

Kermit Roosevelt Lecturer discusses the UK-US relationship

By Curt Keester 09 March 2018



Students of the Army War College Class of 2018 listen intently, and share a laugh, as British Army Lt. Gen. Patrick Sanders, Commander Field Army, delivers his Kermit Roosevelt Lecture. Sanders is the 72nd annual Kermit Roosevelt Lecturer, and his le

British Army Lt. Gen. Patrick Sanders, Commander Field Army, listens to a question from an Army War College senior service college student following his 72nd annual Kermit Roosevelt Lecture. The Kermit Roosevelt Lecture Series serves to enhance the

CARLISLE, Pa. (March 6, 2018) – British Army Lt. Gen. Patrick Sanders, Commander Field Army, arrived March 7, to deliver the 72nd annual Kermit Roosevelt Lecture to senior service college students assembled in Bliss Hall. The lecture series is designed to enhance the relationship between the United Kingdom's and United States' militaries.

Sanders lecture was, at times, light-hearted and funny. He noted how the Army War College is the best war college, in Carlisle, which drew a laugh from the crowd after which he added, "and probably the world." He focused on a serious message however, one many U.S. general officers have shared from the same stage in Bliss Hall: the enduring value of relationships. In this case, Sanders cited examples ranging from World War I to the shared experiences of Iraq and Afghanistan. His message of international partnership was well-received by the 79 International Fellows

from around the world, including Great Britain's Fellow Col. Angus McAfee.

"The friendship, the bonds that have been forged between our two armies, forged in blood and sacrifice over the last 15 years mean that, for our generation, the relationship is extremely strong," said Sanders. "We have forged personal relationships at every level that, because they have been done on operations and under pressure, have led to a level trust and mutual respect and understanding that will be enduring. These are the strongest relationships you can form, I think."

He continued the case for US-UK defense relationships as he spoke to future operations, developing technologies, and emerging threats like cyber.

"Our friendship is extraordinarily durable. We have fought alongside each other in pretty much every conflict since the Boxer Rebellion," said Sanders. "We still are, of course, all around the world."

"I think there is a case to be made that this is one of most durable relationships between two armies that exists -- precisely because it is so resilient to disagreements, resilient to changes in strategic priorities, resilient to disagreements between personalities," he said. "I think it's one that has intrinsic value, because it is based on common values, on shared interests, on mutual trust, and mutual understanding. It's a relationship based on value."

The Kermit Roosevelt lecture series is named for the son of President Theodore Roosevelt. A veteran of both world wars, Kermit Roosevelt worked closely with the British Army in Mesopotamia during World War I, and with the U.S. Army after its entrance into the Great War. Following his death, his widow Belle wrote to then-Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George Marshall: "My husband, Kermit Roosevelt ... attempted to carry out in his own life his conviction that the development of a closer relationship between individual English and Americans, and a better understanding between the military forces of the United States and the United Kingdom would contribute in large measure to the preservation of world peace. In view of this conviction of his, it seems appropriate ... to set up this Memorial."