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STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE

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OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

ON

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

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“We believe the human dimension of war is the most critical element, and that boldness, creativity, intelligence and the warrior spirit are prime attributes.”
General James T. Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps¹

Introduction:

Good morning, Chairman Snyder, Ranking Member Wittman and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. I appreciate this opportunity to address the Subcommittee and discuss the educational achievements of your Marine Corps War College.

Historical Foundations:

During testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on July 12, 1989, the 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Alfred M. Gray, conceptualized his vision for the future of Marine Corps training and education. Armed with the guidance and support of the Chairman and other Committee Members, he returned to his office and he drafted an order to the Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC) directing him to “make it happen.”² Specifically, he mandated the development of “a concept for a Marine Corps University... a focal point for planning, doctrine, training, education, etc. it should provide insight and guidance on naval strategy and national strategy.” He envisioned a “world-class” educational institution for the study of war and the profession of arms. To that end, in August 1990, the University convened an elite group of six Lieutenant Colonels to participate in “The Art of War Studies Program,” the precursor of today’s Marine Corps War College. Since then the College has grown in size and scope, yet, I am proud to report, remained true to its charter and on course to achieve General Gray’s vision.

¹ Conway, General James T., *Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025*, Washington, D.C.: October 2008.

² Gray, General Alfred M., *Training and Education*. Letter to Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command. Washington, D.C.: July 1988.

Mission:

The College's mission is *"to educate selected senior officers and civilians for decision-making across the range of operations in joint, interagency, and multinational environment."*

The College prepares its graduates to assume senior leadership positions of increasing complexity through the study of national security strategy, theater strategy, and military support to those strategies within the context of national security policies, decision-making, objectives and resources. Focused on strategic-level of war, the program is designed to educate students to operate in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment. In accordance with our motto, *"Sapere Aude – Dare to Know,"* we strive to cultivate an academic atmosphere in which assumptions are challenged and new and novel approaches to national security are considered. Steeped in Marine Corps history, tradition and culture, the joint curriculum produces agile, strategic thinkers whose breadth and depth of knowledge comes from exposure to an elite, organizational culture born of an expeditionary mindset that spans the air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace spectra. In sum, via our progressive curriculum, we are preparing the Nation's next generation of strategic leaders to take on the challenges of an increasingly complex and globalized world.

Methodology:

The intensive ten-month program consists consisting of over 1,300 course hours dedicated to both the art and science of modern warfare. Recognizing our students' extensive operational experience and occupational expertise, we employ active, adult-oriented teaching methods to provide a multidimensional educational experience to challenge students to think critically and creatively about enduring and emerging national security issues. Over 94 percent of the curriculum's contact hours are presented utilizing interactive instructional methods such as

Socratic style-seminars, case study analysis, practical application exercises, battle staff rides, field study trips, independent research projects, written assignments, and oral presentations. Active learning methods require time for preparation and reflection. Accordingly, the College dedicates time (“white space”) for the conduct of student research, reading, analysis, and synthesis. Student progress is evaluated throughout the year through graded written assignments, oral presentations, examinations, and class contributions. Students who excel are recognized through the College’s Distinguished Graduate and Writing Award Programs with their class standing and academic achievements being noted on their official Service or Agency performance evaluations.

The student’s active learning experience is significantly enhanced by the College’s small student population (currently 19 students operating in two seminars) and the low student-to-faculty ratio (2.5:1). The small class size allows the students to receive highly personalized instruction, tailored to the students’ unique educational needs and interests. It also affords them unparalleled access to the Nation’s top military, government, industry, and academic leaders, whom they interact with in a more open and personal manner than afforded by larger colleges. Finally, it enables the College to rapidly adjust its academic schedule to address topical issues or capitalize on short-notice, high-value educational opportunities.

Elements of Education:

In 2006, the Marine Corps University sponsored a comprehensive study of Marine Corps Officer PME. The resulting report stressed that in order to achieve world-class status; the College must possess “a world-class faculty, world-class students, a world-class curriculum and world-class facilities and resources.”³ Over the intervening years, the College has worked

³ Marine Corps University, *Officer PME 2006 Study and Findings*. Quantico, VA: 29 September 2006.

diligently to advance and align each element—students, faculty, curriculum, and facilities and resources—to achieve the highest standard of academic excellence and become a world-class institution. The success of those efforts is addressed below.

Students:

The Marine Corps War College attracts high-caliber students from across the Services and Interagency community. Selection to the College is highly desired and therefore highly competitive. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonels vying for a top-level school seat are screened by a Selection Board which selects only the most qualified candidates based on their operational and academic records. Of the hundreds of officers screened annually only the top 13 percent are selected, significantly less than the 36 percent selected for promotion to Colonel. Of those selected to a top-level school, 7 percent attend the Marine Corps War College. Amongst these Marine Corps officers, the College ranks third behind the National War College and Industrial College of the Armed Forces and first among the Service Colleges as their educational institution of choice. Given the College's small size and short history, this reflects very positively on its growing academic reputation. Another measure of the quality of the student body is the students' assignment to demanding follow-on billets. Of the 16 military officers in the current class, five are assigned to O-6-level command positions, four to Service Headquarter staffs, three to Joint or Combatant Command Staffs, and four to instruct at PME institutions. Finally, over its brief history, the College has produced nine Marine Corps General Officers, or ten percent of its eligible graduates. This is more than double the average promotion rate of four percent, and is yet another indicator of the caliber of the students and the commitment of the College to produce strategic leaders capable of serving at the highest levels of the government.

This year's student body consists of 19 senior military officers and government officials, representing each Service, both active and reserve components, three government agencies (Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives), and a wide array of occupational specialties. There are nine Sea Service officers, comprising only 47 percent of the student body, less than the 60 percent maximum outlined in CJCS Instruction 1800.1C, *Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP)*. The high percentage of other Service and agency students provides all of our student population with an in-depth joint and interagency educational experience. The students bring to the table a wide range of educational and operational experiences to include 12 students with Battalion-level command experience and 11 students with combat experience in Operations ENDURING FREEDOM or IRAQI FREEDOM. By virtue of this extensive experience, the students bring unmatched operational expertise and insight into the classroom, thereby, educating others as they learn themselves. Their knowledge both complements and challenges that of the instructors, further enhancing the overall educational experience.

Faculty:

The faculty is small, but first-rate, possessing both academic and operational expertise. Currently the faculty is comprised of one senior military officer from each Service, one senior Foreign Service Officer, and three civilian Title 10 professors. Each is a subject matter expert in his or her field and between them they hold four Doctoral and 16 Master degrees.

The military instructors are all highly experienced officers with strong operational and academic records. Supported by the continuity provided by civilian instructors, the College actively recruits upwardly mobile officers, recognizing the risk that they may be reassigned due to promotion or selection to command. Each military instructor is a designated Joint Qualified

Officer as well as a graduate of a Senior-Level War College, as are two of the Title 10 professors. The faculty's teaching experiences are extensive and include previous assignments at the College of Naval Warfare, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the Air Force Academy, and the U.S. Military Academy. Three taught undergraduates at the Oklahoma State University and the University of Minnesota, and one is currently teaching graduate students at the Georgetown University Security Studies program.

The College is first and foremost a teaching institution. Nonetheless, the faculty remains active in their fields through their attendance at lectures, symposia, and conferences. While not required, the faculty also conducts research and writes scholarly works for professional publications. Recent scholastic accomplishments include the publication of two major works on national security, a manuscript on counterinsurgency, and a chapter on interagency policy for irregular warfare and counterinsurgency.

Supplementing the College's faculty are the Marine Corps University Chairs which include noted subject matter experts in the fields of Arabic culture, Iran, the Middle East, China the Near East, insurgency, terrorism, ethics, and leadership. Due to the College's proximity to the National Capital Region, we capitalize on the expertise of distinguished guest speakers drawn from the highest levels of the government, military, industry, and academia.

Curriculum:

The College curriculum is derived from a myriad of sources. First and foremost, the U.S. Congress supervises and safeguards the educational requirements of its Armed Forces through the tireless advocacy of the House Armed Services Committee. The effectiveness of the Committee and its Chairman is evidenced in the PME renaissance that commenced in the late-1980s' and continues today. Likewise, it was the Committee that foresaw the need for Senior-

Level Service Colleges to grant Joint PME Phase II certification and act accordingly, producing swift and highly successful results. The second source is the Commandant of the Marine Corps who provides guidance and direction through the Commanding General, MCCDC, the Commanding General, Training and Education Command, the President, Marine Corps University, and such visionary documents as *Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025*. Third, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff establishes enduring learning areas and annual special areas of emphasis through CJCSI 1800.1C, *OPMEP*. Fourth, the faculty routinely interview Combatant, Component, and Service Commanders to determine the capabilities and characteristics required of graduates. Fifth, the University's Institutional Research Directorate annually surveys students, graduates, and their supervisors. Sixth, faculty members continually scan the strategic horizon to identify the most crucial security issues the students are expected to face in the five-years following graduation. This process capitalizes on the long-range projections of a myriad of military, government, and academic "think tanks" to include the Marine Corps Strategic Vision Group, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, the Quadrennial Defense Review Team, the National Intelligence Council, and the Combatant Commands. Through this measure the faculty is able to conduct "academic triage," to narrow the curriculum. Lastly, the faculty continually gleans lessons learned from ongoing operations through such sources as the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, the Center for Army Lessons Learned, the Joint Lessons Learned Program, and the Center for Advance Operational Cultural Learning.

The curriculum is updated on an annual basis by the Director during the Course Content Review Board, validated biannually by the President of the Marine Corps University during Curriculum Review Board, assessed every six years by the Chairman of the Joint Chief Staff

during the Process of Accreditation of Joint Education, and inspected every six years by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Aligned with the professional military education (PME) continuum, the program is progressive and dynamic, building on the student's prior military education. Courses and individual classes are integrated and synchronized to reinforce major themes and better demonstrate the potential for cooperation and conflict between the various elements of National power and influence. The curriculum consists of the five core courses discussed below.

Our Leadership and Ethics course challenges students to think about their personal style of leadership in preparation for greater responsibilities. Students study leadership in a fashion that allows them greater mastery of leadership concepts, communications, decision-making, and ethics. Designed to expand on the students' solid leadership experience, education, and training, the Leadership and Ethics course blends the study of theory with discussions with senior military and civilian practitioners of strategic leadership. Due to the College's small size and strict non-attribution policy, these intimate sessions provide students unmatched access to senior leader insights.

Our War, Policy, and Strategy course analyzes military theory and strategy through a historical lens. The course provides a study of the nature, theory, and conduct of war, as well as emphasizing the connection between war's moral and physical dynamics. The course examines the relationships among the elements of National power and their individual and collective contributions to National success in war. The course includes comparative analysis of major military theories and theoreticians. The course uses the historical study of World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, as well as conflicts in Malaya, North Korea,

Iraq, and China to investigate the development of strategy using various models which align ends, ways, and means to achieve a military and political victory.

Our *National Security and Joint Warfare* course enables students to better understand the national security process and joint and combined warfare with considerations made to interagency and international collaboration, as well as incorporating new knowledge gained from on-going operations. Importantly, however, the course deliberately avoids a single-minded focus on today's missions by utilizing studies of the future operating environment, such as the *Joint Forces Command Joint Operating Environment Report*, in order to anticipate the types of missions or decisions students may encounter in the near future. The course is designed to develop a deeper understanding of both the development of national security strategies and the execution of joint warfare. It includes visits to Combatant and Component Commands and the use of case studies and exercises, such as the Joint Land, Aerospace, and Sea Simulation exercise, an inter-War College exercise that emphasizes joint and interagency cooperation. The course takes advantage of the College's proximity to the National Capital Region to meet with senior leaders and policy makers in the Pentagon, the National Security Council, the State Department, Service and Interagency Headquarters, the U.S. Capitol, and local "think-tanks."

Our *Economics* course challenges students to analyze the strategic implications of economics in a globalized world. Recognizing the growing significance of economics to global security, the College provides the students with an understanding of fundamental macro-economic concepts, monetary and trade policy, defense acquisitions, strategic resources, and globalization. Included in the course is a field study trip to the New York Stock Exchange and various financial institutions.

Our *Regional Studies* course employs the expertise of diplomats, military leaders, visiting scholars, and civilian authorities to provide a multi-dimensional perspective for a deep analysis of U.S. global interests, regional policy objectives, and the complexities of formulating effective international strategies. The course explores international relations as well as political, economic, social, and cultural factors in vital areas of the world including Africa, Latin America, Europe, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. To enhance their understanding and sensitivity to regional cultural issues, the students participate in an operational culture seminar taught by the University's Cultural Anthropologist and participate in a cross-cultural strategic negotiation exercise. During the course, students are afforded the opportunity to enhance their foreign language skills through participation in on-line language training and participation in cultural immersion events during international field study trips.

A cornerstone of the Regional Studies course is its extensive international field studies program. During the program, the students travel to several strategic regions to gain local, national, and global perspectives through interaction with foreign military, government, academic, and transnational organizations, as well as the local population. Previous field studies introduced trips to the Asia-Pacific Region, Europe, and Africa. Additionally, the trips focus on all instruments of National power, not just the military, in order to broaden and deepen the students' understand of other peoples, places and perspectives.

In order to be granted a Master of Strategic Study degree, students must also complete a six-month Independent Research Project on a self-selected topic of a strategic nature. This project requires the students to synthesize the knowledge gained from the courses outlined below as they explore topics of immediate and long-term importance to the various Services, agencies and commands.

Irregular Warfare

In the book *The Art of War*, Sun Tzu highlighted the need to balance traditional (*cheng*) and irregular (*ch'i*) warfare to be successful on the battlefield. This lesson is as relevant today as when it was written in the 6th century B.C. Recognizing that the United States will increasingly face hybrid threats poised by state and non-state actors, the College devotes over 150 seminar hours to the study of irregular warfare. The instruction includes analysis of historical and current irregular warfare campaigns, led by noted historians and current irregular warfare theoreticians. For example, the students read proofs of *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* by Dr. David Kilcullen before the book was published, with the author subsequently conducting the seminar on his findings. In academic year 2008, the students participated in a case study of the Battle of Fallujah with a panel of Commanding Generals and Officers, and utilized a case study on U.S. Civil War reconstruction. The College also attended a conference hosted by the National Defense University on the insurgency's role in irregular warfare, where the students met privately with Mr. Jim Locher, architect of the Project on National Security Reform.

Facilities and Resources:

Currently the College's facilities and resources are adequate to achieve its basic educational objectives. Housed in a historic building aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA, the College presents a professional appearance to students and guests alike and a quiet, collegial environment for academic study. However, given the planned expansion of the College and the other resident Marine Corps PME institutions, classroom and workspace is at a premium. To alleviate over-crowding, Marine Corps University initiated a major revision of its Facilities Master Plan. This plan identified the requirement for several new academic facilities at

Quantico's main campus. One of these new facilities is an Academic Support Instructional Facility (ASIF) that would house both our intermediate level school and the Marine Corps War College. The ASIF would contain state-of-the-art classroom facilities encompassing the latest in Information Education Technology (IET) infrastructure. The IET Master Plan calls for the integration of state-of-the-art IET for the performance of curriculum development, delivery and management, collaborative planning, and research services.

Vision:

Our vision for the College is to retain the academic advantages inherent in a small, elite College - specifically organizational access, operational agility, academic freedom, and educational excellence - while progressively growing into a more robust educational institution. To achieve this vision, we have commenced an ambitious program to expand: 1) the size and diversity of the student population; 2) the quality, quantity, and diversity of our faculty; and 3) our academic outreach efforts.

I am pleased to report that we are on track to achieve these objectives. In 2010, the College will expand the student population from 19 to 26 students through the inclusion of an additional student from each Service and the Department of State and the accession of three International Military Students from France, Canada, and Pakistan. The College will also join three additional faculty members, a Marine Corps Colonel, a Defense Intelligence Agency Chair, and a Title 10 Professor of Regional Studies. In 2011, the College will add four additional students and one civilian Title 10 faculty member.

While the College's educational experience cannot be replicated by civilian institutions, it can be enhanced through increased interaction with leading-edge civilian graduate programs. To that end, we are evaluating several strategy programs at prestigious civilian institutions in an

effort to identify best educational practices and mutually beneficial educational opportunities. We recently entered into a dialogue with the Yale University Brady-Johnson Grand Strategy Program regarding collaborative educational opportunities. The Brady-Johnson Program, led by noted historians Drs. John Gaddis and Paul Kennedy, closely parallels our own in content, scope, and educational philosophy. Thus, we believe that there exist many untapped opportunities for academic collaboration. Our objective is to establish a forum through which future civilian policy-makers and military commanders can discuss policy, debate topical and historical issues, and develop mutually supportive networks.

Conclusion:

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Subcommittee, our graduates will face a world dramatically different from that confronting their predecessors. The effects of globalization, demographics, resource competition, economic disparity, religious and ethnic conflict, and the rise of peer competitors and violent non-state actors are conspiring to make our world a more complex and dangerous place. The challenges facing our Nation and its leaders will be truly unprecedented. Consequently, the Marine Corps War College is dedicated to providing our Nation's next generation of strategic leaders with a world class education required to intellectually prepare them for the multitude of challenges ahead. Through the means and methods to be described in testimony, I am convinced that we can meet those challenges, and with the continued advocacy and support of Congress, we are destined to succeed. Thank you for the opportunity to address this Subcommittee. *Semper Fidelis.*