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Homeland Security

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Abstract

After the Cold War, intelligence and military agencies were dealing with issues such as environmental monitoring and disaster management. After 9/11, the U.S. National Guard and Reserves involvement with domestic security began due to deployments of active duty units to the Middle East and the overwhelming problems with Security in the United States. The Department of Defense activated the National Guard and Reserves in a variety of supporting roles to augment the border patrol, customs agencies, and security at airports. In 2002, the Bush administration signed the Homeland Security Act, which established the Department of Homeland Security and charged them with the mission of detecting, preventing, and deterring any domestic threats in the United States with an emphasis on terrorism.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

History of the United States government attempting to battle against civil defense can date back as early as the late 1940s and early 1950s. In 1947, President Truman authorized the National Security Act with the intent of reorganizing the military and foreign policy issues. This included the creation of the National Security Council (NSC), which advises the President on National Security Affairs and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), who advises the President on all intelligence matters. In the late 1940s and 1950s, civil defense did not have the monetary support by the government due to the American population not supporting the idea of a foreign adversary attacking the United States on their own soil. However, that thought process has changed since the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Now that terrorists infiltrated our borders, and we are at war, there are new concepts of combat we call Asymmetric Warfare and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Finally, America has embraced the idea that Homeland Security is a necessity.

Prior to September 11, it is hard to classify exactly what type of defense we had in the United States. However, with how Homeland Security is today, if destroyed, would have a devastating effect on the security of this great nation. The primary mission of Homeland Security is to prevent, protect, and mitigate any terrorist threats or attacks on United States soil. These protection measures must encompass the private sectors that run our infrastructure in the United States. Today, the borders of the United States are more secure than they ever have been. Technology ranging from airport screening to sensors that detect movement on the border of Mexico allows us to sleep better at night. However, intelligence efforts, preparedness, integration of federal, state, and local law enforcement to include first responders, needs to improve so that there is a unity of effort at all levels battle against worldwide terrorism.

HOMELAND SECURITY ORGANIZATION

After the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security in November 2002, it initially consisted of four main departments: Information and Infrastructure Protection, Emergency Preparedness and Response, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Countermeasures, and Border and Transportation Security (The White House). Other components of the organization include State and local government, and the Secret Service. Some of the agencies that are not task organized in Homeland Security, but have a devastating effect in the collection of intelligence, include the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and the National Security Agency (NSA) (The White House).

The primary mission of the Border and Transportation Security is to ensure that the borders, to include the Gulf of Mexico and transportation systems are secure and maintain stability. They are responsible for the Coast Guard, Customs Service, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and Border Patrol to include the Transportation Security Administration. The Emergency Preparedness and Response department are responsible for the training and coordination of first responders and they assist with disaster issues. Lastly, they are responsible for the integration of emergency plans into one unified plan (The White House). The Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Countermeasures department leads the efforts in preparing for possible threats involving Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). In addition, they are broken down into smaller divisions of Nuclear Terrorism, and Science and Technology. Nuclear Terrorism focuses its efforts on chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear terrorism. Science and Technology gives us an advantage with their research capabilities to keep Homeland Security and all other agencies involved at State and local levels up to date on current standards.

Lastly, the Intelligence Community (IC) is also included which consists of sixteen organizations that cover the full spectrum of intelligence for the United States Government (The White House).

INTELLIGENCE AND INTER-AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

In February 2001, the Hart-Rudman Commission issued a phase III report stating that there were concerns with agencies overlapping with intelligence information and there was mass confusion as to what agency was in charge. All of these issues were problematic and the bureaucracy that went along with it was having an adverse effect on the progress of intelligence gathering. It was not until after the terrorist attacks before President Bush gave the Hart-Rudman Commission report its due attention, which aided his decision towards creating a department for Homeland Security operations (Hart & Rudman, 2001).

After the establishment Homeland Security, intelligence and information technology were some of the leading problems that inter-agencies were encountering. One of the leading problems was that all of the inter-agencies were collecting good actionable intelligence. However, it was not until agencies finalized their analysis report before sharing the intelligence (Commission, 2002). As the Hart-Rudman report stated, there were some discrepancies in the reporting of intelligence prior to 9/11. In fact, analysis indicated that state and federal agencies had a sufficient amount of intelligence on the individuals responsible for the 9/11 attacks however, there was not a plan in place to analyze, process, and disseminate the information quick enough to figure that out (Hart & Rudman, 2001). In 2002, a joint committee stated, "Beginning in 1998 and continuing into the summer of 2001, the Intelligence Community received a modest, but relatively steady, stream of intelligence reporting that indicated the possibility of terrorist attacks within the United States. Nonetheless, testimony and interviews confirm that it was the general view of the Intelligence Community, in the spring and summer of 2001, that the

threatened Bin Ladin attacks would most likely occur against U.S. interests overseas, despite indications of plans and intentions to attack in the domestic United States” (HILL, 2002). The reporting of this intelligence failed due to missed opportunities, gaps in intelligence, and lack of communications with agencies involved with protecting the nation’s borders.

The FBI and the CIA both have the capability to gather foreign intelligence within the United States. However, these agencies have had to overcome serious obstacles in order to combine efforts towards intelligence gathering. For example, as terrorist investigations refocus from overseas to the United States, the CIA, by law, has to give all information to the FBI. This is problematic because the CIA loses all operational awareness of any progress the FBI makes with that specific source. For the most part the FBI has the responsibility to gather intelligence within the United States however, since the CIA also has its own offices, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) had to be made in order for these two agencies to coordinate together. In addition, the CIA thought that the FBI was trying to gain operational control over the CIA within the United States and declined to agree to any of the terms. Finally, to remedy the problems that both agencies were having, the National Intelligence (DNI) office oversees the operations of both the FBI and CIA (Global Security, 2005).

THE U.S. MILITARY’S ROLE

For decades, the U.S. military has concentrated its efforts in fighting battles overseas. However, the events of 9/11 changed how we use our military assets here at home to protect our borders. The United States Federal government has the largest assets available to combat homeland defense. Immediately after the attacks on 9/11, the National Guard played a crucial role in supporting security of our borders, to include flying air patrols over Washington, DC. The only stipulation was to ensure that violations of the Posse Comitatus Act were not

committed and that the personnel chosen to pull security detail had enough training in law enforcement to conduct the mission successfully. Another issue that the government needed to be aware of was that our National Guard and Reserves were part time Soldiers or “citizen Soldiers”, and that retention could become an issue.

On October 1, 2002, the President activated the United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). Their mission is to deter, prevent, and preserve the United States to include Canada, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Alaska and the Virgin Islands against any terrorist threats. Headquartered in Colorado, USNORTHCOM is the newest Combatant Command (CoCom) that will be responsible for the Command and Control (C2) and training in support of any civil support missions. In addition to their primary mission, USNORTHCOM stands ready to assist in natural disasters such as hurricanes, fires, floods, earthquakes, anti-drug missions, and any terrorist threat that may occur.

In conclusion, terrorism activity through Asymmetric warfare and proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) are not going away. The military has the largest asset in the force protection of this country. The U.S. National Guard and Reserves stand ready to protect, defend, and support the newly activated USNORTHCOM in any event that may occur. We must adapt to the changing environment. The Intelligence Community (IC) must continue to strive to achieve unity of effort from all inter-agencies. Homeland Security has had many accomplishments however; all agencies involved in protecting this nation must be able to access and use the actionable intelligence to accomplish this mission. Most importantly, we need to ensure that funding, training, and all resources are available to the first responders at all levels of the federal government. Most of our success of domestic disasters is going to depend on the efforts of the first line of defense capabilities.

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