguous. That's just not going to happen.

The track record is not as bad as you portrayed it. There have only been two times in American history when secretaries have been totally off the reservation. We just lived through one of them. Louie Johnson was not the best secretary in the world, but we have really had only two cases.

I think what you're going to find is our challenge for developing military officers is going to remain pretty much as it is. As General Zinni said very aptly, we are going to have to develop them to be the moxie statesmen-military professionals that he described. One component of that expert knowledge and practice is the moral and ethical component, so they know how to work at that level effectively and have the moral courage to say, "I'm out of here." I mean really out—not just moving off to the side, not just retiring and talking two years later, and not just letting the press hunt you down a year and a half, saying, "Will you join these four generals so that we have six?" That's just utterly transparent to the junior officers in the profession.

I don't see a change. I honestly do not. Elliott Cohen, if he were here, would be

jumping up and down. Read *Supreme Command*. A politician always must retain the option of meddling in the military's affairs, because the political risks fall to the politician, not to the military leader.

So as someone who studies political science and civil-military relations, I don't think you're going to see that happen. I think as those charged with developing officers, we've pretty well got the system we're going to have to work in.

### **Colonel McCausland**

One of the things that would be cause for some concern is the capacity issue that General Zinni addressed. If you go to interagency, and you have this 500-pound gorilla down there bench-pressing your refrigerators, and then you've got the other cabinet officers standing around taking up oxygen, who do you give all the problems to? You give them to the guy with big muscles.

That has always has been a problem in some theaters in some countries—who really represents the United States? The ambassador or the SIG **[I COULDN'T FIND A DEFINITION FOR THIS ACRONYM]**for the region? I'd be happy to talk to you about privately about an ambassador who forbid the SIG for that OAR **[I COULDN'T FIND A DEFINITION FOR THIS ACRONYM – is it perhaps operational assessment report?]** to come into his country. That line once again just keeps moving more in the direction of everything ending up in the building. One thing we've got to do is talk about rebalancing relationships and capacity within the Executive Branch.

I would add one other historical footnote. There was a third time that there was a problem. Andrew Johnson fired Edwin Stanton, the Secretary of War. Stanton barricaded himself in his office, and Johnson had to send federal troops to break down the

door and grab the Secretary of War out to fire him.

### **Participant**

I heard anger from General Zinni this morning and read about General Newbold's feelings of guilt. Is it possible that there is unfounded guilt or misplaced anger when we really do expect political leaders to take full responsibility? What I heard from General Zinni was that he was frustrated because Rumsfeld—with all this expertise and all these war plans and all the knowledge and the details in the region—didn't listen to Zinni, and he didn't listen to these other people. Well, that's Rumsfeld's prerogative. , and I wonder if there's an idea lurking underneath that these generals felt that they had a responsibility to keep the nation from failing. Our checks and balances are no guarantee that the nation and its elected leaders won't make bad decisions. There are no guarantees, and our military leaders cannot rescue our political leaders from bad decisions. Let's just talk about Greg Newbold's guilt. Could you develop critical mass to tip the scale to the President? I doubt it. And do we want that pattern where the President is simply at the tail-end of a whole bunch of NDMP **[I COULDN'T FIND A DEFINITION FOR THIS ACRONYM]** processes, just making decisions based on that?

Another assumption that I question is whether we want to put the war-making decisions in the hands of generals and admirals anyway. What's our perspective in the military? We would like very short, cheap wars. The problem is that a military is an expendable commodity. It's like brake shoes and tires. It's built. It looks great. The people are precious, their souls and so forth, but we send them to war to get shot. Generals and admirals are very protective of their forces, and I just wonder how much of that mentality plays into the tension of civil-military relations in an unfounded way.

**Dr. Snider**

Let me answer that, because that's a subject that I have spent the last two years on in another book. We have been working at the Academy to develop models of the development of human spirituality. I know that sounds like psychobabble, so let me explain to you what this issue is about, because to me it's absolutely crucial, and I don't think any of the services are doing it well. I know the Army is not.

How do we develop officers to be true to themselves at the same time that they are true to their profession? How do we do that at multiple levels as they progress through the service so that at every level they can say, "I am living a life that is absolutely true to what I personally believe, and I am living a life that is absolutely true to what I am supposed to be as a role model in the professional's ethics and in my work every day?"

Psychologists have an awful lot of big names for it, but if they don't have those two reasonably well aligned, it causes big problems. My concern is that in leader development in the military professions today, we are so absolutely tongue-tied that we can't talk about what it means to develop your own spirituality, to be so self-aware that you really know what you believe, and you can tell yourself with real confidence that what I believe is compatible with what the profession wants me to do, and therefore I can do it.

When is the last time we assessed our people for that? We're just starting to do some assessments on this at the Academy now. We are also doing assessments of asking, "How comfortable are you directing your people into combat when you know that some

will die?" I won't tell you what the results are, because they are shocking. We think we know what's in these young people's minds about their personal essence, what they really believe, and how self-aware they are. I'm not confident at all that we know what they believe or that they are that self-aware. We could make them a lot more self-aware if we focused on it, and then they could be true to self all the time. If we could get that thinking all the way up, people would not wait a year and a half after an action to object to it.

In the doctrine of our services, we teach initiative and audacity in battle. Why is it any different in dissenting? Once you decide that you need to dissent, it should happen if you are going to be true to self. That's what you've been taught all the way through your military career. That should not be something to agonize over. It's another decision. What is the practice of the officer? The repetitive exercise of discretionary judgment. That's all it is. That's what officers do as professionals, and almost all of those judgments have a deeply moral component. If that moral component is not congruent with what they believe, then of course they're going to doubt it. Of course we're going to have a lot of dissidence and hard backing-and-forthing. Some of these decisions are that big. I understand that, but I just don't think as a profession we are prepared to deal with this issue of being true to yourself to be an authentic leader of soldiers. That's the start point.

Can you accept the professional ethic or not? If you can, then proceed to be an officer. If you can't, because you know who you are, and you can't accept this, then don't go there. The nation doesn't need you.

I think it's a great weakness at the Academy, and I would be willing to listen from

any other school that's doing more in this area.

### **Professor Cook**

One reason that I always find dialogue with Don helpful is because we come from very different disciplines. As a social scientist, I'm a philosopher, and one of the sins of philosophers is we think in analogies and theoretical structures. Suppose we generalize the problem. The problem is that of a professional trying to operate within a bureaucracy in which the leaders are not themselves members of the profession. That's the generic question.

In an earlier life, I did a lot of medical ethics and even taught at a medical school. What's happened in medicine is that the profession has lost a great deal of its autonomy. Most physicians work for bureaucracies, care review committees, pharmacy review committees, and so forth. I watched the anguish as more and more doctors felt that their decisions were being micro-managed by all these external agencies that were driven by profit and other motives. The test for them was pretty routine. They asked: "Are there things that I cannot in conscience do as a physician?" In other words, this is my firm professional advice that this is the best treatment for my patient, and I am willing to raise hell until you authorize it. The best medical professionals I knew were the people who would not take "no" for an answer until they got through. They just kept saying, "May I talk to your supervisor" until they got to the top.

What happens when your supervisor at the top still says no? I don't know. I mean, at a minimum the doctor says, "Then I can't be your physician anymore." Maybe he can't continue as a physician at all, I don't know. Don is getting me to think deeply about where professionalism has cashed out. You can run the same analogy with many

other professions, but medicine is one of the better ones. It's so well-established with such a long tradition of the Hippocratic Oath. As a doctor, what I will do is always take care of my patients.

Military officership by comparison is probably less professional than medicine. It is clearer what physicians won't do. Despite all the jokes, good attorneys are pretty clear as well about what good attorneys will not do: "I will not fail to disclose evidence."

**Dr. Snider**

Attorneys have forty-some-page written code of ethics that we have intentionally not codified for officers.

**Professor Cook**

Right, but I think we need to think seriously about those analogs, even if they're not perfect, if we're going to articulate the true nature of the problem.

**Dr. Snider**

I agree 100 percent. We can learn an immense amount. All professions in America are turning into situations of complex interdependencies. There are no longer pure professions. They're all working under some bureaucratic or business structure, so in terms of organizational theory, this is not clean anymore. In terms of ethical development and practice, I think it's even less clear.

**Colonel McCausland**

Spending a lot of time in Washington, I was always taught that success has a thousand fathers, and failure is an absolute orphan. What I worry about as things progress in Iraq, is that it still may not go very well.

On the political side, there may be an effort by some people to say, "Well, the

plan wasn't great. The military screwed it up, and the media failed to keep the American people in support." Witness, for example, a number of officers I saw who immediately rose up in righteous indignation when the Secretary of State a year or so ago made a comment about tactical failures in Iraq. They immediately felt that she was trying to pass the buck to us.

The reverse of that is also true. I've talked to too many military officers who say, "We were only following orders, and it's the politicians' fault that this all went bad." One thing I think we need to all come to grips with as a profession is—however this turns out, whether you believe in the sin or you don't—an officer corps has a certain professional responsibility that's inescapable, no matter how hard they might try.

### **Professor Cook**

I went through college in the middle of Vietnam. I graduated in '73, so most of you are younger in this room than I am, but I can remember in the public perception of the U.S. military at that point. My ROTC friends had to pack their uniforms in their backpacks to go over to the armory because it wasn't safe to walk across the campus. Fortunately, we don't seem to be going there yet, but we shouldn't forget that there is a real possibility of a total loss of confidence by the American people in its military. The senior leaders of the profession have to think in 10- and 20-year time frames, not in the 3- to 4-year time frames that elected politicians do. The welfare of their service over the long haul has to be a concern. We see that being played out right now in the obvious tension, even at the press level, between the Washington army and the Petraeus army about the relative allocation of resources and the long-term welfare of the institution.

### **Participant**

Being a behavioral scientist, I wanted to make a couple of comments about what I've heard. I would suggest to you that the general who felt anger said in this room retrospectively that had those circumstances existed while he was on active duty, he would have left. We really don't know what he would have done if he were on active duty. I'd give him the probability that he would have done what he said he would have done, but we really don't know.

For the general who retired and then went to Fort Sam Houston and saw the burn patients, it was the effect that interaction of his own moral compass—how he had failed to live up to his own code—with the environment and the people that he saw that invoked that guilt all the more. The individual interacts with the environment, and the power of the situation influences what we will do or not do.

Going back to the question about what we here at the service academies are doing, at the Naval Academy, we have done research on the moral or ethical decision making of midshipmen and Navy chaplains. We now have a deeper understanding about the influences of moral intensity that impact people on their affective and cognitive part of that decision making. We know that Navy chaplains have felt that their moral compass was more closely aligned within themselves and with their family than with being in the military. They saw a disconnect between the military line, if you would, in the Navy chaplain perception about what they perceived to be moral. That affects their decision making.

When I have taught senior JAG officers, using cases of moral dilemmas based on the experiences of junior JAG officers, I saw a real disconnect between what senior officers felt was a moral dilemma and what junior officers felt was a moral dilemma.

The older one gets, the more one gets removed from what we call the variable of proximity. How proximate you are to that person that had the potential to be harmed or helped in the moral situation you're in. Proximity has to do with psychological and emotional proximity as well, maybe more so than physical proximity. The senior officers analyzed the cases by saying those junior officers felt too emotionally connected to the enlisted person in the case, which was their own defense against relating to the moral dimension that the junior officers saw. Because the further removed they are from the battlefield, so to speak, the less they identify with the moral dilemma of what's on the ground, and that was a real problem.

I'm using the concept of battlefield loosely here, referring not to a specific combat battlefield but to that point that we had talked about earlier. What we're looking at is what we're calling the generational phenomena, those who had been in Vietnam and the cohort who came behind them who were not. We look at risk-averse versus willingness to take risk. People who have actually been on the battlefield, who have been more affected by the experience, are more willing to be taking risks than those who have not. We have peacetime officers and wartime officers, and they are dynamically different from each other. We promote peacetime officers based on not taking risks.

### **Another participant**

General Zinni talked about this idea of the warrior versus those working in a bureaucracy in the Pentagon. I respect and admire him for taking the stand that he did, but serving at those levels of staffs as well as interacting with political leaders has its own set of stressors and its own set of moral dilemmas. As a matter of fact, you could suggest that on the battlefield (of course, counterinsurgency aside), some of the things may be

relatively easier to decide versus what you are being asked to do in the Pentagon, where you may disagree, but you may not have all the information. I would be worried as an institution if we develop this warrior perspective.

There are many of us who deployed many, many times in the nineties. People would say, “Oh, those deployments weren’t anything.” Well, we were under the same constraints and challenges, trying to do things with minimum amount of resources, because political leaders did not want these deployments to become big things. You found yourself in some situations where you had to make things work that were not completely satisfactory.

As an institution, we have to be careful about saying that the moral dilemmas that people have on the battlefield are different than other ones in other areas of our profession.

### **Another participant**

We’re just now wrapping up about a 10-month survey effort across the Marine Corps in leadership and ethics and breaking out about 1,200 or so Marines in a baseline study. We’ve been adding populations to that since then. One of the odd things that we found on this point is that probably the majority of the respondents here are combat veterans, of at least one tour, either Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. As far as the ethical decision making process goes, it seems that combat veterans are less sure about moral decisions than those who have not been to combat.

With us, it seems that if they have been to combat, and particularly in the type of counterinsurgency combat that’s being experienced right now, maybe they’re thinking in a more nuanced way, or maybe they have come away questioning some of their

assumptions a little bit more. We're still trying to figure out what we're doing with this gross amount of moral decision-making data that we've collected, but the one thing that is clear is they seem to come away either knowing less or being less sure.

**Another participant**

That's healthy for these issues.

**First participant**

Yes, many would say it is healthy.

**Dr. Snider**

Could that just mean that the black and white has turned into gray, and they understand the complexities?

**First participant**

That's right. That's a more nuanced way of thinking. That's probably a healthy outgrowth.

**Another participant**

But it raises a really interesting question. How can you be rapid and decisive and simultaneously aware of ambiguity?

**Dr. Snider**

Jeff just reminded me that that is passive knowledge.

**Colonel McCausland**

Experiential learning.

**Dr. Snider**

It's only learned by experience. That's what professionals are about.

**First participant**

That's right, and in a small way, our follow-on to that is we have started a dialogue with the Israeli Defense Force, which is going to include some visits to them starting in June. Their lessons from the second Lebanon war, fighting against Hezbollah, have revealed that when a uniformed service conditioned to counterinsurgency, to an irregular fight, is all of a sudden being presented with a conventional threat once again, that causes problems of its own. Now they think of these nuanced ways, those same soldiers who were in Gaza just a short time before. Now you put them into a conventional environment, and the leadership challenges and certainly the moral decision-making challenges are exponentially tougher. That's why they lost 52 **Recavas** [I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS AND SINCE IT'S SPELLED PHONETICALLY BY THE TRANSLATOR, GOOGLING DIDN'T HELP.] to Hezbollah. That's why they had a very inconclusive end, if you can call it an end, to the second Lebanon war. A lot of it right now they're chalking up to this difficulty of placing a counterinsurgency force in a conventional environment. We'll try to follow up in June and see where this goes.

**Dr. Lucas**

I took General Zinni's comments this morning and his anger in particular to be about subject matter expertise. Here was an individual who had the relevant professional knowledge that Don spoke of in his paper, not just intellectual knowledge but this lived experience, a lifetime of lived experience, tacit knowledge, who was furious that his expertise was being brushed aside, as he said, by an individual whom he full well knew could not have either the experience or the knowledge base. He was speaking in reference, I think, to Paul Wolfowitz, but he just as well could have meant Don Rumsfeld. If we recall the historical context, those are the two figures who get identified

as being particularly arrogant in this regard.

I have a lot of respect for both of those individuals at different times in their careers. I wonder how it happens that these individuals, who are both very smart men, very accomplished in their own right with a lot of their own subject matter expertise, would come to treat a person like General Zinni or General Newbold or General Shinseki with such disrespect. How could that be the case over and above their personal management styles?

I want to suggest as part of a sidebar here, since this is a conference of people who teach leadership and ethics and character development, that this is a leadership issue. It's not only a leadership issue about poor management styles at the top. Who here, as a subject matter expert, hasn't had your expertise brushed aside by somebody for whom you worked who you knew could not possibly know what you know? I don't think that's specific to civil-military relations. That is a general organizational problem regarding the way those with power interact with those who are their subordinates. We don't have a good track record of respecting subject matter expertise, and we don't have a good track record of training or educating, particularly in leadership areas, to respect subject matter expertise. Quite the contrary, we teach people—or at least encourage them—to be extraordinarily arrogant and dismissive, or we let them get away with being extraordinarily confident in their own ability to generalize from a very limited knowledge base in one area, say commanding the bridge of a ship, to doing something else like running an educational institution or serving as chairman of the joint chiefs. We assume if you succeed in one area that you can succeed in some other area completely and utterly different. You may or may not, but you're confident that you can, and you're also

confident you can dismiss the expert advice of those who are in that new area. That's a general problem that our organizations have not dealt with particularly well. We have a very poor track record of valuing, inculcating, and building subject matter expertise and then respecting it.

For just a minute, let me go back to Zinni and Rumsfeld. On September 10th, 2001 here at the Naval Academy, Jeff McCausland and I and many others were getting ready for the first in a series of Navy-wide programs two days later, in what was called the McMullen Sea Power Institute. We had spent six or eight months putting together this enormous set of programs. About that time, new Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had released something called the New Quadrennial Defense Review. There had been a lot of chatter about this, a lot of disaffection among active-duty and retired people. I said that we should have a panel on this, with Rumsfeld here, and Wolfowitz or Cambodi **[THIS WAS SPELLED PHONETICALLY, AND I COULDN'T FIND THE CORRECT SPELLING]** should chair that panel. All the disaffected admirals and generals could put their rear ends in the chairs and have at the new Secretary of Defense, to ask him what he thinks he's doing.

In that Quadrennial Review, they were upset that all their traditional, cherished notions of overwhelming force superiority and boots on the ground had been set aside. Part of the vision for a new kind of warfare for the new millennium was technological. It was personnel specific and relied a lot on expertise, as well as equipment superiority. It was a remarkable vision, and what did we get from our military leadership at the time? Contributing to what finally happened to General Zinni and Shinseki, we got an attempt to just brush that aside as nonsense. You don't know what you're talking about. This

will never work. We want to hang on to building weapons systems that are outmoded dinosaurs of the Cold War, and we want to emphasize man-fighters and nuclear submarines, all the stuff that we know, the toys we know how to play with. We want to keep those and build more of them. To hell with you and your vision—we think you are just an arrogant punk messing up our territory.

That debate was phrased in a way that led those guys to be as arrogant in dismissing the expertise of their military corps as that same leadership was arrogant in dismissing the importance of the international community on similar grounds. They're ineffective. They're weak. They're behind the times. They don't matter. As the Vice President said, who cares? We don't care about you.

Well, we helped them do that. We didn't listen to any of their advice. We didn't listen to any of their ideas or try to affect them. We tried to hang on doing our work in the old ways, and so when it came time then to have our subject matter experts really be taken seriously, they had lost their credibility. They had lost their trust of their own leadership.

We have two issues there. One, a very poor leadership challenge that we have about how leaders pay attention to subject matter expertise, and the other a way which we can quickly lose the trust that we might otherwise expect to have if we abuse it through blockheaded, outmoded, and old-fashioned thinking.

### **Colonel McCausland**

Let me come back to the panelists and ask them to react to any of these comments.

### **Dr. Snider**

I was still working for the Army, and one of the things that struck me as most ironic was that General Shinseki announced his transformation initiative on day one of his tenure as chief of staff of the Army, long before these Rumsfeld transformational ideas came around. He experienced the reaction you're describing, in particular from armor officers. I remember a couple of armor guys in Carlisle who were very hostile about getting rid of the M-1 tank, the wisdom of which we could debate at this point. His response was: the thing weighs 70 tons.

Shinseki was, in his way, well ahead of Rumsfeld and nevertheless was still shut out. There were no Army officers invited to any of those panels. I think if you had Shinseki's senior people on the panels with Rumsfeld, they wouldn't have been on totally different pages. They wouldn't have been the intransigent guys you're describing.

On this year-long project on civil-military relations, the conclusion we came to is that the deficiency in our civil-military relations can be described in one little phrase: mutual respect and comity, with the emphasis on the word "mutual." If we can't have in our civil-military relations a mutual respect for the expertise and the responsibility of the other party and create from that respect a working relationship of comity that goes towards a common goal, then yes, we're going to have constant difficulties with civil-military relations. Both sides have to recognize the necessity to create that mutual respect and comity. I would go even one step further: the larger responsibility rests upon the military because of their subordination and the relationship.

Political scientists have this phrase that I don't use very often, because I find it offensive, but in political theory, it's absolutely correct. The elected political leader in civil-military relations has the right to be wrong, and we don't like to hear that in military

culture, but in fact, in political theory, it is true. They are not accountable to us. They are accountable to the ballot box, and the ballot box will hold them accountable, although maybe not on the time line we want. In a position of subordination, we have to develop officers who can create this mutual respect and a relationship of comity so that everybody can get to the bigger issue: How do you serve the American people? How do you protect them, using the military as social trustee professions and the political leaders as in fact leaders of the political apparatus of the state? When the historians are all done with this period, there will be plenty of fault to go around. Our challenge as educators is to understand what the challenge is, specifically in developing future officers. How do we get them to have their heads screwed on so that they can play this role correctly?

There is a literature of books with titles like *Managing from Below* or *How to Lead Your Boss*. I remember taking the Army War College group to Washington once. We had just met with a particularly clueless newly elected congressman, from Cleveland, I think. The colonels were extremely upset that this guy was really only interested in what was good for Cleveland. We called a little huddle and said, “Just remember, whoever you are, this guy outranks you. So you better deal with it.”

### **Participant**

I’m struck by the fact that we all seem to agree that it’s not *whether* to dissent or not but *how*. We all agree that there’s a responsibility to voice one’s opinion when one disagrees with one’s boss in almost any circumstance. If you have a plebe here who is disagreeing with a second class, he may be facing those same issues on how to dissent. In our ethics course, we give examples of when one has to resign and whatnot, but I’m not sure that we actually give guidance on how to argue with one’s boss and how to

disagree. We have to do that throughout our careers, and we start learning how to do that or not as an officer candidate. If we're just beating obedience into them, then they're not learning how to struggle with disagreeing with one's boss. Through that struggle, one gains that self-awareness that Colonel Snider is talking about. If you had asked me when I was 18 or 19 years old what I believed in, I wouldn't have known, and I'm not sure now after 30 years in the military. I'm still struggling with that. The more you struggle with those issues when you have to make a decision, then you become more self-aware.

My point is that learning how to dissent, how to argue against either incompetence or with somebody that you disagree with, is just part and parcel of our careers as we go forward. All of us have had to do it. Some of us learned how to do it more effectively. I just wrote a business ethics book that calls on Machiavelli and says that he was really on to something. You really do have to take care of your career and yourself, and you can be very effective by not taking things on head on.

How am I going to apply what I've heard when I am disagreeing with someone who I work for, when I think that person is making decisions that are taking the organization down the wrong path? The result may not be the deaths of thousands of Americans and Iraqis, but I will still anguish with how to deal with that, thereby becoming more self-aware. When a four-star has that kind of disagreement with the President or the Secretary of Defense, the impact is so much greater, but he has been trained to deal with that through his 35 to 40 years by how he has dealt with his superiors up to that point. Fortunately or unfortunately, a lot of people have gotten to four stars by not arguing with their bosses.

**Dr. Snider**

Here is a concrete example. I have a wonderful cadet this term in my class who came to see me a few weeks ago about exactly this issue. He is an extremely idealistic kid. He is a junior, and he was having a lot of conflict with his air officer who is the officer over the squadrons where they live and with his senior cadet leadership. He was uncomfortable with the disconnect between the stated ideals and the actual reality. We had a conversation, and I said stunningly obvious things, such as pick your battles. Decide how much you really care about this. Figure out how to cast the conflict in a way that tells them how they are going to get something they want out of it. It was as if I had brought down the law from Mt. Sinai to this kid; nobody had ever said this to him. In character development, perhaps we do too much chest-thumping idealism of the oratory sort and not enough of acknowledging that the real world is messy. I think our philosophy course does that, but a lot of the other things we do in our character development program are so close to homiletics that you wonder if they're of any use to them.

### **Colonel McCausland**

We talk about how to say it, but I also think about when to say it. The true definition of tact is telling somebody to go to hell and making them feel they're going to enjoy the trip.

We also need to encourage in officer development creating a climate whereby the person who is in the senior position is willing to accept a certain degree of dissent. The easiest thing to kill in any organization is initiative.

### **Participant**

I'm not sure that it's just a lack of dissent or moral courage that put us into this

situation. The Marine Corps was already talking about distributed operations. That was being able to do what the company or platoon what battalions and regiments could do, okay. The Air Force promoted facts-based targeting and the ability with a precision strike to take out with one bomb what used to take a squadron of B-52s to do. Admiral Zabrowski and the Navy started the whole net-centric warfare movement, and we could defeat countries with computers. People were talking about all these concepts where we were basically going to reduce a map to about this size of this room. Then you get called to the table, where someone says, “Okay, you told me that you can do distributed OPS, so I’m telling you that you can do it with 130,000.” By the way, we did take Baghdad with 130,000. We just didn’t plan for phase four.

My point is that I don’t think it was just a lack of moral courage. I read what General Newbold said. I went back and read what General Eaton wrote. As many times as I read through General Newbold’s article, it seemed to keep inferring that there were others who weren’t saying anything, but I don’t know that he ever stated that he knew they were all against it. They were just too afraid to say. I think it was an assumption.

So do we really have all the generals on the staff who thought we shouldn’t do it and just didn’t have the moral courage, or were they called to task on what they had been promoting for the last two or three years?

**Dr. Snider**

Excellent point. Thank you.

**Participant**

As the historian here, I’d just like to say a couple things. When we talk about civil-military conflict in American history, we have to remember that there are very

seldom civilians versus military in the conflict. What you most often see is combinations, factions of civil and military folks against other factions of civil and military folks. These civil-military coalitions have different perspectives and agendas even though they may be on a similar side on a given event.

Let me give you a historical analogy. The advent of nuclear weapons caused a lot of civil-military stresses and strains. We have on one side the revolt of the admirals, you know, about conflict over roles and missions. Somebody mentioned Louis Johnson. We had the relief in effect of the Chief of Staff of the Army, Matthew Ridgeway, by President Eisenhower over his new look for military strategy and the idea of massive retaliation. Ridgeway, Gavin, and a lot of the Army tried to organize a similar thing to what the Navy did to oppose that, because it fundamentally offended their idea of what war was and the warriors' role in such a war.

Finally, I'll give an example: the jurisdictional dispute between the use of nuclear weapons between Air Force professionals and the new civilian strategists. It was a multi-generational fight over what was going on there. It is a debate over roles and missions, over the vision of war and what war is, and it's a debate over jurisdiction, only in this case, it's not my job. It's the State Department's job. Oh, it's not my job. Well, we have to create a national security professional to do it—that's my point.

**Colonel McCausland**

Great insight. Comments?

**Another Participant**

I don't want everyone to think I'm trying to squelch this entire conference, but if we're looking for other ethical issues as a result of dereliction of duties, what I have seen

from my purview is that we're a lot more guilty of selling capabilities or claiming to have capabilities or claiming that some system is going to give us a capability without truly knowing that. If there is an ethical issue for the military to resolve, I think it's more along those lines.

**Dr. Snider**

Let me add a point to what was said with respect to the historical perspective. He's absolutely right. The civil-military contest is a coalitional contest. I would only go one step further from what he is saying is that the principal civilian players in the coalitions are not the elected and appointed officials. We know who they are. They are part of the defense industrial base that leads the three services around by the nose. It's exactly what he described, but my point is we have to develop officers who have enough moxie to know how to lead their profession in this very critical boundary. What do I keep in, because it's essential to the profession, and what can I afford to throw out, because we don't need it anymore? Every profession deals with this, including medicine. You put the blood sample out at night, and it's back in the morning. That used to be a part of the medical profession. Now it's a private business. This is a moral issue for strategic leaders. What expert knowledge must we have in 10 years, and what expert practice must we have in 10 years to protect the American people?

Inside every one of the military professions is pure antiquated bureaucracy that shouldn't be there anymore. Why do we have a finance corps? Even Enron could pay its people when they had money. Oil companies can pay their people on North Sea platforms. What are the strategic leaders thinking about their responsibility, which I would submit is a moral responsibility, and I'll give General Shinseki immense credit.

He is one of the first chiefs of staff to step up and take on his service, and I'll tell you, he got skewered by his service.

Moral courage doesn't just manifest itself when you're banging your head against a really arrogant Secretary of Defense. Moral courage manifests itself as much turning around inside the service and leading your own profession. We have an immense challenge with the institutional cultures that we have in every service.

Let me give you another example. *(speaks to a participant)* Would you summarize what you are trying to get done in the Air Force?

**Participant**

I work at A-8, executing long-range plans on the air staff, and the corporate culture is such that it doesn't want to look at any lower tech air frames. We are trying to get air staff to see that as in their interests. We brought down some planes early, and we're just trying to move the culture in a different direction.

**Professor Cook**

We're flying Syrian border patrol in F-16s because it's the only air frame we got, right? And it takes about 2 seconds to figure out that a slow-slow prop plane with a lot of hard points and ISAR **[I COULDN'T FIND A DEFINITION FOR THIS**

**ACRONYM]**would be right platform.

**Participant**

Yes. We're looking at Cessna Caravans and AT6Bs that could do hell fire and maybe ISAR.

**Professor Cook**

But the resistance that you're running into is culture specific?

**Participant**

The 10-pound is pretty bloody, and they really do need to recapitalize some of the higher tech stuff too, so I see it from their perspective, but our perspective is that you can actually buy more of that high-tech stuff if you put a little money into this lower tech stuff back a few years. We'll start making money and you can buy the F-22s.

**Professor Cook**

I've been using this with cadets for years as an example of the lack of adaptation of the air force profession. The air frames we're buying—whatever their benefits in themselves are—would be better served if we had a bigger array of air frames using this, but trying to assure the Air Force that it makes sense is nearly impossible.

**Colonel McCausland**

Far be it from me not to beat up on the Air Force when I have an opportunity. Something like 200 pilots now have been shifted to flying Predators, much to their organizational, cultural chagrin, though I still understand they get flight day with their joystick and the air medal. Having said that, though, equal opportunity demands that I say something about the Army. Although I have the greatest respect and admiration for General Shinseki, I would say to all of you that if you decide to dissent within your organization, don't begin by changing the hat.

**Participant**

I have a question. I'm particularly interested in the sacrifice you mentioned. Your talk presented it as more of a monetary sacrifice, but is there something greater that would be sacrificed?

**Dr. Snider**

At lesser levels of dissent, there are significant things to sacrifice.

## **Professor Cook**

I think General Fogleman was probably an example in the Air Force of that where he found himself so at odds with Secretary Cohen. He honestly believed it was better if he left the service and allowed someone else to lead the service as long as Cohen and the Clinton Administration continued. His sacrifice was to give up probably the best job he had ever had in his life.

I don't know. All the sacrifice does not have to be monetary. I know a number of officers who have sought reassignment, who have simply gone into their boss and said, "It's obvious that we are not on the same sheet of music. If you want me to leave, I will." In some cases, the boss hastily says, "Yes, I think that would be better for both of us." So I don't mean all the sacrifice has to be monetary.

The point is that the broader culture of the service is a culture of servant-hood. What is the essential understanding of a servant? Sacrifice is a natural part of being a servant. You don't get to decide. Can you accept the subordination and the personal sacrifice that goes with the role? It's only in the extreme case that it is the remuneration.

I enjoyed being an Army officer. I felt honored. I had an immense sense of self-worth. So the sacrifice doesn't have to be something big that people write about in newspapers. The officer will feel it, and subordinates who know the officer will feel it. That's the part of the culture that I'm talking about.

The Fogleman case is important. I had the honor of interviewing him about this because a lot of people in the Air Force were saying he resigned on principle. When he talked to me about it, he said, "No, I didn't. I simply came to the conclusion that I was ineffective. I disagreed about a few specific decisions I wanted to make in the Air Force

that Secretary Cohen wouldn't let me make." After three or four rounds of that, he concluded that he would be better off resigning, but he didn't feel those issues were of such gravity that he needed to go to the *New York Times* and criticize the administration. Indeed, quite the opposite. He had to be persuaded to talk about it, and he did so only because historians said, "The story will get told one way or the other. You better get it told straight." That persuaded him.

A more interesting case more recently would be of course Admiral Fallon, who stepped down. There was a perception that he was not serving properly the civil authority who had the final policy statement.

### **Professor Cook**

The jury is still out on this somewhat but let's suppose the administration had no intention of actually attacking Iran but wanted to leave the threat on the table, and then he was constantly going around taking the threat off the table. Those are pretty good grounds for dismissal.

### **Participant**

It means something when we dissent or quit a job in the military. Does it mean the same in the media, in the public eye, or to Congress? What you hear in the media is: "This person dissented after they retired so they wouldn't lose their retirement pay" or something like that.

### **Dr. Snider**

The professional is motivated by intrinsics, while the bureaucrat is motivated by extrinsics. The sacrifice is in intrinsics. It may spill over into extrinsics, monetary remuneration, etc., but fundamentally, the sacrifice is in intrinsics. It has to be, because

that's where the motivation of the professional starts.

### **Colonel McCausland**

I would point to Abu Ghraib as an example. On I don't know how many radio and TV programs, they have said, "You held low-ranking enlisted responsible. They went to jail. The senior officers 'got off' with being forced to retire or receiving a letter of reprimand." To the average citizen, that looks like very little. For us who understand, this person spent decades in a career, and now at the very last point, those intrinsic and legacy are totally shattered. Most of them, if you asked would they rather go to prison than talk about it, they probably in many cases would opt to go to jail. That's not understood whatsoever.

### **Participant**

I wanted to piggyback on that intrinsic-extrinsic way of thinking of things. When the decision to dissent is made, and one resigns or whatever, it may not yield any change in policy. What is the pragmatic part that's the extrinsic as well, and how do those two relate?

### **Professor Cook**

First of all, do you even hope to influence policy, or is it a matter of personal conscience? That's how I read Newbold, based on the publicly-available information. Initially, it was: I just don't want to be there when that happens, and then subsequently, looking at the consequences, he felt as if maybe he should have done more. Is there anything a three-star Marine can do to stop this train? I doubt it with this administration in particular.

Try it on for size. What if the day after he was out of uniform, he hit the Sunday

talk shows? What if he said, “This is a really terrible idea. I’ve been there, and I’ll tell you why without revealing classified information. In other words, he could have done what Zinni did, but Zinni had been out for a while. He could have said, “Wait a minute. I was there last week, and here’s what I’m telling you.”

**Colonel McCausland**

I’m going to turn it over to the panel for a quick wrap-up unless there are any last burning points.

**Participant**

When it comes to sacrifice, we in the military have it in our profession, yes, but I have dual professions, in the military and my kind of medical expertise. I can quit the military, but I can always have a job in my profession. If I’m a military officer, a warrior, if I quit the military, I can’t really be employed in that occupation anymore. Sacrifice in our military culture comes from our families. So when I’m at the decision-making point, when am I going to put a stake in the ground about this issue? My family is not going to get any of what I’ve worked for all of these years? That is really a competing tension. Politicians don’t have to make that decision in the same way nor do other occupations.

**Colonel McCausland**

Excellent point.

**Participant**

There is a different Air Force out there that has made a lot of adjustments, that has taken money away from things like the F-22 to buy more cargo aircraft, to put pods on old airplanes like A-10s and F-16s so they could do this border patrol, that has moved

money around out of what the Air Force hierarchy saw as their priorities. It has been adapted. Since General Kinney, I think the historians will agree, the Air Force has been a very adaptive service to make something out of almost nothing to do these things. So there is another Air Force culture out there besides the corporate culture that has been referred.

Along those same lines, you've mentioned that the senior leaders have to be worried about 10 years down the road, and I'd submit to you that our chief and others are caught within a crisis of their own between what they very much want to do—supporting the current war on terror by sending 6,000 airmen to duties that we hadn't really been trained for—or trying to fill some of the gaps that we have. General Jumper in particular, the last chief of staff, started that up, and the requirement was to look 10 to 20 years down the road in a profession, to determine what was needed out there, where to spend the money, and what people to train. We've just reduced by 40,000 people so that we can afford these things we're going to need. But if the Army and the Marine Corps are building up, then we have to be able to support that buildup. I think we are going to find ourselves bottoming out and then ramping right back up. They are going through this struggle, and there is another Air Force culture out there that I don't think was coming out in an earlier discussion.

### **Colonel McCausland**

Within a particular aspect of a profession, coalitions will coalesce around certain areas based on their belief of jurisdictions and abstract knowledge. I would argue that the Navy is the most distinct. We have surface warfare officers, submariners, aviators, and God love them, Marines that are all part of the naval service. They don't necessarily

always totally agree about where the organization is heading.

Even in my own service, it's interesting. When I entered the Army in 1972, the United States Army was the greatest counterinsurgency force on the planet at that moment. We had to find counterinsurgency all over again. The United States Army prepares for the last war it liked.

(Laughter)

### **Colonel McCausland**

So, at the turn of the 21st century, we were building more tanks and crusaders and things like that. You were quite right that within a particular profession or subgroups, there are coalitions and competition and dissent that go on all the time.

### **Participant**

I was a CIA officer for 32 years in operations and overseas. This is a fascinating discussion for me, because in CIA, there has always been a tradition of very free communication up and down. I'm talking about the operations directorate, not the analytical part, although I think that's the case there as well. There was never any question about whether to dissent. It was always a question of how to do it most effectively, and this is where political savvy becomes important. As you learn along the way, how do you tell your branch chief that his idea is really not a good one? You have to be smart about how you do this, and you develop these skills as you go up the line. When you get to the director's office, you want to be very careful how you do it. I'm sure for General Zinni, meeting with the chairman of the joint chiefs or even getting in to see the President, this was the big problem.

With General Zinni, General Newbold, and the others, they can feel badly, and

they can feel guilt, but there was nobody in the White House who was receptive. Their minds were made up, and I don't think that, even had General Zinni and the others gone in en masse to see the President, Dick Cheney, Wolfowitz, and the others behind them, there would have been any change. They skewed the intelligence, and all the efforts of these wonderful people, who felt very strongly about making their point, were in vain, because their minds were made up from the very beginning. That's my own take. Maybe at some point, we'll see some memoirs from Crawford, Texas, about what really went into these White House decisions.

### **Colonel McCausland**

Thank you. Let me go now to the panel. I'm asking for some final comments, in reverse order from where we started.

### **Dr. Snider**

I can sum up rather quickly. I began the conclusion to this paper with a quote from Admiral Stockdale because he is such a clear-headed thinker when it comes to moral issues. "Even in the most detached duty," he stated, "we warriors must remember foremost in our minds that there are boundaries to the prerogatives of leadership, moral boundaries."

What I found most encouraging about this discussion and what I attempted to do in this paper, is to move the discussion from legalities to moralities. The challenge we all face as developers of officers is that in a profession you must have leaders of both competence and character. I don't have great concerns about the ability of our service to produce leaders of competence. We're immensely innovative trainers. We know how to do that. Even if we don't have the expert knowledge, we will replicate it rather quickly,

and while we're doing it, we've got the most innovative and adaptive young officers and NCOs in the field that you can imagine. So they're going to hold the dike until we can figure out how to fix the more systemic problem. I am not at all as confident that the services, particularly the one I study, is nearly as good—given the complexity of what we're going to face—in preparing leaders of character. We don't like to talk about this in our culture because it's rather too politically correct to talk about it. We have to get over this and talk straightforwardly about character and how we develop it. How does it manifest itself, and how does it work? Most of my work has been at the level of trying to get the strategic leaders to think about that, because I'm convinced that if they do, the trickle-down will just be immense, far more than we're able to do working at the pre-commissioning and other levels.

I was up at 10th Mountain Division last week talking to the brigade battalion commanders. I picked a topic that I had never spoken about before, on the content of the professional ethic and how to develop it. I'm not a behavioralist, but I've done enough years of study in this area that at least I had some ideas to offer. What's important was the reaction. I can tell you that in at least one division in the Army, the senior noncommissioned officers are absolutely sick and tired of the officers not leading morally. They feel like that responsibility has been put on them. That's our challenge or at least another way of seeing the challenge.

### **Professor Cook**

At the Air Force Academy, we talk continuously about character development. We add program after program to it, but I'm not sure that we've given the thought that needs to go into it. I guess this goes to the Marine study, that we need to educate for

subtlety and not trade for clarity. It's the training for clarity that produces the confused cadet that I'm talking about. So I think that's the challenge. Perhaps we don't staff these programs with the right people. Perhaps we don't approach the problem in the proper way, but as soon as possible, we need to be moving young people away from thinking in relatively black and white moral terms and move toward gray instead of away from it. We tend to do the opposite and lose credibility thereby.

**Colonel McCausland**

Well, ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank you all for being a very active and attentive panel. I think we probably have raised a whole series of issues that we can carry this conversation on into the evening tonight and into our activities tomorrow.