

Clements Center, 27 OCT 2020

- It is a pleasure to be with you this evening to talk about American civil-military relations.
- Before I get too far along, I would like to clarify that everything I say tonight is my personal perspective and should not be taken as representative of the views of the U.S. Military Academy, the Army, or the Department of Defense.
- I appreciate the way that Damon Coletta framed this panel; that as the first of two panels that will discuss civil-military relations in a polarized time, tonight's focus would be on what Samuel Huntington called the "functional imperative" which stemmed from the threats to a society's security.

To fulfill that functional imperative, Huntington argued, militaries need to be free to develop military expertise. He went on to argue that military expertise is 'universal in the sense that it is not affected by time or location' and that 'military professionals should be permitted to develop their expertise . . . without extraneous influence.'
- I think that both these formulations are problematic. When we think about the education of Army officers today, my argument is that we would do well to be as informed by Morris Janowitz – that other founding father of American civil-military relations – as we are by Samuel Huntington.
- In making this case, am going to draw on a recent article I co-authored with one of my colleagues, Professor Hugh Liebert, on the topic of military officer education.
 - The start point for our analysis was the idea that military operations undertaken by the United States since 9/11 – in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, among other locations – have been more costly and less successful than anticipated or desired.
 - The reasons for these less than optimal results are undoubtedly numerous and complex, but they do create an opportunity for introspection.
 - As those in uniform undertake this introspection, I would argue that it is important to challenge the basic framework in Huntington's *The Soldier and the State*, which has often held sway, by using another seminal work, Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier*, published just three years later.
 - The reason is that Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier* is superior in its articulation of a need for political awareness in the officer corps, placing more emphasis on the need for officers to understand the political impact of military posture – at home and around the world – as well as the political impact of military operations.
- To make this argument, let me start with the concept of

I. Strategic Success

- Here, I must confess, I am one who does not believe Carl von Clausewitz's *On War* has been surpassed in its logic and clarity regarding the relationship between military means and political ends.
- What I derive from Clausewitz is that the value of military means depends on their contribution to a more politically desirable peace.
- So, to me, it follows that the United States would benefit from having military leaders – at all levels of seniority – who are aware of the political ramifications of their presence, action, or inaction, and who are inclined to recognize that their success or failure to advance the national interest will ultimately be judged in political terms.

II. So now, a word about The Merits and Weaknesses of *The Soldier and the State*

- It is rare for a work of political science to endure as Huntington's has; it is still an almost necessary touchstone almost 60 years after it was first published. It was influential at the time and in the decades since for several reasons:
 - it spoke to then-critical Cold War concerns,
 - it identified the military as a "profession," which was attractive to the institution,
 - developed a formula for civilian control, "objective control"; under which the military would remain a politically neutral "profession," loyal to whomever attained political authority, but with the autonomy to develop its expertise in the management of violence
- In sum, Huntington said that the United States could have national security and liberalism, too, if it could approximate objective control
- However, in articulating his solution, Huntington stressed the division of labor between statesman and soldier. Huntington's military officer spoke only of managing violence; his statesman spoke only of political objectives. The tricky business of linking the one to the other – in short, the work of strategy – was left without a voice.

Let me briefly contrast that with The Political Awareness of Janowitz's book, *The Professional Soldier*

- While both works were written in the strategic context of the Cold War, the practical policy concerns of these two authors were very different. Huntington was most concerned about whether the United States could retain a sufficiently effective professional military in the context of American liberalism and an enduring threat; his three-part solution, a politically neutral and powerless military, professional military autonomy in the development of military expertise, and a degree of cultural isolation of the military from the broader society.

- While Janowitz similarly saw that a strategy of containment would require a large force-in-being, he argued for integration rather than separation. When military confrontation could escalate to nuclear annihilation, the country would need its officer corps to become a constabulary force “continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of force,”... a military that “seeks viable international relations, rather than victory, because it has incorporated a protective military posture”

- The most significant advantage of Janowitz’s constabulary concept when compared to Huntington’s ideal of an autonomous professional military is its emphasis on the idea that officers require political awareness to serve the national interest most effectively. Military institutions have a political impact in times of peace as well as in times of war.

IV. So, what are the Implications for Military Education?

- Samuel Huntington did advocate for a broad, general education for officers, and then a “technical phase” that did not explicitly include a sensitivity toward political implications.

- Janowitz: agreed that the tactical and technical competence of the officer corps at its warfighting tasks is necessary. However, he argued, military officers must also understand politics: “Officer education,” he said, “in political-military affairs should start in the military academy where tactical training must be related to the requirements of international relations, and continue at higher levels of education and professional experience.”

So, in conclusion, I would argue that

- Twenty-first century military officers can and should be excellent tacticians *and* astute observers of political affairs. In its call for officers to be aware of the political consequences of military posture and operations, Janowitz’s *The Professional Soldier* provides a useful – and in some circles, underappreciated – guide for preparing officers to best contribute to the country’s strategic success.