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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

**ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEA POWER  
& PROJECTION FORCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,  
EMERGING THREATS & CAPABILITIES

**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY  
COMMITTEE**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE  
& AERONAUTICS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS  
& OVERSIGHT

April 7, 2021

Lieutenant General Darryl A. Williams  
Superintendent  
U.S. Military Academy at West Point  
606 Thayer Road  
West Point, NY 10996

Dear Lieutenant General Williams,

Thank you for your continued service to our country and for your efforts to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets.

Information has recently come to my attention from unsettled soldiers, cadets, and families that raises serious concerns about the U.S. Army's introduction of elements of critical race theory into cadet instruction. While we should always eradicate extremism of all forms from our ranks and never tolerate racism, I am alarmed that this doctrine that focuses our future leaders on race in ways that will be detrimental to unit cohesion, destructive to morale, and strain the readiness of our armed forces.

In February this year, I understand the U.S. Military Academy under your leadership required cadets to attend a mandatory seminar on "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion." According to the schedule I received, cadets "MUST attend at least one of the seminars." The agenda included:

- Workshop: Understanding Systemic Racism
- Viewing: The Defamation Experience

I was provided a presentation slide from one of the workshops with the title of "White Power at West Point" and "Racist Dog Whistles at West Point." Additionally, another presentation slide shared with me depicted a lecture by Dr. Carol Anderson of Emory University with the title "Understanding Whiteness and White Rage."

Dr. Anderson is a controversial, partisan academic, who has made no secret where she stands politically. In her book, highlighted in the presentation, she states, "The trigger for white rage, inevitably, is black advancement. It is not the mere presence of black people that is the problem; rather, it is blackness with ambition, drive, purpose, aspirations, and with demands for full and equal citizenship." In a 2019 op-ed, Dr. Anderson wrote of the Republican Party: "the United States of America is not really their America. They yearn for a white republic." On August 25, 2020 she tweeted about the then-Commander-in-Chief: "And a white nationalist. The GOP's platform is, therefore, white nationalism. The destruction of the sinews of democracy and the

American people--California and Puerto Rico abandoned, COVID-19, HR 1 and 4 + HEROES ACT blocked by McConnell, no impeachment--part of the plan.”

These are only a few examples of Dr. Anderson’s incredibly divisive language. I find it incredulous the U.S. Military Academy is requiring cadets to take courses with this highly politicized demagoguery. While I personally find this language offensive, I cannot imagine being a young cadet ordered to listen to this incendiary language. Further, these teachings run counter to the history and ethos of our a-political military.

Disturbingly, this is the same language the Soviet Union has historically deployed and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is currently deploying about the United States in hopes of causing domestic turmoil and international pressure. In fact, at the U.S.-China talks in Anchorage, Alaska last month the CCP sought to spark racial division by grandstanding on domestic handling of race relations and accusing the United States government of human rights abuses in an effort to create a moral equivalence with the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang, China.

Additionally, I understand that on September 24, 2020 the entire corps of cadets was required to report to Michie Stadium for your address as Superintendent and to hear from a cadet panel. In this session, an active duty female colonel described to the Corps how she became “woke” to her white privilege, and felt guilty for the advantages of her race. At this same assembly, white police officers were described as murderers with no context or court documents provided to corroborate the anecdotes of police brutality. While this session may have been well intended to invoke awareness and understanding, I am hearing forcefully that this session and others like it are instead breeding insult and resentment.

Many cadets are the children of first responders, hail from families spanning the political spectrum, and overcame their own adversities to achieve admittance to West Point. Subjecting our future military leaders to mandatory seminars that blanket a specific race with accusations and remorse will bring irreparable harm to unity in the institution of the Army.

As an Army Special Forces officer, I have fought in combat with men and women of all different types. Our enemy’s bullets do not distinguish race, religion, or background– they only care that we are American. A fundamental pillar of military training has been that it doesn’t matter what race, what religion, or whether one’s family was rich or poor before entering the military. This is why every soldier’s head is shaved and every soldier wears the exact same uniform. All that should matter is accomplishing the mission given by superiors, and protecting your fellow soldiers to your left and right. The military has traditionally taught that the only skin color that a soldier should recognize is camouflage.

These critical race theory teachings take aim at those key pillars and pit cadets against one another through divisive indoctrination under the pressure of ‘wokeism.’ There is no doubt our country has had to overcome atrocious racial bigotry. We have made enormous progress and there is still much to be done in our country. But, the United States military, uniquely in American society, must strive to unify. Unfortunately, these seminars imbue in our future military leaders that they should treat their fellow officers and soldiers differently based on race and on socio-economic background. In a combat environment, where every soldier must equally share the burden of danger, I cannot think of a notion more destructive to unit cohesion and morale.

You and I are both combat veterans, and we both well-know that the purpose of our Army is to fight and win our nation's wars. You and I also know that doing so is accomplished by destroying the enemy, which at times requires brutal, close quarters combat. In my experience, unit commanders rarely have enough time to train all their Mission Essential Tasks (METL) required to prevail on the battlefield, so I have a difficult time understanding how the Academy finds enough time to insert hours of political indoctrination into its training calendar. The mission of the Academy is to build future leaders for an Army that must deter and if need be, defeat the militaries of China, Iran and Russia. It is not your duty to indoctrinate future Army leaders into a particular political ideology.

Consequently, as a member of the U.S. House Armed Services Committee I am requesting that you provide the full presentation of these seminars, presentations, assemblies, and other related curricula to my office so that the U.S. Congress can execute its oversight responsibilities of the U.S. Army and the U.S. Military Academy. I look forward to your prompt response.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Waltz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" written in a smaller, more compact script than the last name "Waltz".

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Michael Waltz  
Member of Congress



**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT  
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY  
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996-5000**

The Honorable Michael Waltz  
United States Representative  
216 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Waltz:

Thank you for your letter dated April 8, 2021 regarding recent diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts on-going here at the United States Military Academy (USMA). The mission of the United States Military Academy is to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character dedicated to the values of duty, honor, and country, and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the United States Army. Extremism in any form is antithetical to the values of our Army and Nation and has no place at West Point.

As a world-class institution of higher education, an overarching goal of our academic program is for graduates to integrate knowledge and skills from a variety of disciplines so that they can anticipate and respond appropriately to opportunities and challenges in a changing world. Achieving that goal requires us to expose our cadets, staff, and faculty to diverse thoughts and perspectives. Through this exposure, we aim to teach our cadets how to think, not what to think.

We conducted an Honorable Living Day and a follow-on Diversity and Leadership Conference on September 23-24, 2020. This event did not occur in February. This was the fourth Honorable Living Day that we have conducted, with previous days focused on combating sexual assault, establishing healthy relationships, and living honorably, going back to the spring of 2019. The curriculum included a cadet panel, a virtual guest lecture by Dr. Steve Robbins (a leading scholar in human behavior related to inclusion and diversity) regarding the neuroscience of inclusivity, and small unit-level discussions. Cadets were given the option to attend a follow-on seminar by Dr. Robbins who then spoke about unconscious bias from a neuroscience standpoint and offered great perspective on the subject. It was a powerful lecture, and his words focused not on race but rather human behavior. Although the Defamation Experience was originally scheduled as a second option for a follow-on cadet seminar, it was taken off the final agenda and no cadets participated in this event.

The slides referenced were not a part of the curriculum for activities in September. These slides were a part of a mandatory social media training session conducted by our Public Affairs Office as a part of Commandant's Time Training, a special session set aside for our Corps of Cadets' leadership to conduct military program training during the weekly schedule. This training was conducted to give cadets a broad understanding of the social media landscape and allow cadets a glimpse into how various social media posts may be interpreted. Our young cadets lack understanding of the impact of social media on themselves, others around them, and on organizational effectiveness. The slides in question were used to discuss potential racially charged interpretations of various social media posts and the appropriateness of racial commentary on social media. Please note that within the same slide deck there was a purposeful discussion about the emerging threat of China and its use of social media to sway public opinion.

We did host a lecture by Dr. Carol Anderson who is the Charles Howard Candler Professor of African American Studies at Emory University. This lecture was not mandatory for all cadets. She was invited as a guest lecturer for two courses: HI463 – Race, Ethnicity, and Nation and HI460 – Civil Rights Movements. These courses are upper-level electives with a total enrollment of approximately 40 cadets and are not part of the core curriculum nor are they required electives for any of our History majors. These courses are purely elective in nature. Approximately 100 additional personnel attended the guest lecture voluntarily in addition to the cadets enrolled in the courses. Dr. Anderson spoke extemporaneously with the audience virtually. She described the subtle ways by which black Americans have been disadvantaged through historical American



policy. She closed the session by encouraging the audience to consider 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> order effect of policies and for the audience to reconsider a zero-sum view of society that pits subgroups against each other. Rather, she reinforced the strength of the Nation in terms of our talents and values and that this is the correct narrative moving forward.

With regards to critical race theory, there is only one course that has this theory as part of the syllabus: SS392 – the Politics of Race, Gender, and Sexuality. There are two lessons on critical race theory and the book, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, is one of several readings in the course. This course is an upper-level elective. Most of the cadets who take the course are Political Science majors. Typical enrollment for this elective course averages about 23 cadets annually.

I would also like to address concerns regarding two personal testimonials that occurred during our September 2020 Honorable Living Day to include a Colonel described as becoming “woke” to her white privilege and a description of police officers being described as murderers.

First to address the Colonel, I can confirm that one of our faculty members did describe her personal experiences and friendship with an African American classmate while attending the USMA Prep School in the early 1990s. She discussed her experiences visiting his family in the projects of Elizabeth, New Jersey, describing how this experience allowed her to better understand the different pathways some cadets face in achieving a place at the Academy. She closed by encouraging all cadets to get to know their classmates, build friendships, and create cohesive teams within the ranks of the corps of cadets. This encouragement is exactly aligned with the cohesive teams initiative championed by the Army. We are proud of her for sharing that story and for providing the Corps of Cadets with encouragement to create a personal connection with each other.

Second, with regard to describing police officers as murderers, I want to start by explaining that at no point during the discussion were police officers ever described as murderers. During that Honorable Living Day, a cadet described how the trajectory of his family’s life changed as a result of his father being beaten to death by police when he was six years old. The cadet did plainly state that his father was killed by police officers. He closed his account by having one simple request of the crowd... to listen to each other because everyone at West Point matters. This cadet showed tremendous courage and we applaud his willingness to contribute to a very powerful day of development for the entire West Point enterprise.

I trust that my explanation above indicates that although some controversial topics and guest lecturers are a part of the West Point educational experience, these opportunities are specific in nature and not a systemic part of the 47-month experience for every cadet. I understand well the requirement for cohesive teams to fight and win in the crucible of ground combat. At West Point, our job is to create those leaders of character necessary for our Nation to fight and win its wars. I remain confident in our ability to accomplish our mission and invite you to West Point so that you may see, first-hand, the incredible developmental experiences our cadets endure every day and the talent that they bring with them into our Army.

Sincerely,



Darryl A. Williams  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army  
Superintendent



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June 9, 2021

Lieutenant General Darryl A. Williams  
Superintendent  
U.S. Military Academy at West Point  
606 Thayer Road  
West Point, NY 10996

Dear Lieutenant General Williams,

Thank you for your response to my questions regarding the teaching of critical race theory (CRT) and the hosting of related seminars on the U.S. Military Academy's campus.

While I appreciate the substantive details you provided, I did not receive “the full presentation of these seminars, presentations, assemblies, and other related curricula” that I have respectfully requested in my oversight capacity as a Member of Congress on the House Armed Services Committee. My request still stands. Additionally, I have further concerns with the information you have shared with me that I would like to convey to you in this letter.

You confirm in your letter to me that Dr. Carol Anderson of Emory University was indeed invited as a guest lecturer at West Point to teach the courses of “HI463—Race, Ethnicity, and Nation” and “HI460—Civil Rights Movements.” You also explain she “described, in subtle ways, by which black Americans have been disadvantaged through historical American policy.”

In a screenshot of a slide obtained by me, as described in my previous letter, the title “Understanding Whiteness and White Rage” is depicted. This title is an incendiary overview that is by no means subtle, as are her highly politicized public statements. Why was a guest lecturer who characterized the former Commander-in-Chief as a “white nationalist” and the Republican Party platform “white nationalism” invited to teach cadets who should aspire to lead an a-political military? Was there a vetting process and review of her statements made on social media and in media prior to extending her an offer to teach Military Academy cadets?

You also confirm to me that the book *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* is used in a political science course. CRT is a theoretical framework, rooted in Marxism, that posits individuals as oppressed or oppressor based on their gender, race, or sexual orientation. These teachings posit Americans as the oppressed or an oppressor—a status from which you are freed only when all existing societal structures, which are inherently systemically racist, are torn down or overthrown. Not only are these teachings antithetical to unity, discipline, and order within the U.S. Army, they are incredibly disturbing given the monopoly on power our military can have

over American society and for their implications towards the continued subordination of the military to civilian oversight.

Your reply to me indicates the numbers of cadets receiving this instruction was in the dozens rather than the hundreds. However, as a nation, we are on incredibly perilous ground if *any* of the future leaders of our military are taught that the civilian institutions and structures with ultimate authority over them – our courts, elected officials, our laws - are systemically oppressive and that they therefore have a duty to oppose them. Does the U.S. Military Academy intend to continue to authorize these types of teachings and seminars going forward?

In that vein, I am respectfully making you aware that legislation (H.R. 3134) was introduced on May 12<sup>th</sup> 2021 in the United States House of Representatives, that I cosponsored, to prohibit the United States military and academies from promoting doctrines associated with CRT. I am also an original cosponsor of legislation ( H.R. 3046) that would prohibit U.S. Military Academies from providing training and education based on CRT. These proposals will likely be considered within the FY2022 National Defense Authorization Act.

Though you and your faculty may have intended these seminars and the associated “Honorable Living Days” to be forums for cadets to better understand each other, I hope you will consider the angst and division felt by the families of the cadets and cadets themselves who alerted me to their content. I implore you to foster an environment of unity, merit, and mission focus and instruct our next generation of leaders in the best tradition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr to be blind to their fellow soldier’s race rather than focused on it.

You have an exemplary service record and I have faith that you can address these concerns for our future military leaders. We have a common goal of developing an Army that is lethal on the battlefield and capable of winning our nation’s future wars. Thank you for your continued service to our country and look forward to your prompt response whether you intend to continue to allow courses, seminars and guest lecturers featuring CRT in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Waltz", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Michael Waltz  
Member of Congress