

Military Officers

Political without Partisanship

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Abstract

The US military should refrain from seeking political power and avoid partisan politics. However, to insist that officers should remain apolitical ignores the fact that in the American system policy making and the development of strategy cannot be easily separated from the political process. Yet such a separation is what many scholars suggest. For officers to avoid the *world of politics* would mean removing them from the debates about policy and strategy that require their input. Military leaders must contribute to the policy process and navigate the shoals of politics while maintaining trust between the civilian and military sides of policy formulation.



It is a pillar of American civil-military relations that military officers are expected to remain apolitical in the performance of their duties. As Risa Brooks writes in a chapter for a recent collection of essays on American civil-military relations, “When individuals join the armed forces, they commit to act in service of the country as a whole and to forego political activity. Military personnel are charged with protecting the security of the country and with performing their functional responsibilities with efficiency, commitment, and skill. Officers are socialized to believe that the world of politics is exclusively a civilian arena.”¹

But what does *political* mean in the context of policy making in a democratic republic? Is it possible for an officer to avoid involvement

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in the political arena and still do his or her job? The answer depends on how one defines *political*. The term has three meanings in the context of civil-military relations. The first definition is seeking power at the expense of other government institutions. Samuel Finer's *The Man on Horseback* is the classic study of this meaning of the word.² The term's second meaning is participation in the policy-making process. This is the sense in which many contemporary writers use the term.³ While Brooks has previously used the term in the same sense as Finer,⁴ she has recently adopted this second definition.⁵ The third meaning of *political* is involvement in partisan politics.⁶

Of course, the US military—as an institution and as individual service members—should refrain from seeking political power and avoid partisan politics. This political refrain should be a cornerstone of military professionalism. However, to insist that officers should remain apolitical in the second sense of the word ignores the fact that in the American system, policy making and the development of strategy on the one hand and the political process on the other cannot be easily separated. Yet such a separation is what Brooks and many others suggest, concluding that, although there are some benefits arising from the military's political activity, the costs of that activity outweigh the benefits. The most important cost would be that such activity “threatens conventions of democratic accountability and decision making in the United States,” leading to a lack of trust in civil-military relations.⁷ For officers to avoid the world of politics would mean removing them from the debates about policy and strategy that require their input. Thus, senior military leaders must be involved in the policy-making process. The argument is predicated on the belief that policy and strategy are processes that require constant adaptation to shifting conditions and circumstances in a world where chance, uncertainty, and ambiguity dominate.⁸ This article will first consider the problem of objective control of the military before discussing reasonable ways officers can participate in the political process. Finally, it examines some of the perils of partisanship.

The Problem of Objective Control

One can trace the belief that officers should remain apolitical to Samuel Huntington's watershed study of civil-military relations, *The Soldier and the State*, in which he sought a solution to the dilemma that lies at

the heart of civil-military relations: how to guarantee civilian control of the military while ensuring the ability of the uniformed military to provide security. He uses *political* in Finer's sense—those seeking power at the expense of other government institutions.

Briefly, Huntington identified two broad approaches to achieving and maintaining civilian control of the military: *subjective* and *objective* control.⁹ The first approach controls the military by maximizing the power of civilians—be it by means of authority, influence, or ideology. In this system, there is a trade-off between civilian control and military effectiveness. Government institutions, social class, or constitutional form can achieve subjective control. Many writers contend that democracy is the best constitutional form for achieving the combination of civilian control and military effectiveness, but totalitarian regimes have successfully controlled the military by pitting one part against another, for examples the Schutzstaffel (SS) versus the Wehrmacht in Nazi Germany and “political officers” versus other personnel in the Soviet Union. While civilian control is maximized, the military may be weakened to the point that its effectiveness is adversely affected.

Huntington advocated the second approach, which maximizes military professionalism. His solution was a mechanism for creating and maintaining a concept he called *objective control*. Such a professional, apolitical military establishment would focus on defending the United States but avoid threatening civilian control. On the one hand, civilian authorities grant a professional officer corps autonomy in the realm of military affairs. On the other, “a highly professional officer corps stands ready to carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state.”¹⁰ Eliot Cohen calls this the “normal” theory of civil-military relations but notes that this approach is by no means the norm in American history—even in recent times.¹¹

The problem with strict adherence to objective control, as understood by most military officers, is that it presumably obliges them to focus their expertise on the management of violence rather than on the policy and strategy debates that guide the application of force. After all, as Carl von Clausewitz reminds us, wars are not fought for their own purpose but rather to achieve political goals.

The following example can illustrate the danger of religiously adhering to the normal—apolitical—theory of civil-military relations. Beginning in the late 1970s, the US Army embraced the operational level of

war—the level focused on the conduct of campaigns to achieve strategic goals within a theater of war—as its central organizing concept. As Hew Strachan has observed, “the operational level of war appeals to armies: it functions in a politics-free zone and it puts primacy on professional skills.”¹² And herein lies the problem for civil-military relations: the disjunction between operational excellence in combat and policy that determines the reasons for which a particular war is to be fought. The combination of the dominant position of the normal theory of civil-military relations in the United States and the US military’s focus on the nonpolitical operational level of war has meant that all too often the military conduct of a war has been disconnected from the goals of the war. As an essay published by the US Army War College’s Strategic Studies Institute puts it, the operational level of war has become an “alien” that has devoured strategy.

Rather than meeting its original purpose of contributing to the attainment of campaign objectives laid down by strategy, operational art—practiced as a *level of war*—assumed responsibility for campaign planning. This reduced political leadership to the role of *strategic sponsors*, quite specifically widening the gap between politics and warfare. The result has been a well-demonstrated ability to win battles that have not always contributed to strategic success, producing “a way of battle” rather than a way of war.

The political leadership of a country cannot simply set objectives for a war, provide the requisite materiel, and then stand back awaiting victory. Nor should the nation or its military be seduced by this prospect. Politicians should be involved in the minute-to-minute conduct of war; as Clausewitz reminds us, political considerations are “influential in the planning of war, of the campaign, and often even of the battle.”¹³

The task of strategy is to bring doctrine—concerned with fighting battles in support of campaigns—into line with national policy. However, as Richard H. Kohn observed in the spring 2009 issue of *World Affairs*, “Nearly twenty years after the end of the Cold War, the American military, financed by more money than the entire rest of the world spends on its armed forces, failed to defeat insurgencies or fully suppress sectarian civil wars in two crucial countries, each with less than a tenth of the U.S. population, after overthrowing those nations’ governments in a matter of weeks.”¹⁴

Kohn attributes this lack of effectiveness to a decline in the US military's professional competence with regard to strategic planning: "In effect, in the most important area of professional expertise—the connecting of war to policy, of operations to achieving the objectives of the nation—the American military has been found wanting. The excellence of the American military in operations, logistics, tactics, weaponry, and battle has been manifest for a generation or more. Not so with strategy."¹⁵

Here Kohn echoes the claim of Colin Gray: "All too often, there is a black hole where American strategy ought to reside."¹⁶ This strategic black hole exists largely because the military has focused its professional attention on the apolitical operational level of war, abdicating its role in strategy making.

Of course, just as soldiers should not be excluded from the policy arena, civilians should not be excluded from the realm of strategy. Strategy, properly understood, is a complex phenomenon comprising a number of elements—among the most important of which are geography; history; the nature of the political regime, including such elements as religion, ideology, culture, and political and military institutions; and economic and technological factors. Accordingly, strategy consists of a continual dialogue between policy and these other factors. However, it is an interactive and iterative process that must involve both civilians and the uniformed military.

Officers in the Political Process

In one of her excellent essays on political activity by the military, Brooks argues that for officers to engage in such activity is inconsistent with the norms of professional military behavior. However, as suggested above, some of the activities she sees as inappropriate are part of what officers must do to fulfill their professional responsibilities. For instance, she identifies several political strategies militaries employ to influence the outcome of policy debates: public appeal, "grandstanding," politicking, alliance building, and "shoulder tapping."¹⁷

A *public appeal* is an attempt to go outside the chain of command to influence public opinion directly. Examples of such strategy include Gen Colin Powell's 1992 editorial in the *New York Times* counseling second thoughts on getting involved in the Balkans and retired Maj Gen Robert Scales's editorial in the *Washington Post* criticizing Pres. Barack

Obama's Syria policy on behalf of what he claimed was a majority of active duty officers.¹⁸ *Grandstanding* is the threat to resign in protest of a given policy. Many argue the Joint Chiefs of Staff should have resigned to protest US strategy in Vietnam.¹⁹ *Politicking* refers to retired officers' endorsements of political candidates or organization of service member voter drives. *Alliance building* is the attempt to build civilian-military coalitions on behalf of a policy or program. *Shoulder tapping* refers to attempts by military officers to set the agenda by bringing issues to the attention of politicians and then lobbying on behalf of those issues. An example of this latter strategy took place in 1993, when military officers mobilized key members of Congress to oppose Pres. Bill Clinton's proposal to lift the ban on military service by open homosexuals. However, this list seems to conflate appropriate military participation in the policy process with partisanship. There is no question the first three activities Brooks describes are partisan in nature, and military officers should avoid such behavior. However, the last two strategies are reflective of reasonable features of American civil-military relations.

Brooks's inclusion of alliance building on her list ignores the fact that historically, US civil-military disputes usually have not pit civilians per se against the military. Instead, these disputes have involved one civilian-military faction against another.²⁰ For instance, shortly after World War II, the debate between the Navy and the newly established US Air Force (USAF) enflamed civil-military tensions regarding long-range airpower—in particular, strategic bombers. On the one hand, Pres. Harry S. Truman, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, and certain members of Congress favored the USAF's long-range B-36 Peacemaker strategic bomber. On the other hand, the Navy, its supporters in Congress, and the press advocated on behalf of the Navy's proposed supercarrier, the USS *United States*. Johnson told Adm Richard L. Connelly in December 1949, "Admiral, the Navy is on its way out. There's no reason for having a Navy and Marine Corps. [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] General [Omar] Bradley tells me that amphibious operations are a thing of the past. We'll never have any more amphibious operations. That does away with the Marine Corps. And the Air Force can do anything the Navy can do nowadays, so that does away with the Navy."²¹ This particular battle culminated in the "revolt of the admirals" that same month, when a number of high-ranking naval officers, including the chief of naval operations, Adm Louis E. Denfield, were

either fired or forced to resign in the wake of the cancellation of the USS *United States* project.²² Even the “textbook” case of a civil-military crisis, President Truman’s firing of Gen Douglas MacArthur, is more complex than it appears at first sight. In fact, there was military support for the firing. Both Gen George Marshall and Gen Dwight Eisenhower urged Truman to fire MacArthur, while Republicans in Congress supported MacArthur.

Another force structure debate involved Adm Hyman Rickover and his congressional allies versus the rest of the US Navy regarding nuclear propulsion. Rickover’s single-minded dedication to a nuclear Navy and his emphasis on engineering oversight resulted in a spectacular safety record, but according to his critics, it also led to an unbalanced and more expensive naval force structure. One of Rickover’s harshest critics was John Lehman, who became Pres. Ronald Reagan’s secretary of the Navy in 1981. Lehman was able to retire Rickover, a feat none of his predecessors had been able to achieve, but Rickover’s legacy, especially in terms of the Navy’s personnel system and shipbuilding, raised many obstacles to Lehman’s effort to create a Navy force structure driven by strategic considerations. Nonetheless, Lehman was able to create and maintain a “navalist” civilian-military coalition—including powerful congressional members—to overcome resistance to his vision within the Navy, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), and the Joint Staff.²³

The creation of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) also occurred, despite strong opposition from the services and OSD. It was an alliance between an assortment of “guerrillas” within the Department of Defense and some very dedicated congressional advocates that saw the reorganization come to fruition.²⁴ A similar situation arose in the case of the Marine Corps’s V-22 Osprey aircraft, with the Marines, the Department of the Navy, and several congressional delegations arrayed against very powerful opponents within the OSD. These sorts of factional debates have persisted into our own time. For instance, the choice of the USAF’s A-10 Warthog land-attack aircraft over its competitors pitted the congressional delegations of several states and both the civilian and uniformed leadership of the three military departments against one another.

Regarding shoulder tapping, one must remember that in the American system, civilian control involves not only the executive branch but the legislative branch as well. These two branches vie for dominance

in the military realm. While the president has constitutional authority as commander-in-chief of the military, Congress retains the power of the purse and is therefore the “force planner of last resort.” Nonetheless, the decentralized nature of Congress gives the president and the executive branch an advantage when it comes to military affairs. Ironically, Congress further strengthened the executive’s hand by enacting the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.²⁵ Regardless, it seems perfectly acceptable for military officers to be able to bring their concerns to Congress.

This is especially true in light of one of Huntington’s most important insights. In *The Soldier and the State*, he argued that a major source of American civil-military tension is the clash between the dominant liberalism of the United States, which tended toward an antimilitary outlook, and the “conservative” mind of military officers.²⁶ Part of this conservative mind-set is a focus on military effectiveness, or what Huntington calls the *functional* imperative, which stresses virtues that differ from those that are favored by liberal society at large. He called these latter virtues the *societal imperative*.

Huntington further argued that while during wartime American liberalism accepted the need for an effective military, it tended to turn against the military during peacetime, trying to force it more into line with liberal values. He contended that in peacetime the dominant liberalism of the United States sought *extirpation* of the military but that liberal civilians, recognizing that even liberal society needs a military, would settle for *transmutation*, which seeks to supplant the functional imperative with the societal one.²⁷ It seems logical that if soldiers believe either extirpation or transmutation is threatening the integrity of their profession, as in the cases of service by open homosexuals or the opening of infantry and special operations fields to women, the uniformed military has a right to make its case. After all, the other professions in the United States set their own standards.

Of course, as I have argued elsewhere, civil-military relations can be seen as bargaining, the goal of which is to allocate prerogatives and responsibilities between the civilian leadership on the one hand and the military on the other.²⁸ There are three parties to the bargain: the American people, the government, and the military establishment. Periodically, these parties must renegotiate the civil-military bargain to take account of political, social, technological, or geopolitical changes. Thus, at

some point, the desires of the third party to the civil-military bargain—the people—may override the demands of the military profession. This was the case with service by open homosexuals, and it may become true of women in combat specialties as well.²⁹

Should the services have been prohibited from making the case for their roles and missions after World War II? Were postwar efforts by the Marine Corps and the other services to mobilize allies in Congress and the media to protect them from being downgraded or even abolished acceptable?³⁰ How about efforts to create a special forces command in the face of resistance on the part of the Pentagon bureaucracy and the services? Brooks would seem to argue these efforts were political and therefore illegitimate. Many commentators view these episodes as merely organizational and bureaucratic infighting. However, they reflected important strategic questions, arising from a strong belief in the efficacy of the services' strategic importance—what Huntington called the *strategic concept* of the service. According to Huntington, a service's strategic concept constituted "the fundamental element of a military service . . . the statement of [its] role . . . or purpose in implementing national policy."³¹ A service's strategic concept answers the "ultimate question: what function do you perform which obligates society to assume responsibility for your maintenance?" A clear strategic concept is critical to the ability of a service to organize and employ the resources Congress allocates to it.³² For instance, the naval services (the Navy and Marine Corps) have tended to embrace "strategic pluralism," which "calls for a wide variety of military forces and weapons to meet a diversity of potential threats." The Army and Air Force, in contrast, have remained wedded to "strategic monism," which places primary reliance on a single strategic concept (long-range strategic bombing), weapon (airpower), service, or region (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization during the Cold War).³³

The fact is, as Andrew Bacevich has argued, "the dirty little secret of American civil-military relations, by no means unique to the [Clinton] administration, is that the commander in chief does not command the military establishment; he cajoles it, negotiates with it; and as necessary, appeases it."³⁴ Richard Kohn has echoed this point: "In theory, civilians have the authority to issue virtually any order and organize the military in any fashion they choose. But in practice, the relationship is much more complex. Both sides frequently disagree among themselves. Further, the military can evade or circumscribe civilian authority by fram-

ing the alternatives or tailoring their advice or predicting nasty consequences; by leaking information or appealing to public opinion . . . or by approaching friends in Congress for support.”³⁵

This is the reality. Although one can argue about the wisdom of military support for this or that program or policy, civil-military relations are an ongoing debate that requires military participation in debates over policy, strategy, and the health of the military instrument itself. But as noted earlier, policy cannot be divorced from politics. Therefore, officers must understand both the political environment and the policy process and be able to participate in debates over policy without becoming swept up in partisan politics.

Perils of Partisanship

Many commentators have expressed concern about the “Republicanization” of the US military.³⁶ By the 1990s, most active duty officers self-identified as Republican. A comprehensive study discovered that the percentage of officers calling themselves independents had declined during a 20-year period while those identifying themselves as Republicans increased. In 1976, the figures were 46 percent identifying as independents and 33 percent as Republicans. Two decades later the numbers had changed dramatically, with only 22 percent identifying as independents, while 67 percent were Republicans.³⁷ A more recent survey looking at veterans shows that those self-reporting as Republicans have remained relatively stable from the 1990s to the present (36.95 percent to 33.06 percent respectively), while the percentage of Democrats has fallen (31.03 percent to 18.55 percent) and the number of independents (27.59 percent to 39.52 percent) has increased in the same period.³⁸ Political leanings aside, there does not seem to be any evidence, even anecdotal, that the political preferences of officers has had any impact on their fidelity to constitutional subordination of the military. And even such concerns fail to note that the US military was far less partisan even in the 1990s than it has been at other times in American history. Indeed the idea of a nonpartisan military arose only as the US military came to view itself as a profession in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Before that, military partisanship was rampant.

For example, after the American Revolution there was a spirited debate between Federalists and Republicans regarding the desirability of

a permanent military establishment. Prominent Federalists, including Washington, Hamilton, and Knox, favored a standing army or at least a uniform militia, but the “genius” of the people made such an establishment impossible. It was a matter of faith for Americans that standing armies were a threat to liberty and that the militia in the form of a “people numerous and armed” was the only acceptable way to defend a republic. This vision of the militia’s capabilities was never completely true, but it took the debacle of the War of 1812 to disabuse the American people of their attachment to a militia.³⁹

Until the election of Pres. Thomas Jefferson in 1800, the Army was a Federalist stronghold. Its few Republican officers were barred from high command. Jefferson was able to reverse the situation by reducing the size of the Army, thereby eliminating many Federalists while commissioning Republican officers. The establishment of the US Military Academy at West Point was an important tool in Jefferson’s enterprise.⁴⁰

During the Mexican-American War, Pres. James Polk, a Democrat, feuded constantly with his generals in the field, both of whom were Whigs with presidential aspirations. Maj Gen Zachary Taylor and Maj Gen Winfield Scott did not hesitate to very vocally criticize the president’s policy, strategy, and leadership while conducting the military operations in Mexico.⁴¹ Such behavior on the part of general officers would be unthinkable today. Their public criticism of Polk adumbrated Maj Gen George B. McClellan’s similar public denunciations of Pres. Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War.⁴² Even with the rise of military professionalism, partisanship did not disappear completely. For instance, during the presidential campaign of 1920, Maj Gen Leonard Wood, an active duty officer—who had formerly been Army chief of staff and who was, at the time, a military district commander—campaigning for the Republican Party nomination while wearing his uniform.

Political activity from which officers should be expected to refrain are those acts of partisanship, including attempts by political parties to enlist soldiers—including retired officers—to endorse candidates, as happened during the 1992 and 2000 presidential elections, or public criticism by an officer of an administration’s policy. Adm William “Fox” Fallon’s criticism of the George W. Bush administration’s policy regarding Iran, the “revolt of the generals” against Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, the Gen Stanley McCrystal *Rolling Stone* interview, and the Robert Scales *Washington Post* op-ed criticizing Obama’s Syria policy are

examples of this.⁴³ Brooks and others are correct to criticize political partisanship on the part of officers. While it is possible for the military to gain some short-term advantages by engaging in partisan politics, the costs of doing so are potentially very high. For one, the American people think very highly of the US military today. However, this could change rapidly if the people come to see the military as little more than another interest group or political party constituency helping to elect individuals who then accede to the demands of that constituency. The military will lose not only its legitimacy in the eyes of the American people but also its ability to help craft national strategy if it acts as if it were merely a public sector union.

Policy refers primarily to such broad national goals as interests and objectives. Although civilians should dominate this arena, they must involve the military as well—for not to do so leads to a potentially fatal disconnect between ends and means. The uniformed military must provide advice regarding such questions as to whether the military resources and the military instrument itself are sufficient to achieve the goals of foreign policy in general or the objectives of a war in particular, what alternative courses of actions exist to achieve those goals, what the likely costs and risks are, and how those costs and risks match up against the likely benefits. Policy and strategy are inextricably linked, and officers must be involved in the policy-strategy debate to ensure there is no mismatch between the two.

The key to healthy civil-military relations is trust between the civilian and military sides of the policy formulation process. Civilian leaders must trust military leaders to provide their best and most objective advice and offer a fair hearing to that advice rather than reject it out of hand—especially for transparently political reasons. At the same time, military leaders must trust civilian policy objectives, respect policy choices, and carry out legal policy decisions. While the military should eschew the quest for political power and avoid partisan politics, it must contribute to the policy process and navigate the shoals of politics. It can do so only if trust exists on both sides of the civil-military divide. ■■■

Notes

1. Risa A. Brooks, "Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies," in *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era*, edited by Suzanne C. Nielsen and Don M. Snider (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 213.

2. Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (1962; repr., New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2006). Finer identifies four levels of military

intervention—influence, blackmail, displacement, supplantment—and six methods or modes of intervention: normal constitutional channels, collusion or competition with civilian authorities, intimidation of civilian authorities, threats of non-cooperation with civilian authorities, failure to defend civilian authorities against violence, and the use of violence by the military itself.

3. Richard Kohn, “The Erosion of Civilian Control of the Military in the United States Today,” *Naval War College Review* 55, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 8–59.

4. Risa A. Brooks, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

5. For further insight into Brooks’s thinking, see Risa A. Brooks, “The Perils of Politics: Why Staying Apolitical Is Good for Both the US Military & the Country,” *Orbis* 57, no. 3 (Summer 2013): 369–79.

6. Andrew J. Bacevich and Richard Kohn, “Grand Army of the Republicans: Has the US Military Become a Partisan Force?” *New Republic*, 8 December 1997.

7. Brooks, “Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies,” 237.

8. Indeed, a major component of intermediate and top-level professional military education is focused on the policy-making environment and policy process. At my former institution, the Naval War College, one subcourse of the National Security Affairs Department is specifically dedicated to the study of policy. It includes sessions on decision-making models (rational actor, organizational, bureaucratic, etc.), the Departments of Defense and State, the executive branch, Congress, the intelligence community, the interagency process, and so forth.

9. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 80–85.

10. *Ibid.*, 84.

11. Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 4.

12. Hew Strachan, “Making Strategy: Civil-Military Relations after Iraq,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 48, no. 3 (Autumn 2006), 60.

13. Justin Kelly and Michael James Brennan, *Alien: How Operational Art Devoured Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: US Army Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), viii.

14. Richard H. Kohn, “Tarnished Brass: Is the U.S. Military Profession in Decline?” *World Affairs* 138, no. 4 (Spring 2009), 73.

15. *Ibid.*, 76.

16. Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare* (London, UK: Orion, 2005), 111.

17. Brooks, “Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies,” 218–24.

18. Colin L. Powell, “Why Generals Get Nervous,” *New York Times*, 8 October 1992, <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/10/08/opinion/why-generals-get-nervous.html>; and Robert H. Scales, “U.S. Military Planners Don’t Support War with Syria,” *Washington Post*, 5 September 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/us-military-planners-dont-support-war-with-syria/2013/09/05/10a07114-15bb-11e3-be6e-dc6ae8a5b3a8_story.html.

19. See, for instance, the discussion in H. R. McMaster, *Derelection of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* (New York: Harper, 1997).

20. I am indebted to Donald B. Connelly for this observation. See his book, *John M. Schofield and the Politics of Generalship* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), xii.

21. Quoted in George W. Baer, *One Hundred Years of Sea Power: The U.S. Navy, 1890–1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 190.

22. Thomas D. Boettcher, *First Call: The Making of the Modern US Military, 1945–1953* (Boston, MA: Little Brown, 1992), 177–86; and Jeffrey G. Barlow, *Revolt of the Admirals: The Fight for Naval Aviation, 1945–1950* (Washington, DC: Naval Historical Center, 1994).

23. John F. Lehman, *Command of the Seas* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1988).

24. Mackubin Thomas Owens, “Congress and the Creation of USSOCOM” (Naval War College faculty paper, May 2013).

25. Mackubin Thomas Owens, "Force Planning: The Crossroads of Strategy and the Political Process," *Orbis* 59, no. 3 (Summer 2015), forthcoming.
26. Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 153.
27. *Ibid.*, 155–57.
28. Mackubin Thomas Owens, *US Civil-Military Relations after 9/11: Renegotiating the Civil-Military Bargain* (New York: Continuum, 2011).
29. Colton C. Campbell and David P. Auerswald, ed., *Congress and Civil-Military Relations* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015), 1.
30. On the Marine Corps's fight for survival in the postwar years, see, Gordon W. Keiser, *The Marine Corps and Defense Unification, 1944–1947: The Politics of Survival* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1982); and Victor H. Krulak, *First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999).
31. Samuel Huntington, "National Policy and the Transoceanic Navy," *US Naval Institute Proceedings* 80, no. 5 (May 1954), 483.
32. *Ibid.*, 488 and 491–92.
33. On strategic pluralism and strategic monism, see Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 400 and 418–27; Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 264; and Keiser, *U.S. Marine Corps and Defense Unification*, 121–22. Compare these perspectives with Mackubin Thomas Owens, "The Hollow Promise of JCS Reform," *International Security* 10, no. 3 (Winter 1985–86), 106–08; Mackubin Thomas Owens, "Goldwater-Nichols: A Ten-Year Retrospective," *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1996; and Mackubin Thomas Owens, "The Use and Abuse of Jointness," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 1997.
34. Andrew J. Bacevich, "Discord Still: Clinton and the Military," *Washington Post*, 3 January 1999, C1.
35. Kohn, "The Erosion of Civilian Control," 15–16.
36. Bacevich and Kohn, "Grand Army of the Republicans."
37. Ole R. Holsti, "A Widening Gap Between the US Military and Civilian Society? Some Evidence, 1976–1996," *International Security* 23, no. 3 (Winter 1998–99): 5–42.
38. YouGov poll, November, 2013, Civil-Military Tab 2.
39. Lawrence Delbert Cress, *Citizens in Arms: The Army and Militia in American Society to the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).
40. Richard H. Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783–1802* (New York: Free Press, 1975); and Theodore Crackel, *Mr. Jefferson's Army: Political and Social Reform of the Military Establishment, 1801–1809* (New York: New York University Press, 1987).
41. John C. Pinheiro, *Manifest Ambition: James K. Polk and Civil Military Relations during the Mexican War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007).
42. Mackubin Thomas Owens, *Abraham Lincoln: Leadership and Democratic Statesmanship in Wartime* (Philadelphia, PA: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2009), 30–33.
43. David Margolick, "The Night of the Generals," *Vanity Fair*, 13 March 2007, <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2007/04/iraqgenerals200704>; Scott Wilson and Michael D. Shear, "Gen. McCrystal Dismissed as Top US Commander in Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, 24 June 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/23/AR2010062300689.html>; and Scales, "US Military Planners Don't Support War with Syria."

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