

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE
Fakulta sociálních věd
Institut mezinárodních studií

PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
(Posudek vedoucího)

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): **Marek Aldorf**

Název práce: The United States Military: The Most Patriotic Social Welfare Program?

Vedoucí práce (u externích vedoucích uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce):

Doc. PhDr. Francis D. Raška, PhD.

1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle): The aim of the work is to analyze the example of the social system provided by the U.S. military, which, according to the author, has been largely successful and could serve as a model for improving the American social system as a whole.

2. VĚCNÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (náročnost, tvůrčí přístup, argumentace, logická struktura, teoretické a metodologické ukotvení, práce s prameny a literaturou, vhodnost příloh apod.): This topic is quite a demanding one and represents an honorable contribution to the debate on American social policy. A wide variety of sources is cited and the argumentation is both sound and valid.

3. FORMÁLNÍ A JAZYKOVÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (jazykový projev, správnost citace a odkazů na literaturu, grafická úprava, formální náležitosti práce apod.): English is not Marek's native language and Marek sent the work to me so that I could improve upon the grammar and usage. I must say that, in general, Marek's English is very good and that the changes I suggested were accepted by Marek. I am happy with the sources, structure, and presentation of Marek's findings.

4. STRUČNÝ KOMENTÁŘ HODNOTITELE (celkový dojem z diplomové práce, silné a slabé stránky, originalita myšlenek, naplnění cíle apod.):

Marek Aldorf has selected the issue of the United States military's social system as the topic of his M.A. dissertation. His goal was to investigate whether the social benefits provided by the military could serve as the basis for improving social welfare in the United States overall. He has cited a plethora of primary and secondary sources. The work is divided into an Introduction, five main chapters, and a Conclusion.

In the Introduction, Marek clearly spells out the aim of his work. He discusses the U.S. military's programs as a sort of social system within the system. The content of each chapter is aptly summarized and the methodology is explained.

In Chapter 1, Marek recapitulates the history of the American social system and refers to it as an "unfinished path." Most importantly, he states why the U.S. military is an ideal institution to study in light of American realities. The chapter is well written and argued.

Chapter 2 analyzes in detail all the social, medical, retirement, vocational, and educational benefits offered by the U.S. military. It is quite obvious that these programs are attractive to prospective recruits and have aided the professionalization of the military embarked upon in 1973. The discussion of the 2012 U.S. defense budget serves to illustrate the importance of the military politically and even socially.

Chapter 3 assesses the use of military social programs and their ability to facilitate the integration of veterans into civilian life. What this chapter demonstrates is that the benefits have been to some degree underutilized thanks to lack of awareness, but that the increasing interest of middle class citizens in the military during recent hard economic times has resulted in heightened awareness and increased the effectiveness of the benefits themselves.

In Chapter 4, Marek states that the middle class is more likely to join the military because of the benefits and the lack of a sufficient social system in the civilian sphere. By using lively language and subheadings, he makes the point clear.

Chapter 5 brings a number of interesting facts and figures to explain why more middle class individuals are joining the military. His main argument is that the military has programs and benefits unavailable to many civilians who are deemed too wealthy to qualify for free health care, education scholarships, and so on. I must say that I think that Marek's notion that Obamacare will represent a panacea for the present lack of health insurance is mindlessly optimistic. Even before its implementation, the faults of the program are obvious and,

given the economic and fiscal situation of the United States, it is questionable whether the United States will be able to afford more social programs. This criticism should in no way be seen as one of Marek's work. I stand by my assertion that Marek has produced a good work and I do acknowledge that he is right in most cases. I am merely skeptical about the prospects for Obamacare.

In the Conclusion, Marek restates his main argument that the military social system is being used by recruits as a supplement for the ineffective (and, in some cases, nonexistent) programs in the civilian sphere. I am happy with the work.

Marek Aldorf has produced a laudable M.A. dissertation. I recommend without reservation its acceptance. The final mark is **excellent**.

5. SPOLUPRÁCE S VEDOUCÍM PRÁCE (komunikace s vedoucím práce, schopnost reflektovat připomínky, posun od původního záměru apod.)

Marek consulted with me on a regular basis and he did take into account my suggestions.

6. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři): Do you foresee a civilian social system being established in the United States given Americans' aversion to higher taxes and general aversion to welfare as such?

7. **DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA**

(výborně, velmi dobře, dobře, nevyhověl): **VÝBORNĚ**

Datum: 21.8.2013

Podpis:

Pozn.: Hodnocení píše k jednotlivým bodům, pokud nepíšete v textovém editoru, použijte při nedostatku místa zadní stranu nebo příložený list. V hodnocení práce se pokuste oddělit ty její nedostatky, které jsou, podle vašeho mínění, obhajobou neodstranitelné (např. chybí kritické zhodnocení pramenů a literatury), od těch věcí, které student může dobrou obhajobou napravit; poměr těchto dvou položek berte prosím v úvahu při stanovení konečné známky.