



*Adjunct Professor of International Affairs*

October 14, 2008

**MEMORANDUM FOR:**        **COLONEL MIKE MEESE**  
                                 **United States Military Academy**

**CC:**                        **COLONEL CINDY JEBB**  
                                 **United States Military Academy**

**SUBJECT:**                After Action Report -- General Barry R McCaffrey USA (Ret)  
                                 Adjunct Professor of International Affairs, USMA  
                                 **VISIT TO NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND**  
                                 **AND UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND**  
                                 Peterson Air Force Base - Colorado Springs, CO -- 5 August 2008

**1. PURPOSE:**

- This memo provides an independent operational assessment of USNORTHCOM capabilities and requirements based on presentations at the Peterson Air Force Base Headquarters.
- Note attached book of NORAD/NORTHCOM briefings/slides and fact sheets.
- Look forward to de-briefing you and the department faculty at your convenience.

**2. SOURCES:**

- 1.) Working Breakfast. **Headquarters, NORAD/NORTHCOM Office. Private discussions with General Gene Renuart, Commander, NORTHCOM and Deputy Commander, LTG Glenn Webster Deputy Commander, US Northern Command and Vice Commander, US Element, North American Aerospace Defense Command.**
- 2.) Roundtable discussion. **Intelligence Update. Current Operations. Theater Security Cooperation. Interagency Coordination. National Exercise Program.**
  - **LTG Glenn Webster**
  - **Major General John Bordelon, Chief of Staff, Headquarters North American Aerospace Defense Command and US Northern Command.**
  - **Major General Chris Miller, Director of Plans, Policy and Strategy, North American Aerospace Defense Command and US Northern Command.**
  - **Brigadier General Tony Rock, Deputy Director of Operations, US Northern Command.**
  - **Colonel Jim Brown, Antiterrorism/Mission Assurance Division Chief, Directorate of Operations, US Northern Command.**
  - **MG John Bordelon, N-NC/CS**
  - **MG Pete Forgues, N/J3**
  - **MG Chris Miller, N-NC/J5**

- **RADM Chris Colvin, NC/J3**
- **Dr. Marilyn Croach, N-NC/CCSA**
- **COL Juan Arcocha, N-NC/J4**
- **COL Mike Curry, N-NC/J6**
- **Captain Richard Bergeron, N-NC/J7D**
- **COL Lisa Turner, N-NC/JA**
- **COL Jim Brown, NC/J34**
- **COL Brian Crawford, ARNORTH LNO**
- **LTC Chris Carper, CCSIG**

### **3. NORTHCOM HAS COME OF AGE:**

My 25 August visit and update with NORTHCOM senior leadership in Colorado Springs was extremely encouraging. NORTHCOM has now fully come of age and is effectively providing coordinated and coherent planning and direction to US air-ground-sea forces in support of Homeland Defense and Civil Support.

This is my 4th visit to the command since its establishment in 2002. I have watched with great admiration the determined leadership of the first commander--- Air Force General Ralph Eberhart who under emergency conditions put together the initial framework of the command. Then during the command tenure of US Navy Admiral Tim Keating NORTHCOM took the disaster of Hurricane Katrina and used it to force coherence and a sense of mission into the national government. And now Air Force General Gene Renuart brings to the mission his enormous experience in NATO, the Mid-East, the Pacific, JCS, and the Sec Def Office. He is also a fighter pilot with 60 combat missions. General Renuart has capitalized and leveraged six years of hard work by his predecessors in NORTHCOM. America finally has a fully operational military homeland security structure--- with assigned forces, agreed procedures and plans, and a robust operations and training regimen. Most crucially, NORTHCOM actually meshes with the other trusted partners in homeland security operations.

#### **Three forces have combined to finally create this new sense of NORTHCOM confidence and effectiveness:**

- 1<sup>st</sup>:** NORTHCOM has exploited the sad lessons of Hurricane Katrina ---which was the most shameful failure of Federal (FEMA), State, and local leadership in any national emergency in our history. The inability to understand and react to massive natural disaster by the Commander-in-Chief, the Louisiana State Governor, and the Mayor of New Orleans was a galvanizing jolt to the entire political system. When the immediately following Hurricane Rita threatened coastal Texas...Admiral Tim Keating at NORTHCOM had the full attention and support of national political authorities to back up competent and motivated State and local leadership.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>:** We have a new Secretary of Defense Bob Gates who has unshackled the restrictions placed on NORTHCOM and allowed the command to fully and boldly partner with Secretary Mike Chertoff of DHS and the Governors of the many States...as well as other international and inter-agency actors.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>:** NORTHCOM has created a cooperative homeland security training and exercise environment. (Pandemic influenza, cruise missile attack, power grid loss, MANPAD attack of commercial air, earthquake disaster, port detonation, etc). More importantly NORTHCOM can provide the training and exercise resources to organize the other Federal agencies as well as State and local authorities. The byzantine Federal-State political and legal difficulties of putting together a coherent national emergency response plan are being overcome by the obvious benefits of cooperating with the massively resourced (comparatively) and extremely effective US Armed Forces. NORTHCOM has the ability to plan and execute large-muscle complex operations. NORTHCOM can pay the bills---NORTHCOM can execute.

These first three commanders of NORTHCOM (Eberhart, Keating, and Renuart) are among the most impressive officers we have ever had in uniform. They are owed a debt of gratitude for the determination and

patience with which they have pulled together a real planning and operational headquarters that has the confidence and trust of not only the US domestic agencies and State governments --- but also the Government of Canada and increasingly the Government of Mexico. (Mexico has a real and historical fear of US arrogance and domination. Increasingly, but carefully Mexico has become willing to work with NORTHCOM and its subordinate commands in an arm's length manner.) In sum, NORTHCOM has been a remarkable creation of a significant international and joint military and civil operation in a very short period of time.

#### **4. WHY NORTHCOM? :**

- **THE THREAT:**

The US Armed Forces to include NORTHCOM historically have had enormous difficulties describing in blunt and realistic terms the actual threats that face America. Understandably we are reluctant to create international tension with the articulation of a politically insensitive threat scenario. We also fear alarming the American people about threat vulnerabilities. We are also loath to admit that from a historical perspective that we are never able to successfully predict the probability of attack. We can only actually state the capabilities to attack our vulnerabilities that we see developing in the near future. (Ten years.) NORTHCOM faces an additional challenge in that our entire Constitutional basis of the Armed Forces forbids the military from playing a domestic law enforcement role (Posse Comitatus Act).

- **NATURAL AND MANMADE DISASTERS:**

NORTHCOM is most comfortable describing the considerable threat of national disaster which will continue to be a periodic tragic cause of the significant loss of American lives and billions of dollars from earthquakes, hurricanes, forest fires, flooding, toxic gas or radiological accidental contamination, manmade or natural pathogens (SARS, Ebola, Avian Flu), and other acts of an angry nature (Global warming) and the mischance's of this complex society. There is no question that coordinated action by US military forces is vital to saving lives and resources with emergency civil action to protect the people.

- **THE RUSSIANS ARE BACK:**

We have other significant threats that we must also take into account. The Russians are back as a modest potential threat to the air and sea security of North America (With potential strategic cooperation from Cuban and Venezuelan partners.) We can wish it were not so--- but we must again re-vitalize our air defense fighter and Coast Guard and Naval defense of North America to counter the increasing threat of Russian Bear H and Blackjack strategic bombers armed with ALCMs and the new conventional air-launched cruise missiles (CALCMs) --- and Russian naval intrusion (Northern and Pacific Fleet SLBM's) along our defense periphery. This NORTHCOM defense should not look like the 1950's Cold War--- but it does have to be modernized and effective. (NORAD F22A interceptors, Naval ASW, etc.) Russia recently released draft military doctrine under Mr. Putin's guidance which now directly calls the US an "adversary" and no longer a "partner." Other agencies can address the diplomatic and soft power tools to mitigate this growing political confrontation driven by Russian fear of US missile defense, NATO encirclement, and US perceived unipolar hegemony. NORTHCOM must provide us credible deterrence.

- **MEXICO AND THEIR INTERNAL WAR:**

Mexico and Canada are the most important economic, political, and cultural partners that the United States must nurture and respect. Mexico is now in a struggle for the survival of the rule of law and its democratic institutions against the internal threat of drug-fueled, massive criminal cartel activity. Thousands have been murdered. The Police are frequently outgunned by criminal gangs employing RPG's and 50 Cal machine guns. The local security forces and political authorities are sometimes intimidated, corrupt, incompetent, and not supported by a fearful local population. The Mexican people are outraged but on the fence about whether their own government has the will to save them. The enormously courageous and competent Mexican President Calderon has declared war on these internal criminal gangs and is fully supported by the most trusted and effective institution in Mexico---the Army. The outcome is in doubt. NORTHCOM can and must play a supporting role to the US State Department, the Department of Justice, the Customs and Border

Protection Agency, other Federal agencies, and the authorities of the four US Border States to confront this joint menace to the Mexican and US populations.

- **CUBA:**

Fidel Castro will soon go to his Marxist reward. The Cubans are little if any military threat to the American people or the region. However, Raul Castro will lose control of the Cuban dictatorship within two-three years of Fidel's death ---triggering a struggle to escape among a desperately poor population that yearns for not just fairness and opportunity—but also freedom. We are going to possibly be faced with the most terrible humanitarian disaster in our history in the coming five years when 250,000 to 500,000 Cubans flee at huge personal risk from the chaos of a struggle for power among the security forces of Cuba--- and head for freedom across the 90 miles of treacherous waters to Florida and the US coastal Caribbean States. This will be inevitably a humanitarian rescue mission passed to NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM by US civil authorities. There will be no stopping this exodus. NORTHCOM must be prepared to coordinate the actions of all US Federal and multiple State agencies to protect life and dignity---and maintain control and then repatriate a mass of desperate people.

- **TERRORISM:**

There are 44+ foreign terrorist groups identified by the Department of State as representing a threat to the American people. There is little question that there will be continuing criminal conspiracies to attack vulnerable US infrastructure and to conduct operations designed to murder masses of the American people. We have made enormous progress to create new institutions to defend our domestic population and installations.

However, more must be done to create a Border Patrol of 45,000 agents (Now 11,000) with the appropriate technology, border fencing, aviation, and training. (5500 miles of US-Canadian border--- 2000 miles of US-Mexican border). The Coast Guard must be increased to 75,000 personnel (From 36,000) with a fully modernized aviation and maritime capability. (96,000 miles of sea frontiers) A Public Health Service of sophistication and adequate resources must be re-vitalized. The US Marshall Service should be increased to a Federal Law Enforcement Agency of 25,000 people with a specialized detention capability. The Drug Enforcement Agency should be greatly increased to give it a true international training and operational capability.

NORTHCOM must have the resources and the manpower to fully support US counter-terrorism capabilities and to mitigate terrorist attacks in ways that are consistent with US law. The under-resourced US Air and Army National Guard must be massively restructured to give State Governors and NORTHCOM the: engineering, medical, helicopter, medium and heavy air transport, military police, ground and air reconnaissance (to include UAVs), CBRNE, civil affairs, transportation, light and motorized infantry, and communications capabilities needed to respond to major disasters as well as to support US operational combat deployment requirements.

## **5. HOMELAND SECURITY IS MORE THAN THE US CONUS MILITARY FORCES:**

The inter-agency and NGO focus and effectiveness of NORTHCOM is remarkable. Effective and tested lines of communication have been established with the Department of Homeland Security, State Governors and their command centers, the vital Air and Army National Guard, and other Federal agencies. There is an aggressive set of formalized OPLANS to deal with Civil Disturbances, CBRNE incidents, Disaster Relief, and Special Events under temporary, emergency, or extraordinary circumstances.

NORAD HQS with fully integrated Canadian military leadership is now co-located with the NORTHCOM HQS at Peterson AFB. The co-location of these two vital HQS (both commanded by General Gene Renuart) is now far more effectively integrating US-Canadian aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning. (The Cheyenne Mountain Bunker remains on stand-by as an alternate command and control facility).

NORTHCOM Hqs now has an effective Fire Control Suite which works as a coordinating element of the globally deployed US STRATEGIC COMMAND leadership to pull together CONUS, Canadian, Alaska-based,

and other forces of the vital US Ballistic Missile Defense System Architecture. (Ground based interceptors, Beale Radar, etc). The ultimate threat to the American people remains Weapons of Mass Destruction whether delivered by ballistic or cruise missile attack from an adversary such as North Korea or Iran--- or from terrorist infiltration.

## **6. SUMMARY:**

The American people rightly demand that civil public institutions not military forces exercise primacy in protecting the US domestic population. However, the planning and emergency operational scale and power of the US Armed Forces simply must be placed at the service of civil authorities when major disaster strikes.

The US Armed Forces are the most trusted institution in American society. The immediate and palpable sense of relief in New Orleans when the brave men and women of the Coast Guard and the Armed Forces were finally fully committed was powerful and inspirational. Never again can we allow human suffering on a massive scale to occur without immediately and effectively committing the full strength of our military forces.

NORTHCOM is now in a position to promise effective and rapid domestic action in support of civil authorities.

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