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## **SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NORTHERN COMMAND**

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The United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM) is a new military headquarters charged with defending the American homeland. Established on October 1, 2002 in response to the terrorist attacks on Washington, DC and New York City, the command at present has only a limited focus. Enhancing the roles and missions of NORTHCOM could do much to further improve US domestic security over the long term. This analysis finds:

- Establishing a command similar to NORTHCOM had been under discussion for some time, but the September 11 attacks were the impetus for creating the new headquarters, leaving little time to establish a clear vision of what forces should be included and what missions the command should perform over the long term.
- Despite the creation of the new headquarters, other commands have significant roles related to domestic security. More robust and formal means are needed to integrate their activities with NORTHCOM.
- Mission areas where NORTHCOM should be given an expanded role include military support to civilian authorities, critical infrastructure protection, special operations, and drug interdiction.
- NORTHCOM also needs a more robust organization and additional resources, including a sub-regional command structure, a more visible presence in Washington, assigned forces designed to perform homeland security tasks, and an expanded training mission.
- The command could also serve as a catalyst for transformation. Many of the requirements for homeland defense, such as expanded situational awareness and efficient, networked systems that can immediately and accurately direct forces to perform critical missions, parallel those mentioned as desirable for US general purpose forces.

NORTHCOM, at present, appears to be a headquarters without a strong vision. The command should become a full-service homeland security organization, laying the groundwork for an effective national response to catastrophic disasters; bolstering other homeland security programs; evolving to prepare for new threats that may appear in the future; and serving as an important vehicle for transformation.

### **IN THE WAKE OF 9/11**

NORTHCOM was created under the unified command plan (UCP), a document that describes the geographic boundaries and functions of the combatant commands charged with conducting US military operations worldwide. The latest revision established NORTHCOM as a single headquarters responsible for North America. In all previous plans Canada, Mexico, and the United States were not assigned to any regional command.

After the Cold War there was considerable discussion about reorganizing the UCP. A protracted debate ensued over how to shift the regional commands from countering Soviet power to providing global military support to a variety of missions in a systematic and coordinated manner.<sup>1</sup> One proposal included creating an “America’s Command,” that would place the entire Western hemisphere under a single regional command. As late as 2000, a report commissioned by the Department of Defense (DoD) recommended establishing a separate command with oversight of North America. Both foreign policy and domestic issues caused the proposal to be shelved. There was concern that Mexico, which maintains a strict neutralist foreign policy while seeking close economic ties with the United States, might object to being included under a US regional security umbrella. In addition, the Joint Chiefs of Staff remained sensitive to domestic concerns that the new command could be perceived as impinging on civil rights, as well as on state and local government responsibilities for public safety. However, within a week of the September 11 terrorist attacks the Joint Chiefs recommended the establishment of NORTHCOM. The emerging requirements to fight a global war on terrorism clearly overrode previous reservations.

As currently established, NORTHCOM is tasked with the land, aerospace, and maritime defense of the continental United States, Alaska, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, parts of the Caribbean, and Atlantic and Pacific waters (out to 500 miles). NORTHCOM will also provide military assistance to civilian authorities, including military support (responding to the consequences of civil emergencies or attacks), assistance for civil disturbances, support to law enforcement, counter-drug and counter-terrorism efforts, critical asset protection, and responding to the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), i.e., chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-explosive devices. NORTHCOM assistance to civil authorities will be provided under the lead of another federal agency.<sup>2</sup> The command, however, has no formal relationship with the recently established Department of Homeland Security.

## **HOMELAND SECURITY AND THE REGIONAL COMMANDS**

Despite the creation of NORTHCOM, other commands will continue to have significant domestic security responsibilities.

### **North American Air Defense Command**

The North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), is a joint US-Canadian organization responsible for aerospace control over North America and assisting authorities in responding to illegal airborne drug trafficking and airline hijackings. For example, air patrols over the United States in the wake of the September 11 attacks were directed under the control of “US Element NORAD.”

As a bi-national command, NORAD is not covered under the UCP. However, NORAD’s commander was also appointed NORTHCOM commander. He is “dual-hatted,” heading both organizations. NORAD remains a separate, not subordinate headquarters.

It is unlikely that Canada will formally join NORTHCOM. How close US and Canadian homeland security efforts should be linked remains a subject of some controversy in Canadian politics. It is

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<sup>1</sup> W. Spencer Johnson, “New Challenges for the Unified Command Plan,” *Joint Force Quarterly* (Summer 2002), p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> Change 2 to the Unified Command Plan (January 10, 2003), pp. 9-10.

possible, however, that NORAD may grow into a more comprehensive joint US-Canadian homeland defense command incorporating all land, sea, and air operations. NORTHCOM's association with NORAD may, and probably should, mature in a way similar to the relationship between the US European Command and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NORAD should become a joint US-Canadian air, land, and sea defense command supported by NORTHCOM forces and capabilities.

### **Pacific Command**

The US Pacific Command (PACOM) provides defense and civil support to Hawaii and US territories and possessions in the Pacific. PACOM, for example, maintains the Center of Excellence for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. It also sponsors interagency and disaster response exercises. These primarily deal with responses to disasters in countries in the Pacific theater, but also have application to providing support to civil authorities in the aftermath of a domestic terrorist attack. PACOM's responsibilities also include other traditional defense tasks such as air and maritime control.

### **Southern Command**

US Southern Command's (SOUTHCOM) role is especially important to the homeland defense mission. Before the UCP revision, SOUTHCOM was responsible for military operations in Central and South America, as well as managing bilateral security assistance with Mexico. The latest change shifted parts of the Caribbean to NORTHCOM. For the next few years, however, SOUTHCOM will continue to oversee security assistance programs in NORTHCOM's area including activities with the Caribbean island nations, as well as initiatives with Mexico and US defense facilities in Cuba.

In the past, the Defense Department has considered abolishing SOUTHCOM and making the entire Western hemisphere a NORTHCOM responsibility. This would be a mistake. Latin Americans would be deeply resentful, seeing such a move as a sign that Washington was demoting their security interests to a secondary concern. In any case, Mexico, with its tradition of nonalignment, will certainly eschew a direct military relationship with NORTHCOM. SOUTHCOM with its long standing experience and sensitivity to regional issues is a better choice for improving security on the southern flank. Finally, making NORTHCOM responsible for all hemispheric issues would overwhelm the command and detract from its focus on protecting the homeland.

Rather than abolishing the headquarters, SOUTHCOM could play a larger role in obtaining intelligence and stemming the drug smuggling and human trafficking that might bring terrorist threats to US shores.<sup>3</sup> Traditionally, however, SOUTHCOM is the most poorly-funded of the combatant commands. Most of its day-to-day resources come from funding for counter-drug operations, monies that often arrive with strictures that limit the command from using assets for other missions such as counterterrorism operations. Expanding SOUTHCOM's means to support the global war on terrorism could be an important contribution to NORTHCOM's success, helping address the many potential routes and opportunities to launch terrorist strikes from the southern flank.

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Ann Scott Tyson, "Boosting Latin American Surveillance," *Christian Science Monitor* (November 20, 2002), p. 1.

## **Strategic Command**

In the latest revision of the UCP, US Strategic Command (STRATCOM) was tasked to integrate combatant command missile defense operations. According to recent press reports, while NORTHCOM will be responsible for directing missile defense operations in its area of responsibility, STRATCOM will act as the global integrator to ensure that activities of the theater commands support one another. STRATCOM, for example, would be responsible for ensuring the right combination of offensive and defensive means were employed to counter a missile threat that might be launched from the PACOM area of responsibility at the United States.<sup>4</sup> In addition, STRATCOM provides space support, such as early-warning of missile launches, to all theater commanders, including NORTHCOM.<sup>5</sup> STRATCOM also has responsibility for information operations to protect DoD computer systems from foreign attacks.

## **Special Operations Command**

The US Special Operations Command (SOCOM) provides special operations forces to the regional commands for a range of missions from direct action, to psychological operations and civil affairs, to combating terrorism. SOCOM can also conduct activities independent of the combat commands at the direction of the President and Secretary of Defense.<sup>6</sup> SOCOM has always had some homeland defense tasks. It maintains a national response force to respond to special contingencies. Special operations forces have been used as “red teams” to test the security of certain installations. SOCOM has also supported designated national security events (like the Olympics). In addition, in the future special operations forces could support a wider range of homeland missions, including the use of civil affairs units for consequence management in responding to WMD incidents.

## **Joint Forces Command**

US Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) provides conventional forces to the regional commands, including NORTHCOM. While some combatant commands had forces assigned directly to them, Army, Navy, Marine, and Air Force units in the United States remain as a part of a pool of troops that can be dispatched to the regional commands as needed. NORTHCOM has few forces assigned to it on a day-to-day basis.

JFCOM is also responsible for conducting joint force experimentation. In the past, warfighting missions have played a prominent role in experiments. In the future, however, experimentation could also tackle the special needs of NORTHCOM. The command should press for joint experimentation that addresses potential emerging threats to the homeland such as the covert use of short-range missiles and unmanned

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<sup>4</sup> “NMD Mission Likely to Go to NORTHCOM, Deputy Commander Says,” *Homeland Defense Watch* (February 10, 2003), pp. 7-8; “Pentagon Integrates Missile Defense Command and Control Systems,” *Inside Defense* (March 10, 2003), pp. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> Missile launches are tracked worldwide by the Defense Support Program (DSP) satellites, which maintain geosynchronous orbits 22,000 miles above the earth. DSP is to be replaced by a constellation of more accurate launch detection satellites known as the Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS), which will support acquisition of targets for US missile defenses. In addition, the US Navy maintains a complex system for tracking submarines that might launch ballistic missiles. These systems include the Integrated Undersea Surveillance System (IUSS). IUSS includes fixed, mobile, and deployable acoustic arrays that identify targets for anti-submarine warfare forces. Recent developments have improved US capabilities to track submarines. See, Statement of Malcolm I. Fages before the Military Procurement Subcommittee on Submarine Force Structure and Modernization, House Armed Services Committee, June 27 2000, pp. 7-9.

<sup>6</sup> Glenn W. Goodman, “Expanded Role for Elite Commandos,” *Armed Forces Journal* (February 2003), p. 34.

aerial vehicles, and the use of radiological dispersal devices, as well as the complex requirements of inter-agency and inter-government coordination.

### **Transportation Command**

The US Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) performs a number of functions that may be called on to support homeland security missions. For example, TRANSCOM provided air-refueling for combat air patrols over the United States after 9/11. In the event of a crisis, TRANSCOM could offer emergency aeromedical evacuation and other support for the National Disaster Medical System such as delivering supplies and equipment from the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile.

Given that multiple commands will continue to play important roles in the war on global terrorism, as well as homeland defense, their activities should be thoroughly synchronized to ensure the military provides the best possible contribution to protecting the nation. This challenge is, in many ways, not new. The interests and concerns of combatant commanders often overlap formal boundaries. There is, however, no standardized, routine system for direct robust cooperation between the combatant commands. Usually, the commands establish small cells in adjacent headquarters to exchange information and manage the friction of ongoing operations. Inter-command and inter-agency working groups are often event driven, focusing on regional or country-specific issues.<sup>7</sup> These traditional means of coordination will likely be insufficient to deal with the critical challenges and timely responses required for homeland defense. NORTHCOM could well require a formal and robust system for integrating its operations with other commands. Each combatant command is standing-up a joint interagency coordination group. These might be reorganized and further expanded to better serve homeland defense and security missions.

## **THE FUTURE OF NORTHCOM**

Both the concerted global war on terrorism and NORTHCOM are now more than a year old. It is worth reassessing what adjustments might be made to make NORTHCOM more effective and better prepared to protect the United States over the long term. In particular, the Defense Department should consider what areas of responsibility should be expanded and what additional resources NORTHCOM might need to accomplish its task. There are a number of areas where DoD may wish to rethink NORTHCOM's mission and organization.

### **Military Support to Civilian Authorities**

In the past, Pentagon support to state and local governments for natural and technological (manmade) disasters was coordinated by the Secretary of the Army acting as the executive agent for DoD. With the recent establishment of an Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense in the Pentagon this organization is being rethought. The support function could well be added to the portfolio of the assistant secretary, coordinated by creating a Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civil Support.<sup>8</sup> If this occurs the Joint Staff will also likely take on additional responsibilities in this area, such as

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<sup>7</sup> Richard A. Lechowich, "Crossing Boundaries: Commanders in Chief and Areas of Interest," *Joint Force Quarterly* 24 (Spring 2000), pp. 34-41.

<sup>8</sup> Jim Garamone, "Homeland Defense Chief Speaks of New Responsibilities," *American Forces Press Service* (March 19, 2003), np, [<http://www.defenselink.mil>].

promulgating deployment orders, while the Office of the Secretary of Defense handles management and budget tasks.

As DoD reorganizes the civil support mission, it should consider carving out a significant role for NORTHCOM in the planning, training, and day-to-day management of operations. This would allow the assistant secretary to focus more of his primary effort on policy issues, a more appropriate role for the secretariat than managing field operations. In addition, placing NORTHCOM in the routine business of coordinating these missions, even when a large federal military presence is not required, will allow the command to establish solid working relationships with the other federal agencies and state and local governments with which it will have to work intimately in responding to a large-scale disaster or terrorist attack. Placing NORTHCOM in the routine civil support chain of command will help its staff develop trust and confidence with other agencies. This will be needed to operate effectively under the stressful demands and pressing time-constraints of a major national response. In particular, expanding NORTHCOM's responsibilities for planning support for a range of operations, such as preparation for the annual forest fire season where military forces support state fire fighting missions, might provide important dividends in preparing to respond to more dramatic future tasks.

### **Force and Critical Infrastructure Protection**

Currently, the armed services are responsible for the security of their military installations within the United States. In addition, under the new national strategy for the protection of critical infrastructure, DoD is responsible for collaborating with the defense industrial base on how to address critical defense infrastructure protection needs, ensure continuity of operations, and effectively share appropriate security-related information with private-sector service providers.<sup>9</sup>

In some cases a carefully directed, effective attack on military infrastructure or defense industrial assets could have a significant impact on the nation's ability to project and sustain military power. For example, the overwhelming bulk of American military power is still moved around the world by ship. Most military supplies and hardware move through only 17 seaports. Only four of these ports are designated specifically for the shipment of arms, ammunition, and military units through DoD-owned facilities.<sup>10</sup> Attacks that interfered with port operations during the height of a foreign crisis could limit the access of combat forces to overseas theaters by interfering with their leaving the United States.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *The National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Key Assets* (February 2003), p. 46.

<sup>10</sup> For an overview of the military's reliance on ports and associated security risks see, US General Accounting Office, *Combating Terrorism: Preliminary Observations on Weaknesses in Force Protection for DOD Deployments Through Domestic Seaports*, GAO-02-955TNI (July 23, 2002); Statement of William G. Schubert before the Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans Affairs, and International Relations, Senate Government Reform Committee, July 23, 2002, np, [<http://www.marad.dot.gov/Headlines/testimony/homesecurity.html>]. See also, US General Accounting Office, *Combating Terrorism: Actions Needed to Improve Force Protection for DOD Deployments through Domestic Seaports*, GAO-03-15 (October 2002), pp. 5-10. In another example of the application of an anti-access strategy, in January 2003, US officials claimed to have credible evidence of a plot to sabotage commercial airliners transporting US troops to the Middle East. During major military mobilizations most forces are deployed by contract carriers. Thom Shanker, "Officials Reveal Threat to Troops Deploying to Gulf," *The New York Times* (January 13, 2003), p. A1. Even if this report proves unfounded, it nevertheless illustrates potential ways that an enemy could attempt to interfere with the deployment of US forces.

<sup>11</sup> A series of recent Army wargames postulated various options for employing attacks on the homeland as a component of an anti-access strategy. In one game, for example, the enemy forced the United States to withhold troop deployments until terrorist sabotage cells throughout the country had been neutralized. Richard Brennan, *Protecting the Homeland: Insights from Army Wargames* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2002), pp. 21-22.

The challenge of providing force protection for military infrastructure and the defense industrial base has grown significantly since the September 11 attacks. For example, in January 2003 some 9,000 Army National Guard troops were called up nationwide to augment security at 163 Air Force installations around the nation. In many cases, these troops were replacing Air Force security units who had been overstrained by the increased demands of guarding bases in the wake of 9/11. It is likely such requirements will remain in the future and that the military will require a flexible, well-orchestrated, and responsive system to both ramp-up and reduce security to meet the current state of terrorist threats. It makes sense to assign overall responsibility for setting general force protection levels, balancing competing needs, assessing compliance, and testing preparedness to a single command. In other theaters these tasks are an important mission for the combatant commander. NORTHCOM should be tasked to assume similar responsibilities.

### **Special Operations**

Unlike other combatant commands, NORTHCOM has only a very small special operations forces contingent on its staff probably suitable only for liaison activities with SOCOM. NORTHCOM does not, for example, have the capability as other commands do to stand up a Joint Force Special Operations Component Command. NORTHCOM, however, does have territorial responsibilities outside the United States, particularly at sea and in the Caribbean islands, where special operations forces might well be called on to interdict a terrorist threat. In addition, there are situations, such as special national security events, where there are legitimate and appropriate uses for these forces within the United States. NORTHCOM should have the same capabilities as other commands to be able to plan for and control special operations forces. In addition, a stronger role for NORTHCOM would facilitate cooperation with Canadian special forces,<sup>12</sup> perhaps coordinated through a reorganized NORAD. Finally, building up NORTHCOM's capacity to direct these activities would relieve SOCOM of the responsibility to plan and direct national missions, permitting the command to focus more generally on supporting the global war on terrorism and other tasks worldwide.

### **Drug-Interdiction Operations**

When the administration drafted its strategies for counterterrorism and homeland security, it intentionally did not include operations to stem the flow of illegal drugs into the United States. Similarly, in the federal reorganization after 9/11 which created the Department of Homeland Security there was no effort to move the Drug Enforcement Administration to the new department. There may be, however, good reasons to closely coordinate homeland security and drug-interdiction operations. Terrorist attempts to infiltrate illicit material into the United States may well mimic drug smuggling. For example, the greatest gap in US defenses may not be the widely discussed possibility of smuggling in commercial shipping containers, a threat that may be reduced somewhat by new procedures and technologies, but the tactics favored by drug smugglers, infiltrating contraband in non-commercial vehicles with concealed compartments capable of storing 30-70 kilograms of material.

In addition, transnational criminal organizations, can impact homeland security threats in several distinct and important ways. Criminal groups may facilitate, fund, supply goods and services, or even act on

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<sup>12</sup> Donald A. La Carte, "Asymmetric Warfare and the Use of Special Operations Forces in North America Law Enforcement," *Canadian Military Journal* 2/4 (Winter 2002), np [[http://www.journal.dnd.ca/vol1/no4\\_e/asymmetrical1\\_e.html](http://www.journal.dnd.ca/vol1/no4_e/asymmetrical1_e.html)].

behalf of other transnational groups. The line between these groups can be vague. In some instances money gained from drug trafficking funds terrorist operations.<sup>13</sup> One recently discovered plot, for example, involved attempting to trade heroin for shoulder-fired, ground-to-air missiles.<sup>14</sup> Such activities may be the trademark of many future terrorist activities.

National Guard forces are already routinely used in coordination with state and local governments for supporting interdiction efforts. These missions are somewhat controversial. The missions have not been overly burdensome and in some cases provide valuable training, particularly for units flying aerial surveillance. Some argue, however, that it has always been difficult to measure their effectiveness and the value of the interdiction program overall.<sup>15</sup> Drug interdiction has not proven an effective deterrent nor eliminated the threat. In 1999, for example, an estimated 300,000 kilograms of cocaine were smuggled into the United States.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, analysis of these programs suggests that an integrated strategy and increased resources might make the challenge of smuggling without fear of interdiction more difficult.<sup>17</sup> Given the potential linkages between terrorism and drug trafficking, and the likelihood that the military will continue to be tasked with supporting drug interdiction in the future, it would be prudent to ensure that such operations are conducted as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Joint Task Force Six (JTF-6), headquartered at Fort Bliss, Texas, which provides counter-drug support to federal, regional, state, and local law enforcement agencies throughout the country, has been assigned to NORTHCOM. DoD should consider consolidating all DoD domestic support for drug-interdiction operations under NORTHCOM including control over Joint Interagency Task Forces-East (JIATF-East) and West (JIATF- West).<sup>18</sup> NORTHCOM could serve as the single DoD point-of-contact for all activities and be responsible for integrating and synchronizing the department's contribution to drug-interdiction and counterterrorism. This would facilitate routine cooperation between the command and law enforcement and border control authorities, working relationships that could serve well to ensure better collaboration in responding to major terrorist threats.

Many of the activities required to support drug-interdiction operations can be done without violating legal prohibitions against employing federal military forces for domestic law enforcement.<sup>19</sup> In addition,

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<sup>13</sup> Statement for the Record of Louis J. Freeh, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, on International Crime before Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Senate Committee on Appropriations (April 21, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> Nicholas Kulish and Matt Pottinger, "U.S. Seeks Extradition of Men It Says Schemed to Sell Stingers to Terrorists," *The Wall Street Journal* (September 11, 2002), p. A13.

<sup>15</sup> Christopher M. Schnaubelt, "Can the Military's Effectiveness in the Drug War be Measured?" *Cato Journal* 14 (Fall 1994), pp. 243-265.

<sup>16</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Measuring the Deterrent Effect of Enforcement Operations on Drug Smuggling, 1991-1999* (August 2001), p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> See the results of the cocaine interdiction program. Office of National Drug Control Policy, *2002 Final Report on the 1998 National Drug Control Strategy, Performance Measures of Effectiveness* (February 2002), [<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/02pme/pmepdf/PME.pdf>], p. 24.

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of JIATF operations see, James Kitfield, "Anti-Drug Task Force May Provide Homeland Security Blueprint," *GovernmentExec.Com* (September 20, 2002), [<http://www.govexec.com>].

<sup>19</sup> Posse Comitatus prohibits federal forces from performing law enforcement activities without the permission of Congress. The act has never been a serious obstacle to the use of federal forces for domestic operations, nor does it preclude the military from providing logistical support, loaning equipment, and offering technical advice, facilities, and training to civil authorities. Though there is much confusion in this area that might be addressed by more clearly stated and publicized policies, there is

the means of funding drug-interdiction support to state and local governments could well serve as model for managing many military homeland security activities.<sup>20</sup>

### **Command, Control, and Organization**

Currently, NORTHCOM has only a very limited ability to command and control any operations it might be required to conduct nationwide. This could make future operations difficult to manage particularly in the event of multiple terrorist strikes in different parts of the nation that required extensive support. One means to extend NORTHCOM's capabilities would be to establish a network of sub-regional commands that could serve as the nucleus of joint task forces capable of responding to a large-scale disaster or terrorist attack.

One option worth considering might be to utilize nine of the US Army Reserve Command's (USARC), Regional Support Command (RSC) headquarters. These commands are strategically placed throughout the United States. With minimal additional force structure, equipment, and facilities these headquarters could be tasked to stand-up joint force headquarters as required to respond to national contingencies. An alternative, although more expensive, solution, would be to field contingents collocated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's ten Regional Operations Centers. In either case, a suitable model for a future sub-regional headquarters might be something akin to the security control facilities used during the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah. The operations center for the games fused together the intelligence sources and the management of the law enforcement, security, and support activities of dozens of state and local agencies, as well as the National Guard forces serving under state control and the assets of more than 15 federal departments and organizations, including 4,500 military personnel.<sup>21</sup>

The ability to rapidly establish joint task force command and control could be a key contribution to the success of future NORTHCOM operations. Unlike operations in other theaters, however, military activities will likely not be the centerpiece of homeland security efforts. NORTHCOM needs to ensure that whatever sub-regional command network does evolve is well designed to support state and local governments and the work of other federal agencies. Efforts should be coordinated closely with the Department of Homeland Security's objectives for managing the federal response plan which governs how national assets support state and local governments. The department's Office of State and Local Coordination could well serve as the focal point for integrating command and control initiatives at all levels of administration into a cohesive national network for managing homeland security operations.

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strong precedent to support using military forces for homeland security activities. The Posse Comitatus law and other strictures are not significant legal impediments to creating home defense forces. For more on this issue see, Mathew Carlton Hammond, "The Posse Comitatus Act: A Principle in Need of Renewal," *Washington University Law Quarterly*, Summer 1997, p. 3, [<http://www.wulaw.wuslt.edu/75-2/752-10.html>]; Jeffrey D. Brake, "Terrorism and the Military's Role in Domestic Crisis Management: Background and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, RL30938, April 19, 2001, p. 11-18; Craig T. Trebilcock, "Posse Comitatus—Has the Posse Outlived Its Purpose?" Center for Strategic and International Studies Working Group (2000), pp. 1-5.

<sup>20</sup> James Jay Carafano, "The Reserves and Homeland Security: Proposals, Progress, Problems Ahead," *CSBA Backgrounder* (June 19, 2002), p. 9. The proposed National Guard Act of 2003 (S. 215) adopts this strategy, modeling funding programs for homeland security on the current National Guard counterdrug program.

<sup>21</sup> "Preparing for the World: Homeland Security and the Winter Olympics," (January 2002), np, [<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020110-7.html>].

One means for enhancing NORTHCOM's ability to work more closely with the Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies would be to provide the command a more prominent presence in Washington. Presently, NORTHCOM maintains only a small liaison office in the Pentagon. The command would benefit from the creation of a senior deputy commander and a requisite staff assigned to the capital region. To ensure close coordination between NORTHCOM operations and the policymaking in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the department might establish a unique command arrangement, such as appointing a deputy NORTHCOM commander simultaneously as a deputy assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense within the Pentagon.

## **Training**

Coordinating exercises and training for the range of activities that fall under the rubric of protecting the homeland could be one of the most significant future challenges. The current training regime comprises courses and exercises conducted by many federal departments and agencies, as well as by state and local governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Within this plethora of training activities there is little standardization, much duplication, huge gaps, and inadequate integration.<sup>22</sup> The recently released National Strategy for Homeland Security calls for the newly created Homeland Security Department to consolidate ongoing activities into a national training and evaluation system.<sup>23</sup> This is a daunting challenge.

DoD is already a major contributor to many training efforts that support state and local first responders.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the military has broad experience in conducting the multi-echelon training of complex tasks similar to those required for homeland security missions. In the future, NORTHCOM could serve as the focal point for the military training contribution in much the same way as JFCOM oversees joint training requirements for overseas warfighting missions.

In addition, there are many areas where the military's training expertise could well support many civilian critical training initiatives such as developing mission essential task lists, establishing multi-echelon training centers, implementing training documentation systems, and developing senior professional education.<sup>25</sup> Under a unique organizational arrangement NORTHCOM might serve in tandem with the Department of Homeland Security's Emergency Response and Preparedness Directorate as a federal executive agent for implementing a national training and assessment program. National Guard forces, which are resident in every state and territory could provide the facilities and force structure for a national training environment. The National Guard State Area Commands (STARCs) would be ideally suited to coordinate this mission.

## **Component Forces**

NORTHCOM has very few forces from the armed services directly under its control. For the present this is probably appropriate. The command is still very much in the process of setting-up. Burdening it with managing too many additional forces whose missions at this point might not be well-defined would be

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<sup>22</sup> James Jay Carafano, "Homeland Security and the Trouble with Training," *CSBA Backgrounder* (October 3, 2003), p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> See, *The National Strategy for Homeland Security* (2002), p. 45 [[http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/book/nat\\_strat\\_hls.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/book/nat_strat_hls.pdf)].

<sup>24</sup> Carafano, "Homeland Security and the Trouble with Training," p. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Carafano, "Homeland Security and the Trouble with Training," pp. 9-11.

unwise. On the other hand, as NORTHCOM looks to the future it should revisit its requirements for assigned forces and the most appropriate representation of service component headquarters.

NORTHCOM's requirements should emerge from the command's detailed plans required to support the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCAP). JSCAP apportions forces to the combat commanders for routine operations and planned contingencies. The JSCAP determines what forces will be assigned from the services to a combatant commander and when. In contrast to other commands, however, at the operational level NORTHCOM will have to work closely with the other agencies involved in the federal response plan to ensure that the right mix of forces, capabilities, and services are available to meet the range of foreseeable contingencies. Close coordination should allow for the sharing and pooling of assets which may reduce the overall total requirements for an effective national response system.

In its planning, NORTHCOM should consider the requirements for unique forces specifically for homeland security missions. These might include additional units for short-range ballistic missile and cruise missile defenses to guard US targets against covert launch platforms brought in proximity to the United States.

DoD might also consider designing units specifically to augment critical infrastructure protection efforts. For example, three years ago the department authorized the formation of five Joint Reserve Component Virtual Information Operations Organizations (JRVIOs) staffed by 182 reservists. Reservists work part-time from remote locations as part of geographically distributed organizations. Today, JRVIOs provide support to five defense agencies working on intelligence and cyber-defense.<sup>26</sup> They offer a range of services from monitoring systems to augmentation for major incidents. Such virtual organizations might be effective in support of a number of critical infrastructure protection initiatives. They could capitalize on the existing skills of reservists gained through civilian employment or military experience.

Additionally, DoD should take another hard look at whether it has forces adequately prepared to deal with catastrophic disaster. One challenge that should be more carefully scrutinized is the potential proliferation of nuclear or virulent biological weapons that might be covertly smuggled to a target by ground, sea, or air transport. These weapons could inflict catastrophic casualties, killing tens of thousands of people and causing hundreds of billions of dollars in damage, destruction on a scale that might well overwhelm civilian response capabilities and require robust military support.<sup>27</sup>

If there is a need for national WMD response forces, these units could be formed by reorganizing existing National Guard forces. Such units might resemble the US Marine Corps Chemical Biological Incident Response Force, but be organized on a much larger scale with organic detection, treatment, decontamination, evacuation, mortuary, mental health, veterinary, and security assets capable of addressing multiple large-scale disasters simultaneously in different parts of the country. These forces might then be assigned to NORTHCOM, where they could participate in a robust training program with state and local responders.

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<sup>26</sup> The agencies supported by JRVIOs are the Defense Information Systems Agency and the Joint Task Force—Computer Network Defense, both in Arlington, Va.; the National Security Agency and the Information Operations Technical Center, both at Fort Meade, Md., and the Joint Information Operations Center, Kelly Air Force Base, Tx.

<sup>27</sup> For a notional list of requirements for responding to a catastrophic attack see, Eric V. Larson and John E. Peters, *Preparing the U.S. Army for Homeland Security: Concepts, Issues, and Options* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), p. 60.

The 1999 *Reserve Component Employment 2005 Study* (RCE-05) provided the Defense Department's most detailed, wide-ranging analysis of the Reserves' potential contributions to homeland security. The report argued for assigning homeland security missions to Reserve Component commands. It recommended some "remissioning" (assigning homeland support duties as a primary mission), and "restructuring" (reorganizing a unit with different personnel and equipment specifically for homeland security tasks).<sup>28</sup> These recommendations were virtually ignored.<sup>29</sup> In the wake of the 9/11 attacks and with the potential for future terrorist threats it is time to seriously reconsider proposals similar to the RCE-05 study, including the formation of WMD response forces.

An assessment of force requirements also needs to consider the requirement for "homeland security" overseas as well as at home. Many areas where US forces might deploy may face the danger of nuclear, chemical, or biological strikes. Host countries could well lack the robust infrastructure required to respond to these attacks. In addition, international NGOs are not well prepared to deal with the consequences of a WMD attack. American homeland security forces might be needed to provide consequence management for civil populations in forward deployed areas. Depending on the situation, WMD response forces might be used by other commands as well. This arrangement would be in keeping with the guidance established in the last UCP revision which directs NORTHCOM to provide technical advice and assistance to support other combatant commands in consequence management operations outside the United States.

In addition, given their medical, security, and transport capabilities, the WMD response units could also substitute for other conventional units when such assets are in short supply and there is little threat of WMD attacks. It would be better to have WMD-response forces that are well-prepared to deal with catastrophic attacks and save thousands of lives, but could also do other military missions, rather than continue with the current force structure which maintains National Guard forces marginally prepared and resourced to do warfighting tasks that would have to be reorganized in an ad hoc manner to respond to a major terrorist strike.

## **HOMELAND SECURITY AND TRANSFORMATION**

NORTHCOM should also play a key role in speeding the transformation of the US military from a force designed for the Cold War era to one prepared to meet the security challenges of the 21st century. Transformation reflects innovation on a grand scale, undertaken to exploit major changes in the character of conflict.<sup>30</sup> Network-centric operations, linking diverse systems together so that warfighters can take full advantage of available information and bring assets to bear in a rapid and flexible manner, may well be one of the centerpieces of this transformation.<sup>31</sup> In many respects, homeland defense missions could benefit from employing network-centric operations. For example, dealing with covert maritime threats may require tracking thousands of ships and hundreds of ports, integrating the information available to naval forces, the Coast Guard, the Department of Homeland Security's Border

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<sup>28</sup> "Reserve Component Employment 2005 Study Completed," DoD News Release, July 22, 1999, [[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jul1999/b07221999\\_bt345-99.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jul1999/b07221999_bt345-99.html)].

<sup>29</sup> Carafano, "The Reserves and Homeland Security: Proposals, Progress, Problems Ahead," pp. 5-6.

<sup>30</sup> Testimony of Andrew F. Krepinevich before the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 9, 2002, [[http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/Archive/T.20020409.Defense\\_Transforma/T.20020409.Defense\\_Transforma.htm](http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/Archive/T.20020409.Defense_Transforma/T.20020409.Defense_Transforma.htm)].

<sup>31</sup> Department of Defense, *Network Centric Warfare: Report to Congress* (July 27, 2001), p. 1.

and Transportation Security Directory, national law enforcement and intelligence services, local port authority administrators, private-sector shippers, and others.

Rather than viewing NORTHCOM and its domestic security missions as competitors for resources with the needs of other combatant headquarters supporting the global war on terrorism and military missions worldwide, the command should be viewed as a full partner in the transformation effort. Operational practices, concepts, and implementing technologies and force structures designed to serve one command could well be applied to others. There are several areas, in fact, where NORTHCOM could serve as the DoD lead in the transformation effort. Intelligence sharing, interagency coordination, maritime surveillance, air and missile defense, force protection, WMD-defense, and consequence management are just a few areas where NORTHCOM could develop the blueprint for other commands on implementing network-centric concepts.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The events of 9/11 prompted the creation of NORTHCOM, but DoD provided only a limited vision of how the command would materially contribute to domestic security over the long term. Much of DoD's contribution to the domestic component of the global war of terrorism has focused on augmenting security on the border, conducting combat air patrols over major cities, and supporting the protection of critical infrastructure from airports to bridges and tunnels. These missions were well underway before the command was stood-up and, in fact, can likely be conducted effectively without direction from NORTHCOM. To serve effectively, NORTHCOM, in addition to meeting the nation's immediate additional security needs, must also focus on how it could better protect the homeland in the future. The proposals suggested here would provide additional resources and responsibilities that would support a command capable of effectively responding to catastrophic disasters, providing the right assets to bolster other homeland security programs, evolving to prepare for new threats that may appear in the future, and speeding the process of military transformation.

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The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) is an independent policy research institute established to promote innovative thinking about defense planning and investment strategies for the 21st century. The center is directed by Dr. Andrew F. Krepinevich. For more information on CSBA, see our web site at: <http://www.csbaonline.org>.