

## Dan Leahy's Book Outline On:

### ***Warriors and Citizens: American Views of our Military*** Edited by Kori Schake and Jim Mattis (Hoover Institute, 2016)

#### **Quotations from Trump's Secretary of Defense Nominee**

*Jim Mattis, nominated by Trump to be Secretary of Defense, is editor of this collection of essays, but also the co-author of two essays in this collection, the first chapter and the final chapter. I've tried to select quotes from his final chapter that will give us an indication of his future policy initiatives.*

*The central question of this series of essays is: Given the general ignorance of the public with regard to the US Military and yet the public's overwhelming support for the military, what, if any, are the implications of these two assumed facts?*

*In essence, I think Mattis is arguing that political leaders and policy elites need to take this general public support for the military and use it to mobilize resources for a broader and more lethal war against "our enemies."*

*I've tried to create subtitles for the quotations under that show Mattis' policy direction.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dan Leahy*

#### **Ensuring a Civil-Military Connection: Chapter 11**

##### **Relationship between the civil society and the military: Strong and Healthy, But Ignorant.**

This book explored "whether American attitudes are changing toward our military" and "in our judgment" the relationship "between America's military and its civilian society is strong and healthy." (p.285). However, the public's ignorance of the military allows problems to develop.

##### **Civilian Control of the Military: No Problem**

"Overall, we find little justification in the data or in contemporary civil-military interaction for the academic preoccupation with a military restive about civilian control." (p.297).

##### **Policy Elites and Political Leaders Ignoring Military Needs**

"In recent policy debates – such as those about allowing homosexuals to serve openly, retaining a residual force in Iraq and Afghanistan, cutting military spending, and assigning women to combat units – military leaders' counsel and the opinions of rank and file servicemen and women have been dismissed by political leaders and the public." (298)

“In our view, if there is a contemporary departure from the American norm, it is that military commanders are more, not less, hemmed in by political leaders because the wars we are fighting are more removed from the everyday experience of most Americans.” (p.300).

### **The Need for Political Leaders to Mobilize the Public. “It's Their Job.”**

“President Obama's vacillation over enforcement of his Syrian red line is said by his supporters to have been significantly affected by his belief that the public would not back another war in the Middle East.” (p.301)

... yet data “demonstrate that public attitudes are actually quite malleable. Political leaders just are not expending the effort to change attitudes; they are instead decrying their lack of public support to justify inaction. (p.302)

“But by expending political capital to engage and educate the public, political leaders could create larger decision space...” (p.302)

“We share these concerns about political leaders shying away from their responsibility to shape public attitudes.” (p.302). (Mattis notes that Bush relied on Petraeus to argue for the 2006 Surge and Obama has been silent on the war in Afghanistan since 2009 and let the military make the case to stay in that country).

### **Their Total War and Limiting our Engagement.**

“Our enemies have structural advantages in our current wars because they are fighting a total war and we only limited wars.” (p.303)

“We have people in policy circles who are as familiar with humanitarian and legal aspects of human interaction as they are unfamiliar with military necessity and battlefield realities, including what is permitted, from military necessity, under international law and conventions.” (p.303)

### **Prioritizing Personnel Rather than War Resources**

The public is ignorant about the fact that “military compensation exceeds that of 90 percent of civilian counterparts.” (p.304).

“The U.S. Army chief of staff testified in 2013 that at the current pace within a decade 80 percent of the army's spending will be for personnel.” (p.304)

“... Congressional unwillingness to reduce pay and benefits to servicemen and women has become a major problem for the sustainability of the all-volunteer force.” (p.305)

This budgetary priority is to the “detriment of training, equipment and numbers in the force, key factors in sustaining a strong military capable of winning battles and bringing more troops home alive from war.” (p.305)

## **Challenging Martial Values Rather than Increasing Battlefield Lethality**

“... the founding fathers ... established for our republic: military jurisprudence was to remain separate from the civilian justice system, allowing the military to establish and enforce codes of conduct appropriate to the demands of the battlefield.” (p.307)

“... 49% of veteran elites consider the male-dominated aspects of the military important to its culture.” (p.306)

“... - 96% of civilian elites and 71% of the general public – consider the infantry's opposition to including women important.” (p.308)

“... why then are civilian leaders imposing so many changes the military as an institution is clearly uncomfortable with?” (p.308)

“We are persuaded by Lindberg's and Owen's arguments that public ignorance or indifference to military issues provides leeway for liberal shapers of culture and politicians with a progressive agenda to impose their ideas on the military.” (309)

“We vociferously support the standard for determining military policies outlined by U.S. Marine Corps general John F. Kelly (Ret.): every change to established practice should be judged on whether it increases battlefield lethality.” (p.310)

## **Encouraging Victimization Rather Than Explaining the Mission**

“... only about 15 percent of veterans experience post-traumatic stress (PTSD)”

For President Obama's first six years of office “... he was more likely to visit Bethesda Naval Hospital than Fort Hood, with its 52,280 active duty soldiers.”

“But emphasizing the wounded to the exclusion of those still in the fight.... is to send a cultural message that casualties are more important than what we are fighting for.” (311)

“Encouragement of victimization”. “The Veterans Administration (VA) now coaches men and women transitioning out of military service to maximize their benefits...” (p.311)

“Suffering or witnessing violence is no longer required for the VA to categorize a veteran as suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder;” (p.311)

(Mattis notes: 43% of veterans now receive some disability rating and disability payments have doubled. While news stories about the crisis of suicides in the military abound, “Suicides in the military correlate with the same factors that drive suicides in our broader society.” p.312)

Mattis disagrees that the military needs to change to better reflect American society. “A nonmilitarized society - ..... - is fundamentally different from the battlefield.” (p.312)

## **Conclusion: Policy Failures imperil Our Military and our Advanced Civilization**

“We are culturally a more militaristic society than most of the developed world.”  
(p.313)

“Political leaders now take for granted an abiding respect by the public for our military, as though it were immune to any effect from their policy choices. This is deeply flawed, and potentially deeply costly, mistake.” (p.314)

“And we should not avert our eyes from the very real consequences of these failures, such as those we have experienced in recent wars that lacked clear political objectives and carried self-imposed limitations such as troop caps, campaign end-dates disconnected from conditions on the ground, and restrictions on using ground troops at all (or that allowed them in only incremental numbers). “(p.315)

“... our current approach is making the all-volunteer force unaffordable...” we need to “build support that reins in personnel spending” and works to “smash Veterans Administration practices, such as restricting veterans to care at VA facilities...”

“... the decision to maintain, even during America's longest war, an all-volunteer force, has removed a sense of danger from 99 percent of American families.” (319)

“We are treating our wars as though they have no strategic consequence – we elected defeat in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

“Theodore Roosevelt's caution rings even more true today: 'Despise that pseudo-humanitarianism which treats advance of civilization as necessarily and rightfully implying a weakening of the fighting spirit and which therefore invites destruction of the advanced civilization by some less advanced types.' ” (p.322)

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