

SENIOR CONFERENCE XLIV
CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS: FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE SOLDIER AND THE STATE

West Point, New York
31 May - 2 June 2007

The United States Military Academy (USMA) Senior Conference is an annual event administered by the Department of Social Sciences on behalf of the Superintendent, USMA. The conference provides a forum for distinguished representatives—from government, academia, the think-tank community, and the joint military services—to discuss topics of national security importance.

Senior Conference 2007, our forty-fourth gathering, will address challenges that have significantly impacted American civil-military relations since the publication of Samuel P. Huntington's classic, *The Soldier and the State* (1957). Since that time, the United States has seen important changes within its military professions, in the domestic political context, and in the practice of warfare in which US forces can expect to engage. This conference will examine these changes, and explore their implications for the answers to two main questions:

- (1) How should the strategic leaders—colonels and generals—of America's military professions be developed so that they are effective in the current environment? (Development encompasses education, training, assignments, and utilization.)
- (2) What are the appropriate norms which ought to govern the relationships between the strategic leaders of the military professions and the country's civilian political leaders?

The conference provides a perfect forum—sequestered and informal settings at West Point—for assembling a distinguished group of participants for two days of informal discussions. Prior to the conference, scholars will be asked to write essays addressing some of the key issues confronting American civil-military relations and present them at a roundtable workshop to be held in early March. The Senior Conference will then use these essays to frame issues and establish a substantive interaction for Senior Conference attendees. Keynote speakers will suggest new directions for analysis and several panels will focus on key challenges facing American civil-military relations and policy-relevant implications. Throughout these sessions, in which comments are “not for attribution,” there will be a free and candid exchange of ideas among participants.

In an era in which the military instrument of power is playing a central role in US national security policy, effective and appropriate civil-military relations are vitally important. This conference will result in a volume of scholarly essays, in honor of Professor Huntington, which survey critical challenges to American civil-military relations and make policy-relevant recommendations on the way ahead. Suggested authors include: Deborah Avant, Richard Betts, Risa Brooks, James Burk, Eliot Cohen, Michael Desch, Peter Feaver, Richard Kohn, Stephen Rosen, and David Segal. Professor Samuel Huntington will be our honored guest at the conference, and other tentative invitees include US Army General (ret) Eric Shinseki, currently the U.S. Military Academy Class of 1951 Chair for Leadership Study.

Senior Conference 2007 is made possible by the generous support of the USMA Association of Graduates. [Other donors will be prominently identified in all Conference materials and publications.]