

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND DEMOCRACY IN POLARIZED AMERICA

Introductory Remarks

Hello, my name is Sherman Teichman. I am the Founder of The Trebuchet, a higher education consultancy. I have the privilege of welcoming you to the first in a series of forums on “Civil-Military Relations and Democracy in a Polarized America.”

Thank you to the Clements Center for National Security at the University of Texas at Austin, to the distinguished Scowcroft lectures of the United States Air Force Academy, and VIA Unlimited, for hosting and creating this series with us.

It resonates with the mission of a student-centered educational program I began sixteen years ago at the Tufts University Global Leadership Institute called ALLIES - Alliance Linking Leaders in Education and the Services. I directed this program for thirty years, until I became Emeritus in 2016.

With my students we created a leadership initiative dedicated to creating understanding between cadets and midshipmen of the Service Academies, and University liberal arts and humanities students, two distinct groups that unfortunately rarely have the opportunity to interact meaningfully. It is critical that they do, and that they begin to do so at an early stage.

ALLIES is an immersive, educational, experience of joint research and training intended to create enduring relationships that inspire, inform and influence the student’s civilian and military careers. This is essential for a thoughtful and respectful civil-military culture in our country.

ALLIES activities include joint presentations at major national and international forums, conducting field exercises in peace and stability operations, simulations of conflict and humanitarian intervention scenarios.

There is a strong emphasis on immersive, on-site learning – for example studying counterterrorism at the Royal Military College in Jordan; working with a Buddhist NGO in Sri Lanka on post-tsunami reconstruction, preparing for humanitarian assistance operations in Guatemala; understanding the role of the post-genocide military in Rwanda, investigating their decommissioning of fissile materials in Ukraine; and in Chile, working with the Judge who prosecuted Pinochet to create the first human rights curriculum for their military police.

Given its global perspective – Allies members have met with Iraq’s first National Security Adviser after the fall of Saddam, Serbian Nonviolence experts, senior political and military leaders of the ANC, IRA and Provo leaders, a Pakistani nuclear physicist; the Deputy Commander of the Bosnian Army who defended Sarajevo; with both U.S and Russian military and intelligence members of the Elbe Group.

ALLIES liberal arts alumni have been greatly impacted by their experience in ALLIES. They now serve – as fixed-wing and drone pilots, submariners, in the SEALs, Marines, Rangers, in intelligence and counterintelligence, in cyber units, as lawyers in the Judge Advocate Generals Corps; in UN peacekeeping, in humanitarian refugee relief and rescue organizations, Pentagon & DOD; as researchers the Truman National Security Project’s Defense Council.

At the ALLIES National Security and Civil Liberties Program with the Law Library of Congress, we considered Wikileaks; the War Powers and Patriot Act, "extraordinary rendition" Guantanamo, NSA surveillance, the ethical concern with lethal autonomous weapons (LAWs) , - and laws – the Imperial presidency; the impact of the Commander in Chief Clause of Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution, How compatible is presidential inherent power with the U.S. system of republican government and constitutional limits?

ALLIES has a non-partisan, non-ideological ethos, informed by evidence, marked by respectful, rational discourse, - critical elements of our essential civil-military relationship, that is now threatened by the strife and discord of our current, fraught electoral process.

This shared concern led me to approach my military friends and former ALLIES Academic faculty liaisons at the Service Academies, specifically Benjamin Paganelli of USAFA and Jim Golby of West Point to create this initiative.

I would now like to pass the baton to our friend, Professor Damon Coletta of USAFA our moderator, the Scowcroft Political Science Professor at USAFA and editor of Space and Defense. Thank you.