

Coast Guard Academy  
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I want to thank Lt. Commander McKenzie for inviting me here today. It is a unique experience to be able to address men and women who have chosen a career in public service. The Coast Guard's national security mission has become even more vital in an era when our nation is faced with both internal and external threats.

It was a great pleasure to get to know Commander McKenzie in the classroom. You know him as a professor and I knew him as a student.

When I began to teach at Brown University--a class on the institutions that create and implement American foreign policy-- I knew I would be tested. Three of my students were current or recent members of the Armed Forces. They were, like Jeremy McKenzie, combat veterans. My own service had been on the softer side of our national security system.

I like to think that I can read my students well. I can tell when I am connecting. Frankly, I couldn't read McKenzie at first. I knew this would take some work! He was not only experienced; he would soon be standing at the head of a classroom as a professor at the Coast Guard Academy.

In the end, we connected. Commander McKenzie contributed greatly to that class. I learned from him, and it is even possible that I taught him something he didn't know! I hope you now understand better why it was such an honor to be invited here by my former student!

I am sure that you are proud to be preparing for leadership roles in the Coast Guard. Your institution is a vital part of the system that provides security for the homeland. The Coast Guard is part of the last circle of defense in a multi-layered system that spans the globe.

What I want to do today is to talk to you about those outer institutional layers: some of them military; some of them civilian; some of them relating to international institutions and law; some of them to alliances; some of them long-term development investments in the prevention of conflict; and some of them diplomatic initiatives that advance US interests.

First, the context: the world order our diplomacy helped create after World War II is under severe pressure today as the result of population increases, global environmental challenges, food insecurity, transnational health pandemics, ethnic and religious rivalries, terrorism by non-state actors and a growing trend away from democracy and towards authoritarian

nativism. That is quite a list, and it isn't by any means exhaustive.

A key part of this context relates to the increase in global population. Put simply: more people, more problems. The international institutions we created in 1945 were designed to handle a world of 2.5 billion who lived in 50 nation states. Today there are 7.4 billion people living in 195 nations. Too many of these sovereign entities are conflict-prone, fragile and poor.

A decade ago, President George W. Bush announced a new national security strategy. The shorthand version was called "3-D", for Defense, Diplomacy and Development. This policy was endorsed across partisan lines and embraced by Bush's successor, President Obama. This was an acknowledgement that our military, stronger than any combination of the next 10 potential enemies, could not alone confront the security challenges we face. We needed to integrate better our national security institutions.

It is a policy that hasn't quite made it beyond the rhetoric stage, but it makes sense because not every threat has a military solution. Yes, a strong military allied with NATO partners can deter aggression in Europe. We can defeat an ISIS Caliphate when it takes on the characteristics of a nation state. We can keep the Strait of Hormuz open with our Navy, though that vital waterway is also an area of potential conflict with Iran.

We can with increasing difficulty provide a “blue-water” deterrent force in the South China Sea. And we can offer a trip-wire force in South Korea as North Korea becomes increasingly belligerent as its nuclear capacity grows.

There is no doubt that we need a strong and agile military. Our ability to project force globally is unique and the threat that we will employ armed force is as important to our diplomatic efforts as actually using it.

However, even in the theaters I have mentioned, we are faced with highly risky options. And when we enter hostilities in complex theaters like Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, or in asymmetric situations as we did recently in Niger, we need a more comprehensive strategy that involves diplomacy and development. Secretary Mattes has been quoted often as saying that if the State Department and USAID budgets are cut, “then I need to buy more ammunition.”

Well, those budgets are being cut and we are buying \$54 billion of additional equipment and ammunition!

So what is the role of diplomacy? It is always surprising to hear the answers when you ask people what they think diplomacy is. A common response is that a diplomat is someone who uses the right fork, wears striped pants and is paid to lie for his country.

Winston Churchill said “Diplomacy is telling someone to “Go to Hell” in such a way that they look forward to taking the trip.”

This may lead us to conclude that a diplomat is polite, tactful, empathetic and clever. In today’s impolite and non-PC political environment it would be easy to dismiss this profession as being irrelevant. I would argue that today’s global disorder requires more diplomacy that ever before.

After all, it was diplomacy that created the international fabric that has kept the peace. It was diplomacy that created the United Nations, NATO, the European Union, the Bretton Woods financial institutions, the World Trade Organization and the nuclear non-proliferation regime we are using to bring sanctions against North Korea.

It was diplomacy that created vital alliances in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Europe.

It was diplomacy that promoted a rules-based world that honors values that we Americans hold dear— the rule of law, individual rights and democratic institutions.

Statecraft and diplomacy, as my Brown colleague Ambassador Chas Freeman has observed, are two sides of the same coin. Statecraft translates into strategic foreign policies conceived by political leaders. In theory, leaders are informed by professional diplomats who are on the ground interacting with foreign governments and international organizations. Leaders identify priorities related to national interests, the most important of which is the security and the safety of one's own people.

Diplomats and innovative leaders, who interact with other leaders, use their skills in Ambassador Freeman's words "to persuade others of the wisdom of their policies, to unite them in common purpose, to inspire them to subordinate their interests to these purposes."

Relative power plays an important role in diplomatic discourse. If a nation needs a security guarantee or access to an economy, a powerful nation like the United States can leverage that need. In the period following World War II, American power was unchallenged. Though we still uniquely possess a military and economic power that reaches around the world, new regional powers are beginning to assert themselves. This will require new approaches and more careful discourse.

A professional diplomat would say that power in this new context is something best left unstated, not something we should brag about. If it is used to embarrass, belittle or shame, it will encourage counterproductive expressions of national pride. Governments, even governments of small nations, cannot afford to be seen by their own people as capitulating to more powerful nations.

Negotiations with powerful regional nations over trade or security will require give and take. As Roger Fisher has observed in his book Getting to Yes, a transactional approach to a diplomatic negotiation most often leads to an escalating bargaining process and to impasse. Successful negotiations produce more than one winner. Proud nations, like proud people, are more likely to “cut off their nose to spite their face” than to back down to a bully.

War is of course the ultimate test of power, but it is a last resort that in today’s world rarely produces a clear winner. The interminable Afghanistan war is a contemporary example of that. It is far better to use power to deter war than to wage it. As the Chinese philosopher Sun Tzu wrote: “The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.”

Why then do we need an institution that provides a home for professionals who practice diplomacy? I was once the head of the training facility for American diplomats, the School of Professional Studies at the Foreign Service Institute. There, diplomats are schooled in negotiations, inter-cultural communications, history and precedent, reporting and analysis and international law.

They learn how to interact with political leaders and to inform them as policymakers. They often contribute a sense of realism to the policy process and can help political leaders avoid the pitfalls. Foreign Service Officers are the balance wheel of the policy process, one that is badly needed especially when the presidency changes hands and when foreign policy experience is lacking.

Today that balance wheel has been rendered nearly inoperable. The White House doesn't trust the diplomats and it is denying itself access to this body of experience. Some of the most senior diplomats have been fired and the Administration wants to reduce the State Department budget by 30%. Political appointees with little experience are being asked to run our diplomatic establishment while career professionals are kept at arms length.

There is certainly a case for reform of the State Department, but thus far the approach taken mostly has

excluded professionals from the policy process. Unfortunately, we are learning once again that it is far easier to destroy an institution than to build one.

The US Agency for International Development is responsible for the international development and humanitarian relief missions. These are related to the foreign policy mission, but distinct in terms of goals, operating principles and relationships.

Most importantly, the role of State Department diplomats is to influence their foreign counterparts to accept or accommodate to US policies. USAID professionals must form true partnerships in developing countries. They cannot accomplish their development mission unless their foreign partner succeeds.

Professional development officers possess technical expertise in each of the sectors of society: education, healthcare, the environment, agriculture, governance and the economy. Their goal is to help their partners build institutions that carry out public policy and that are sustainable over time.

These programs do not produce results over night. Working in some of the poorest countries on earth, progress in building viable institutions takes time. And there is the challenge. We Americans are impatient

people and we expect immediate gratification.  
Development requires patience.

Yet, the investments we have made in the past 50 years have had a profound effect on the world we live in. Countless nations have progressed from being poor to middle income. Lives are more worth living and governments are more accountable to the people. Development has brought more peace and more prosperity.

Foreign Direct Investment is gradually replacing assistance in sustaining economic growth and developing countries are raising resources to fund these activities from their own people through increasingly efficient tax systems.

That is not to say that the job is over. The poorest countries are potential sources of conflict, terrorism, refugees and instability. In these places there are more people and more problems.

When these problems boil over, USAID's humanitarian relief mission kicks in. This mission responds to the inability of the poorest nations to withstand natural and manmade disasters. Working with international organizations, NGOs and often with the American military, USAID provides relief in the form of food, medicine, housing and other essentials of life to the dislocated victims of disasters.

These offices are also working with governments to help them become more resilient to natural disasters of the type that hit our own country this year in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico. The Coast Guard has played a crucial role in mitigating the effects of these horrible storms.

As populations continue to rise in the poorest countries, we will need to continue to provide official assistance. This is an investment in a more stable, more peaceful world. It will contribute to the prevention of the crises that are overwhelming governments and international organizations. Foreign assistance not only serves a very practical national security need, it is also an expression of the humanitarian values of the American people.

You are preparing yourselves to be leaders in a vitally important American institution. The Coast Guard has a legacy of bravery and heroism. A small part of that legacy was captured in the movie “The Finest Hours.”

The world in which you will operate is changing fast. You will have to accommodate to the effects of the warming earth in places like the Bering Straits. Weather disasters are likely to be even more dangerous. And your mandate now includes keeping international terrorism from our shores.

This Academy is preparing you well for the role you will play. I hope that my remarks today will enhance your appreciation of the role of other institutions in our national security system. For it is only when we integrate these institutions and work together that we will achieve our national purpose.