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

April 8, 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", is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M" and a long, sweeping tail.

Michael Waltz
Member of Congress