



ROLL CALL

A Leadership and Ethics Publication

SUMMER 2021



Director's Update

by Gregory Smith, M.A.

As we come to the end of Institute for Law Enforcement Administration's (ILEA) Fiscal Year 2020/21, I am excited to say that this institution of professional law enforcement education not only weathered the pandemic well... we excelled. In March 2020, keeping with policies set by our parent organization (The Center for American and International Law), ILEA shut its door to face-to-face training and began to strategize a remote learning model coupled with a work from home policy.

To meet the needs of clients, we quickly began a series of free webinars designed to educate and maintain relationships with our member agencies and the law enforcement community. However, by August 2020, it was clear that law enforcement was ready to resume limited face to face education. In response to the George Floyd incident, we began to receive several requests for our Teaching Diversity: Instructor Skills Course and our Ethics Train-the-Trainer. We delivered these programs and embarked on a renewed full program schedule. To date, we have conducted 42 programs and touched nearly 2000 law enforcement souls.

These programs included our timely discussion webinars on The Policing of Black America. Pan-

elists included: Major Malik Aziz of the Dallas Police Department (recently selected as the new Chief of Police of Prince Georges County, Maryland), Professor Thomas Meloni of Western Illinois University, Sheriff Marian Brown of Dallas County, Barry Sorrels, Attorney at Law of Sorrels Haygood and notable others. We delivered two 8-week Schools of Executive Leadership and four Schools of Police Supervision and countless other programs on subjects such as Internal Affairs, Professional Standards and Ethics, Personnel Management: Reset the Clock, Public Information and Communications, the Civilian Leadership Series and others.

In addition to resuming educational services, ILEA has examined its operating model over the last year. We are now beginning to focus on seeking funding dollars to support and expand our programming. Also, raising scholarship funds that will allow us to educate more law enforcement personnel who are members of agencies that traditionally do not have the resources for training beyond state mandated education. With the help of Linda Chanow, Vice President of Development for The Center of American and International Law and her staff, we have had a very positive year in this regard and look forward to growing this effort in the future.

ILEA is also increasing its profile beyond the classroom. With such a small staff over recent

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Stand Tall in that Arena

by Matt Clem

Leaders, guardians, and champions to the noble cause, rise and take heart! Stand tall in that arena in which you have so far valiantly endeavored to serve well your communities by helping others live peaceful, productive lives.

President Theodore Roosevelt famously spoke of that arena, in which you now daily live, in a speech delivered in Paris on April 23, 1910. In it, he exhorted that it was not the criticisms of timid souls that count, but the doer of deeds who spend themselves in a worthy cause. Still today, I can think of no more worthy cause than that of our first responders who have selflessly chosen to place the needs of others before their very own; oftentimes jeopardizing their own physical safety, their own social comforts of home, and their own peace and wellness, all to protect and care for complete strangers who are otherwise unable to protect themselves in the face of evil. In fact, as 2020 came to a close, we remembered the ultimate sacrifice made by over 300 officers killed in the United States in the past year alone. Furthermore, we were newly confronted with the additional, arduous challenge to serve our communities amidst a deadly, global pandemic, which led to the premature deaths of at least 65 law enforcement and corrections officers just right here in Texas.

While we honor and recognize that tragic loss of life, we cannot—we must not—forget the living sacrifices made every day by first responders everywhere who continue to contribute to the worthy and noble cause of helping make our communities safer. These are 911 dispatchers, corrections officers, police officers, and many others working within our law enforcement organizations who have answered the call to help. More importantly, these are fathers and mothers, daughters and sons, husbands, wives, and friends. When asked “whom shall I send,” they—YOU—answered that call, “Here I am! Send Me!” YOU are the “doer of deeds” who, though often “marred by dust and sweat and blood,” are not timid souls but rather dare greatly in service to others.

No doubt, as 2020 raged on, we as a profession were also collectively confronted with serious criticisms from many fronts. While we are wise to give pause, actively listen to, and reflect upon the criticisms of our constituents in order to give voice in genuine service to those whom we serve, we must not lose heart, nor courage, to live out our vision



Class photo of participants in the 131st School of Police Supervision held Sept 28-Oct 23, 2021.

with integrity and honor. In the midst of all the noise and distractions brought to bear upon us in the past year, we must remain courageously and exceptionally focused on our purpose. As leaders within our organizations, it is critically important, perhaps now more than ever, to fan or reignite the flames of that passion within our teams to serve—ourselves as well as others. Now is not the time to conduct business as normal. Nothing about the last year has been “normal.” Many people whom we serve are not only physically isolated, but feel psychologically alone, stressed, tired, and angry. It is reasonable to assume many of us on our teams are hurting in precisely the same ways, likely without any conscious acknowledgment of those feelings. To ignore that reality would, in my mind, constitute an extreme failure of leadership.

My challenge then to each of us is not necessarily to DO different things, but rather to do the *right things differently*. While presuming each of our organizations are built upon a foundation having a common, moral purpose, we simply no longer have—indeed have never had—the luxury to ignore repeated, intentional conversations that help remind ourselves and our teams why we exist. Like CPR, I believe when done right those conversations breathe new life into teams that help keep members focused on what is truly important—PEOPLE. Additionally, although we are now challenged to think differently in order to maintain social distancing guidelines, we should mindfully provide sustenance to our teams by seeking new and creative ways to celebrate the many successes we achieve in fulfillment of our purpose. Like every other living organism, teams simply cannot sustain themselves very well within the arena of life when they are malnourished. Taking time as leaders to

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**“I count him
braver who
overcomes his
desires than him
who conquers
his enemies, for
the hardest
victory is over
self.”**

Aristotle

Dangers from Within

by Richard N. Holden, Ph.D.

Perhaps, for maybe the first time in history, the U.S. Secret Service is changing the personnel in the Presidential Protection Unit out of a concern that current personnel in that unit are too attached to President Trump to be effective in protecting President Biden. If true, and it is possible that this is just a routine precaution, it means some members of the Secret Service have become radicalized. Was the attitude of the police toward the terrorists who attacked Congress part of a larger problem in law enforcement itself? Police officers were identified among the capital insurgents. On-duty officers were also seen taking “selfies” with members of the attacking crowd. Law enforcement leaders now have a new concern. It is the looming prospect of enemies from within.

There were worse years than 2020; in 1918 the Spanish Flu combined with the carnage of World War I comes to mind. For U.S. law enforcement, however, this past year is one we want to quickly get past. Lost in the tumultuous election, controversial police killings with their attendant social unrest, and an unrelenting pandemic with its human and economic cost, was the fact that police fatalities reached their highest level in decades. Much of this is attributed to Covid-19, which claimed over 300 police lives, and we are still losing officers to the lingering effects of the 9-11 attack in New York City. Still, there was a distinct rise in officers killed through ambush and assault. Sadly, Texas led the nation with the highest number of fatalities.

Law enforcement in the best of times is challenging, but we are not in the best of times. We are seeing first-hand the disintegration of civil discourse in American society. Civil unrest is the highest it has been since the 1960's and 70's. The anger in the streets of America is palpable. The divide is growing, the anger is turning to rage, and the streets of our cities threaten to explode in violence.

In the attack on the U.S. Capitol, we have now witnessed organized insurrection fomented by a sitting president. Most disturbing was the absence of effective police security and a laissez-faire attitude by police toward the mob as it stormed the Capitol. This was in marked contrast to the extraordinarily rapid and effective response to Black Lives Matter protests. Is it any wonder that leaders in the minority communities point to this as an example of uneven police response to crowds of color?



57th School of Executive Leadership participants graduated on October 9, 2020.

This raises the prospect of police radicalization. It is estimated that twenty percent of the mob attacking the capital were veterans. We have known for some time that there are a certain number of extremists in the U.S. military, but the percentage is thought to be low. That our police forces may have attracted extremists is something we have not considered and is a frightening prospect.

How and why is this possible? First, the extreme right has always been more dangerous than the extreme left. This is not to say that left wing terrorism is non-existent; on the contrary, it is very real and poses a threat. When looking at the number of attacks, however, most terrorist attacks in the U.S. have come from the right.

In terms of direct threat to law enforcement, only the 1970's with the antiwar movement at its peak combining with various civil rights movements with violent offshoots, were most police officers killed by left wing extremists. In every other decade more police officers were killed by right wing extremists.

These facts would argue that police should be very wary of right-wing extremism. By and large, most law enforcement agencies do take the threat from the right seriously. There is something happening in our society, however, that cannot be overlooked. We are facing the prospect of radicalization from the right.

I never thought I would be discussing radicalization as a reality of conservative ideology. We have always associated the idea of radicalization with extreme religious movements. In truth, however, radicalization can be a force with any ideology.

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“Whenever governments adopt a moral tone—as opposed to an ethical one—you know something is wrong.”

***John Ralston Saul,
The Unconscious
Civilization***

“Moral crusaders with zeal but no ethical understanding are likely to give us solutions that are worse than the problems.”

***Charles Colson,
How Now Shall
We Live?***

De-escalation or Education

by Stacey White, Ph.D.

There are not many places you can go in the United States today and not find someone who is critical of law enforcement to some degree. Whether it is use of force, or corruption, or just the overwhelming diatribe which is frequently found being propounded by society today. Whether it is statements about how a police officer could have handled a situation differently, or how the administration could have provided more information, either way society has become more cynical about law enforcement today than they were a couple decades ago.

It could easily be argued that people just do not understand the police, an argument made by many police officers, supervisors, and administrators today. Or could it not be argued that society put law enforcement in the position of change after the terror attacks of 911 and have forgotten the new missions placed upon the men and women in blue? That is a daunting question given the fact that with the inception of the Patriot Act, politicians asked for law enforcement to change from the community-oriented policing model followed before 911, to a more militaristic version of itself. Who in that case is at fault? The people? The Politicians? The President? Who? The answer does not come easy because in a sense nearly everyone including the police share some of the burden during a time of war against an enemy which hides within the population of foreign lands, and here at home.

The incidents of late which have sparked such ire from the public has led to movements which demand change from the police, along with defunding, and dismantling of police agencies. Whether it is the George Floyd incident of recent, or as far back as Rodney King in the 1990's, the public outcry for change is so strong that many are asking if the police overall are faulty; if the word systemic is truly as applicable as it is being thrown around. That answer must come with some research, some deciphering and maybe even a little translation given that some groups do not comprehend the mission and training of law enforcement, even before the 911 mission change.

So, let us take a trip back to the history of police brutality, a journey not easily taken by those of us in uniform, but an important educational journey if we are to collectively find a resolution to the problems we are facing today. The terminology of brutality goes as far back as the late 1800's, into the

early 1900's, with the worker strikes of the late 1800's when police were essentially directed to be brutal against those who revolted against big industries, serving essentially as “Strike Busters”, a not so pleasant truth about police of that time. Then we come to the civil rights era of the 1960's, again, a not so pleasant era for police who were again tasked, and in many cases ordered by a higher authority to act out in a manner which some of them might not have wanted to act. The truth is not easy to swallow, and facts of history are not easy at letting go, or forgetting, nor should it.

We must live for today while using the history of our nation as learning tools, as rules and guides for our future actions. With the current abilities of social media, cell phone streaming and constant around the clock media, the times of police officers working in the shadows is over. And is that really a bad thing? If we are to be honestly desiring change, no, it is not a bad thing. What we must strive for is that the few police officers who are bad shall no longer be allowed to hold the remainder of us hostage with their misconduct, and the good officers no longer obligated to support those who seek to break the integrity of the thin blue line through their wrongful acts.

Now that we have taken the bitter pill about ourselves let us now talk about the context of the public outcry today where the public sees everything the police is doing as wrong, even when the police are completely in the right. A woman charges a police officer with a knife and is shot dead in the streets, a horrific incident perpetrated against an officer who did not wake up that morning and say to him, or herself, “Today would be a good day to shoot someone”. I think we know none of us do that, but public perception of some groups of society believes that to be so. But these scenarios have played out on our streets many of times, and were caught on body camera where an officer has asked, begged, and pleaded for the malefactor to put down the weapon, and yes, a knife is a dangerous and deadly weapon that can easily harm, or kill an officer, if only the public realized that, right? The truth is that most of the public does understand that and does not question it, but the vocal few of society who livestream every contact with police are not always as truthful with their narrative as we would like.

Now let's halt the direction we are going for a minute and talk about that loud few who ventures

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boldly out onto the streets with the sole intent to video the police, in some cases it being their design to do so by creating a conflict on the streets in hopes that the one, or a member of the few bad cops might be the one assigned to the call and give the amateur videographer their 15 seconds of fame, and the hungry not so trustworthy media some dirty laundry to air on constant around the clock newsfeed. Many of us at some point have found ourselves biased by something we feel strongly about, and in many cases that was brought about by a traumatic event in our lives, thus is likely the case of the amateur videographer who is looking for that opportune moment in time. So, how do we deal with that the police officer, supervisor and administrator may ask? Simply put, to be better, to enforce stringent policies, and to put the bad cops on notice that the times have changed, and those very few of us who exist might consider a change in profession. But is it just us? No, it is not just us, it is society which has declined, but moral decline is another topic altogether.

The public does not comprehend the duties of a cop, the numerous hats expected that the police officer shall, not should, wear. We must be the frontline mental health worker who in a split second must evaluate and diagnose a problem which might exist in a field contact and as quickly must find the least aggressive approach as possible, regardless of whether that crazy person has a knife, or not. The truth is what it is, that police have since the federal government has closed so many mental health facilities, become the frontline in a pandemic of mental illness that plagues the streets of America today. Additionally, the training provided to police officers who are expected to act as psychologist in the moment, is not sufficient and not as widely provided due to budget constraints, and yet government entities want to take away that funding to appease the political factions of society who do not understand that an already underfunding police department is going to do their best to not reduce the manpower, and will be cutting costs elsewhere if possible, which includes training. So, where are we back to now? Are we not repeating history and going back to the 1970's, or a time even before that where the average police officer had barely a high school diploma?

Let us talk about de-escalation for a moment and ask yourself how you de-escalate a situation where

a person wants to die and yet has not the intestinal fortitude to commit to the act themselves, but rather put a uniformed police officer on the spot and force the unsuspecting officer into doing what they want to avoid. Again, as previously stated, police officers do not get up before each shift and think how great it would be to hurt someone today or kill someone. Most police officers start their day by spending time with loved ones those last few minutes before walking out the door, and many say a prayer before heading out on their beat.

De-escalation training is a must for all departments, to that there is no debate. But how are you going to provide that training when you are taking funding away from the police? How are the police supposed to magically learn how to do their jobs better if society will not provide them the training, they are willing and, in many cases, desperately seeking? How can politicians sit upon high and look down upon the police for being so deficiently trained? To be honest they should not be able to label the police anything unless they themselves have walked the beat on the toughest streets, or put themselves into harms way, before they get before the camera with fist clinched and loudly decry, "Defund The Police".

So many options out there for police officers to get training which will help them learn about demographics, and about self-analyzation. Courses that teach the officer how to remain calm in situations while trying to calm someone down who might not appear to be able to comprehend that they lack a sense of calm. Why are not these options being explored? Simply because police departments are short on funding, but also short on manpower and as such do not have the shift coverage to let the

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*Graduates of the 58th School of Executive Leadership of-
ship held March 1-April 23, 2021*

**"Right is right, and
wrong is wrong,
and a body ain't
got no business
doing wrong when
he ain't ignorant
and knows
better.."**

***Mark Twain, The
Adventures of
Huckleberry Finn***

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recognize and celebrate, even in seemingly small ways, the contributions made to team effort in pursuit of that noble purpose provides renewed energy to forge ahead, especially in tough times. Finally, we must provide our teams adequate refreshment to renew their spirit. When teams are constantly focused only on putting out fires, the odds of burn-out are all but certain. Allowing teams time to focus on issues that are vitally important, but not particularly urgent, to the fulfillment of a greater purpose, helps quench the thirst to impact the world in a more meaningful way.

None of this, of course, is particularly revelational. What has changed is not our understanding of leadership, but the environment in which our leadership has suddenly been forced to adapt as a result of the calamitous year we experienced in 2020. To keep the analogy going then, we as leaders must not only keep our fingers on the pulse of our teams, but like passengers in a plane that has suddenly lost cabin pressure, we must first check our own wellbeing before we can successfully help others. While every leader will invariably at times find themselves struggling to maintain positivity, particularly when so much of the real world and the unreal world of social media remains perpetually negative, what is most important is that we do not wallow there. To better help others and to help our teams, I encourage each of us now to first take an honest moment to check our own pulse. This is our call to courageous, undeniable action: Leaders, guardians, and champions to the noble cause, rise and take heart! Stand tall in that arena! You are needed there, now more than ever!

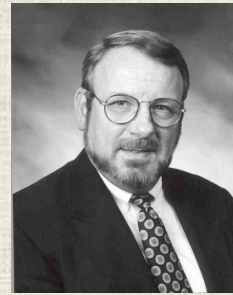
Captain Matt Clem retired from the North Richland Hills Police Department in October 2019 after 24 years of service. Matt currently works as an officer with the Watauga Police Department and as an adjunct instructor with ILEA teaching "Courageous Followership."

"Acting responsibly is not a matter of strengthening our reason but of deepening our feelings for the welfare of others."

***Jostein Gaarder,
Sophie's World***

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

GARY W. SYKES AWARD



ILEA is continually accepting nominations for the Gary W. Sykes Award for Professional Achievement in Law Enforcement and the Ethical Courage Award.

Criteria: Recipient must be a criminal justice professional for at least 10 years, has been instrumental in

bringing about significant organizational change for the good of the profession; is significantly involved in community service and civic activities; and is a role model to law enforcement officers, support personnel, criminal justice professionals, and citizens.

ETHICAL COURAGE AWARD

Given each year since 1998, this award is intended to recognize an individual or an organization for especially meritorious leadership or courage related to law enforcement ethics and integrity.

This award is given during the Contemporary Issues and Ethics Conference.

Please forward all nominations and questions to gsmith@cailaw.org.



Class photo of participants in the 132nd School of Police Supervision held Feb 1-26, 2021 and hosted by the Tarrant County College Law Enforcement Academy.

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officers go for the hours it truly takes to train in the various courses like Critical Incident Technician, or De-escalation for Street Cops. Anyone who thinks a cop believes that they have learned all they can and cannot be taught anything new is misleading themselves and refusing to see that cops today are truly smarter than the generations before, and as such are seeking more knowledge if allowed to do so. So, what are other reasons which police are not getting the training? The answer comes from upon high with the administrators who must make the decision of what is more important now, keeping a fleet running, keeping radio equipment current, providing vests for officers, making sure that pay and benefits are comparable enough to retain good officers, and the many other variables a police administrator must configure into a shoestring budget.

Police Chiefs, Sheriff's, or Commanders are always looking for training opportunities for their people and for ways that they can feasibly obtain the training while ensuring that the streets are still covered. In this quandary many of these administrators send their most experienced instructors out to train the trainer courses in hopes that they can bring some of these well needed classes back to the department and then spread the knowledge, but in many cases some of these courses are being put on by military veterans, or police veterans who have started a company to teach police these valuable techniques, but at a cost that for some agencies it just is not affordable. The average cost for some of these specialized schools is at least \$500.00 per person, and if you want to truly pay due attention as an administrator you should send at least three to four trainers to these courses, which in many cases also includes boarding and food costs. Now for a larger department that might not be such a huge impact on the budget, but for a small police department out in the sticks, that is a hurdle that just cannot be cleared.

Now we come to the topic of public education, a topic which is yet another pill which is hard for some politicians, or pundits, do not want to swallow because it is an admission that might not be a popular one with the voters of their district, but it is the truth all the same. The fact that the public lacks understanding of what the police are taught seems more profound today than it ever has been. A complete lack of comprehension of what justified force can be applied to what scenario, a lack of understand that the police officer has but a split second to decide what actions to take, and a total oblivious thought to

the muscle memory and mental acuity of a cop when under duress, all of which in most cases are taught to them from the basic academy and on into their continuing education.

An example that supports this lack of knowledge is the shoot / don't shoot scenario training provided civil rights activist Rev. Jeremy Maupin. When confronted with a scenario that was a heavily scrutinized real-life incident, Rev. Maupin took the same actions as the officer by shooting the suspect. These are important measures that need to be taken by police, by reaching out to community leaders like Rev. Maupin, and educating them about what is the standard training for police, and why that standard exists today. But that is not the only community leaders which could benefit from this exchange, why not include the elected officials of government, or even civil rights groups such as Black Lives Matter? Anyone who thinks they know how the police should act and not have a clue should be subjected to real-life scenarios to see how they would respond.

In truth, police officers are in many cases plucked from the communities where they serve, whether it is the mean streets of Chicago, the sunny beaches of Los Angeles, a police officer in many cases is the guy who went to the same school and graduated with the people they would take an oath to serve and protect. The question is that if society is in moral decline as some sociologists have suggested, are not the candidates for police officers who are plucked from those streets not potentially declined as well? This moral decline, or in the actual theory by Max Weber it is referred to as Moral Decay theory, and it poses that society can decline based upon the environment which exists. Something that places on exhibit that closely draws attention to the idea of moral decay is the writings of Edward Gibbon, who wrote in his book series titled *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Where in his text he clearly talks about the environment where the collapse of the Roman Empire came from many of the causes which we see in American society today, overwhelming welfare, uncontrolled debt, and political corruption, with a trickledown effect to the lowest levels of society.

What we must do to save ourselves from the decline is to open our eyes, open our hearts, put away the greed for power and influence, and talk, just open the mind and with respect we all start talking to each other. We take the sour pills along with the tasty

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**"It is reasonable
that everyone
who asks justice
should do justice."**

Thomas Jefferson

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ones and with a legendary amount of transparency we work together to put a new face on American society, a face which includes everyone of every race, color, or orientation. If we do not learn now from the history of the world it could very well be that we will send the end of American society in our lifetime, but most especially the lifetime of our grandchildren.

Chief Stacey White is a career law enforcement official who has dedicated 30 years of his life to the service of the people of the United States, and his home state of Oklahoma. Chief White believes in improving the criminal justice profession through enforcement of ethical standards and improvement of the standards of training which law enforcement officers receive today.

“The disappearance of a sense of responsibility is the most far-reaching consequence of submission to authority.

Stanley Milgram

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Contemporary Issues and Ethics Conference December 2-3, 2021

This year's conference is bringing a powerhouse lineup to discuss emerging technologies and the call for social justice in law enforcement. Speakers include:

- Gordon Graham, Founder of Lexipol
What Risk Management is All About
- Alex del Carmen, Associate Dean and Professor, Tarleton State University
Advances in Facial Recognition Technology and Ethical Considerations
- Dr. Zech Lee, Associate Professor, The University of Texas at Arlington
Mass Shootings and Social Justice Reform
- Dr. Kimberly Miller, Miller and Associates Consulting, Fort Collins, CO
It's All About Culture

Active members of the ILEA Alumni Association attend FREE!

UPCOMING ETHICS & DIVERSITY PROGRAMS

Ethics Train-the-Trainer

- Sep 13-16, 2021 | Plano, TX
- Oct 11-14, 2021 | Bel Air, MD

Teaching Diversity: Instructor Skills for Promoting Inclusion, Anti-Bias and Justice Education

- Nov 1-5, 2021 | Plano, TX
- Nov 15-19, 2021 | Georgetown, TX

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years, we began to limit our presence in public discourse and forums. As we expand our missions you will see a return of ILEA to the forefront at organizational gatherings, working with the news media, publishing more regularly and overall becoming more involved in the future of law enforcement conversations with our staff and faculty. Good things are happening, and things are only going to get better.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new President of The Center for American and International Law, Mr. T.L. Cabbage, who comes to us from the Department of Energy. T.L. is a progressive leader with new ideas and is and has proven to be an energetic supporter of ILEA's mission.

We must also say goodbye to our outgoing President Mr. Mark Smith. Mark has served the Center for over 37 years. Never have I worked for an individual with a higher level of integrity. Mark is an inclusive, supportive leader whose kindness is unmatched. He will be missed.

Finally, I must thank the ILEA faculty for their dedication and the ILEA staff for their dedication and diligence. Ms. Tracy Harris, Chief of Staff and Operations, Chief Deputy (Ret.) A. Jay Six, Executive-in-Residence, Dr. Mark Stallo, Scholar-in-Residence, Ms. Jasmine Hunt, Program Manager, Ms. Gerri Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant, and Dr. Rick Holden, Scholar-in-Residence (Ret.). Without these before mentioned people we could not do what we do. They are #TEAMILEA!

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Many experts warn that we are now facing the prospect of mass radicalization. The growth of extremist media with its focus on misinformation and conspiracy theories is driving otherwise intelligent people into a frenzy of anger and distrust.

Today, many Republican voters believe President Trump won the election and had it stolen by nefarious forces despite the absence of evidence and the fact that Republicans were responsible for much of the voting and ballot counting. As the reality of a Biden presidency set in the right-wing blogosphere doubled down on conspiracies and blatant falsehoods. Internet sites like QAnon push the most reprehensible of false information. One might argue, and some have, that QAnon is a radicalization engine.

What has this to do with law enforcement? The police profession attracts people with generally conservative disposition. This is positive; conservatives are more responsive to legal and social structure. They are comfortable with rules and authority. Liberals would not do all that well within a law enforcement role.

The downside is that because officers are surrounded with others like them, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender, they are trapped in conservative echo chamber of their own making. Add conspiracy theories and disinformation and you potentially have an extremist with a badge.

Terrorism scholar Louise Richardson identified the characteristic of the prototypical terrorist when she referred to the lethal triangle. This consists of a disaffected individual, a legitimizing ideology, and an enabling group. Find someone who is disenchanted with society, especially the government, feed them a diet of conspiracy theories and misinformation, and surround them, either in person or on the web, with other like-minded individuals and you have the formula for a potential extremist with violent tendencies.

Can this happen to the police, absolutely. Is it happening now is the larger question? More importantly, what can be done to prevent this process from taking place thus saving the careers of good officers, not to mention the reputation of the police?

The most important step in preventing radicalization from taking hold is to pay attention. Where are offic-

ers getting their information? Who are they listening to?

The second step is to observe. Pay attention to officer behavior. Angry people cannot hide their anger. Hate needs allies; the angrier a person, the more they try to convince others of the righteousness of their beliefs.

Finally, false information must be challenged. The longer bad ideas, whether lies or conspiracy theories fester the greater the likelihood that they will take root across a broader spectrum of the organization. As Adolph Hitler said, "Tell a lie loud enough long enough and people will believe it."

Society is now awash in disinformation. The Internet, with its lack of filtering mechanisms, is a disinformation super conductor. Never has the need for critical thinking been more apparent. Police leaders are now in the precarious position of needing to keep their fingers on the pulse of the organization. The potential danger from radicalized police officers cannot be ignored. Hopefully, it will not happen. It would be foolish, however, to ignore the possibility of a threat from within.

UPCOMING ILEA PROGRAMS

Civilian Leadership Series

- Level 2 | Aug 2-6, 2021 | Southlake, TX
- Level 3 | Sep 20-Oct 1, 2021 | Plano, TX

Rules of Engagement: How Leaders Build Engaged Work Teams

- Aug 16-17, 2021 | Plano, TX

Managing the Training Function

- Aug 30-Sep 2, 2021 | Plano, TX

Texas Sergeant Academy

- Sep 13-24, 2021 | Harlingen, TX

Police-Media Relations

- Oct 20-22, 2021 | Plano, TX

Internal Affairs, Professional Standards and Ethics

- Nov 1-3, 2021 | Plano, TX

"Whatever is my right as a man is also the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee as well as to possess."

**Thomas Paine,
Rights of Man**