

STATEMENT BY  
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PREVENTION OF TERRORISM  
  
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL  
SECURITY, EMERGENCY THREATS AND  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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## INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman, members of the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations. My name is Dennis Reimer and I am the Director of the National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) in Oklahoma City. I assumed this position on April 1, 2000. Prior to that I was a soldier for 37 years, retiring as the 33<sup>rd</sup> Chief of Staff of the United States Army. I welcome the opportunity to appear before you and share my views on this important subject.

## NATIONAL MEMORIAL INSTITUTE FOR THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM

MIPT is the third component of the National Memorial in Oklahoma City. Our roots are buried deep in the rubble of the Murrah Building and our charter – to prevent or mitigate the results of terrorism – came at a high cost. The family members and survivors of the Murrah Building bombing felt very strongly about having an organization that looked to the future to try to prevent what happened on April 19, 1995 in Oklahoma City from happening again. The events of 9/11 underscored both the importance and the difficulty of this mission.

MIPT is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization that Congress has supported through four separate appropriation processes. This year, MIPT received an \$18 million appropriation in H. J. Res. 2 (Pub. L. No. 108-7). MIPT also received appropriations in the two preceding years, \$4 million in FY02 (H. R. 2500, Pub. L. No. 107-77) and \$18 million in FY01 (H. R. 4942, Pub. L. No. 106-553).

Appropriations from FY 00 through FY 02 were administered through the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) under NIJ Award #2000-DT-CX-K002. All appropriations through NIJ were administered under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance program number 16.560.

Upon signing of Public Law Number 108-7 for the FY 03 Appropriation, MIPT's appropriations will be administered through the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP) in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). MIPT's prior awards have also been transferred to ODP. The appropriations are administered under the same Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance program number 16.560.

The focus of MIPT's efforts has been on the first responder community, which includes firemen, policemen, emergency medical personnel, emergency managers, public health workers, etc. We made a conscious decision to keep our staff small in order to provide as much product as possible to this community. We believe we are both a cost effective and cost efficient organization.

Approximately 75% of our resources currently go towards developing technology that first responders need to do their job better. We are sponsoring research in many areas such as programs on improved sensors that more efficiently and quickly detect and identify chemical, biological and high explosive weapons; the development of a battery-cooled protective ensemble to allow firemen to spend more time in the "heat of the

battle”; a system to protect our national telephone network from attack; a protective filtration system to filter and clean the air in buildings and protect occupants from the effects of chemical and biological attack and a project (Project Responder) designed to give first responders the ability to identify those technologies they most need in order to do their job.

Our training and exercise program has centered on the need to help decision-makers identify the tough issues involved in defending our homeland from terrorist attacks. We were one of the sponsors of DARK WINTER, an exercise that contributed to the decision by the administration to increase the smallpox vaccine supply available so that there would be enough for every man, woman and child in the United States. This exercise led to a state exercise in Oklahoma, SOONER SPRING, where MIPT partnered with the Oklahoma Department of Health and the Oklahoma National Guard to enable policy-makers from the Governor on down to gain greater clarity on some of the tough issues surfaced during DARK WINTER, such as how to enforce a quarantine and how to distribute the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile at the local level. We continued our efforts to examine policy by helping sponsor an energy-sector exercise, SILENT VECTOR, where the pitfalls of overreaction became obvious. We look forward to even a greater role in the exercise program in the future.

The citizens of Oklahoma have willingly shared the painful lessons learned from the Murrah Building bombing. With the benefit of seven years of hindsight, MIPT updated those lessons learned and published a booklet **Oklahoma City 7 Years Later**, which captured the holistic experience of the community and how it dealt with the effects of terrorism. That booklet was distributed by us at no cost to mayors and other city and state leaders in the United States in the hopes that they would never have to use it, but if they did, it would serve as a handy reference document for planning, training and execution. It has proved very popular with over 17,000 copies downloaded from our website. We are currently involved with developing a best practice/lessons learned capability for the entire first responder community. Patterned after the Center for Army Lessons Learned, this capability will tie together all first responders and allow them the opportunity to share critical information. There are many pockets of excellence across the United States that have developed innovative ways of dealing with the tough issues associated with protecting the homeland. We believe that by sharing these best practices, everybody’s preparedness will improve. Similarly, while the real life lessons learned from Oklahoma City, New York City and the Pentagon serve as the cornerstone of our lessons learned program, we plan to incorporate training lessons learned from the various exercise conducted at all levels across the country. The cost of meeting all the training requirements across the nation is probably prohibitive, but this system provides the most cost effective means of getting the maximum return on whatever resources the nation can afford. In putting together this capability, we are being guided by an Advisory Panel made up of national representatives from major first responder associations.

Located near the center of our nation and at the site of the largest domestic terrorist attack in the United States, Oklahoma City is an ideal place to hold conferences and workshops on terrorism. Each time we have done this attendees have left the sessions more strongly

committed to doing everything possible to combat terrorism on U. S. soil. One of our first conferences dealt with the requirements of the first responder community. We brought representatives of this community to Oklahoma City and asked them to identify specific needs, particularly in the area of technology, so that we could focus our research program to address those requirements. Project Responder, which I mentioned earlier, was a direct result of this conference and has received strong support from the new Department of Homeland Security and the Interagency Board for Equipment Standardization and Interoperability (IAB). Our hope is that Project Responder will provide the foundation for a first responder research, development, test and evaluation program.

A significant portion of our charter has always dealt with outreach. MIPT continues to help educate the American people on the effects of terrorism. Our webpage, [www.mipt.org](http://www.mipt.org), has received numerous favorable comments concerning content and ease of use, and we continue to reach out to a wide variety of audiences concerning terrorism issues. Family members and survivors in Oklahoma were some of the first to reach out to victims and families in New York City. Having already experienced the emotions associated with these tragedies, these family members have forged a tight bond with many of those affected during 9/11 and continue to provide invaluable assistance.

#### ROLE OF U. S. MILITARY IN HOMELAND SECURITY

Having served in a number of key positions in the United States Army, I have some experience with the effects of this mission on the U. S. military. I have testified, while still on active duty, in front of Congress on my concern about the threat of terrorism. Having been involved with the reshaping of the U. S. Army after the Cold War, I also have some perspective of the effects of operational tempo (OP-TEMPO) on our soldiers and their families.

I have been involved throughout my military career with the total Army concept and understand how much we depend upon the National Guard and our reserve components. I hasten to point out that my first-hand experience with the military is four years dated and certainly my views may not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Defense.

#### THINKING AND ACTING ANEW

The issue this Committee is addressing is a complex one. The words of President Abraham Lincoln spoken at a different time and addressing a different problem, seem appropriate – “The occasion is filled with great difficulty and we must rise to the occasion. Just as our situation is new, so must we think anew and act anew.” I believe we really do need fresh thinking if we are going to solve this challenge in a timely fashion and provide the American people the protection they deserve. I also believe this is a solvable problem.

At the heart of the solution set is partnership - partnership amongst the federal, state and local levels of government; partnership between the public and private sector and partnership between the first responder community and the military. This hearing primarily addresses the latter and I will confine my remarks to that area.

In general, the first responder community needs are great. They generally fall in three baskets: training, equipment and communications. I have come to know the first responders as wonderful, hard working Americans who really want to do what has to be done. I take a backseat to no one in my respect for the American soldiers I have served with during my career, but these first responders are equally good and they are the soldiers on the frontlines of the new battle to protect America's homeland. We must find a way, with finite resources, to meet their needs and assist them in their efforts.

In addressing the partnership between first responders and the military, one must acknowledge the difficult task the military faces. One of the fundamental lessons to come out of Oklahoma City was that terrorism can affect any city or town in the United States. Any disaster of any size will most likely require federal assistance and the Federal Response Plan addresses many of the mechanics associated with that assistance. However, with over 85,000 local jurisdictions for the military to support, there is a need for doctrine and a degree of standardization that do not currently exist. At Oklahoma City, New York City and the Pentagon the incident commander in each case was a fire chief and the military was in support of that fire chief. That will also most likely be the model for the future. While a standardized incident command system is a step in the right direction, there is still more that needs to be done in order to efficiently mitigate the damages that come from a terrorist attack. A doctrine that is universally understood is paramount. The early stages of any disaster are extremely critical and during those stages, similar to combat, training often has to trump natural reactions. There is a need for a standardized interdepartmental training program that focuses on the mission essential tasks associated with responding to a terrorist attack. A compatible communications system for all is essential for effective control of an incident, but is currently beyond our new term resource reach. The front end planning and system engineering of the communication architecture necessary for effective control must be done as a matter of priority. In general, it is important to build upon a thorough threat assessment at all levels and prioritize requirements based upon the most likely threat so as to achieve the greatest return on investment.

#### KEY ROLE OF NATIONAL GUARD

In my mind, the National Guard is a key military element in both homeland defense and homeland security. Their rich and proud tradition going back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century has always stressed protecting our citizens. The close support they provide the governors and their close association with state emergency responder personnel, coupled with their added flexibility when employed in a Title 32 status, make them a natural candidate for an enhanced role in this area.

The downsizing of our military has placed increased reliance on the National Guard – particularly in the Army – for the full spectrum of military operations. OP-TEMPO for them is becoming an increasingly heavy burden and there is a need to re-examine and probably fine tune the structural alignment between the active and reserve component forces. At the very minimum, the issue of mobilizing first responders and taking them away from their duties of protecting the homeland in order to deploy overseas with their

military units should be addressed. It is my understanding that such an effort is currently ongoing in the Department of Defense.

Many of the piece parts are in place. Procedures for Military Support to Civilian Authorities (MSCA) are codified in the Federal Response Plan. They have been developed over years, are solid and are generally well understood. They work best when advance warning concerning the pending disaster is provided. We have considerable experience in responding to hurricanes and tornadoes and other natural disasters across the nation. While the exact point of impact for some of these natural disasters cannot be predicted, a general warning can be provided to a large area and advance precautions taken. No notice disasters such as earthquakes or terrorist attacks are more problematic. Generally, the element of surprise results in greater damage, more casualties, and requires a thoroughly coordinated response in support of local responders. Without a common doctrine, a commonly understood operational framework and standardization of terminology, the risk of wasting precious minutes at the front end of this process is increased. This risk can be mitigated through a program of cooperation between the military and the first responders. The creation of Northern Command with its mission to deter aggression and defend the homeland is certainly, in my opinion, the right decision. The focus now should be on the implementing actions necessary to allow Northern Command to accomplish its mission.

The decision to place National Guard officers in key leadership positions within Northern Command is praiseworthy. In my opinion, the current alignment between active and reserve component personnel and the manning of Northern Command is at the bare minimum. However, before one can determine the proper force structure necessary to properly accomplish that mission, the policy issue concerning the role of the Department of Defense in homeland security vice homeland defense has to be addressed. This is a policy issue best addressed by Congress and those in leadership positions in the administration, but the American public has an expectation that the homeland will be secured. If attacked again, I doubt that any of us will be satisfied with another study to fix responsibility. We know enough from previous experience to know that our nation is threatened and we need to think anew and provide the American people the best protection we can afford for the resources available.

#### CONNECTING THE DOTS

In many ways this is an exercise in connecting the dots. The current debate about the greater use of the National Guard in homeland security revolves around the mission of the Guard. During the Cold War their mission was clear in that we were a threat-based force. The Capstone Alignment Program gave focus to our wartime efforts and peacetime training programs for the Total Force. There is no doubt that the military, and particularly the National Guard, benefited greatly from this alignment. We have now changed from a threat-based force to a capabilities-based force and the mission is less predictable. Essentially, during the Cold War we knew the enemies capabilities but not their intentions. With the War on Terrorism, we know the enemies intentions but not their capabilities. A set of military capabilities that gives the President maximum flexibility is required.

Generally, the discussion concerning force structure for the National Guard centers around whether the Guard should be a mirror image of the active component and available for worldwide deployment or whether it should be primarily oriented to the defense of our homeland. There is, in my opinion, some middle ground that should require minimum force restructuring and allow additional flexibility. Currently over 30 states have Civil Support Teams for Weapons of Mass Destruction (CST-WMD). These teams are invaluable and provide complementary capabilities to meet the needs of the first responder. We need to ensure their missions are precise, they are properly equipped and manned to discharge these missions and their alert status is correlated with our national terrorism warning system. Consideration based upon threat assessment should be given to increasing the number of these teams. Whatever level of manning is required for them to provide a 24-hour capability should be resourced. Above the CST-WMD level each state has a National Guard State Area Command (STARAC). This headquarters, if desired, could be expanded to provide the governor of each state greater visibility of his overall effort in homeland security, command and control of those military units earmarked for a primary mission of homeland security and for providing training assistance to first responders as required. Above the state level are two Continental United States Armies that could provide an operational link to Northern Command and help with identifying specific needs in the defense of our homeland and the security of our citizens. The elements of an effective coordination system for planning and a command and control system for execution are in place.

#### TRAIN THE WAY WE FIGHT

One of the fundamental truths we learned in the military was that you must train the way you fight. The force we observed in Iraq is proof positive of that. Army units have trained hard in the desert for more than a decade and the confidence gained from that training is invaluable. The same principle applies to homeland security. Our exercise program must train all levels, from policy-makers to individual first responders, civilian and military. If this is done, just as in the military, a degree of standardization will result as we find the best way of doing things, and that is good.

#### COMMUNITY OF THE WILLING

Finally, let me say that I think there is a lot that can be done if we leverage ongoing efforts. There are many organizations like MIPT – that form a community of the willing – and if we build on their ongoing efforts, we can make considerable progress much faster than some people think. The key to this is introducing a culture of knowledge sharing, doing what’s right and not worrying about who gets the credit. This will require some new thinking.

#### CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I thank you for conducting this hearing. I think it is important and timely. The events of the past decade have demonstrated that we are vulnerable to attack by terrorists and that time is not necessarily on our side. This is not a simple challenge because essentially we are trying to determine the right balance between the security of our citizens and the protection of the individual

rights that have made our country great. We need fresh and clear thinking because the solution we come up with will determine a lot about the character of our nation.